

**Intergenerational differences in the experiences of
middle-class Iranian migrant women post-revolution
(1979) who are living in the UK**

By

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Dedication

This dissertation is dedicated to the memory of my beloved father Ali Akbar Salimi who sadly passed away before the completion of this work. He was a mechanical engineer in the National Oil Company in Iran and always encouraged his siblings and children to pursue their studies. Without his support and encouragement I would not have been able to carry out my research, and for this I am extremely grateful.

He was a wonderful role model through his ability to be compassionate and empathise with others. He was always there for relatives and colleagues to offer friendship and support as and when needed.

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ABSTRACT

The focus of this research is on well educated, middle-class Iranian migrant women who left their homeland at least ten years ago and are now living in the UK. The purpose of this research is to consider the first generation (who individually decided to migrate to the UK) and the second generation (the daughters of the first generation who had no other choice but to live in the country that their parents had selected) of Iranian migrant women according to intergenerational differences in their experiences of the migratory process. This study explores how Iranian women migrants (first and second generation) understand their gender roles in their homeland (Iran) and in their host country (Britain), therefore mapping the impacts of migration onto their gendered subjectivities.

Based on in-depth interviews, this research focuses on the reasons why the first generation Iranian women migrated to the UK, their views on their gender roles within the family and host society, and their attachment to cultural values. Iranian migrant women left their homeland and had to rebuild their lives in a new country. I examine whether their perceptions of gender roles have changed as a result of migrating to a new country. The study attempts to show the extent to which the Iranian women migrating to the UK were affected by the issues surrounding women's status in response to political developments in their homeland during the 1979 Revolution in Iran. I also seek to uncover if these Iranian women import the traditional roles into their new society, in particular how their views about women's status differ from those they held in Iran.

By exploring the migration process among two generations of Iranian women in the same family, the thesis seeks to reveal the gap between the family cultures with regards to protecting the Iranian values, and the effect of the host country's culture on the actual practices of migrant women which lead to shaping their identity. It also examines the extent to which these migrant women have kept their cultural values and transferred them to their daughters.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

The research literature on Iranian migrants in the UK and in particular on Iranian migrant women is relatively limited and has hardly received any academic attention. The existing literature does not provide much insight as to why these women left Iran in the first place, their background or to what extent they have adapted to the host society's culture during the past three decades. Migration literature on women normally focuses on poorer/working class women who migrate, often to work in the informal sectors illegally and undocumented. Most studies tend to focus on women from the Philippines, Bangladesh and Africa (Buijs 1993; Anderson 2001; Kofman 2003; Dumont *et al* 2007).

The focus of this research is on two generations of Iranian migrant women from different cultural groups, and with diverse socio-economic levels, both single and married, who decided to leave the country of origin (Iran) after the 1979 revolution, simply because they were not able to be categorized into the new definition of women in the new Islamic regime (Sadeghi 2006). This study addresses the lack of research materials on middle-class migrant women in the migration literature by looking at the middle-class Iranian women who migrated to the UK, with regards to their place of birth, education, marital status, occupation and experiences.

My interest in researching Iranian migrant women was first sparked by reading about Iranian migrants who were invited to a symposium by the Islamic State in Tehran in 1999, and their educational achievements. I realised that there were no female names on the guest list although many of the male migrants had married educated Iranian women who had good positions in the host societies as lecturers, dentists, psychologists, lawyers, and so on. I wanted to find out more about the Iranian migrant women and represent their situation in a different country. To satisfy my curiosity about Iranian migrant women, I started to find out some resources through libraries.

The more I read the more questions arose about Iranian migrant women and the ways these women organise their lives in the receiving countries. It became obvious to me that

there are many Iranian migrant women who have achieved a very high status, both in their individual and social lives, in the countries which they live. At the first step of my research my attention was drawn towards exploring the motives of these women to migrate. Many different reasons play a crucial role in encouraging Iranian women's migration. For example, nowadays, Iranian women have greater access to more information about women's rights through progressive media such as the Internet, satellite TV and from relatives who are citizens of receiving countries. My research focused on the reasons for motivated Iranian women to emigrate during the last three decades. Depending on Iranian women's socio-cultural circumstances after the 1979 revolution in Iran (I am referring to these circumstances in the next chapter) it seemed that many of the Iranian women did not fit well into the new community which was controlled by shariah law. It may be reasonable to assume that the revolution constituted one major motive in Iranian women's decision to migrate.

At the same time my attention was also drawn towards investigating whether Iranian migrant women's perceptions of gender roles have changed over the time they have been living in the UK. Gender roles within Iranian families are generally different from those among Western families. This research addresses how Iranian migrant women's perceptions of gender roles changed due to their migration process. Migration brings women into contact with a new society, and more than likely a new culture, which may cause them to experience and adapt to a new way of life. This new cultural context may bring socio-cultural changes which will perhaps make most of them realise the human, civil and constitutional rights and liberties which they do not receive in a patriarchal society such as Iran.

On the other hand, migration could be associated with psychological conflict, resulting in 'culture-shedding' and bringing positive outcomes for women (Berry, 2006b: 50). This study explores whether the first generation of Iranian migrant women re-evaluate their traditional gender roles in response to the socio-cultural environment of the host society. In the study I also investigate how second generation Iranian migrant women see their gender roles within the family and society. The crucial part of this investigation is to explore whether the migration process can have an influence on the traditional perspective of gender roles at home and society for both the first and the second generations of migrant women.

Another goal of this study is to consider the identity of second generation migrant women and whether they try to preserve the Iranian culture. In my analysis I employ two definitions of a second generation migrant. One definition considers a second generation migrant from a mixed marriage, for example, Iranian father and English mother or Iranian mother and English father. Another definition of second generation migrant refers to those children whose 'parents are both foreign born' (Hansen and Kucera, 2004:4). Utilising the two alternative definitions on the one hand allows me to have access to more participants, and on the other hand provides me with better understanding of the role of the first generation migrant women (mothers) in preserving their home culture.

I explore how first generation women pass on Iranian culture, attitudes, customs and values to the younger second generation migrant women. One of the questions for this research is how the second generation's identity is shaped in the UK and the effort appearing to be made by some of the first generation migrant women to maintain the culture of the original country.

In order to address the above points, for example, changes in the traditional gender roles, I asked firstly about the main factors that encouraged Iranian females to migrate to the UK and who accompanied them on their travels to the host society. Secondly, because these women entered a new society (UK) with their traditional perspectives of gender roles, I attempted to examine whether their views of their roles inside and outside the family have changed due to the migration process. Thirdly, I compared the perceptions of the second generation towards gender roles, gender identity and the patriarchal system with that of the first generation to find out the similarities and differences between the two generations.

I address the aforementioned questions with a reference to interviews conducted in the UK during 2008-2009. The interviews included 38 selected subjects from both first and second generation Iranian migrant women. I asked the first generation to explain their perception of similarities and differences of gender roles in Iran and the UK. I also asked them to draw a comparison between their daughters and themselves in relation to gender roles to help me understand the effect of migration on the female members of a family.

The data gathered from the study provides the perspectives of two generations of Iranian migrant women in the UK since the 1979 revolution towards gender roles, and it highlights the shift in their views resulting from the migratory movement. This research illustrates whether or not Iranian migrant women have moved away from the traditional viewpoints of Iranian society towards gender roles.

Moreover, this study gave Iranian migrant women a chance to narrate their life experiences and describe what is happening in their lives in the host country. Listening to their explanation of their own life experiences provided an opportunity to have access to first hand information about Iranian migrant women's values, beliefs and attitudes regarding their migratory movement.

Research Aims

To know the experiences of those under-researched women, who became residents of the UK after the 1979 Revolution. How much of an impact does the Islamic Revolution have on their lives and how do they settle themselves in a new society with a new culture and surroundings?

To understand their experiences in terms of a feminist migration framework; this in turn leads to recognising the complexities of new identities and cultural attachment within two generations of Iranian migrant women.

Research Questions

In this study, I investigate the participants' experiences and motivations for migrating, their perception of gender roles and patriarchal systems both in the UK and Iran, and how this differs between first generation (mother) and second generation (daughter) in the same family.

A phenomenological perspective influenced the study design, data collection and data analysis. I consider human surroundings and how the surroundings influence the individual's identity.

A central question guiding this investigation was to explore whether the migration process can have an influence on the traditional perspective of gender roles at home and in the wider society for both the first and the second generation Iranian women. In all countries and cultures, women have basic roles and duties in relation to the family and the home (Siddique 2003; Mahdi 1999). Living in receiving countries (for example United States and Australia) can change the traditional roles significantly and create new challenges at home (Mahdi 1999; Chaichian 1997; and Jamarani 2007). I utilise the term 'traditional' to refer to belief or behaviour of Iranian women with significant ties to their origins. I therefore set out to investigate how living in the UK can change the traditional roles of Iranian women. Additionally, I wanted to explore any transfer of cultural values and norms from the first generation to the second generation (for example, maintaining the national and religious ceremonies and the Persian language).

In brief, the research asks the following questions:

Iranian migrants' motivations: What were some of the motivating factors which made Iranian migrant women leave Iran? Why did they choose England as the receiving country? What was their role in making the decision to migrate to the UK? Did they have the same rights in making the decision, or were they just following their husbands? Do gender norms and political constraints (for example, laws and policies) restrict women's options to move? What restrictions on migration to the UK affect this population? One intention of the study is to demonstrate that despite some researchers' assumptions, the migration of Iranian women is not solely for economic reasons. The socio-political environment prevalent in Iran is a major factor for many Iranian women in this study to leave their homeland.

Shifting away from traditional roles and seeking new roles and rights: Have Iranian migrant women's views of gender roles changed due to displacement? Has the migration process empowered Iranian migrant women? What is the effect of migration on

relationships and roles within families? Have the Iranian migrant women imported their traditional roles into the UK?

Intergenerational differences in the experiences of a migration process: Are there differences in the meaning of traditional roles between mothers and daughters? To what extent do first generation women want to transfer the traditional norms and values of Iranian females to their daughters? What do the second generation think about the traditions, values and norms of Iran and Britain?

I addressed these questions through an exploration of everyday lives, with an emphasis on their perception about a new socio-cultural system. I asked what factors encouraged them to leave Iran, and why they decided to stay in the UK. Have Iranian migrant women's views on gender roles changed due to geographical movement? Moreover, through an empirical investigation I have begun to consider intergenerational similarities and differences.

Thesis Structure

This thesis comprises eight chapters.

Chapter One provides general information about the study. Chapter Two focuses on women and gender in Iran to draw attention to their situation during the past three decades. Chapter Three provides a thorough analysis of existing literature, highlighting how women's migration process has received little attention in the literature of migration over the past decades. The literature review considers first and second generation migrant women in a feminist approach which leads towards three major themes of this study.

The focus of Chapter Four is on a discussion of the methodology employed for the thesis. In this chapter, epistemological positioning is presented and design of the research is discussed.

Chapter Five offers a discussion of why the Iranian women migrants I interviewed decided to leave their homeland. According to participants' narratives there are

interconnecting reasons such as social, political and cultural events that lead Iranian women to migrate.

Chapter Six looks at the shifting roles among first generation of Iranian migrant women and challenges in the host society. I intend to investigate how these women have adjusted to the new culture and norms and how their gender roles have been influenced by challenging issues they might have faced during their time here.

Chapter Seven is concerned with the second generation Iranian migrant women who were either born in the UK or arrived here when they were very young. I aim to explore the identity of this generation, considering the impact of living in the host society, on preserving the Iranian cultural values such as language, customs and so on. I set out to illustrate how much this generation preserves, if at all, of their heritage and to what extent they retain their cultural identity.

Chapter Eight will be the conclusion of the thesis, referring to the main themes, motives of migration, shifting gender roles and intergenerational characteristics.

CHAPTER TWO

WOMEN AND GENDER IN IRAN

Introduction

To establish a foundation for my research, I provide a historical background on Iran's socio-political climate after the 1979 revolution with regards to women's status. This chapter illuminates the changing status of Iranian women over the past three decades, firstly, through a consideration of gender discourses and their implications for women in the 1980s. Secondly, the changing of socio-political environment in the 1990s and the emergence of women's right are explained. Thirdly, the green movement in 2009 and its implications for women are discussed.

I will focus on the participation of women in diverse social movements to show their fighting against different forms of oppression and to explain the consequences of these movements for Iranian women.

1979-1989

The involvement of Iranian women in movements for their human rights started a century ago, in the early twentieth century (Moghadam 1995; Paidar 1997; Afary 1996). Mohammadi (2007) argues that:

The Iranian women have traditionally been deprived of many of their basic rights and have suffered from both male centred ideologies and male dominance that treat women as irrational, child-like and immature, and from widespread discriminatory policies that affect their lives from birth to death (Mohammadi, 2007:2).

During the 1979 revolution, millions of Iranian women took part in events in different forms: distributing leaflets about revolution's news, giving shelter to political activists under attack, marching and demonstrating in streets, with a few taking up arms and

becoming members of underground political parties. Iranian women played a crucial role and speeded up the victory of the revolution (Mohammadi 2007; Tohidi 1991). Mohammadi has argued that 'There were not gender differences and gender expectations in the participation and expectations of women during this great massive social event' (Mohammadi, 2007: 2).

After the success of the 1979 revolution and Islamising Iranian society, new gender standards for women were provided through the application of the Islamic Republics policies. As a result, changes occurred and 'pre-revolutionary unity quickly eroded' (Paidar, 1995: 353). During the first decade of the revolution, the impact of the Islamic state policies towards women was varied. For example, Mahdi (2003) has argued that: 'For religious women, who were practically banned from public engagement by their husbands and/or religious authorities during the Pahlavi period, their veiled public presence, something that the government was also interested in, was a symbol of liberation from social and spatial isolation. To them, the chador is a form of protection against the unwanted and undignified looks of sinful men' (Mahdi, 2003: 11).

Nevertheless, the enforcement of Islamic laws by the present regime led to the migration of some educated and expert sector of the Iranian society, including women. Mahdi (2003) has explained that 'women, either single, travelling with their parents, or married, accompanying their husbands, migrated from their home land. He also added that 'These families could no longer bear the impact of these policies and could afford to leave the country... For western educated, middle-class women, these restrictions resulted in a loss of social status, meaningful employment, and individual autonomy (Mahdi, 2003: 11).

During the early months of revolution, despite women's massive participation, the new government (Islamic Republic of Iran) treated women unequally in every shape and form, passing new laws regarding dress code, job opportunities and schooling. Indeed, women were affected in every sector of the society; ideological foundations of the theocratic government shaped women's issues. Poya (1999) has portrayed the period immediately after the 1979 revolution as:

The state adopted the policy of seclusion of women - their restriction to the private domestic domain and their complete exclusion from the public sphere...the Islamic state attempted to push women back to total dependence on men by reasserting the importance of the home and family for women' (Poya, 1999: 9).

Vakil (2011) has explained the early days of the revolution in the same way and mentioned that 'government policies toward women were extreme as the revolutionary Islamic ideology was imposed over society. Indeed, women were affected in every realm; women's issues were tied to the ideological foundations of the theocratic government'. She also adds that 'with the imposition of Shariah law and the mandatory return to the veil, women were inimically connected and impacted by the nature of the government' (Vakil, 2011: 52). In addition, Parvin Paidar suggested that 'women were made promises as revolutionaries'... but afterwards they were asked to stay at home. Indeed, no group experienced 'the post-revolutionary changes so rapidly and thoroughly during the transitional period as did women' (Paidar, 1995: 353).

These new laws took women away from social, economic and political activities, for example, women's employment diminished from 11.1% in 1976 to 9.8% in 1986, and 'the rate of female representation in parliament dropped from seven to 1.5 percent' (Mohammadi, 2007: 2). Many employed women in the public sector lost their jobs because their appearance did not fit with the Islamic law (Mohammadi 2007; Tohidi 1991; Eghbal 2011). Poya has argued that 'under the influence of olama, and in accordance with the Quran's view, women are worth only half the value of men in legal and financial matters (Quran 1955: verse 282), and are too emotional and weak to be able to make hard decisions. Women were excluded from professions, such as management, and from the judiciary' (Poya, 1999: 9). During this period, the aim of the Islamic government was to imprison women inside their homes, to care for and rear children, the preservation of the family also 'emphasised women's priority at home' (Poya, 1999: 9). As a result, the Islamic state offered women voluntary redundancy and early retirement in order to have time to accomplish their domestic duties.

Vakil (2011) has explained that 'women recognised the realities of life under the rules of the Islamic government of Iran where overnight family laws that granted women

protection in divorce and custody of the children had been withdrawn' (Vakil, 2011: 54). Vakil (2011) and some other scholars such as Poya (1999), Paidar (1995) and Eghbal (2011) pointed out the issue that women were banned from participating in some sports activities and from watching men playing football, basketball, volleyball, to name but a few of the sports. Eghbal (2011) demonstrates that 'after the 1979 Revolution, based on its interpretation of Islamic law, the Islamic Republic imposed legislation that had the effect of restricting personal, social and religious freedoms, especially of women' (Eghbal, 2011: 27). These rules and regulations affect every aspect of women's lives.

In addition, 'the new shariah law gave men absolute right to divorce, revoking the prior need for justification. Child custody laws were also amended in favour of men, such that in the aftermath of a divorce, women were entitled to keep sons until the age of two and daughters only until the age of seven' (Vakil, 2011: 54). Moreover, Vakil (2011) has argued the value of women's judgment as evidence in court and has explained that 'women's evidence was worth only half of a man's blood money for a murdered woman was equal to half of a man's' (Vakil, 2011: 54). And Paidar (1995) also researched this issue and explained that 'if a murdered woman's relatives demanded retribution of any kind, her relatives would be obliged to pay the killers family, the full blood money in compensation' (Paidar, 1995: 23).

After the revolution, society did witness one positive movement: female enrolment at primary school and at the university level increased, but gender discrimination became common place once again. Women were represented in textbooks only in the roles of mother, homemaker or teacher. At university, also, there came the decision that women were not allowed to attend the 69 different fields of studies, even if they had passed the entrance exams with flying colours. For example, they were excluded from some engineering fields and were not allowed to become judges (Poya 1999; Mohammadi 2007; Moghadam 2004; Vakil 2011).

After the beginning of the Iran-Iraq war the Islamic government decided to make some economic and gender employment changes in its related policies. Poya (1999) has considered this period as follows:

Although the ideological constraints placed women in a disadvantageous position within the labour market, paradoxically, gender segregation opened up

opportunities for religious women to enter employment...at the same time, the imposition of social control by the state (and men), and also women's own internalised control, posed major obstacles to the upward mobility of many female workers (Poya, 1999: 77).

As a result of the Iran-Iraq war (1980-1988), there was decreased attendance of men in the labour market and also increased participation of women in social and economic activities, both in formal sectors (nursing, teaching at girl's schools, and so on) and informal sectors (cooking, sewing and medical preparation for soldiers). The participation of women as unpaid labour in the informal sectors was associated with economic and political benefits for the state. There was an organization which called Bassej Khaharan (the women's organization, 'one of many Islamic state organizations', which provided different facilities for the war) had recruited large number of women and their enlistment continued during the war years (Poya, 1999: 78). The responsibilities of women in this organization can be categorized as follows: 'military and ideological training of women; helping the families of the Martyred and the families of the prisoners of the war; to serve in the literacy corps; voluntary teaching in poor rural areas. Their main task, however, was to prepare medicines, repair the soldiers' clothes and prepare food for the soldiers on the front lines' (Poya, 1999: 79). Although, Iran-Iraq war had a galvanizing influence on the women's status and mobilised them into the labour market, the emphasis was on preserving the position of women as mothers and wives (Poya 1999; Vakil 2011).

At demonstrations and meetings, many women (even non-religious ethnic groups) wore hejab as a symbol of solidarity and gradually hejab 'was extended to unveil women who felt obliged to show their solidarity to majority' (Tohidi, 1991: 252). They fought for social justice and true equality. As mentioned earlier, none of the revolution's leaders talked about compulsory hejab and even emphasised that 'hejab is not mandatory' (Ettela'at Daily, March 11, 1979).

After establishing the Islamic Republic of Iran, in 1980s women were presented with the Islamic dress code that began in media such as television and for teachers at schools. A few months for women employed in government sectors were required to wear the hejab. A couple of months after that it was announced that all women (including non-Muslims

and tourists) had to wear hejab in public. Meetings were planned by female groups such as Women's Society of Islamic Revolution, Nationalist and Liberal groups on the International Women's Day, to take place in Tehran and Shiraz, to protest against the new rulings. In Tehran, Iranian women demonstrated against the Islamic hejab at the Judiciary, and this demonstration against wearing the veil was met with violence (Tohidi 1991). The new rules and measures were not imposed immediately. Tohidi has argued:

Women, members of national ethnic minorities, popular and progressive organizations, workers and newly formed labour councils, intellectuals, journalists, publishers- one by one, all became victims of the waves of terror imposed by a theocracy that showed itself to be more and more regressive. Of all these groups that actively participated in the revolution, the Iranian women played perhaps the least understood and most enigmatic role (1991: 252).

Moreover, the opposition political groups comprised of Marxist, Nationalist and even some Islamic groups (who were opposite to Islamic government's policies) cracked down, and thousands of females were arrested, many of them executed or jailed for long sentences, with the gradual destruction of secular women's organizations. The beginnings of war had considerable effects on women's movements and silenced critics of the new regime.

Scholars (Pakzad 1994; Tohidi 1991; Moghadam 2004; Bailey 2008) pointed out that the Iranian government encourages women to keep the motherhood role in a familial context and also emphasized that the family is the fundamental unit of an Islamic country. Female children have been taught domestic chores and child rearing, as family context has provided support for the opinion that 'women's primary role is 'domestic responsibilities' (Aghajanian, 2001: 27). Education is available for all girls and boys in Iran although schools are segregated. Although the percentage of girls accepted in universities has increased to 64% in recent years, some areas of studies are still closed to females, including judiciary. Job suitability for a woman is decided by a male relative, for example, father, brother and husband. If the male relative thinks that a job is unsuitable for a woman, he can stop her from taking that job. Aghajanian (2001) has argued 'if the nature of woman's occupation is not compatible with her family's interest or dignity, the husband may prevent his wife from engaging in such an occupation,

provided he can prove such incompatibility in the special civil tribunal' (2001: 27). These studies suggest that women can obtain employment even if their main role is to care for their families, and in most cases, the contribution of women in economic activities may provide extra income that is for a family.

The Islamic government of Iran sought to restore Shariah law and in July 1980 the hejab became compulsory. The dress code consisted of long coat with long sleeves, a pair of trousers, thick socks or stockings and a large scarf covering all head and shoulders. The way in which Islamic government re-established their culture was by altering the position of women in the country, even the colour of the uniform was controlled by the Islamic state and it was limited to 'black, grey or dark brown' (Poya, 1999: 73) .

Many women did oppose their re-established roles within the household, especially the working middle-class women who benefitted from some aspects of the Pahlavi authority who had found a new sense of political empowerment, having experienced a more liberal lifestyle. The former regime believed that women did not have to be relocated into the household in order to restore an Islamic society (Ebadi 2006). Poya (1999) has explained the condition of women after establishing the compulsory hejab as follows: 'New security units (Islamic Guidance, local Islamic councils and the Revolutionary Guards) patrolled the cities, hunting for the opposition and for women without hejab. No woman dared to appear in public without Islamic dress because so many women had bones broken and face burned with acid' (Poya, 1999: 73).

Under these conditions, women had to live strictly within the clear parameters laid down by civil law. A woman's main duties are to be mother, homemaker, wife, and she is expected to obey her husband's commands (Afshar, 1999). With regards to their responsibility towards family members, a woman's individual aspirations and interests will be ignored or at best, be secondary.

Scholars (e.g. Mohammadi 2007; Tohidi 1991; Afshar 2006) have claimed that in spite of the massive participation of Iranian women in the 1979 revolution, women experienced losses of rights, removed by the Islamic regime in the first decade after the revolution as follows:

- All women were required to cover all parts of their body, except hands and face. Appearing without hejab in public were subject to punishment by 'seventy-five lashes or up to a year's imprisonment' (Tohidi, 1991; 253).
- Schools and universities became sex-segregated and women were banned from studying in some fields in higher education. For example, agriculture, law, geology and mining engineer.
- On the subject of marriage, the legal age for marriage was lowered from eighteen to thirteen. Under the previous regime, the Family Protection Law restricted polygamy but it was re-established, 'a man may have up to four wives officially, as well as others on a temporary basis (sigh'a). Contemporary marriage can be contracted for a fixed period of time-ranging from a few minutes to ninety nine years-after a nominal fee is paid to the woman a verse is repeated' (Tohidi, 1991: 253-4).
- In terms of divorce, the principle of Islamic rule makes conditions easier for men than women. A husband wishing to divorce his wife is only required to obtain court approval to submit the divorce. If his wife is objecting to divorce, the process of objections only delay the registration of separation and do not stop it from happening. The legal right to the protection of female children over seven and male children over two, in the event of divorce, is the father's responsibility, unless the wife can prove that her husband is not a fit father when applying to the court for the custody of her children (Tohidi 1991; Moghadam 2004; Poya 1999).
- With regards to economic principles, women are entitled to receive an inheritance, although it is to be half of their male counterparts. They also have the right to own property and the right to make contracts. All women also have the right to receive financial support from their husbands or male relative, as well as the right to 'mehriyeh' which is a sum of money paid by a husband to wife at marriage.
- In terms of employment, the initial attempt by the Islamic government was to exclude women from the labour market but the socio-economic pressure of the Iran-Iraq war had an impact on women's participation in the labour market. Poya

(1999) concluded that 'economic necessity arising from the flight of men to the war zones, and inflation and a general level of unemployment as a result of Iran's isolation in the world market, intensified by the war and the war economy' led to women's participation in the labour market (Poya, 1999: 10). Although, the number of women in the public sector increased and women were involved in a variety of occupations, government policy still controlled women's 'upward mobility' (Poya, 1999: 74-93).

- In terms of sports, the government policy of sex segregation presented severe challenges to women's sports. For example, women athletes are subject to strict requirements when competing in Iran or abroad, with the Iranian Olympic Committee stating that: 'severe punishment will be meted out to those who do not follow Islamic rules during sporting competitions'. The committee also banned women athletes from competing in sports events where a male referee could come into physical contact with them (*Adnkronos International*, 19 December 2007).
- Poya (1999) argued that 'in July 1981 the ghesas law (the Bill of Retribution) replaced the civil laws. This meant that women were denied the minimum protection offered by the civil law in cases of marriage, divorce, custody of children, freedom of movement, murder, adultery, abortion and many other issues. According to ghesas law, harsh sentences, such as lashes and stoning to death, were to be practised on women for violations' (1999: 69).

The road from 1980 to 1990 was an arduous one for some Iranian women. They saw their legal and social positions decline in the name of Islamic revival, as discussed earlier, compulsory hejab, the ban on women singers, exclusion of women from state (political power), the ban on women students in some fields of higher education, a return to polygamy and temporary marriage were some of the gender outcomes that marked the first ten years of the 1979 revolution. The policy of the Islamic government proved an instrument for the subjugation of Iranian women within Iranian society and culture (Poya 1999). This dominate situation in the first decade of the revolution provided the context for building a conceptual framework to the link the findings of the field research and the academic discussion in this thesis concerning the relationship between migration of Iranian women and socio-political conditions in Iran in 1980s.

1990-2004

As mentioned earlier, in the first decade of the Islamic government, the state controlled gender issues, to reinforce its authority with women (Vakil 2011). In this period, two groups of women were politically active. The first group was made up of traditional women who cooperated with the Islamic state in order to prevent their marginalization within the political system. The second group comprised secular women who were isolated from gender issues and did not collaborate with the Islamic state. At the end of the Iran-Iraq war in 1988, Khomeini's death in 1989 and through reformed changes to the revolutionary ideology (based on Khomeini's beliefs), in the second decade (1990-2000), we saw some traditional women evolving into Islamic women who 'supported gender reform' within the Islamic regime. The birth of this issue was in response to the political, social and 'economic failures of the first decade' (Vakil, 2011: 66).

In the 1990s, some restrictive barriers to female's field of study, employment and sports were removed and have created more opportunities for women. The society enjoyed a more open political and cultural atmosphere due to President Rafsanjani and President Khatami. At the same time, a variety of women organization established such as The Women Populace of Iran, Women's branch of National Democratic Front and the Association of women lawyers who were amongst the most active that struggled for supporting women to accomplish their rights.

From 1989 to 1997, President Rafsanjani eased social control. Women were less stressed on the streets and benefitted from some changes regarding to their personal law and also were able to take part in international sports competitions (Esfandiari 2010).

President Rafsanjani upturned the Islamic Republic Policy of encouraging large families and launched a family planning program to restrain Iran's rapid rate of population growth. As a result, the total fertility rate declined from 5.6 in the early 1980s to 1.8 in 2006 (Esfandiari 2010). As Moghadam (2003) argues 'in 1992, the High Council of the Cultural Revolution adopted a set of Employment Policies for Women, which, while reiterating the importance of family roles and continuing to rule out certain occupations and professions as Islamically-inappropriate, encouraged the integration of women into

the labour force and attention to their interests and needs' (Moghadam, 2003: 3). Moreover, the field of law opened to females in 1990s, although women still could not apply as judges, 'women legal consultants were permitted in the Special Civil Courts (Moghadam, 2003: 3). Mehranguiz Kaar (1997) a female lawyer, argued:

In the mid-1990s we have seen a step towards ratifying and returning to the previous situation. There is now a law which allows women to act as judges, but not as judges who give definitive judgement which delineates this part of the law; their signature in this context is not validated. According to the law women can be research judges...this has allowed women lawyers predominately to act as judges in family law, but by law they can be research judges in different areas. Before this law, according to shariah, women had no right to be judges. Now in practice women are acting as judicial councillors, remarkably the clergy are now stating that in principle, in Islamic terms, there is no barrier to women acting as full judges and giving full judgment in all cases. For many Iranian women this is a substantial step forward. For this reason we feel that fundamental change is taking place in this process. We have fought very hard to achieve certain reforms and we are determined not to lose them. We have a permanent foothold, and the way forward is clear (Kaar, 1997, at the 1997 International Conference on Middle Eastern Studies, quoted on Poya, 1999:101-102).

Rafsanjani's socio-political policy was supported by both secular and Islamic women. For example, in 1990 these Islamic women objected to some education law that in 1985 'prevented unmarried female students from studying abroad' (Poya, 1999: 104). These women claimed that they supported Islamic government but their interests were ignored by the state. Some of these women wrote a letter to the *Keyhan* newspaper:

This law discriminates against religious working-class women who rely for their studies on government financial help. Those women who have money can go abroad despite the law and continue their education. It is also gender discrimination, because why should moral degeneration only apply to women and not to men? We appreciate the importance of marriage and for this reason we apply to the Majles to reform the law and allow women over 28 who have a

good record of Islamic behaviour to be allowed to continue their higher education abroad (*Keyhan* 22 November 1990, quoted in Poya, 1999:107).

In the 1990s, contrary to 1980s, the education system incorporated some changes, allowing females 'greater participation in previously restricted fields of study' (Poya, 1999: 104). Despite all the limitations of Islamic gender ideology and the government's objective to seclude women at home, we can observe an increase in the level of female education in both urban and rural areas; however as (Poya 1999) argues, 'the percentage increase in female education was not homogeneous for all areas. In the poor areas of the east very few girls went to school, but in richer areas of the north most girls went to school alongside boys' (Poya, 1999: 104). Again, this issue was a throwback to the first decade of Islamisation, where educational segregation occurred in rural areas and excluded girls from schools.

Reforms led to some modification in the political arena and women became more visible by the mid-1990s. In this period, in parliamentary elections in 1995, 2000 and 2004 not only did the number of women members increase (i.e. in 2004, 13 women were elected to parliament, making the largest number since the revolution), but also we saw 'emergence of articulate reform-minded advocates' (Moghadam, 2003: 3). In my opinion, these women were advocates of reform and women's rights. They struggled for changes in both patriarchal family laws and political liberty. During this period, women non-governmental organizations were established and in every ministry women's offices were created.

An example of the aforementioned modifications would be the publication of hundreds of books about women's and feminist issues, which were on the black list of the Ministry of Culture before the beginning of the civil rights movement in the 1990s (Mohammadi 2007). Indeed, women's press flourished, with books and magazines including important cultural, political and social subjects. There were different types of women's magazines; for example, *Zanan (women)* magazine which from 1992 started a monthly publication that included critical articles about the viewpoint of policy makers of women's rights in Iran. Some articles claimed that Islam supports equality between men and women, but the Iranian government have misunderstood sections that cover egalitarianism and equal opportunity.

After the 1979 revolution, there was a prohibition on women's sport competitions, as Pfister (2003) argues 'Islamic women's sport appears to be a contradiction in terms - at least this is what many in the West believe... In this respect the portrayal of the development and the current situation of women's sports in Iran are illuminating for a variety of reasons. It demonstrates both the opportunities and the limits of women in a country in which Islam and sport are not contradictions' (Pfister, 2003: 207). Since the revolution, sport organisations for females have faced the essential changes to enable gender-segregated contribution in large numbers. However, Iranian women did not take part in international competitions until 1989, during the presidency of Hashemi Rafsanjani, his daughter Mrs Faezeh Hashemi, became head of the women's sport organisation and she arranged the first Asian games for Muslim females in Tehran. Mrs Hashemi came under attack from hardliners, but did continue her support of female's sport in different areas, including cycling. Benn (2011) portrayed the role of Mrs Hashemi in Iranian women's sport as follows:

The aspiration to support women's top-level sport, and the rules concerning sex-segregation, encouraged the idea of women-only sports competitions. Led by Hashemi, the Islamic Countries' women's Sport Solidarity Council was approved at the second session of the Iranian Executive Board in the National Olympic Committee (NOC) in 1991 (Benn, 2011: 116).

Mrs Hashemi supported and welcomed participants from Muslim and non-Muslim countries. Between 1993 and 2004, this movement improved into a four-yearly international event.

As Rostami (2001) argues, in the latter years of the 1990s, the society faced an agreement between Islamic and secular feminists which caused the institutional rights to be challenged by women had suffered the supremacy of men through their life. Moghadam (2004) explains that the feminist leaders in Iran include women who are practising lawyers, such as Shirin Ebadi (a former judge, lawyer and the winner of the Nobel Peace Prize), and Mehrangiz Kaar (a former judge and a lawyer) who was awarded the Ludovic Trarieux Prize in recognition of her life's work in 2002, and was also honoured by Human Rights First in 2004 (Kaar 2010).

They all critiqued restrictions on women's rights and were women who established or supported the women's press; scholars and academics who formed 'women's studies courses' at universities; and were 'believing women whose questions about the status of women in Islam and in the Islamic Republic launched the field of Islamic feminism' (Moghadam, 2004: 4). It seems that after the 1979 revolution, women's votes were important in 1997 and 2001 presidential elections which led to the election of President Khatami. The period of 1997 to 2003 has been named the 'Reform Years', which saw the formation of a majority of reformists in Parliament in 2000. President Khatami named three women as state's members ('Mrs Ebtekar as a vice-president in charge of environmental affairs, Mrs Aazam Nouri as deputy culture minister for legal and parliamentary affairs, and Mrs Zahra Shojai as Iran's first director-general for women's affairs') (Moghadam, 2004: 4). Since the 1979 revolution, it was the first time that women received top government posts.

As mentioned above, the second decade of the Islamic Republic was accompanied by the appearance of reforms that brought some advances such as policy shifts, women's rising positions and increased public expectations. Despite these advantages, in May 1998 conservative members of Parliament (opposed to President Khatami's reforms) initiated bills to limit women's rights. Reformist members of Parliament introduced significant laws about divorce cases for women, but the Guardian Council recognised them as un-Islamic laws. Mohammadi (2007) gives an example of this issue:

Iranian feminists hailed a bill giving divorced mothers the same custody rights over boys as girls, passed by the Sixth Parliament. The bill was a small step forward in removing existing discriminations against women...If approved by Guardian Council (who represents the interest and concerns of traditionalist and authoritarian clerics), the bill would have granted women custody of boys and girls until they reach seven (instead of two years for boys). Although some prominent religious scholars gave the bill their support, the Guardian Council rejected it (Mohammadi, 2007: 14).

Approval of this kind of bill could be a great success for Iranian feminists. However, the reform movement provided the women's movement with an opportunity to express political ideas that are a response to the political perspectives of Iranian society. For example, during the academic year 2002-2003, 'women's enrolment exceeded that of

men for the first time since universities were established in Iran in the 1930s' (Moghadam, 2004: 3). In the realm of employment, women make up 35 percent of public sector employees. As Moghadam (2004) argues, the majority of these employed women work in Ministries of Health and Education, and about 35 percent have Bachelor degree or other university degrees. It seems however there were still some distinctions between men and women; the high-ranking positions in society all occupied by men. As Mohammadi (2007) argues, in 2000 only 3 percent of high-ranking positions were in the hands of women.

In one example of Iranian women's development, in 2003 Shirin Ebadi a former judge, a lawyer and activist, was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize for her significant efforts toward human rights and democracy. Although she is the first Iranian to receive this award, she has been in exile since June 2009 due to the 'increase in persecution of Iranian citizens who are critical of the current regime' (Ebadi 2010). In 2008 (21 December) Ebadi's office of the centre for the Defence of Human Rights was attacked and closed. On 29 December Islamic authorities attacked her private office, and grabbed her computers and files (Moaveni 2009). On first January 2009, Pro-regime demonstrators attacked her home. Ebadi was at a seminar in Spain at the time of the Iranian presidential election (June 2009) when the crackdown began colleagues told her not to come home, and as at October 2009 she has not returned to Iran (Fletcher 2009).

Despite some progresses for women's positions during 1990-2004, the status of women did not markedly improve since Khatami's term. For example, during Khatami's leadership the Supreme Council of the Cultural Revolution refused to sign the United Nations Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) which is the most significant international agreement on the rights of women (Hughes 1998). Even Massoumeh Ebtekar, Khatami's highly publicized woman appointee, seemed to not favour loosening boundaries on women that might give them more individual freedom. She confirmed that 'Man is responsible for the financial affairs and safety of the family. Thus, a woman needs her husband's permission to make a trip. Otherwise problems will arise and lead to quarrels between them' (Hughes, 1998: 22). She also was a supporter of stoning women to death; she argued that 'One should take psychological and legal affairs of the society into consideration as well. If the

regular rules of family are broken, it would result in many complicated and grave consequences for all of the society' (Hughes, 1998: 22).

As mentioned earlier, during Khatami's term it was claimed that publications would have new freedoms, but the publishers had contrary experiences. Hughes (1998) explained the situation as follows,

In February (1998), the newspaper *Jameah* started to publish articles critical of the government, colour photographs of smiling women harvesting wheat, and an interview with a former prisoner. By June a court revoked their license. Also, police filed charges against *Zanan*, a monthly women's magazine, for 'insulting' the police force by publishing an article on the problems women face with the authorities on Iranian beaches, which are segregated by sex (Hughes, 1998: 23).

Nevertheless, attainment of Khatami's reform for women was more access to women's education and the special work programs which provided part-time employment, especially for women with young children. The modest dress regulations for women were also relaxed. Despite the repression, women still have some access to higher education, and some have been able to take on low-level, (a few have high-level), governmental positions. During 1990 -2004 the Islamic Republic saw the appearance of policy shifts, new management, and increasing societal expectations. Although, all the promises of reform had not happened, it seems some social changes had come about, e.g. in family dynamics, educational attainment, cultural politics, women's social roles, and attitudes and values. For example, the number of registered female NGOs increased from 67 in 1997 to 480 in 2004; and at the same time the majority of members of the Sixth Parliament came from the reformist party which approved many decisions in favour of women (Mir-Hosseini 2006).

The consequence of the women's social progress emerged in the Guardian Council decision in 2004; the council banned reformists from taking part in the Seventh and Eighth Parliament elections so the conservatives' candidates led the Parliament. As a result, of the 12 female members of the Seventh Parliament 11 women were from conservative parties that planned to change and repeal the policies that reformists ratified

for women in the Sixth Parliament. 'In both parliaments (the seventh 2004 to 2008 and eighth since 2008), women have been very patriarchal. Unfortunately, they have not challenged any gender inequalities that are justified in the name of Islam. For instance, they defend polygamy because they consider it an Islamic value. They also defend segregation and the gender division of labour' (Nikou 2011).

In my opinion, Iranian women wanted to start a life without any discrimination and demand more opportunities and access to key jobs and positions such as administrative, legislative and judicial positions. Therefore, the society faced more challenges during the Ahmadinejad terms, which will be discussed as follows.

2005 - 2013

In 2005 Ahmadinejad was elected President. He promised to establish a new social justice, allocate oil income to the entire population...but when the journalists asked about women's rights, he remained silent and the belief of the new state gradually became clear. The promise of social justice did not extend to women. The idea of government was to limit women's activity in public sectors and direct them to give priority to their family responsibilities. In addition, the president's adviser stated that Iran would not ratify CEDAW (Convention on the Elimination of All Forms Discrimination Against Women) as Guardian Council rejected the idea in the Sixth Parliament (2000-2004).

In this period, women kept pressing for full equality in the society, but faced hardliners' domination which pushed the President to force women to be relegated to second-class citizens again. Some of Iranian women have chosen a way to show their objections to inequality and sex discrimination. The Million Signatures Campaign movement formed in 2006, aimed to collect at least one million signatures in support of opposition against the discriminatory laws. Activist women and men in the Campaign organized a peaceful rally in July 2006. Mir-Hossieni (2006) explained that there was a strong police presence when the meeting started. She also added that 'The newly created female police' treated the Campaigners rougher than their male counterparts, and 'protesters did not even get a chance to display their placards reading Misogynist law must be abolished and we are

women, we are human beings, we are citizens of this land, but we have no rights' (Mir-Hossieni 2006). Mir-Hossieni reported that female police grabbed objectors by the hair, beat protesters with batons before 'dragging them to the police vans' (Mir-Hossieni 2006).

Therefore, activist women, particularly secular women were targeted by the government. Many were arrested and detained leading to their exclusion from public forums, and their migration to other societies (Vakil 2011). For example, Shirin Ebadi (a winner of the Nobel Peace Prize), Azar Nafisi (a best-selling author for her book about her struggle in Iran), Shadi Sadr (a member of One Million Signature Campaign who fought and is fighting hard for women's rights), Mehrangiz Kaar (a former judge and a lawyer who was awarded the Ludovic Trareux Prize in recognition of her life's work in 2002). Although all of these women are residing abroad, they experienced life in Iran after the revolution. The aforementioned women are unable to live in Iran due to the risk that they may be murdered for their participation in a direct confrontation with the government.

Under these circumstances, Iranian women faced disadvantages in several areas. The great efforts of women to improve their standing in the society over the previous 16 years (Rafsanjani and Khatamie's Presidency) almost disappeared. For example, *Zanan* (*Women*), the premier feminist magazine that was published for 16 years with 152 issues, was closed by the government. The main aim of the magazine was to offer Iranian women new articles on parenting, health, legal issues, women's achievements and so on. The magazine also criticized the Islamic legal code. It should be noted that articles in the magazine covered topics from domestic abuse to plastic surgery and many more, some of which were considered, by the authorities, to be extremely controversial. Therefore at the end of January 2008, the government closed down the publication of the magazine, naming it as a 'threat to the psychological security of the society', and claiming that it portrayed women in an abject status in an Islamic society (Mir-Hossieni 2006). During Ahmadinejad's presidency, the publication of 40 periodicals, including *Zanan*, has been banned across the country by the Press Supervisory Board, which is controlled by hard-liners.

Once again the way women dressed in public (the wearing of the hejab) became a major subject. On April 11 2007, a member of a conservative party in Tehran city council criticised women for not observing Islamic dress code by wearing short monteaus, (a monteau is a covering similar to an overcoat, which must be a certain length), and small headscarves. Mir-Hossieni (2007) explained that 'a week after of the speech, a group of 200 women from conservative martyrs' families staged a sit-in in front of Parliament, chanting, 'Majles of Hizbullah, where is Allah's law?' Other sit-ins followed, in front of the judicial and presidential offices, demanding that action be taken against immodestly dressed (bad-hejab) women. The chief of the police of Tehran announced that from April 21 they would deal harshly with people who wore short trousers, didn't cover their hair properly, and had figure hugging monteaus on (Mir-Hossieni).

It should be noted that this issue was nothing new really. It was only the annual routine of official threats letting people know that there would be no relaxation of the strict laws governing the way women should dress in public. In 2006 the supporters of compulsory hejab realised that a new approach was needed to deal with the bad hejab women. They believed that advice rather than violence would be more effective in dealing with the women who did not wear their hejab properly. President Ahmadinejad accepted the new proposal and a new policy based on the above approach came into existence. The male and female officers dealing with this issue were told to adopt this new policy when they stopped bad hejab women.

After the 1979 revolution, Iranian women were banned from entry to stadiums, watching men's sporting events. In April 2006, Ahmadinejad directed the head of the Sports Organization to allow the entrance of women to football stadiums. He claimed that attendance of women and families in sports places may promote social health and morals in these places (Dokouhaki 2006).

This directive of Ahmadinejad to remove the unwritten ban on women surprised everyone. It caused national and international headlines to focus on this topic and the President faced strong objection from his conservative supporters on Tehran city council, in Parliament, the press and the clerical organization. Opposition to this directive came from their traditional gender ideology. Although, activist women welcomed the directive and pointed out that it was 'a winner in this political game', some religious authorities issued fatwas to forbid women spectators at football competitions, even if they sat in their own section away from the male section. The clerics stated that looking at the

footballers in their shorts and t-shirts would be sexually motivating for women and could lead to aberrant social behaviour. Mir-Hosseini described the consequences of this re-agreement argument as follows,

The fatwas unleashed a flurry of responses and counter-responses in the press and on websites, which brought to the surface not only differences of opinion among the clerics and the hardliners, but also the unsoundness of the arguments of those for whom gender segregation and strict observance of *hejab* are the only guarantee of public morality. For a week, the president remained silent and let his cultural advisers defend his position. Then, on May 1, the Leader brought the debate to an abrupt end, urging the president to respect the opinion of the cleric leaders. By mid-May, the affair was over. But women with short trousers, narrow scarves and tight, hip-length tunics were going about their business in Tehran as usual, and their war of attrition with the authorities went on as before (Mir-Hosseini 2006).

The suspension of Ahmadinejad's view point on women's hejab and women's presence in stadiums, on one hand showed the limits of president's powers and on the other hand, indicated the authorities' understanding of their requirements to adapt to society of today.

Parvin Ardalan (an activist woman and a secular feminist) was selected in February 2008 for the Olof Palme prize in appreciation of 10 years of trying to protect the Iranian women's rights. She did not attend the ceremony to receive the prize, as the state did not allow her to leave the country. Ardalan and her colleagues are continuously striving to increase women's rights in Iran, despite threats and suffering harassment from the hardliners. In addition, in 2009 presidential election, 42 women registered to become candidates for the next presidency. The Guardian Council did not acknowledge the women's suitability for the post of president and declared them all disqualified. Meanwhile, for the first time, the Council indicated that women would be allowed to run for top political jobs.

In the June 2009 presidential campaign, tens of thousands of women from different social classes supported the two reformist candidates who had backed women's rights demands. During the campaign for the presidential election in 2009, Zahra Rahnavard appeared alongside her husband Mir Hossein Mousavi (a reformist candidate for the

2009 presidential election). She broke with Iranian political tradition by attending rallies and presenting speeches.

After the official results of the presidential election were announced, and following alleged vote rigging by Mir Hossein Mousavi's campaign, the re-election of Ahmadinejad as president sparked a long protest by Mir Hossein Mousavi's campaign which caused millions of Iranian women and men (of all ages) to participate. This event was named The Green Movement, and for women was a reflection of the hopes seen through reformists, secularism and the blossoming of civil society. The outcome of this movement had produced some limitations on women activists. Women's networks structured around the One Million Signatures campaign and Green Movement broke up into smaller groups and many activists migrated to other countries or went underground to survive the government attack.

Conclusion

During the past 34 years of the 1979 revolution, women found themselves confronting the same challenges and paradoxical policies experienced with past regimes. During these years, women have developed in social, economic, political and religious areas despite all the limitations they have faced and still do. Years of hardship, experience, association and women networking had made the foundation of the women's movement. Vakil (2011) argued 'observers have noted that a feminist generation of educated women appears to be emerging in Iran, despite the anti-feminist discourse of the Iranian government. Revolutionary mobilization may have generated a heightened sense of efficacy among women' (Vakil, 2011: 199).

In my opinion, Iranian women face a variety of social and legal restrictions in the post-revolutionary period of Iran. Women in Iran are treated as inferior citizens, meaning that they have to live and abide by rules created by an Islamic and a patriarchal system. Over the 30 years of the revolution, women have moved all the way through disagreement with some government's policies, conciliation and association with each other to use different plans and tactics to move forwards their program for women's equal opportunity. Iranian women have manoeuvred a course through the boundaries and restrictions of socio-political issues in the last three decades to strengthen their status and progress into positions of equality.

As a result of all the restrictions on women in Iran, there are now quite a few well-educated and politically aware Iranian women struggling to secure their place in the society after the revolution. I believe that despite all difficulties which Iranian women have confronted, still the activists women are struggling for their rights. It seems that they are aware that they will achieve equality within a democratic political order, trying to provide a way for young females to be aware of their own rights.

A question remains to be answered: What is the reaction of Iranian women towards the above-mentioned circumstances? This question will be considered theoretically in the subsequent chapter.

CHAPTER THREE

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Introduction

The chapter will focus on the theoretical literature underpinning this study. It contains themes which reflect all the distinct areas of the research questions (See pp. 18-9). It should be mentioned that this is an artificial categorization and some blurring occurs between these groupings. The eight empirical themes are as follows:

- A summary of migration theories
- Brief information on feminist theories of migration
- Theories of patriarchy
- Theories of modernization
- Globalization and migration process
- Theories of gender roles and migrant identity
- Theories about migration and transnational families
- An explanation of second generation's identity, their perspectives about gender roles and preserving parental cultural values

It is worth stating that the theoretical literature underpinning migrant women's studies has its emphasis on poor and working class migrant women. Furnham and Shiekh explained 'being a migrant woman represents a double vulnerability' (Furnham and Shiekh, 1993: 23). Furthermore, these researchers look at migrant women from Asian countries and in particular, from Muslim countries as victims compared to women in the Western countries (for example, Lutz 1997; Tse and Liew 2004).

In this section, I will briefly consider migration theories and how the first theories of migration are not able to explain the patterns of women migrants.

Migration Theories

In the 1970s, migration theory derived largely from the 'Marxist political economy', the 'dependency theory' and 'world system theory' (Kofman *et al.*, 2003: 23). The main concern of these theories was a focus on the distribution of economic power that led the cheap labour migrants to the host, developed countries as a mechanism for the capital system (Kofman *et al.*, 2003). From this perspective, the unequal global distribution of economical and political power is the major reason for migration. This model takes into account that each individual decides to move to societies where he/she can gain more economic security than his/her country of origin. By contrast, Oishi (2002) stated that wage differentials and unemployment rates are not the only patterns of international migration. She carried out a comparison study between sending countries and non-sending countries to explain the patterns international migration of women. Oishi (2002) argues,

All the major sending countries of migrant women (Philippines, Sri Lanka, and Indonesia) have higher GDP per capita than non-sending countries (Bangladesh, India, and Pakistan). This does not make sense if we assume that poverty is the only cause of emigration. The effect of unemployment is also puzzling. In Sri Lanka, men's unemployment rate is higher than women's, but women still comprise 79% of total out-migrants. On the other hand, in Pakistan, women's unemployment is much higher than men's, and yet, women account for only 1% of the out-migrants (Oishi, 2002: 3-4).

It seems that focusing on only the economic indicators does not provide an accurate pattern of migration for Asian females.

The more recent theory is the 'structural account' where less industrialized countries such as Spain, Italy and Greece send cheap labour to the more industrialized countries (for example England, France and Germany). Hence, a 'system of economic migration' and a macro viewpoint of the migration process emerged (Pedraza, 1991: 306). Pedraza explained:

The scholars of micro models note that immigration research needs to consider the plight of individuals, their propensity to move, to consider the larger social

structure within which that individual's plight exists and decisions are made. By contrast, as a macro model, the structural approach has tendency to omit people as decision-makers (1991: 307).

The 'structural account' of migration highlights what is seen as the 'feminization of poverty resulting from structural adjustment programmes and, particularly, their impact on women's work in both the waged and unwaged sectors of the economy' (Lim, 1983: 75). Lim considered the connection between 'structural account' and feminization of migration and stated:

The 'structural account' is linked to the feminization of poverty resulting from structural adjustment programmes and, particularly, their impact on women's work in both the waged and unwaged sectors of the economy (1983: 75).

Policy makers in developing countries, especially in Asia, have programmes to encourage 'labour migration', usually as a way to reduce 'internal poverty' and absorb more foreign currency. In this type of migration, there is a legal agreement between migrants and their government which forces the migrants to send a majority of their income to their homeland. Lim claims that new industrial countries have strong requests for female labours (Lim, 1983: 90). These models see women as a 'normative category' in migration flows, and describe women migrants according to individual decision based on an annual salary differences (neo-classical), or group decisions based on the remittances (neo-Marxist) (Kofman *et al.*, 2000:21). In fact, available studies on Iranian migrants and my own study also show that the majority of migrant women from Iran were not engaged in low income employment prior to their move (Mahdi 1999; Chaichian 1997, Bozorgmehr *et al.*, 1996). My data also shows that these models do not explain the migratory movement of women as accurately or as adequately as the literature has suggested.

To understand how women can be incorporated into migratory movement, the theories mentioned only offer limited reasons. For example, they have emphasized economic factors over questions of motivations of migration. Furthermore, the above theories 'have often failed to adequately address gender-specific migration experiences' (Boyd and Grieco, 2003: 1). Early migration theories ignored the non-economic elements

influencing the migration process. This gap was especially crucial in situations of understanding females' migration due to different reasons such as socio-political complications (e.g. Iran-Iraq war), 'marital discord', 'physical violence' etc (Kofman *et al.*, 2000: 24). In other words, 'why are migrants from the Philippines and Cape Verde predominantly female, whereas very few women migrate from other, geographically closer countries, such as Morocco and Egypt?' (Tacoli, 1999: 662). Then, considering the conditions that motivated the women to migrate and the active role of migrant women in transnational families has been influenced by feminist views. The following theme considers some feminist theories of migration and how it can be seen as an underpinning part of this study.

Feminist Theories of Migration

As stated, early migration scholars ignored the non-economic factors encouraging individuals to migrate. They also excluded women from migration's studies. Kofman (2000) pointed out that in the mid 1970s Morokvasic claimed that migration was not only influenced by 'economic hardship' in the country of origin, but also by the fact that women with a variety of difficulties are interested to leave their homeland (Kofman, 2000: 24).

During the past decades, the number of female migrants has increased due to a variety of reasons. For instance, 'gender-selective demand for foreign labour', 'changing gender relations' and changes in the political circumstances of countries of origin, resulting in the passing of some anti-women laws, for example, in Iran, it is forbidden for a woman to become a judge (Carling, 2005: 4). In many occasions such changes could encourage women to leave their homeland (Anderson 2001; Carling 2005).

The feminist literature has contributed to and has brought some critical social theoretical themes to migration studies. Early studies were based on surveys or interviews with men only, claiming these men were representative of the whole migrant population. Women were assumed as 'associational' and portrayed as dependent migrants. In approximately three decades, feminist have played a pivotal role in exploring women's status in migratory movement processes. Early feminist migration scholars address, the lack of women's migration literature and experiences (Pessar and Mahler 2003b).

Feminists have argued that most existing literatures about migration are epistemologically masculinist (Willis and Yeoh 2000). Feminist migration research has elaborated the practical implications of women's migration and provided an opportunity to understand migrant women's lives. Further, the feminist conceptualization of migration as women-orientated makes it possible to examine women's actions as migrants themselves and not simply as followers of men migrants. In addition, feminists are critical of the conceptual separation of migration and of equating migration with masculinity. They examine the important role of women in the migration process and highlight their positions in homeland and in host societies.

The first step of feminist migration studies was to include women in the migration story. As Hondagneu-Sotelo has pointed out:

Given the long-standing omission of women from migration studies, an important first step involved designing and writing women into the research picture. In retrospect, this stage is sometimes retrospectively seen as consisting of a simplistic 'add and stir' approach, whereby women were 'added' as a variable and measured with regard to, say, education and labour market participation, and then simply compared with migrant men's patterns' (Hondagneu-Sotelo, 1994:5).

This approach was an adequate way to compare migrant women's and men's income through quantitative methods. According to Hondagneu-Sotelo (1994) this approach fails, because gender is not only about economic power, it is sets of different social relations which form migration and related institutions in both the migrant's country of origin and the host society.

Some studies about migration and women in the 1980s have had a considerable impact on this issue by focusing on the recruitment of poor and young women from rural and peasant backgrounds to work in industrialized regions and countries (Fernandez-Kelly 1983; Wolf 1992). More women than ever before migrate to developed countries in search of employment opportunities, as there are more openings in the labour market for

women in the developed countries, for example, domestic help, which includes, cleaning, taking care of the elderly, cooking, 'live-in nanny', and so on (Anderson, 2001: 673).

It seems that the first studies of migrant women were based on economic perspectives and focused on the migration of disenfranchised women of the Third World. Then, we saw a switch from 'women only' approach to one which focused on women's incorporation into global trade accompanied by 'the shifting gender dynamics in their family relations' (Hondagneu-Sotelo, 1994: 5). In the late 1980s and early 1990s, feminist scholars recognized gender as a set of social practices which are shaping and shaped by migration process (Grasmuck and Pessar 1991; Kibria 1993; Hondagneu-Sotelo 1994).

These studies considered migrant families and migrant social networks as gendered institutions. Hondagneu-Sotelo (1994) underscores gender relations and highlights conflict, looking to find evidence of patriarchal systems and male domination in migrant families. These studies emphasize the ways men's lifestyles constrain, and also the ways in which migrant gender relations become more equal, through the migratory movement. They believed that migrant women's access to jobs and wages could lead them to gender equality in families. Some other researchers claim that, in contrast to migrant women who obtain social status and enhance their situation at home, migrant men lose their domestic status in private and public life by obtaining 'subordinate positions in class, racial and citizenship hierarchies' (Hondagneu-Sotelo, 1994: 7).

Pessar and Mahler (2003a) stated:

Gender distinguishes between male and female domains in activities, tasks, spaces, time, dress and so on. People are socialized to view these as natural, inevitable and immutable, not as human constructs. But conceptualizing gender as a process, as one of several ways humans create and perpetuate social differences, helps to deconstruct this myth. Through practices and discourses they negotiate relationships, conflicting interests and hierarchies of power and privilege. Conceptualizing gender as a process yields a more praxis-oriented perspective wherein gender identities, relations and ideologies are fluid, not fixed (2003a: 2).

The above evaluation of gender shows that excluding women from migration studies does not give a true picture about migration. In recent decades, migration scholarship has moved from studies that focused on male migrants to a burgeoning literature that has made a significant contribution to understanding women's positions in migration experiences. The first step of corrective migration studies was associated with only redressed male bias by considering women as a variable, not by recognizing gender as a 'central research focus' (Pessar and Mahler, 2003a: 3). Some migration scholars (e.g., Grasmuck and Pessar 1991; Pedraza 1991; Hondagneu-Sotelo 1994) treated gender less as a variable and looked at gender as a set of social relations that organize migration patterns. They sought to consider gender in dynamic ways and examine how gender relations facilitate 'women's and men's immigration and settlement' (Pessar and Mahler, 2003a: 4). Consequently, feminist migration scholars consider gender as a constitutive factor of migration process. They believe that gender affects many aspects of migration. Hondagneu-Sotelo (1994) stated:

Patterns of labour incorporation, globalization, religious practice and values, ethnic enclave businesses, citizenship, sexuality and ethnic identity are interrogated in ways that reveal how gender is incorporated into a myriad of daily operations and institutional political and economic structures. As the collection of essays show, gender organizes a number of immigrant practices, beliefs and institutions (1994: 10).

Migrant women's occupations may be categorized into four groups: 'domestic servants', garment industry workers, 'donate their labour to family enterprises' and skilled jobs such as nursing (Pedraza, 1991: 314). Among different kinds of employment the aforementioned jobs defined 'womanhood' (Pedraza, 1991: 314). Economic development theory tells us that the disadvantages of the labour market, such as racial discrimination, language obstacles, inadequate job opportunities and a lack of awareness of the host country's culture, encourage immigrant groups towards ethnic entrepreneurship and small business ownership (Eunju 2005; Light 1984; Pedraza 1991; Mahdi 1999a; Siddique 2003). These situations push migrants towards self-employment. The contribution of migrant women to ethnic enterprises is in the form of unpaid or under paid family labour. This will maximize business profits, which enables further investments in the family business (Light 1984; Pedraza 1991).

One important part of the economic situation of migrant women is related to the type of job they do. Many ethnic groups have small businesses such as 'restaurants, grocery shops, painting and decorating companies' and so on in migrant-receiving countries (Mahdi, 1999a: 11). For example, in the USA migrant women with original business ideas were shown to be setting up businesses in order to overcome the constraints, such as sexism, which they face in a patriarchal system (Light 1984; Pedraza 1991; Mahdi 1999a). Iranian migrant women have an active role in the Iranian ethnic economy in Los Angeles. These women have started up businesses mainly to overcome issues of finding jobs in the formal labour market due to barriers such as languages, age and level of education. Some of these women who might be widows, single, divorced or married with unemployed husbands, are the sole owners of their businesses and are the primary breadwinners (Light 1984; Pedraza 1991; Mahdi 1993).

As a result of the female entering the employment market in a host society, 'the role of the migrant woman changes inside and outside the house' (Boyd and Grieco, 2003: 2). This could result in a shift of responsibilities for the female migrant's spouse, where he would do housework and take care of the children. In such a scenario, the female migrant could become the main breadwinner. In my study I will examine how this fits in with a background of patriarchy, and ask 'Does migration influence the power relationship and decision making between couples from a patriarchal system?' (Boyd and Grieco, 2003: 2). As some Iranian migrant women come from a patriarchal system with traditional gender roles, this study seeks to provide a better understanding of the perceptions of Iranian migrant women towards their gender roles in the UK. Does the patriarchal system travel with them? Is there any change in their relationship with their husbands after migrating to the UK?

An important contribution to the understanding of migrant women has been made by feminist theory and empirical research. Relative to a feminist perspective on migration, scholars such as Castles and Kosack (1985), and Phizacklea and Miles (1980) have paid attention to the gender division of labour. The majority of sociologists assumed women to be followers of male family members and viewed their role in the migratory movements as reactive rather than proactive (Kofman *et al.* 2000; Hondagneu-Sotelo 1994; Tyree and Donato 1986). As Morokvasic (1983:13-14) states: 'This deliberate

exclusion of women is usually justified by the lack of research funds and by women's supposedly minor economic role'. Zontini (2010) states:

Using a tradition/modernity framework to explain migrants' experiences, this male-centred literature invariably associated migrant women with the pole of tradition, describing them as dependent on male migrants, uneducated, unable to speak the language of the new society, and anchored to their culture. If mentioned at all, women were thus only considered in their roles as wives and mothers, that is, in their roles within the family (2010: 26).

Migrant women have received serious attention and studies since 1980s. The international females' migration, and the following development of Women's Studies and feminist approaches, gives a reason for this concentration. After a long period of being ignored in the migration literature, women began to emerge (Saltzman Chafetz, 2000: 105).

There are a variety of factors which impact on migratory movements of women. These include: having a lot of money, political persecution, poverty, the status of marriage, violence against women (physical and psychological), rules of divorce which make it impossible for women to divorce their husbands on any grounds, sex discrimination, and difficulty in finding jobs (Kofman *et al.* 2000; Lammervo 2005). All these factors have an effect on women's decisions to emigrate and are seen to push women towards migrating to countries 'where women's rights are observed' (Kofman *et al.*, 2000: 21).

Different elements that lead a woman to leave her homeland may be categorized as individual, familial and societal levels: Individual elements comprise 'age, race, urban/rural origins, marital status, role in the family (wife, daughter, and mother), position in family (authoritative or subordinate) and educational status' (Forbes, 2003:17). Family factors include size, age/sex composition, structure of family (extended, nuclear, etc), family status (both parents, single parent, etc), and class situation. Societal factors refer to society's 'norms and cultural values' that determine if a woman can migrate or not and if so, how (for example as a labour, family reunification, etc) and with whom (alone or with family) (Forbes, 2003: 17). It seems that the cultural

factors of sending countries have an important role to determine the possibility of women's migration.

In patriarchal societies women may decide to migrate to escape restrictions and inequalities in the homeland, seeking greater autonomy, self-confidence and social statuses in host countries (Jolly and Reeves 2005). Gender relations and hierarchies within the family and society leads to a situation where men very often hold power over their female counterparts. In this context the family explains the women's rights and roles, which could provide an incentive to migration or on the other hand it could be a disincentive to migration (Boyd and Grieco 2003; Pedraza 1991).

To explore the motives for migration of women, some scholars consider the household as decision-maker. They pay attention to the gender roles and family relations in a variety of cultural contexts. For example, Chant and Radcliffe (1992) refer to the household as:

A social institution which organise resources (land, labour, tools, capital and so on) and recruits and allocates labour in a combination of reproductive and productive tasks. Gender divisions of labour are crucial to this pattern of livelihood and provide a basic template for household decisions about who will migrate and who will stay (1992: 22-23).

By contrast, Hondagneu-Sotelo (1994) criticizes the household approach due to the findings of her investigation into Mexican families in the USA. She claimed that it is impossible to maintain a unified household planning for a migratory movement. She stated: 'Opening the household black box exposes a highly charged political arena where husbands and wives and parents and children may simultaneously express and pursue divergent interests and competing agendas. How these agendas become enacted draws attention to the place of particular authority in shaping migration' (1994: 94-95). In her research, individual migrants decided to migrate as a result of their own decisions to reply to opportunities that opened up for them in the USA. In my study, the question that seems to be related to this approach is to what extent Iranian migrant women's decisions to migrate are taken by other members of the household. Zontini (2010) has argued that scholars who have studied Asian migration emphasized the household as an important

factor in encouraging individuals to migrate. I shall attempt to explore the role of household for Iranian women migration process.

Sadeghi (2006) claims that the main reason for Iranian women emigrating from Iran appears to be that ‘they did not fit the new definition of Muslim women’ (Sadeghi, 2006: 33). Since the 1979 revolution, well-educated women with professional backgrounds and financial support have been forced to flee Iran and this migration trend continues today (Sadeghi 2006). Gender relations and hierarchies within the family and society leads to a situation where ‘men have too much power over their female counterparts’ (Grieco, 2003: 3). It seems that the inequality and the restrictions imposed on women in Iran could, and has led to some women (according to their class and status) to emigrate from Iran (there are some samples of the restrictions on Iranian women in Chapter Two).

The above section looked at the occupational concentration of migrant women in general and also the feminist theory of migration in order to explore the social and political situation of Iranian migrant women that encouraged them to leave their homeland. In addition, this section examined some factors relating to migrant women in the context of migratory movement as the focus of this study. In brief, the table below shows Iranian feminist Movements and their features. The participation of women in social movement since the 1979 revolution was covered in Chapter Two.

Table 1 Different Female Groups Engaged in Iranian Feminist Movement and Their Characteristics

Active Groups	Female University Students	Intellectual Women	White Collar Women
Analytical Frame-Work(s)	Class Analysis State Analysis	Political Pluralism	Functionalism
Main Agenda	Systematic Disadvantages in Work Place and Society	Sexism and Androcentrism, Civil Rights	Social Rights
Gender Defined as	Interrelated Set of Social Structures	Culturally Engineered Meaning	Base for Species Survival

Goals	Social Justice, Equal Share of Power for Women	Vindication of Women's civil and Human Rights	Equal Payment for Equal work, Equal Share of Employment, Equal Legal Position for Women
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Source: Mohammadi 2007

It seems that the most important feminist argument is about inequality and sex discrimination. Although, according to table 3-1 different groups of women have a variety of thoughts, beliefs and analytical explanation about women's situation. They believe that men's settled way of thinking and practice has to be changed.

To give an understanding about Iranian women's position in a patriarchal society, governed by Islamic laws, an explanation of patriarchal theories in the views of different types of feminists seems to be necessary.

Theories of Patriarchy

A patriarchy is a society in which males have the central roles of political leadership and act as the primary moral authority. Patriarchy is where men hold authority over women, children and properties. Price (2009) has argued that 'in the process of patriarchy, human society was divided into two sexes, and the notion of gender was created, defined and established. The roles and behaviour appropriate to each sex was expressed in values, customs, laws and social roles. By the time major organized religions of the area were consolidated to order and rationalize the universe, subordination of women to men had become natural for both the sexes'. She also has added that 'metaphors, language and symbols further incorporated the assumption of female inferiority and subordination' (Price, 2009: 1).

In this study patriarchy is a relevant explanatory framework for Iranian women, which has been used to address the underlying women's subordinate social positions before and

after their migration. The theory of patriarchy, as Beechey (1979: 66) has claimed, 'attempts to penetrate beneath the particular experiences and manifestations of women's oppression and to formulate some coherent theory of the basis of subordination which underlines them'. Divergent perspectives on patriarchy are presented within the feminist tradition. For radical feminism, the traditional woman was a 'passive and brainwashed victim of patriarchy'. Critics of this school focus on an argument that it generalizes a specific term 'patriarchy' across a variety of societies and cultures. The second school of feminist studies has claimed that 'traditional woman had a mind of her own and her own base of strength, within the Woman's Sphere' (Mirkin, 1984: 39). Mirkin (1984) has argued that patriarchy theories view males as 'controlling access to institutional power', and they have an effect on ideology, art and religion in a way that is acceptable to their needs (1984: 41); nonetheless this school of feminism sees 'traditional women in a more favourable light than do the theories of patriarchy' (Mirkin, 1984: 40). Although there is a wide-ranging debate about the term patriarchy (e.g. Dahlerup 1987; Acker 1989; Pollert 1996), the majority of feminists have considered the term to indicate gender relations in which women are subordinate and men hold main institutions in both private and public areas (e.g. Harmann 1979, 1981; Walby 1990; Cockburn 1991; Witz 1992). Therefore, it is crucial to understand patriarchy in terms of its dynamics and complexities.

Common features of the feminist conceptualisation of patriarchy

Patriarchy literally means 'rule of the father; the term was originally used to describe social systems based on the authority of male heads of household' (Scott and Marshall 2005). The concept of patriarchy has a diversity of definitions among feminist scholars, which underlines a group of hypotheses.

Goldberg (1979) has argued 'Patriarchy is any system of organization (political, economic, financial, religious or social) in which the overwhelming numbers of upper positions in the hierarchy are occupied by males' (1979: 25). Ramazanoglu (1989) has defined the term 'A concept used to attempt to grasp the mechanism by which men in general manage to dominate women in general' (1989: 34). Walby (1990) claimed 'Patriarchy is a system of social structure and practices, in which men dominate, oppress and exploit women' (1990: 20). This definition indicates the importance of patriarchy to

be viewed as a structural phenomenon rather than one perpetuated by the individual exploitative man.

Giddens (2009) has introduced patriarchy as, 'The dominance of men over women. All known societies are patriarchal, although there are variations in the degree and nature of the power men exercise, as compared with women. One of the prime objectives of women's movements in modern societies is to combat existing patriarchal institutions. From the individual to the institutional level, various types of masculinity and femininity are all arranged around a central premise: the dominance of men over women' (Giddens, 2009: 610).

Despite a variety of definitions, it may be possible to find some common factors throughout the conceptualisations. Firstly, the term of patriarchy focuses on men's domination over women and refers to a system of government in which men rule countries through their power. Secondly, it seems to be a shared assumption among the mentioned definitions that the specificity of patriarchy lies on a structural issue, not a personal problem. In a patriarchal system the women is seen as passive obedience as opposed to the men as an active force; these differences lead to a hierarchical power relation that is a superiority for men and inferiority and fellowship position for women.

In this context, a clear line between male and female tends to be drawn in terms of different gender roles and behaviour. The hierarchical relationship creates separate functions between two genders and the roles of both sexes are well-defined and expectations are clear. For example, earning money for living costs is seen as mostly suitable for men, while domestic work and child rearing is appropriate for women. Therefore, the domination of men over women (patriarchy) is conceptualised as a social structure which can be ended by structural change. However, it should be noted that the nature of control of women varies from one society to another due to the different factors such as class, religion, and the socio-cultural practices.

Consequently, in the context of Iran, patriarchy within a particular class differs in terms of religious and cultural variations. In Iran almost all feminists (religious or secular) agree on creating broader movements against different kinds of social inequalities.

Firstly, I shall briefly consider Western feminism perspectives and then I will offer a discussion about Iranian feminism.

Liberal Feminism and Patriarchy

Liberal feminists seek individualistic equality for women to provide them with an opportunity to compete with men in the political and legal realm without any changes in the structure of society (Mandell 1995; Eisenstein 1981; Taylor 1993; McElroy 1991). Chakarova (2003) has argued that 'The main contribution of liberal feminism has been to show women's discrimination. It says that biological differences should be ignored in order to achieve gender equality' (Chakarova, 2003: 31). The liberal feminist theory claims that the gendered characteristics, such as women's parenting abilities, are in fact social products, not biological. Tong (2009) claims that 'Women owe to liberal feminists many of the civil, educational, occupational, and reproductive rights they currently enjoy. They also owe to liberal feminists the ability to walk increasingly at ease in the public domain, claiming it as no less their territory than men's' (Tong, 2009: 60). Liberal feminism has played an important role in breaking down many barriers to women's entry into male-dominated jobs and equalizing wages, but they have not been successful in overcoming the existing belief that women and men are inherently dissimilar. Therefore, different feminist theories have emerged to consider the social structural factors, such as patriarchy, that produce gender inequality.

Radical Feminism and Patriarchy

Whilst liberal feminist have focused their attention on equality of opportunity between men and women as a way to end patriarchy, radical feminists on the other hand try to highlight the women's inferior status in societies. This perspective focuses on patriarchy as a power system which organizes society based on an inequality between men and women, and expresses the view of social dominance of women by men. Early radical feminism, formed in 1960s within second-wave feminism, and viewed patriarchy as a 'transhistorical phenomenon' (Willies, 1984:122) more important than the other source of domination. Willies has described the term of patriarchy 'not only the oldest and most universal form of domination but the primary form' (Willies, 1984: 123) and also as a model for all other types of oppression.

Radical feminism sees patriarchy as a system with civil liberties for men and subjugation for women (Willis 1984; Firestone 1970; Millett 1969). Radical feminists have argued that patriarchy exists in a Western society where women are under control of men. For example, Therborn (2004) asserts that 'all significant societies were clearly patriarchal. There are no single exceptions' (2004: 17). Radical feminists posit that in patriarchy, women are considered to be as the 'other' to the man norm and thus have been oppressed. They believe that a way to abolish patriarchy and other systems which spread the domination of men over women is through revolution which will release everyone from a patriarchal society.

In many different ways, there are critiques of radical feminism. Tong (2009) has argued that 'there is no evidence that women constitute a sex class, since it is clear that, apart from a common biology, women may have no real shared interests as a class apart from men' (Tang, 2009: 90). It seems that radical feminists over-emphasise factors that separate men from women, for example over-focusing on the biological differences.

Radical feminists identify three main areas where women are most affected: the state, family, and motherhood. Unlike liberal feminist theories, where the focus is on women's status in terms of individual rights and laws, radical feminist emphasis is on women's everyday lives. They believe that patriarchy is a 'sexual system of power in which the male possesses superior power and economic privilege', is what shapes everyday life and specifically affects women, for the benefit of men (Eisenstein, 1979: 17). Patriarchy, they argue, is constituted in and through various social structures and is reproduced and activated in everyday relations, having impacts on a global scale. It can be found in all aspects of society, including the state, the family, and other institutions, such as schools, the media, and religious organizations. In order to free themselves from the 'Father Land' of patriarchy, women must resist and undermine this autonomous social, historical, and political force created by men for their own benefit, (Daly, 1978:28; Donovan, 200: 156).

Marxist Feminism and Patriarchy

Marxist feminist school focuses on the impact of capitalism on gender inequalities and considers that combined with inequalities of ethnicity and class. They believe that to discover the essential source of female oppression it is crucial to investigate their various roles within the capitalist system. Marxist feminists such as Beechey (1986) agree with other feminists that women are exploited as a group, but argue that applies especially to working class women and that working class women may well have economic circumstances more similar to working class men than to upper and middle class women. Marxist feminists (for example, Benston 1989; Hewitt 2000; Waring 1999; Tong 1998) have argued that class exploitation is able to give a better explanation of women's oppression than sexual domination. They believe that women's freedom fundamentally requires social revolution which will establish a new system (Socialism) that will bring new positions for women. Marxist feminists have been criticized for placing too much focus on economic issues (e.g. distinguishing working class women and bourgeois women). Mandell (2009) has stated 'Although Marxist feminism has been able to explain the gendered division of labour within the home and workplace and the role of capitalism in this process, it has not been able to explain why these gendered roles, responsibilities, and attributes were assigned to women and men in the first place' (Mandell, 2009: 15).

Sylvia Walby's Perspective of Patriarchy

According to Walby (1990) the gender concept of patriarchy is a multi dimensional construct. She identifies six structures that are independent, but interact with one another: production relations in the household (e.g. women's unpaid domestic jobs, such as housework), patriarchal relations in paid work (e.g. women receive lower salary, excluded from certain types of work), the patriarchal state (the state has a bias in its policies towards patriarchal interest), male violence (patriarchy is often sustained by male violence against women), patriarchal relations in sexuality, and patriarchal cultural institutions (a variety of institutions, including media, produce representations of women within a patriarchal gaze).

Considering this gender concept of patriarchy could provide us with an understanding of the roots of women's subordination. For example, there are production relations in the

household, which refers to the domestic labour of housewives and the advantages for husbands. One of the constituents of gender concept of patriarchy is male violence that refers to violence against women such as sexual harassment, rape and wife beating. These six structures are independent, but interact with one another and influence women's identities. Women's subordination can be described dynamically by interaction among these six structures. Walby (1990) distinguished two forms of patriarchy. She has explained:

Private patriarchy is based upon household production, with a patriarch controlling women individually and directly in the relatively private sphere of the home. Public patriarchy is based on structures other than household, although this may still be a significant patriarchal site. Rather, institutions conventionally regarded as a part of the public domain are central in the maintenance of patriarchy (Walby, 1990: 178).

In my observations, private patriarchy is based on exploitation of women through male dominated hierarchal role constructions in the sphere of the home. Public patriarchy seeks the subordination of women rather than the exclusion of women from the public arena, for example, wage differences and gender selection in paid employment

According to Walby (1990) capitalism was associated with a shift in patriarchy, at least in some developed countries, both in form and degree, from past centuries to the present day. However, Walby argues that the historical shift did not lead to basic changes in structure of patriarchy, 'men remained the dominant gender, all six patriarchal structures continued across this period, only a minor shift in the relative significance of public and private sites of patriarchy, which can be identified as far back as the seventeenth century, accelerated' (Walby, 1990: 200). In other words, women are now subordinated in all different spheres in public.

Secular and Muslim Feminism in Iran, and Patriarchy

This section provides an overview to the debate on feminism in Iran. I focus on the Iranian debate, although there have been a variety of discussions among feminists within Middle Eastern women's studies. In my observations, the arguments around patriarchy enable us to view gender as an analytical factor, which make it possible to consider the

impact of structural elements, including cultural legacy and the state policy, on migrant women. They can also reveal men's domination over women in different ways. How applicable is the concept of patriarchy as an explanatory framework to the situation of Iranian migrant women?

Traditionally, In Iranian society women have been in a subordinate position. Patriarchy is portrayed in Persian literature and cultural structure, and involves the control of women (wives, sisters) and children by the male counterparts. According to Price (2006) 'patriarchy is a historic creation formed by men and women in a process which took over 2,500 years to complete' (2006: 1). The foundation of this idea that men are superior to women can be found in religious beliefs and cultural practices. As Darvishpour (2003) has argued 'generally, religions have a patriarchal view of the relationship between the genders. The relationship between Adam and Eve symbolizes how religions may view women' (2003:55). The current regime in Iran gives more power and legal status to males in private and public, as opposed to females, thus supporting the patriarchal system. However, it should be borne in mind that Iranian culture is 'divided between traditional and modern classes as well as upper, middle and lower classes' (Price, 2006: 1). As Price (2006) claims 'different classes have different attitudes and cultural practices, and while modern classes are striving to overcome patriarchy and gender inequalities the more traditional classes may be defending and practising such cultural ideas' (2006: 1).

The ideas of secular feminists and Muslim feminists should be noted as two opposing issues in the 1980s and early 1990s (Poya, 1999). They challenged the Iranian women's position under the new Islamic government. Darvishpour (2003) has argued that 'secular feminism has a neutral view about religion', (2003: 3), although Atheist feminism views religion as an anti-women issue. The Iranian secular feminists, mostly writing from exile, (for example, Moghadam 1998, Afshar 1991; Sanasarian 1986; Nashat 1983), criticized the Islamic laws 'with regards to women's position' at home and in public, and further challenged that the Islamic state 'marginalised women's activities in the economic, social and political spheres' (Poya, 1999: 4). Darvishpour (2003) has stated that

Secular feminists argue that the relationship between Islam and feminism depends first and foremost on whether a liberal or patriarchal view of Islam is

dominant in the society. They also hold that under a theocratic government or a religious movement, woman's emancipation is impossible. But they do not think that feminist movements have to attack religious beliefs' (Darvishpour, 2003: 3).

Muslim feminism in Iran has a liberal perspective of Islam and attempts to bring it into modern times, with a more meaningful (and relevant to today's life) interpretation of the verses in Quran, without a patriarchal approach to Islam (Darvishpour 2003; Moghadam 2002; Poya 1999; Tohidi 1996). As the first Muslim feminists in Iran, (Rahnavard, Hashemi and Etezadi Tabatabai) have argued that the only system which does not exploit women is Islam. They believe that under other systems (capitalist and communist) 'women are exploited as cheap workers, oppressed as sex objects and robbed of their identity of femininity (Poya, 1999: 6). But under Islamic system, a woman can take part in socio-economic activities, without obligation to spend her gains to support other family members. Poya (1999) has pointed out to a comparison of these two opposing perspectives as:

Both secularist and Muslim feminists concentrate on ideological rather than material issues. The secularists emphasised the repressive nature of Islamic ideology and its effect on women's position within family, employment and the wider society. The Islamists, on the other hand, respond by defending Islamic ideology as liberating women from the consumerism inherent in capitalism. Material issues such as the Iran-Iraq war and aftermath, which affected women's participation in the labour force and their struggle to improve their status, were largely ignored (Poya, 1999: 7).

As mentioned earlier in Chapter Two, it should be noted that in the 1990s, some significant issues occurred in Iran (such as parliamentary and presidential elections) and these factors paved the way for women to modify the religious perception of women's situation. There were some reforms of family law, employment policies and education. As a consequence, some secular feminists (e.g. Afshar 1998; Paidar 1997; Najmabadi 1991) have recognised that women are fighting for their rights and 'they will not easily be defeated' (Poya, 1999: 7). They have argued that Iranian women, despite strict moral

rules imposed by the Islamic government, have escaped their unfavourable status in the 1990s.

It is a result of a mixture, between secular and Muslim feminists during the 1990s; and this is despite the fact that there was no dialogue between them in early years after the revolution of 1979. Ebadi (2012) has argued that 'feminist movements have become very large, very active in Iran. Women are fighting for equal rights. Equal rights are the first pillar of democracy'. She adds 'So the government is considering different ways to create restrictions for women' (Karimi and Sindelar, 2012: 1).

The arguments around patriarchy enable us to view gender as an analytical factor, which makes it possible to consider the impact of structural elements, including cultural legacy and the state policy, on migrant women. They can also reveal men's domination over women in different ways. In my opinion, the concept of patriarchy could be one reason why women migrate from Iran - in order to free themselves from a patriarchal system. In addition, the values of the family and gender relations in Iran cannot be analysed without considering the influences of modernization in Iran.

Modernity and Women in Iran

Some scholars (Price 2006; Darvishpour 2003) point out that family and gender relations cannot be understood without considering the influence of modernization in Iran. Modernity, or the modern age, is usually defined as the post-traditional, post-medieval historical period, marked by the move from feudalism toward capitalism, industrialization, secularization, the nation-state and its constituent institutions and forms of surveillance (Baker, 2004: 444). The term of modernity refers to social relations associated with the rise of capitalism. It also had consequences in politics, culture, philosophy, science and art. Modernity indicates the abandonment of the past and supporting a new beginning.

The term modernization has different definitions; but these have two characteristics in common: 'firstly, modernization is a process of fundamental social change, and secondly, this process ends up in the emergence of an entirely new type of society' (Schelkle and Kohli, 2000: 33). The characteristics of social change are: 'self-sustaining

growth in the economy, political participation in the polity, diffusion of secular national norms in the culture, increment of mobility in the society and a transformation of personality that has been described by Lerner as an increase in empathy' (Schelkle and Kohli, 2000:33).

Various 19th century intellectuals, from Auguste Comte to Karl Marx, offered scientific perspectives in the wake of modernity and modernization. Classical theorists such as Marx, Weber and Durkheim had different opinion on modernity. For example, Marx believed that the basis of modernity was the emergence of capitalism and also thought that alienation, class conflict and revolution are the outcomes of a capitalist society which led to unprecedented expansion of productive forces. According to Weber modern life is associated with the expansion of capitalistic economic mechanisms, and in general his writings of modernity refer to 'the way in which the dominance of rational calculation (rationalization) over more emotional, affective or spiritual forms of apprehension lead to a progressive disenchantment of the social world' (Scott and Marshall, 2004: 422).

Parsons (1964) described the features of a modern society in four structural innovations: 'Bureaucratic organization of collective goal attainment, money and market systems, generalized universalistic legal systems, and the democratic association with elective leadership and mediated membership support for policy orientations'(Schelkle and Kohli, 2000:35). Parsons highlights the significant roles of those structural innovations on the way to modern institutions (for instance, education, modern science and law) that became well-known in the development of modern society. Parsons focused on 'pattern variables' and highlighted the effects of modernity on forms of social interactions. It seems that the main systematic feature of modernity was capitalism. Therefore, capitalism is seen as interweaving with other elements of modernity such as surveillance, industrialism, individualism and administrative control.

Giddens (1998) described modernity as vastly more dynamic than any previous type of social order. Modern society is a more technical society with a complex of institutions, which lives in the future, rather than the past.

Henry (2007) has described modernity as follows:

Modernity consists of three elements: traditional, institutional, and cultural. Traditional modernity means that there is a historical consciousness, a sense of breaking with the past, and a post-traditional consciousness of what is going on in the world. Institutional modernity is concerned with capitalism, industrialism, urbanism, and the democratic nation-state. Cultural modernity entails new beliefs about science, economics, and education. It involves a criticism of religion and separation of religion from politics and education (Henry, 2007: 1).

In brief, modernization is a term which refers to an evolutionary transition from a traditional to a modern society. Modernization has been linked to the processes of industrialisation, urbanization, secularization, centralization and politicization of societies, and the spread of education. When modernization happens within a society, the individual becomes more important than family and community as the fundamental unit of society. Societies undergoing the process of modernization develop rules that are dictated by principles instead of tradition and religion.

Implications for the thesis

To understand the meaning of modern and modernity in this study, a brief explanation of the socio-cultural position of women in Iran before the 1979 revolution is necessary. In my observations, the so-called White Revolution by the Shah in 1963 was a package of policy which facilitated the conversion from an agrarian to an industrial, modern economy. The aim of this programme was land reform to prevent possible peasant revolt. However, land reform was a key stage in developing an industrial economy, and this modernization plan called for a transformation of women's roles. For example, 'family law was modified in favour of women along with other measures to advance the position of women' (Bahramitash, 2003: 231). De-veiling was imposed by Reza Shah (the Shah's father) and the Shah encouraged the process by increasing the number of non-veiled women 'in the new expanding government bureaucracy', particularly in education and health services (Bahramitash, 2003: 231).

A period of economic growth stimulated by oil revenues led to expansion of education and health for many women, especially those of urban upper and middle class backgrounds. Therefore, many more women entered the labour market in the 1960s and 1970s. In addition, the Shah approved women's right to vote and become members of Parliament. Despite the political, social and economic development during the era of Pahlavi monarchy, Iran retained a combination of Iranian traditional culture, Islam and Westernism. Tohidi (1994) argues, 'Any major political and ideological discourse, including the Women Question, has been fought out in an uneasy triangle involving Islam, Westernism and nationalism' (Tohidi, 1994: 112). Therefore, in modern Iran, a distinct value system and cultural attitude were behind the economic development and social transitions.

Following the modernization some changes occurred in social values and institutions among the Iranian young generation. For instance, the gap in educational achievement between women and men lessened greatly. In addition, many educated women were marrying at a later age and having fewer children. Bahramitash (2011) argues 'In theory of modernization, higher education for women should lead them to more employment opportunities'. She also points to 'a lack of connection between education and employment' (Bahramitash, 2011: 180). It seems that the government of Iran is not able to provide adequate jobs for these educated women and due to high inflation rate in recent decades, many of educated as well as less educated women are applying for lower wages and low-status jobs. Therefore, having high education and working does not mean a socio-economic empowerment for women. Despite a relative level of rising employment for women due to sex segregation (e.g. in Health and Education sectors), women are still not 'fit for top ranking positions'. In term of women's political management, there is a 'low rate of women's participation in Parliament (3% in 2004) and women holding ministerial and sub ministerial ranks' (Bahramitash, 2011: 169).

In sum, cultural elements associated with patriarchy have changed during the last century, in particular, in the Pahlavi era (pre-revolution regime). In my opinion, Pahlavi era brought some principles of modernization for middle, upper and educated classes. They attempted to establish a balance in legal status for both sexes. During the past 34 years, Islamic regime in Iran gives more power and social position to males inside and outside the house, as opposed to females, therefore, due to this different definition of

modernization, there is no evidence of modernization in current Iran. In regard to migration of Iranian women, the basic elements of modernization available in the Western countries could be attractive factors to encourage Iranian women to migrate.

Globalization and Iranian Women

After establishing an Islamic government in Iran, the regime closed its borders to outside influence. At the same time, globalization as a new process was taking place around the world. Mahdi (2003) argues, 'Globalization is an abstract concept which refers to a host of social processes taking place beyond, but having serious impact on national boundaries' (Mahdi, 2003: 1). Globalization, as a social, political, economic, and cultural power has been able to reach the most isolated areas of the world. In the following section, I will be considering the effect of globalization on Iranian women.

During the past three decades, despite all restrictions, we observed a growing participation of women in public activities, 'non-governmental organizations' intended to increase women's awareness. In addition, some socio-political groups formed in order to protect women's rights. To discuss women's demands for democratic developments and independent civil society, I use the term globalization as an idea of 'time and space compression' (Harvey, 1989:204) and 'time and space convergence' (Giddens, 1981: 91) in line with Harvey's and Giddens notions. These notions refer to the expansion of technology, communication, science, and combination of markets and labour around the world (Mahdi 2003). Mahdi (2003) explains that a main consequence of the above mentioned processes of globalization is a global awareness of basic rights through time and space compression. He believes that more and more people desire to have access to materials beyond those in their own national borders. Mahdi (2003) argues about international movement of ideas and its impact on dictatorial regimes as:

The movement of ideas, images, products and patterns of social relationships operates above the limits and boundaries established by the dictatorial regimes and isolationist states. Even in the most isolationist countries, products imported from other countries bring with them images, patterns, and modalities that influence the local patterns and force the local actors to react to them either favourably or unfavourably. For instance, Islamic states like Iran, who are

determined to stay away from Western influences, find themselves fighting not foreign armies and imperialist tanks and war machines but McDonalds sandwiches, Hollywood movies and Disney images, and Western pop music icons (Mahdi, 2003: 2).

I believe that, in the repressive situation of Iran, Iranian women have been able to find a way to collect support and articulate their displeasure with the government policies in regard to women's status. Iranian women have started to develop voluntary associations to express their interests for adjusting to the global changes happening in the whole world, benefiting from a variety of factors of globalization. Growth of information and industrial technologies provided an opportunity to increase and expand a wish for freedom. Consequently, taking part in socio-political movements has been growing, in particular, in countries with autocratic governments. It seems that more people view liberal processes as an essential result of participation in global organizations.

Both Harvey (1989) and McGrew (1992) have stated that globalization, as a worldwide issue, gives increase to contradictory elements of localization. Iranian people observed the influence of global forces during the Pahlavi era (1925-1978) provoked the traditional values, thus resulting in overthrowing of the regime. Even during the Islamic regime rule, the influences of global changes have caused problems in the traditional structure of families, annoying the government. In response to this phenomenon, the authorities in Iran have put pressure on local customs that control women's participation in the social world.

Mahdi (2003) refers to two sets of globalization and localization processes and describes their functions as:

The two sets of processes of globalization and localization are tied together dialectically and work with and against each other at the same time. Localization channels the global energy, directs it to the appropriate destination, and customizes it to the formats of the indigenous structures. In a dialectical process of give and take, content and form of globalization shape each other to the local needs and demands. At the same time, the local demands and structures modify themselves to global processes and institutions

appropriate to their growth and expansion. Global structures and changes then are integrated with local traditions and existing social structures (Mahdi, 2003: 3).

With the establishment of the Islamic government, international communication was cut off, and abolished all foreign influences over economics, politics and culture. Khomeini even announced that he wanted to begin a new globalization, that is an Islamic globalization, by exporting the revolution. In the past three decades, the Islamic regime dominating Iran has done everything to distance the Iranian people from the rest of the world and advocate religious and local traditions.

Skeldon (2000) argues, 'Globalization is a product of the extension of flows: of capital and of trade. The flows of people, too, can be seen as an integral part of the whole process of globalization' (Skeldon, 2000: 4). In my experience, the Islamic government's localization policies towards women had an impact on both religious and secular women. Religious women, despite their participation in the revolution were banned from taking on high-ranking political positions and secular women who also participated actively in the 1979 revolution, were controlled due to their beliefs. Nevertheless, localization policies towards women and the domination of men in public life resulted in migration of educated and skilled Iranian women. It seems that these women could no longer tolerate the effect of Islamic policies and could afford to leave their homeland. Among migration flows of Iranian women, there are numbers of highly-skilled women professionals: doctors, physicians, lawyers and so on. Skeldon (2000) claimed 'The globalization of financial services and the expansion of transnational corporations, in particular, have contributed to the increasing importance of these highly-skilled flows' (Skeldon, 2000: 12).

Globalization may offer women opportunity of communication and information exchange. Moghadam (2005) discusses how feminist groups through globalization have created transnational networks of women activists and women's organizations to unite unions against socio-economic inequalities and develop women's positions in societies throughout the world.

Gender Identity, Gender Relations and Migrant Identity

The feminist view of gender as a social construction raises two questions which have influenced the study of women and migration during the last decade. The first question concentrates on the patriarchal system in which men hold all the power and domination over women. How does patriarchy produce a change in women's ability to emigrate, the timing and the final destination on the migration process? The focus of the second question is on the 'relationship between men and women' (Boyd and Grieco, 2003: 2). How do females' roles such as wife, home maker, change with leaving her homeland? Is the system now operating in the household developed after arriving in the host society (Boyd and Grieco, 2003)?

Differences in gender roles are observed by researchers conducting studies in migration. For example, Espin (1987) stated that migrant women from patriarchal societies face contradictions between the homeland and the host society's cultures. During settlement in a new society, migrant women from traditional countries experience 'gender role modifications', shifting from specific roles to open roles in distant societies (Espin, 1987: 490). Migratory movement has an effect on women - specific roles and offers them an opportunity to change the 'family dynamics' as a result of new sets of cultural values and attitudes in a host society (Cakir, 2009: 16).

To understand the impact of migratory movements on women's roles, a consideration of gender identity is necessary. As I mentioned in Chapter Two, in some Iranian families and in the government's belief, an ideal woman is described as one who obeys her husband and is a good mother who devotes her time and efforts to her family members.

Gender identity refers to the roles and expectations that society and culture associates with both men and women in the society. Gender identity 'is not a set, constant characteristic with the same meaning across different cultures' (Wood, 2005: 19). Gender identity is seen as a dynamic social product which is an interaction between psychological and social factors (Erikson 1986; Breakwell 2001a). According to Identity Process Theory individuals renew their identity and remove factors of their identity, due to their everyday interaction. Thus, identity is flowing and its flexible nature provides a way to understand the experiences of migrants, whose identities are in process of being

rebuilt due to the context of migration and interactive process (Breakwell 2000; Schilling-Estes 2004).

In the case of women from the Middle East and Africa, the process of replacement and re-evaluating of the identities may be more complex. Sometimes women 'are seen, and often see themselves, as the guardians' (Afshar, 2007: 240) of cultural norms and taking care of family members, while at the same time the host society demands of them to become more active 'economically or politically' (Afshar, 2007: 240). Women preserve the sense of belonging to their homeland and at the same time are open to the new norms and cultural values of the host society. Migrant women often decide to build 'self-ascribed identities' within the restrictions of their socio-economical environment (Afshar, 2007: 240).

In other respects, women from traditional and patriarchal countries are expected to preserve their cultural norms and values after arriving in the new society. This phenomenon could be seen, for example, in Iranian communities in the UK. The main role of men in the Iranian community is to be the 'head' of the family without being affected by female's contributions to the household finances (Mahdi, 1999b:10). Iranian men still remember their ancestors' particular roles and have desire to be in the same position, i.e., breadwinners, main family decision-makers and the most important source of family finance without recognition of women as an economic partner. The data from some of the interviewees in my study shows that female access to higher socio-economic situations does not mean the same level of access to opportunities as her male counterpart might enjoy.

Portes and Rumbaut (2001) stated that migrants face significant elements such as political and social situations, economic context; 'differences in residential environments' and so on, are important variables which newly migrants groups receive in the host country and contribute to keep and maintenance of their native culture in the receiving countries (2001: 614). In response to the question of Iranian migrants' women cultural identity, several authors argue that it appears to follow patterns of bicultural theory (Mahdi 1999; Chaichian 2003; Jamarani 2007 and Modarresi 2001). In my study most of the interviewees described their gender identity as an Iranian woman who tries to adopt the positive aspects of the British culture, for example, have a same pattern of

child rearing for both their son and daughter. It means that they want to provide the same opportunity for both sexes and do not put sex discrimination among their children. Some of them complain about the existence of sex discrimination among some Iranian migrant men who have been living in the UK for more than three decades.

As Modarresi (2001) stated, Iranian migrant women, especially the first generation migrants, are committed to educate their children based on Iranian cultural values in order to maintain a degree of cultural continuity. The responsibility of preserving cultural identity appears to be the role of women. According to Modarresi, women spend most of their time with children, and they have to teach and explain customs, values, and language to offspring (Modarresi 2001). Given that native language is a major cultural element, utilizing native language to express thoughts and feelings and exchange information or conversation with other people in the same minority group can preserve and maintain ethnic culture. The first generation migrant interviewees of my study emphasized the importance of their mother tongue and the importance of making new friends to keep ties with their ethnic group. Chaichian (1997) found that use of their native tongue by Iranian first generation migrants was one of the most important factors of preserving their culture. 'The majority of respondents (77.5%) in a study about Iranian migrants living in Iowa in the United States, said that they always spoke Persian (native language) at home.' (Chaichian, 1997: 615)

However, language is only one dimension of culture. Sociologists have also looked at leisure pursuits, family ties, religious observance and gender roles to identify differences between migrants and members of the receiving society. Comparisons may be made between Iranian migrants and other groups. For example, Moore as one of the first sociologists who referred to cultural identity of migrants, described how the Mexican-American has been a noticeable migrant community in the United States since 1848, but 'they are not in the final stage of integration into the host society' (Shaull and Gramann, 1998: 6). Keefe and Padilla (1987) have also agreed with Moore and introduced 'selective acculturation' for this difference (Keefe and Padilla 1987: 159). These researchers state that migrant groups keep their certain cultural characteristics such as family patterns, traditional foods and 'music preferences', whilst having no trouble adapting quickly to other traits of the host country that contribute to their social and economic improvement (such as language). (Shaull and Gramann, 1998: 2)

In particular, leisure behaviour may be an important contributor to the 'selective-acculturation processes' (Shaull and Gramann, 1998: 2). Leisure has two traits that have power over its expression of cultural values against pressures of cultural assimilation. First, in comparison with social activity at different organizations such as university, school and offices, leisure is comprised of few 'social limitations' (Shaull and Gramann, 1998: 2). During leisure time an individual chooses his leisure companions freely and could express his cultural behaviour much easier than in formal institutions. Second, as Shaull (1982) argues, in the case of ethnic groups, particularly among Mexican-American and other Hispanic migrants in the United State, leisure time is spent among relatives and friends who belong to the same ethnic groups. The researchers state that leisure activities in these contexts can be a safe and protected place to transmit their 'subcultural identity' (Shaull and Gramann, 1998: 2). Thus, the way of spending leisure time could provide a better understanding of cultural identity among the first-generation Iranian migrant women.

It seems that migrant women's situation is related to their new circumstances. As Afshar has stated,

For women who have crossed the national boundaries the process of reconstructing identities was contextualized in a historical and special time and place, both in the host and in the home countries. (2007: 241)

Afshar has mentioned Afghan women who migrated to the UK and stated that 'they had opportunity to re-build their identities in very different ways to those who migrated to Iran' (Afshar, 2007: 241). Afghan women experiences show that being in a particular place may be the most important factor to how different groups settle in a host society and in a given context (Afshar 2007).

Women with a traditional perspective or background enter developed countries with different cultural behaviours and norms, thus adjustment to the culture of the host country can be a hard process. With regard to gender roles, in my opinion, for Iranian women who come from a more traditional and patriarchal culture, the migration process may impact their gender roles in family and society in a new environment. This influence

could manifest in two different ways, either to reinforce strongly the traditional values and attitudes, or to challenge those values and attitudes with a view to changing them.

In some respects, migrant women become familiar with new perspectives regarding women's rights, in particular, if they find 'outside employment'. This new earning ability often provides them with a greater influence at home and 'gives women ability to direct household priorities' (Forbes, 2003: 28). A study of Mexican migrants in the United States indicates that the process of migration is accompanied by a diminishing of the patriarchal role of men and increasing power and authority for women. The study shows that in some cases the Mexican migrant woman had become the main and only breadwinner in the household; therefore the migrant's spouse's responsibilities had changed. This given that the migrant male would carry out the household chores such as, cooking, cleaning, looking after children, and so on which leads to reducing the male's patriarchal role as the head of the household.

Some researchers have studied changing gender roles within Iranian migrants in Canada (Moghissi 1999; Mahdi 1999), Vietnamese migrants in Philadelphia (USA) (Kibria, 1996) and Mexican immigrants in the United States (Hondagneu-Sotelo, 1994). These researchers have noted that the migratory movement changed the traditional gender roles within families. Mahdi (2001) pointed out:

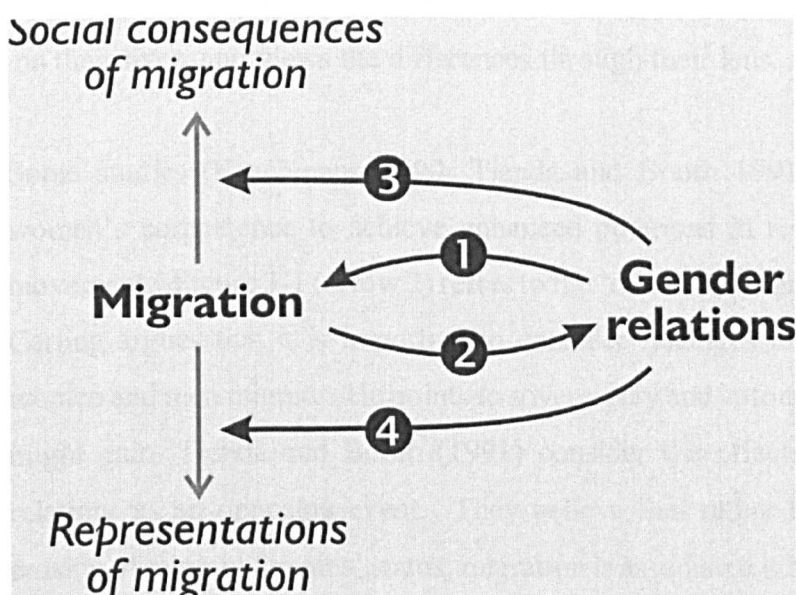
Iranian immigrant women are moving away from traditional understandings of gender roles and sexuality; they are developing their own unique synthesis of attributes and values representing the cultural realities of both their past and present lives.' (2001: 210)

Migrant women may face a reduction in patriarchal gender relations and obtain more power and authority and thus men lose some of their advantages, for example, men are no longer the sole decision-makers for the whole family. While migrant women access more opportunities in the host country, they also face new challenges at home and the new society. One researcher states that the impact of displacement on gender roles and relations must be considered 'as shifting in quality, often resulting in gains for women in certain spheres and losses in others' (Kibria, 1996: 85). In this context, migration may influence the meaning of gender roles and relationships among family members.

Gender in Migration

Social science scholars established the term ‘gender’ in order to highlight the differences between sexes. At the same time, the term of ‘gender relation’ was introduced to underline male’s and female’s roles in society and ‘the way in which these roles are linked to ideas about maleness and femaleness’ (Carling, 2005: 3). Carling (2005) critically considers the social construction of gender in relation to migration with four different approaches:

Figure 3.1: Different forms of causal analysis of the gender dimensions of migration



Source: (Carling, 2005: 5)

First, Carling refers to a vast range of literatures which considers the effect of gender relations on ‘the size, direction and composition of migration flows’. For example, people migrate for marriage, employment, and a better life. Carling subdivides the first approach as follows:

- Choice in making the decision to migrate is affected by gender. Carling states that in many cases, men make independent decisions while neglecting women as family members (Carling, 2005).

- Gender can play a crucial role in having desires and ambitions to migrate. Carling claims ‘in many cases, the proportion wishing to emigrate might be similar among men and women while motivations are different. In other cases, the share of prospective migrants is different between the sexes’ (Carling, 2005: 6).

Analysing gender relation’s effect on migration of Iranian women helps to distinguish cultural differences between men and women in Iran and in the host country. It might be shown how they interact and shape their social life with regards to socio-political dimensions of migration. These differences reflect on how they view migration and therefore produce different ways of living in the host country. The conceptual framework of this study discusses the women’s perceptions of migration and its effects on their lives, and views the differences through their lens.

Some studies (Brochmann 1990, Tienda and Booth 1991) have explored migrant women’s competence to achieve enhanced positions in response to their migratory movement. Figure 3-1 (arrow 2) refers to the ‘effects of migration on gender relations’. Carling argues that it is important to consider ‘changes in gender roles’ when both women and men migrate. He points to sovereignty and autonomy which female migrants might gain. Tienda and Booth (1991) consider the effects of migration on gender relations as an opposing event. They believe that rather than a development or an erosion of migrant females’ status, migration is associated with a restructuring of gender asymmetries. In the context of migration’s effect on gender relations, Tacoli (1999) states:

Since commitments and obligations encompass gender norms and cultural values, women’s independent migration does not contradict their important role in household reproduction. On the contrary, it often represents an extension of their maternal or filial duties. Having said that, while migrant women generally have less control over their own lives than do their male counterparts, spatial distance and financial independence may be strategically used by some of them to resist gender constraints and patriarchal authority. However, this renegotiation of normative roles appears to take place within the boundaries of gender ideologies and social acceptability, and open conflict is actively

avoided. Women's migration can thus be described as both a cause and a consequence of the restructured asymmetries (1999: 660).

Consideration of the effect of migratory movement on women's situation must be investigated with socio-cultural context of migrant women as well as the personal life condition of women. For example, the consequences of replacement for single and married migrant women can be dissimilar (Carling, 2005).

Arrow 3 in figure 3.1 shows the influence of gender roles on migratory movement. For example, Carling explains that 'intra-family gender relations affect the different propensity of male and female migrants to remit their earnings' (2005: 7). He adds that migrant women send a large amount of their income to their families in the homeland, which must be considered as a result of 'socially constructed gender roles' (2005: 7). Carling also points to the time when migrant women were admitted as dependants without permission to work, resulting in them not learning the language and not integrating into the host community. As a result, this has had considerable consequences for their children (2005:7).

The representation of migration is influenced by the perspective of scholars and policy-makers about gender relations (Figure 3.1, arrow 4). As mentioned earlier, labour migration was dominated by men until the termination of mass migration and the beginning of 'female family reunification.' (Carling, 2005:8) Carling stated:

This representation reflects an expectation of men producing and women reproducing. In fact, many women entered as independent migrants in the pre-stoppage years. When family reunification became the dominant form of migration, many young men entered as dependants. Sexist expectations result in downplaying the roles of immigrants who do not fit the stereotypical pattern (2005: 8).

Migration and Transnational Families

The notion of transnationalism is at the heart of migration studies which aim to investigate contemporary migratory movements. Transnationalism is an approach that

considers migration as a multi-layered process (demographic, political, cultural, and familial). Scholars recognize that migrants remain strongly in touch with their country of origin and are still influenced by their cultural values (Levitt and Glick Schiller 2007; Basch *et al.*, 1999). They see 'migrants' cross border ties' and suggest a transnational perspective to understand the impact of these ties empirically (Levitt and Glick Schiller, 2007: 182).

Scholars refer to great influences and links between the country of origin and host countries. Basch *et al.* state that 'transnationalism is a process by which migrants through their daily life activities, social, economic, and political relations, create social fields that cross national boundaries' (Basch *et al.*, 1999: 27). They believe that 'transmigrants' make decisions and take a variety of actions that are rooted in their relationships that tie them to more than one society (Basch *et al.*, 1999: 27).

According to Levitt and Glick Schiller, the concept of 'social field' is an instrument for in depth understanding of social relations among 'those who move and those who stay behind' (Levitt and Glick Schiller, 2007: 182). In addition, they believe that the concept takes researchers 'beyond the direct experience of migration into domains of interaction where individuals who do not move, maintain social relations across borders through various forms of communication' (Levitt and Glick Schiller, 2007: 182). The concept of social field means going beyond the boundaries and reveals how migrants are influenced by sets of rules through their daily activities, both from their homeland and the country of residence.

Utilising the transnational approach could help to understand Iranian migrant women's incorporation into British society and transnational connections to Iran at the same time. This concept reinforces the fact that Iranian migrant women retain a strong link with their homeland even though they have been resident here for over two decades. Levitt and Glick Schiller (2007) have explored four separate waves of transnational migration scholarship that are: 'the research done by sociologists and anthropologists in the United States, studies done by the Transnational Community Programme based at Oxford University, a literature on transnational families, and an effort to reformulate notions of space and social structure' (Levitt and Glick Schiller, 2007: 183).

These waves in migration theorising have created a fundamental body of work to apply the transnational concept to a significant body of issues. The concept considers 'transnational identity formation', (Levitt and Glick Schiller, 2007: 183) and socio-cultural practices that lead migrant integration and transnational ties simultaneously.

Levitt and Glick Schiller (2007) define social field as 'a set of multiple interlocking networks of social relationships through which ideas, practices, and resources are unequally exchanged, organized, and transformed' (Levitt and Glick Schiller, 2007: 188). Social fields are 'multi-dimensional, encompassing structured interactions of differing forms, depth, and breadth that are differentiated in social theory by the terms organization, institution, and social movement. National boundaries are not necessarily contiguous with the boundaries of social fields' (Levitt and Glick Schiller, 2004:188). They explain a perspective of 'society' and its 'membership' based on a 'social field' approach which distinguishes between 'ways of being' and 'ways of belonging' (Levitt and Glick Schiller, 2007: 188). They refer to the Manchester school of anthropology and Bourdieu's definition of the concept of 'social field' and claim that these scholars 'focused on a level of social analysis beyond the study of the individual' (Levitt and Glick Schiller, 2007: 189).

A 'social field' viewpoint discloses that 'ways of being' is different from 'ways of belonging' (Levitt and Glick Schiller, 2007: 189). 'Ways of being' refers to activities and practices that people are involved in rather than ascribe their identities with their activities. In contrast, 'ways of belonging' refers to activities that the identities of individuals are associated with. It explains a conscious tie to a specific group or institution. 'Ways of belonging combine action and an awareness of the kind of identity that action signifies' (Levitt and Glick Schiller, 2007: 189).

Scholars of transnationalism believe that migrants create cross-border lives and their socio-cultural affinities spread across more than one country and territory (Conway *et al.*, 2008; Glick Schiller 1999; Levitt 2001; Portes *et al.*, 1999). Castles and Davidson (2000) refer to this issue and argue that:

The growing international mobility of people questions the basis for belonging to the nation-state. The heterogeneity of cultural values and practices grows

exponentially, so there is no time for process of acculturation and assimilation. The boundaries of the nation-state are being eroded: millions of people have multiple citizenships and live in more than one country. Global markets, transnational corporations, regional and supra-national bodies, and a new pervasive international culture are all gaining in influence (Castles and Davidson, 2000: vii-viii).

Members of transnational families have links across national borders. The theories of transnational families' experiences consider subjects such as ethnicity, gender and generation through questions about identities, communities and relationships among migrants.

Bryceson and Vuorela (2002) remind us of a number of transnational family experiences. They categorise them into three crucial factors: 'first, issues pertaining to care in old age, second, matters of identity (national, ethnic, belonging); and third, the search for security and opportunity (e.g. political, economic)' (Cheong *et al.*, 2007: 6). Some scholars such as Goulbourne and his colleagues criticize the Bryceson and Vuorela's view and believe that they underestimate 'the importance of identity and belongingness as crucial elements driving the motor of transnational family experience' (Cheong *et al.*, 2007: 6).

On the other hand, we can see two key concepts in Bryceson and Vuorela's theory which provide better understanding of transnational families: 'frontiering' and 'relativizing' (Bryceson and Vuorela, 2002: 11). Frontiering means 'to denote the ways and means transnational family members use to create familial space and network ties in terrain where affinal connections are relatively sparse' (Bryceson and Vuorela, 2002: 11). They believe that frontiering clearly defines the transnational families' identity. According to these scholars 'frontiering' indicates the connections between individuals and reveals different ways of meeting between people of different walks of life within the transnational group. In their usage of the term 'frontiering', they state:

Frontiering in Europe in the late twentieth and early twenty-first century is about the reversal of mass migration flows and their orientation to rather than away from Europe and the significance of transnational families and

multiculturalism in Europe during an age of spatial mobility and historical upheaval (Bryceson and Vuorela, 2002: 12).

The term 'relativizing' refers to the different ways of preserving and maintaining 'relational ties' with family members who spread across the world and want to keep their family ties. Bryceson and Vuorela (2002) refer to 'relativizing' as a term that 'involves the selective formation of familial emotional and material attachments on the basis of temporal, spatial and need-related considerations' (Bryceson and Vuorela, 2002: 14).

The aim of transnational theories has been to highlight the importance of migrants' families who are left behind in the country of origin. This issue is particularly important given the attention in the link between diversity of cultural values between two countries. These theories focus on the role played by the transnational family networks in the process of migration. These perspectives acknowledge that the social field context of both receiving and sending countries is influential on migrants' identity.

The next section will explore transnational belonging and dual citizenships among second generation in detail.

Transnational Belonging and Dual Citizenships among Second Generation

In recent years, scholars have drawn attention to the concept of the second generation. They believe there is a distinction between the 'classic second generation' and the so-called '1.5 or 1.75 generation' (Menjivar, 2002: 532). The former refers to children born in the host countries, and the latter (1.5 and 1.75) refers respectively to children born in the homeland but arrived between 6 and 12, and after 12 up to 17 years of age (Mood 1997; Andall 2002; Ellis and Goodwin 2006; King and Christou 2008).

It seems that cultural identity becomes diluted in subsequent generations but only in some respects. First generation migrant women are usually in a transitional stage and may face challenges, going through a changing process with social and psychological problems (Cozen *et al.*, 1992). However, studies on second generation migrants in different countries present a variety of tendency in keeping their original culture; the experiences of European migrants show an erosion of cultural identity among second and

third generations. But the descendents of these migrants carry on identifying with people of European ancestry, even among the third generation (Nahirny and Fishman, 2005: 46).

The attention of scholars has focused on the second generation's integration into the host country. Integration is a complex processes influenced by a variety of factors. These factors may be structural; for example, educational status and citizenship laws and they may also be cultural identity, ethnic identity and so on (Portes and Zhou 1993; Portes *et al.*, 2005; Rassool 1999). This identification with ethnic origins is largely symbolic, emerging only on special occasions, for example on ethnic ceremonies, festivals and through special dressing and a particular style of cooking (Gans 1992). Studies of third, 'fourth and fifth generation European Americans found that they no longer speak their original language, have married with other individuals of 'mixed European ancestry' and are more integrated into American society in comparison with their parents (Alba, 1990:115). The same findings can be seen in different studies (for example Tuna 1998; Waters 1990; Kibria 2000 and Komaie 2007).

Basch and her colleagues recognized that 'the dichotomized social science categories used to analyze migration experiences could not explain the simultaneous involvement of migrants in the 'social and political life of more than one nation-state' (Basch *et al.*, 1994: 5). They began to use the terms 'transnationalism' and 'transnational social field' to describe this 'interconnected social experience' (Basch *et al.*, 1994: 5). The term transnational belonging refers to post-nationalist perspective on the 'deterritorialization of nation-states', while dual citizenship is a crucial aspect of the political threat that transnationalism poses to nation-state integrity (Basch *et al.*, 1994:18) It seems that a citizenship allegiance to one country becomes pointless and individuals belong simultaneously to different countries in a transnational social life. Levitt and Glick Schiller (2004:1003) consider it:

Simultaneity, or living lives that incorporate daily activities, routines, and institutions located both in destination country and transnationally, is a possibility.

One debate within sociology, surrounding transnationalism, is the extent to which the children of migrants will maintain ties to their parental homeland (Levitt and Waters,

2002). Castells (1996) explains how the current 'Information Age' creates a complex system of communication and may 'reinforce pre-existing' relationships (Castells, 1996: 31). The paths of integration of the second generation to the host country are 'multi-directional' (Feliciano and Rumbaut, 2005; 1088). In keeping with these scholars' studies, I will explore the perspective of second generation Iranian women towards gender roles and the effect of migration in their view point. I want to know whether the Iranian second generation women maintain transnational ties to Iran or whether is the extent of their transnational activity is more symbolic.

Furthermore, to address questions about the transfer of mothers' attitudes to their daughters, I utilised the notion of intergenerational transmission to refer to some gender outlooks (e.g. relationships between men and women, the perspective on gender role and so on). This idea draws on information about migrant women to consider the relationships between a mother's attitudes and experiences and her daughter's attitudes. In this study I ask if the mother's gender role has transferred to the second generation's (their daughters') gender roles. Moen (1997) argues that 'Daughters' own status matters most in predicting and broad historical changes in moderating intergenerational transmission process.' (Moen, 1997: 280)

Scholars such as Smith (1983) and Starrels (1992) describe a strong link between the parents' and children's attitudes. They claim that the notion of transnational transmission of attitudes may become 'problematic in times of large-scale social change, when younger generations may well part ways with their elders in beliefs, values and behaviour' (Moen *et al.*, 1997: 282). Over the last 30 years, Gerson (1985) and Moen (1992) have argued that a revolution in gender roles has occurred which has caused young women to face new models and norms 'regarding family roles' (Moen *et al.*, 1997: 282). Moen and his colleagues (1997) raise some questions such as: 'How are daughters of the gender-role revolution similar or different from their mothers?' (Moen *et al.*, 1997: 282). Given the societal shifts in gender norms, they ask whether mothers have lost their influences over their daughters' attitudes. To address these issues, socialization theory highlights the significant effect of early childhood learning, both 'in terms of role modelling or verbal exhortations', for transferring beliefs, directions, and behaviour across the generations (Moen *et al.*, 1997: 283). Bandura (1982) argues that socialization focuses on children learning from their parents' actual behaviour as well as

their attitudes; parents serve as role models as much as ‘verbal persuaders’ (Bandura 1982: 25).

In addition, Moen *et al.*, (1997) suggested that, children whose mothers who are employed outside the home have less traditional attitudes about women at work. In addition, they suggest that the pre-school years are important years for transmission of social norms and values’ (Moen *et al.*, 1997: 284). Moreover, Bronfenbrenner (1995) claims that parents do not pass on definite values to their children, but having access to the same social, cultural and political conditions in the host country are important factors in forming children’s attitude and beliefs.

It is worth adding that the young Iranian women taking part in this study are characterized as being almost ‘second generation’ due to their migration to the UK with their parents at a very young age. They have all lived in the UK for at least ten years, attended English schools and speak English fluently. It would be interesting to find out if the above theories are justified in this instance and how much these young Iranian women have followed in their mothers’ footsteps. To what extent do they take onboard their mothers’ values? Do they agree with their mothers on gender role issues, and so on? All these questions are covered in the Chapter Six and Seven.

Conclusion

From this literature review it is clear that the migration process is a major transition in an individual’s life and it brings a number of emotional, social, economic and cultural consequences for migrants, in particular, migrant women. This research will attempt to explore the Iranian women’s migration process through specific sociological theories.

In the context of migration theories and practices, a wide range of theoretical perspectives has risen on the agenda in the last 50 years. Early migration theories, such as, Marxist political economy, dependency theory and other economic approaches did not provide an adequate clarification for Iranian migrant women’s role in the migratory movement so they are not explored here. By contrast, feminist theories, patriarchy theories, modernization theories, globalization theory, views about gender in migration

and transnational theories take into account the significant influence of institutional and structural contexts on Iranian migrant motivations, gender relations, changing of gender roles and gender relations due to migration.

In my study, the process of Iranian migrant women was conceptualized and developed under the heading of the feminist approach and also represented by the other mentioned theories; these approaches view women in migration as a result of unequal distribution of human rights between two genders. Particularly as Iran, in my observations, is ruled by a patriarchal and autocratic government, social movement, including migration, has been determined by various factors which are interweaved with each other.

As widely recognized in migration theories, women migrants' situations have been determined by various factors, in particular economic elements, but this fails to take into account the considerable impact of institutional and functional changes on women. Feminist theory played a crucial role in the understanding of female migrants, especially the gender concept of patriarchy, which has been utilized to reveal women's submission. This has enabled me to consider gender as an analytical category which makes it possible to explain the effect of structural and cultural elements on women's subordination.

Furthermore, the concept of patriarchy offers opportunities to examine women migrants' circumstances from various angles. Given that migrant women are at the intersection between the family and society, and the state has interfered in this intersection in different ways, the notion of patriarchy has relevance in investigating the gender relations which migrant women have been facing in the triangle of the family, new country and self.

Nevertheless, it should be noted that the manifestations of patriarchal theories are associated with cultural customs and family perspectives on gender. Even the policies of governments are not free from tradition and gender ideology. This situation provides a reason for investigating the motivation for women to migrate.

Globalization has impinged on migration. Migrating to advanced countries has become another issue influencing women from various backgrounds. It seems that the international migration of women lies at the core of the ongoing process of globalization.

Although some women migrate to develop their economic prospects or to ensure a secure living environment, some on the other hand migrate to avoid persecution in their country of origin, for example some Iranian women migrants.

Feminist migration scholars (Kofman *et al.* 2000; Sotelo 2005; Houstoun *et al.* 1984; Tyree & Donato 1986) did pay attention to the gender division of labour and developed their knowledge and understanding of women migrants. These scholars drew a new portrait of migration with a reflection of changing migration patterns. They provided an opportunity to fill the gap in the migration literature through analysing transnational families. Feminist scholars provided a strong conceptual framework for integrating theories of migration into studies of women migrant. Attention to feminist theories helped to address questions about the equivalence between femininity and masculinity. Feminist scholars pushed forward to analysis the ways that females are tied to migratory movement. This consideration would help researchers to understand the implications of gender in the socio-cultural situations of migrant women in the migration researches. And also, feminist migrant researchers have carried out scholarly analysis of women across transnational migration. In addition, a feminist perspective on migration has allowed researchers to elaborate on the implications of migration in order to understand the process of modernization of migrant women at the heart of migration studies. Feminist researchers have continued to grapple with patriarchal systems in different societies and have also begun to examine the connections between migration and freedom for migrant women in their studies. Boyd and Grieco (2003) and Pedraza (1991), for example, considered that a hierarchy and unequal gender relation within the family leads to a situation where men have too much power over their female counterparts. In this context, the men in a family would dictate the women's rights, which could lead women to decide to migrate, or on the other hand it could be a disincentive to accompany the male counterpart for migration (Boyd and Grieco 2003; Pedraza 1991).

In this special context of Iranian migrants, attempts to explain women's situation in migration in terms of professional and skilled migrants within dominant theories of migration fail to advance understanding. I will consider a particular case of female migration which has not received a lot of scholarly attention, by explaining different approaches which are partly overlapping. The theories mentioned here demonstrate a

variety of possibilities for exploring the migratory movement. The studies I discuss can all be related to the framework outlined in the introductory chapter. Nevertheless, some of these approaches concern high interrelation between migration and the patriarchy system prevalent in the country of origin.

While the place of women in the migration process is gradually being recognized, and the evidence summarized in this paper shows that Iranian female migration to the UK has been gender-balanced, very little attention has been given to Iranian female migrants, especially in the UK. A more significant result is that most of the studies on migration and women describe the women from poor/working class backgrounds, with very little, if any, attention being paid to well-educated and middle-class migrant women except those studies that focus on brain drain and migration.

To explore the patterns of female migration from Iran I hold that the state and government play an important role in shaping women's migration. As discussed in Chapter Two, there are policies in Iran which treat men and women differently. For example, policies do not restrict males from leaving the country but at the same time do restrict women; women cannot leave the country without written permission from a male relative (father, husband). I will also consider the role of the first generation in preserving and transferring the cultural values of homeland to the second generation. In addition, the influences of the new circumstances on the first and the second generation women will be explored to provide comprehensive understanding of Iranian migrant women in the UK.

In the following chapter I will discuss the methodology that I will use in my research.

CHAPTER FOUR

THE METHODOLOGY

AND METHODS OF THE RESEARCH

Introduction

This chapter will start with a consideration of the research context, how I decided to carry out my research on this topic, followed by a section about Iranians' backgrounds in the UK. I will also be considering challenges that Iranian women face in their everyday lives in Iran to provide an understanding of their motives to move from their country of origin. My epistemological positioning will be considered next, followed by the research process section including a discussion about sampling technique and gaining access to participants. The last two sections are about data analysing and ethical considerations.

In this study, I have utilised a qualitative approach as the main method, with an interpretive and a feminist point of view as my basic perspective, in order to explore the perceptions of individual middle-class, well-educated Iranian migrant women about the concept of gender roles and how this defines their position in society.

Research Design

As a secular feminist researcher, I wondered on the effect my perspective might have on my decision for employing a particular research method for my study. Scholars such as Harding (1987) and Oakley (1981) argued that conducting research from a feminist viewpoint should involve a certain methodological angle. Recently, many feminists have criticized the abovementioned idea and claimed that research methods are value-free; suggesting a particular method as feminist methodology might be consistent with feminist values (Epstein Jayaratne and Stewart 2008). This manifested itself as a deep suspicion of quantitative research methods, and a heralding of qualitative methods (in particular, unstructured interviews), as the gold standard for the feminist approach to

research. Over time, Letherby (2003) and Epstein Jayaratne and Stewart (2008) have argued that feminist researchers can conduct research, using any research method.

I support this approach, as my research was about migrant women, their life histories, their standpoints and experiences; I believe that qualitative research was the best way to investigate this sensitive subject. A qualitative approach was viewed to be appropriate to encourage rich data collection. This approach further allowed the women to express their experiences of migration and constraints in their own words. The aim of the analysis was to gain a better understanding of participants' values, attitudes and beliefs (Becker and Bryman 2004; Bryman 2004). As there is little knowledge about Iranian migrant women in the UK, qualitative methods can be used to explore more 'substantive areas' of this ethnic group (Strauss and Corbin, 1998: 11). I therefore utilized in-depth qualitative interviews with Iranian migrant women (two generations) who were resident in the UK. An in-depth qualitative interview is an open-ended, discovery-oriented method describing the research processes and outcomes from participants' perspectives (Guion 2001). This method allowed me to gather information which could not have been anticipated.

In this research, I utilised a semi-structured format during the interviews, but also allowed questions to carry on based on respondents' replies. An appropriate tool to achieve participants' viewpoints about a research topic is a semi-structured interview which allows informants to express their beliefs freely; whereas in structured interviews the respondents may encounter some limitations (Babbie 2007). 'The flow of the conversation dictates the questions asked and those omitted, as well as the order of the questions' (Guion, 2006: 1). Also, by using a semi-structured interview, the interviewer can probe for more information. In short, by using qualitative research methods, I achieved a more detailed description and a better understanding of the participants' experiences.

I am aware of the weaknesses of qualitative research, the common one being that generalising the findings might not be possible and knowledge creation might be limited to the people included in the research. Generalising the results to apply to a large number of individuals was not a main focus of the study; rather, the aim was to understand how the participants view themselves and their new environment. In the

context of this study, I faced limitations in accessing adequate samples; for example, the fear and suspicion from some people who thought that my research was being funded by the Iranian government, and the interference of husbands or fathers. Thus, I have collected data from respondents who have voluntarily accepted to conduct an interview about their migration. This has, of course, had some influences on the study. For example, the study represents only the perspective of women migrants who were interested in the topic of the study. In spite of these limitations, I have generated rich descriptions of middle-class, well-educated Iranian immigrant women in the UK.

Philosophical/Epistemological Perspective

As the methodology of this research is qualitative, it is therefore important to know that the term qualitative is not always a synonym for 'interpretive', a qualitative research may be positivist, interpretive or critical; it depends on the main philosophical assumptions of the researcher (Myers 2009). It is worth adding that within this qualitative study there has been increasing attention to the individuals' everyday experiences and exploring of the effects of race, gender and social class on their viewpoints, given each individuals' unique experiences.

In this study, interpretive and feminist perspectives were utilised. Firstly, interpretive methods of this research on Iranian migrant women intended to seek deep understanding of the context of the migration process, and the way Iranian migrant women influence and are influenced by the context. My adaptation of an interpretive research methodology assumes a certain worldview. It encourages reflective explorations of my own lived experiences as related and connected to the participants' stories. Reissman (1993) argues that the production of any knowledge contains an indication of its producers. My epistemic assumptions support this statement. There is an intermingling of my role, as the knower, and the role of the individual respondents, as the known.

Some scholars (for example, Blumer 1969; Guba 1990; Kvale 1983) claim that the aim of phenomenology, philosophy, and interpretive studies generally is to understand phenomena through the meanings that people assign to them (Blumer 1969; Guba 1990; Kvale 1983). Wolcott (1994: 10-11) notes that the aim of interpretive research is 'To reach out for understanding or explanation beyond the limits of what can be explained with the degree of certainty usually associated with analysis'.

Furthermore, I also drew from feminist epistemology. I have attempted to portray the instability of social categories and link the life stories up to wider social structures. I have also looked at the causes of gender inequalities, considered the structure of Iranian society in terms of the patriarchy system (Baxter 2003; Mills 2003). However, feminism comes in many different approaches (e.g. Secular feminism, Islamic feminism) with altering epistemological viewpoints (Brooks and Hesse-Biber 2007); feminist researchers seek to make visible the lived experiences of women, the research and writing process within social sciences generally and within feminist social science in particular. This paper, surveying the principles of feminist research methodologies, posits reflexivity as a feminist issue.

The experiences of oppression due to sexism, to which both researcher and researched are subject, can create a unique type of insight and ability to decipher 'official' explanations and grasp gender relations and their mechanisms (Fonow and Cook 1991: 1). These insights teach us not only about gender relations, but also about society as a whole.

While many feminist sociologists seem to favour qualitative research, Harding claims it is not the method that makes feminist research different from what she terms 'male stream' research, but (a) the alternative origin of the problems, which concern women rather than men; (b) the alternative hypotheses and evidence used; (c) the purpose of the inquiry, which is to understand a woman's view of the world and assist in the emancipation of women and (d) the nature of the relationship between the researcher and the so-called 'subjects' of her inquiry (Harding, 1987: 11).

Through feminist paradigms I investigated the ways that gender has, and ought to influence my conceptions and understanding of knowledge. It recognizes 'ways in which dominant conceptions and practices of knowledge attribution, acquisition, and justification, systematically disadvantage women and other subordinated groups' (Anderson, 2009: 1). Various practitioners of feminist epistemology identified the following failures of dominant knowledge: denying women from inquiry, developing theories to present women as inferior or noticeable only as male interests, producing theories to reinforce gender and other social hierarchies. This certainly has been true in my research and I have tried to reform these conceptions and offer diverse accounts to overcome these shortcomings. Feminist scholars have entered into different academic

groups which have created new theories and methods to show gender has an important role in these 'transformations' (Anderson, 2009: 1). Feminism not only has changed and politicised the women's lives but also emancipated the 'academic research act' which has resulted in the most basic and important changes to how social researchers 'do' research (Byrne and Lentin 2000; Reinharz 1992; Roberts 1981).

My main objective in this study was influenced by a feminist agenda which resulted in my choices to utilise a qualitative methodology to allow Iranian migrant women's voices to be explicitly heard in migration discourse. Utilising interpretive and feminist paradigms in this study provided me with a better understanding of the Iranian female role in migration process and reduces the patriarchal hegemony. The feminist perspective helped me to explore the obstacles facing women in making the decision to move from their homeland, and explain how migrant women adjust to all the new changes.

I viewed my research as a feminist researcher, based on some fundamental assumptions. Firstly, I believe that the process of migration from Iran during the past thirty years is not limited to males. The political atmosphere in Iran has been depressing many educated, middle-class Iranian males and females since the revolution happened. In the majority of studies, the field of research is for men, and argues that women have less chance of being candidates for international migration. The patriarchal system in Iran denies the role of women in making vital decisions for their family life. This system shapes individual epistemic accounts of the males' experiences. For example, they identify themselves as the breadwinner, thus achieving higher education is their right.

Secondly, I am very politically and environmentally aware of unequal power relations that exist at different social strata, and also within the female and male groups. It is my intention to develop a close collaboration study where the female participants could be active producers of knowledge. Through this study, they can bring a meaning to their experiences and let the others hear their stories.

The Research Process

The data presented in the research was gathered from the interviews with first generation Iranian women who migrated from Iran around the time of the 1979 and 1980 and second-generation Iranian-British daughters of first generation who were either born abroad or left Iran at a very young age. Many of the second generation may have never even visited their mother's homeland. One of the main aims of my research is to discover the viewpoints of the second generation towards gender roles, patriarchal system and gender identity. These responses will then be compared with those of the first generation, noting any similarities and differences.

Interviews were completed with 38 first and second generation middle-class Iranian migrant women between the ages of eighteen and seventy, living in urban areas of London, Nottingham, Loughborough, Southampton, Bournemouth, Milton Keynes and Leicester. An equal number of first and second generation Iranian female migrants were interviewed. Some of the first generation Iranian migrant women were single when they first arrived in the UK, while others accompanied their husbands.

Tables 4.1 and 4.2 summarize the participants' details. All the names have been changed in order to protect the participants' identity. All of the first generation participants were born in Iran and moved to the UK in their adulthood. They were all Muslim except one, who was Zoroastrian. The majority of first generation participants immigrated to the UK following the 1979 revolution, but six women arrived in the UK in the early 1970s.

Table 4.1: Participant's biographical data of first generation

Name	Age	Marital status	No child	EDU	Place of Birth	occupation	Husband's occupation	Husband's Nationality	Year of Arrival
Nika	55	2 nd marriage	3	B.A	Tehran	Retired (art teacher)	Computer engineer	British	1980
Mina	45	1 st marriage	3	B.A	Mashhad	housewife	Professor University	Iranian	1983
Nahid	61	Divorced	3	B.A	Tehran	Social worker	—————	British	1981
Parva	58	2 nd	2	PhD	Tehran	professor at	Professor	British	1979

		marriage				University	University		
Roya	47	1 st marriage	3	B.A	Tehran	accountant	Computer engineer	Iranian	1989
Laleh	46	1 st marriage	1	B.A	Tabriz	Beauty shop owner	Civil engineer	Iranian	1993
Ahmad	50	1 st marriage	2	M.S	Tehran	Computer engineer	Computer engineer	Iranian	1985
Homa	51	1 st Marriage	1	M.A	Tehran	Dentist	Electronic engineer	British	1987
Farid	49	1 st marriage	2	B.A	Tehran	IT Engineer	Pizza shop owner	Iranian	1994
Zari	52	1 st marriage	2	M.A	Tehran	psychologist	Civil engineer	Iranian	2002
Farib	52	1 st marriage	2	M.D.	Tehran	Eye Specialist	Urologist	Iranian	1983
Sharz	45	1 st marriage	2	M.A	Abadan	accountant	accountant	Iranian	1993
Mona	50	1 st marriage	2	PhD	Tehran	Professor University	Bank Manager	Iranian	2001
Mehr	71	1 st marriage	3	B.A	Tehran	retired	-----	Iranian	1982
Shagh	42	1 st marriage	2	B.A	Tehran	Practice Manager	Dentist	Iranian	1990
Elhan	48	1 st marriage	3	B.A	Shiraz	Manager	Business-man	Iranian	1983
Dokhi	72	1 st marriage	2	PhD	Tehran	Retired	Professor University	Iranian	1982
Farah	43	1 st marriage	2	M.S	Tehran	Lawyer	Air-space engineer	Iranian	1995
Biti	50	1 st marriage	2	PhD	Tehran	Dentist	Dentist	Iranian	1986

Nineteen second generation Iranian migrant women participated in this research. They were all Muslim except two, one who converted from Islam to Christianity, and the other participants was Baha'i.

Table 4.2: Participant's biographical data of second generation

Name	Age	Marital Status	No. of Children	Education	Place of Birth	Occupation	Husband's Occupation	Husband's Nationality
Bahar	24	Married	0	B.A	UK	Student	Business m	Iranian
Lila	20	Single	0	B.A	UK	student	-----	-----
Elahe	28	Married	2	B.A	UK	Housewife	Shop owner	Iranian
Nazanin	31	Married	2	M.S	Tehran	Housewife	Engineer	Iranian
Nazli	20	Single	0	B.A	UK	Student	-----	-----
Kiana	18	Single	0	A level	UK	Student	-----	-----
Marjan	22	Single	0	B.A	UK	Computer engineer	-----	-----
Anali	27	Single	0	M.S	UK	IT Engineer	-----	-----
Marziel	20	Married	0	B.A	UK	Interior designer	Computer engineer	Iranian
Donya	18	Single	0	A level	UK	Student	-----	-----
Sonia	22	Married	0	M.S	Abadan	Student	Shop manager	Iranian
Arezoo	18	Single	0	A level	Shiraz	Student	-----	-----
Parisa	26	Single	0	M.S	UK	Lawyer	-----	-----
Atoosa	21	Single	0	H.N.C	Tehran	Student	-----	-----
Sima	22	Single	0	H.N.C	Tehran	Student	-----	-----
Siana	21	Single	0	B.A	Tehran	Student	-----	-----
Sara	22	Single	0	B.A	UK	Accountant	-----	-----
Anahid	33	Single	0	PhD	Tehran	Dentist	-----	-----
Sogol	25	Married	0	B.A	Germany	Nurse	Civil engineer	British

In May 2009, I conducted a pilot study of the interview schedule with six Iranian migrant women living in different cities around the UK. The findings of this pilot study provided me with an opportunity to remove ambiguous questions, as far as possible, from the interview schedule. This empirical work has been conducted to discover the Iranian migrant women's perceptions and interpretations of cultural identity, for example, gender roles and some of the reasons for their migration. The pilot interviews represented other themes or sub-themes which were also relevant to the research topic and addressed by

the study, for instance, questions about marital status satisfaction and about belonging to the homeland and host society.

Interviews started on 6th August 2009 and finished on 21st December 2009. As mentioned above, interviews were conducted with 19 first generation and 19 second generation Iranian migrant women (mother and daughter pairs), in the participant's homes. The interviews were done separately, without the presence of any third party, firstly, to avoid one respondent influencing the replies of the other, and secondly, I considered it would be best for second generation women to conduct an individual interview, so that they could convey their experiences and describe their viewpoints more honestly. In addition, the participants were assured that the information they provided would be treated in complete confidence.

All interviews were tape recorded, with the exception of one case. In that case the respondent declined to have the interview recorded; hand written notes replaced the tape recorder. Every interview was completed in one session and did not require return visits. Interviews with the first generation participants lasted on average one and a half to two hours each, and each interview with the second generation lasted between 45 minutes and one hour.

Using a tape-recorder was useful for several reasons: it enabled eye contact and provided a detailed record, so that vital information was not overlooked. It also permitted me to translate accurately from Persian to English for writing up. The eye contact provided better understanding of falsity or truthfulness of a subject. Using the tape recorder has helped me to build a coherent picture of the respondents.

Robson (2002) explains that the internal validity of qualitative research is subject to various threats, for example, a risk that data collection may be incomplete or inaccurate, respondent bias and researcher bias. I used a tape recorder in order to increase the accuracy and comprehensiveness of the data collected. Notes were written to further complement the recorded interview. This was necessary as the respondents sometimes expressed views after the tape recorder had been switched off. I wrote my notes after returning home rather than in front of the interviewee, because I did not want to put the

respondents at risk of embarrassment or worrying about the consequences of the research.

Robson (2002) highlights that participants' bias may occur, for example, because of a desire to please the interviewer by providing information which, in the participant's view the researcher may wish to hear. Researcher bias generally means that the researcher's assumptions may influence the outcome of the research (Robson, 2002: 102). To minimise bias, transcribing enables readers to have access to check the data. Re-reading and counting occurrences of phrases help to ensure that our interferences are not reflected in the data. Also, by considering and comparing the information gathered from the interviews with previous literature, documents and researches, this minimised the aforementioned problems thus ensuring internal validity.

In order to develop the constructive validity of my research, I have also utilised various sources of evidence. Besides conducting informal and formal interviews, I was able to gather information about Iranian migrant lifestyles, work, leisure time and attitudes through observation and short conversations when taking part in Iranian activities in different cities in the UK. Other sources include previous research about migrant women, different books and articles (English and Persian language) about migratory movement, and the Internet.

Sampling and Gaining Access to the Participants

To obtain a representative sample of Iranian women I needed to have access to an official record which lists the demographic information of all eighteen to seventy year old first and second generation Iranian women in the UK. The record at the Home Office shows the total population of Iranians in the UK, but it is not clear where they live and who they are. This meant that I was unable to determine the level of their education or their social and economic status. Besides, being among migrants whose lives have been shaped by traumatic experiences which often converts them into people who 'do not trust each other and do not talk freely' (Hunt, 2008: 3), increasing the complexity of gaining access to the adequate sample.

Due to absence of statistics on the number of Iranian women in the UK, I personally experienced difficulties in gaining access to my research interviewees. Then, I finally decided to contact my participants through utilising snowball sampling in different cities in England. Snowball sampling is a special non-probability method used when the desired sample characteristic is rare or there is no suitable list of the population we are studying (Creswell 2003; Seale and Filmer 1998). A few potential participants will be interviewed and asked whether they know of any individuals with characteristics and knowledge that will be valuable to the study (Patton 1990; Neuman 1997; Wiersma 2000; Gobo 2007). Snowball sampling is a tool for choosing participants and locating information-rich cases. While snowball sampling can cause lower search costs, it comes at the expense of introducing bias because the technique itself reduces the likelihood that the sample will represent a good cross section from the population (Patton 1990; Wiersma 2000).

Snowball sampling was used for this research as the Iranian migrants are very wary of talking to people they don't know, particularly, other Iranians, for the fear of information being passed to the authorities back in Iran. Many of these migrants have close families back in Iran and would not want to cause any problems for themselves or their relatives just because they made some remark in an interview, especially due to the present political and social climate in Iran. It was very difficult for me to access respondents without acquaintance. I therefore felt that this type of sampling would be appropriate because I wanted to make sure that it led me to as many respondents, between the ages of eighteen and seventy, who are UK residents, as possible within the time frame of the research.

As a researcher I was aware of this situation; I tried to mobilise my personal human networks to access participants throughout the fieldwork. First, some connecting agencies to mediate between me as an interviewer and interviewees in diverse setting were established. Second, I described the main concern and purpose of my study and main participants' characteristics required to the connecting agencies and asked them to introduce me to relevant respondents who were willing to take part in the research through face to face interview. They made considerable efforts to provide me with women whose situations matched my research aims. Despite all their efforts, I faced resistance from some of the potential migrant women which I later uncovered; their main

difficulty was suspicion of me. As Fink suggests 'the authoritarian nature of the political system and the atmosphere of fear and repression that envelope the country of origin, creates a situation whereby the primary lens is suspicion and mistrust.' (Fink, 2001:129)

However, the power of personal networks for effective accessibility to the respondents in the research was confirmed, given the fact that I could recruit 38 participants in a relatively short space of time.

Although snowball sampling should lead to a lower research cost, this has not been so in my case, due to travelling and accommodation expenses. The majority of the participants in my research do not live in my local community, therefore making it necessary, at times, to travel up to 300 miles to conduct an interview.

The sample included in this study consisted of first generation and second generation middle-class Iranian migrant women between the ages of eighteen and seventy who have been resident in the UK from anywhere between 7 to 35 years. Some of the participants started arriving in the UK from the early 1970's with the intention of achieving a higher level of education and upon completion returning to Iran to work. However, this was not always the case; for example, some got married, worked and raised a family in the UK.

Practical Problems

The main obstacle throughout this research has been the existing political situation in Iran. For instance, respondents were very reluctant to express their views as freely as one might hope. This is due to the fact that there are many informants who operate outside of Iran and they would pass the names of any political activists to the Iranian embassy in the host country. This makes people very apprehensive of whom they talk to as any criticism made against the present regime and the supreme leader is dealt with most severely. This punishment handed out could be the loss of socio-economic position, imprisonment, torture, and even execution. This is of particular concern to those migrants who spend their holidays in, and have close relatives still living in, Iran.

I had difficulty gaining some of the participants' trust, even though I assured them that all responses would be confidential and they would remain anonymous. This lack of trust

is due to the fact that some of the respondents were either asylum seekers or had been classified as being political activists.

Generally the participants agreed to me using a tape recorder during the interview. However there was one exception. During one of the interviews the respondent's father came into the room and asked me to stop recording the interview even though the respondent herself had agreed to the interview being taped. This is despite the fact that the respondent's father is a friend of my husband and knows us well. I did ask why he wanted me to stop recording but he would not give me a reason. He did agree that I could take notes for the remainder of the interview.

There were other problems too. One of the respondents, introduced through a friend of mine, initially seemed very keen to take part in the research and appeared to have no problems with an Iranian carrying out the interview. On that basis, I contacted her and made an appointment to see her at her house in Milton Keynes.

When I arrived she appeared very apprehensive and I began to wonder if she now regretted agreeing to do the interview. This respondent asked me if I were on a scholarship or being sponsored from Iran. I explained that I am self-funded and reassured her about the confidentiality of the research materials. The interview with this lady and her daughter went well and they were both very pleased with the outcome of the interview. On the strength of how well the interview had gone and the fact that the respondent had come to trust me, she said that one of her friends would do the interview providing this friend could see the questions first. I agreed and was given the phone number of the friend on the understanding that this lady would speak to her friend about the research and the interview. When I called the friend to make an appointment she appeared angry that I had her phone number in the first place. She said that she had seen the questions and that they were very personal and couldn't see how these questions would help me with my research, therefore was refusing to do an interview.

The long duration of the data collection was mainly due to the utilisation of 'snowball' sampling technique. I considered this technique the best as I believe it can provide as many participants as possible. The participants were introduced to me through friends and family. Not all who had initially agreed to the interview actually took part. For

example, after travelling for four hours to meet one of the participants, she didn't even have the courtesy to open the door when I finally arrived at her house. When I later enquired why, she just said that she did not want to do the interview. I am still puzzled and disappointed that she couldn't let me know before I made the journey.

During an interview with one of the younger respondents, aged 20, two of her friends arrived unexpectedly. I asked whether it would be possible to conduct the interview without the presence of her friends, but she said that she was happy for her friends to be there as they knew all about her life. This was far from ideal, as in the presence of her friends the respondent was not taking the interview seriously. I pointed out that if she really was as bored as she appeared, we could always do the interview at another time. She did apologise and agreed that her behaviour was far from appropriate for an interview. We rearranged the interview for a couple of days later and this time the interview went very well.

Conducting informal interviews provided a friendlier atmosphere, one which created a closer relationship between me and respondents. At the same time, that position affected participants, who did not become accustomed to considering a 'conversation' to be 'research' (Belenky, 1997: 114). This feminist form of interviewing affected my participants in this study. A friendly informal conversation about the migration process and gender roles is a way to explore what a female migrant does. At times my respondents were not relaxed and satisfied because our chat did not seem like an interview. Some of them stopped in mid-sentence to ask, 'Is this really what you want to know?' 'Are you sure my story is helping you?' In some cases, just after ending an interview and turning off the tape recorder, a respondent told me, 'I hope that was useful', or 'I hope that was what you needed for your study'. They had expected to be faced with different questions from a researcher. Once the participants acknowledged the differences between my feminist style of interviewing and their expectations of research, they felt satisfied.

On two occasions, two first generation women who I had already interviewed promised me to arrange a meeting with their daughters. I waited two or three weeks for their call, yet when I called up they did apologise and said that their daughters refused my request. I asked their mothers about the reason for rejection; both of them told me that firstly,

their daughters had no free time and, secondly they thought doing an interview is boring. As a result of the non interviews of the second generation, I omitted the original first generation data collection. I proceeded to schedule two other sets of interviews with first and second generation Iranian women to complete the data set.

Ethical Consideration in the Research

Researching any form of human behavior, the researcher needs to observe certain ethical issues (McKinney 2007; Seale *et al.*, 2007). A social researcher often requires personal information from participants, 'hence the respondents must be informed that trust and confidentiality' will be involved in all parts of the study (Babbie, 2007: 62). Bulmer (1999) explains that researchers have to 'act in such a way as to preserve interviewees' rights and integrity as human beings' (Bulmer, 1999: 3). It is also important to accurately inform respondents about the nature of the research topic and explain to them that participating in the study is on a voluntary basis (Babbie 2007; Seale *et al.*, 2007). In this regard, I provided the participants with information about the research, such as the main objectives and my own identity as a social researcher. I utilised an information sheet in English and translated it into Persian for those who required me to do so.

Confidentiality and anonymity are also an important ethical issue in research (Kvale 1996; Mason 1996; Christians 2000). Participants were asked to sign a consent form, which also informed them that all data would be processed with anonymity and confidentiality and would be kept at a secure place. Moreover, I informed the interviewees that I was collecting data for my PhD which was not sponsored by any organizations or institutes from Iran or the UK. It was anticipated that the participants would be very suspicious about my background and possibly defensive in terms of their well-being, for fear that I was connected in some way to the government of Iran. The interviews were conducted in private on a one to one basis. This was to ensure confidentiality at all times.

As participation in this study was on voluntary basis, it was made clear that participants would not be under any pressure or constraint if they wished to withdraw from the study at any stage of data collection. Permission to use a tape recorder was also requested from participants, and where this was declined notes were taken. The guarantee of

confidentiality and anonymity has been ensured by the use of pseudonyms and number codes rather than the participants' real names. Also, to show appreciation of their participation in my research, I offered to inform them of the research's finding and results.

The ethical approval process mentioned above is one dimension of ethics in qualitative research, referred to as 'procedural ethics' (Gillam and Guillemin, 2004: 263-265) which involves approval from a relevant ethics committee. The second dimension of ethics is 'ethics in practice' which occurs during research. In qualitative, in-depth interviewing the researcher wants participants to explain about their own personal life. This can sometimes result in the information gathered to be of an unpredictable nature (Gillam and Guillemin, 2004: 263-265). Therefore, I planned how to conduct the interviews in different situations, for example, should I carry on with the interview, if I felt that a respondent became uncomfortable with the way the interview was going?

Reflexivity in the Fieldwork

Reflexivity is a crucial part of any study, which I used through out my research, especially when designing the interview schedule, gathering information, data analysis and the writing up stages. Robson explains reflexivity as 'the process of researchers reflecting upon their actions and values during their research (e.g. in producing data and writing accounts) and the effects that they may have' (2002: 172).

Before undertaking this research, my previous studies involved both male and female respondents. All of these took place in Iran and quantitative methods were utilised to conduct all of them. Thus, the first major challenge for me was to increase my knowledge of qualitative research. The key difference with qualitative research is the potential to offer 'a more human, less mechanical relationship' between the researcher and the participants (Fonow and Cook, 1991:10). An 'emotional intimacy' can be achieved when there is little trace of hierarchical system between the researcher and the respondents (Fonow and Cook, 1991:10). This is recommended by Acker, *et al.*, 1991, Miller and Glassner 1998, Mies 1999 and Oakley 1999 amongst others. At the same time, it was also essential for me to reflect on my own role in order to address any biased views that may result from my social standing. I realised that I needed to be as objective

as possible during the interviews, as participants in this study (particularly first generation) and myself, had shared aspects of life experiences and some of its associated constraints and challenges.

My own life experiences, opinions and beliefs played an important role in shaping my research process; from the choice of my research topic to decisions on how to collect the data and how to display the findings. It is important to note that my personal experiences, being both an Iranian woman and a migrant woman, led me to choose this topic. Like many Iranians, I had a religious upbringing, rooted in Islam's shariah law. I am a Muslim, as are my parents, and having knowledge of this religion helped in the research field in terms of conducting interviews with traditional Muslim women. Although Islam is a diverse religion which includes a range of practices, I can claim that I have a basic knowledge of the religion.

In terms of social position, I have experienced a fortunate educational upbringing, having attended good elementary and high-schools (in the private sector). I then attended an elite state university in Tehran. I have had the financial resources through which to pursue a degree as well as post-degree qualifications. My father, uncles, brothers and cousins all have post-graduate qualifications in different fields such as engineering, medicine, accounting, science and so on. In terms of location, we were living in the middle-class area where many of our neighbors had educated children studying and living abroad. Thus, my biography is that of a member of a well-educated, middle-class group.

Many of the first generation participants were middle-class, whilst a few of them were upper-class. A high number of the respondents completed their higher education at different universities both in Iran and in the UK, with a few gaining a PhD in different fields. As middle-class, well-educated, migrant Iranian women, the participants and myself shared the same socio-political background and encountered similar challenges after the 1979 revolution. This made it easier for them to talk about political changes, life experiences, restrictions imposed on women and other difficulties that we all faced.

One of the important problems in conducting the interview is to be aware of creating a 'mutual understanding' between interviewer and participants (Miller and Glassner,

1998:100). When there are some differences between the researcher and informants, in terms of education, social status and so on, these difficulties may appear to be creating an 'emotional intimacy' (Fonow and Cook, 1991: 10). Of course, there were some differences between interviewees and myself, for example, in our dress code, religious practices, education and political positions. Despite our common gender, national and racial identity, I paid attention to the shared points which is essential in data collection and data analysis. I tried not to reveal any inner disagreement. The main principles of the feminist approach place an emphasis on diminishing the boundaries between researchers and respondents (Reinharz 1992). I treated everyone with respect and equality, and sought to establish a reciprocal relationship.

Being Iranian and studying Iranians has advantages because we can share a common state of being from the same country, speak with the same language and know a similar amount about the socio-political atmosphere of the same country. I observed that this assumption was made once trust had been established with participants. Also, being a woman and studying women is appropriate because we share the same situation (Westkott 1979, quoted in Acker, *et al.*, 1991). In the interview situation, a non-hierarchical relationship was possible between participants and myself by appealing to our everyday experiences as women: as daughters, wives and mothers in fairly traditional family. However, there are disadvantages as well. For instance, some interviewees were suspicious of my motives. They stated that questions were too personal and asked for a lot of information. This was despite the fact that those who introduced these respondents reassured them that I was carrying that research without any government backing.

In order to establish trust with the participants of the study, I shared some of my own life experiences with the respondents. During the interviews, the participants (mainly the first generation) were interested in my situation and the reason behind carrying out this research. They were particularly curious as to how I coped with being a research student, especially as a woman in her mid-forties, with two young children and two elderly parents in a foreign country. I explained that it has certainly been a challenge doing this research whilst acclimatising to my new surroundings as well as being a mother and caring for to my elderly parents.

I feel that by sharing my own experiences with the respondents, we achieved some 'emotional intimacy' (Fonow and Cook, 1991: 10). They also respected the fact that I am an Iranian woman working to highlight their struggles and difficulties faced during their migration process and establishing a life in the host country. This is in complete contrast to other studies where I have interviewed male respondents, where there was no such rapport.

It was not as easy to establish such trust with the second generation respondents as it had been with the first generation. Firstly, most of them were not old enough to know about the consequences of the 1979 revolution and the barriers which were created for women; secondly, they were much younger than me, so found answering some of the questions quite difficult. Thirdly, my position as a researcher created the expected hierarchies when interviewing them. However, in spite of these problems, an 'emotional intimacy' between the respondents and myself grew during our interviews. For example, I talked about my teenage years and how I met my husband for the first time, how I became familiar with political movements in Iran and briefly explained about my experiences when I was the same age as they are now. I found most of them willing to do the interviews, talk about their experiences and they were extremely welcoming despite the age difference. They saw me as a knowledgeable person who has in-depth information about their homeland. They often said that they knew little about Iran, and also believed that their short visit to Iran in the summer holidays did not present them with an opportunity to learn more.

If the respondents asked me about my religious beliefs or political views, I tried to answer as honestly as possible, taking care that my responses would not have any negative impact on myself or my family.

It seems that, in using qualitative methods, a researcher is identified as an insider who could investigate the surrounding of subjects through the viewpoint of the people who are being studied (Harding 1987; Smith 1988). Wolf (1996) explained that being a research insider does not necessarily mean that the researcher is going to produce a comprehensive collection of information as a result of the research. She also mentioned that being a research outsider does not make it harder to have access to certain information. Therefore, this 'makes a compelling case for multiple perspectives, in that

each researcher, because of her positionality vis-à-vis the community under study received important but different information.’ (Wolf, 1996: 15)

Tinker and Armstrong (2008) have argued that ‘outsider status’ enable the researcher to ask questions that a researcher of the same ethnicity or religion may not have felt free to ask (2008: 57). This could indeed be true for democratic societies, but in third world countries, with their traditional culture, observing social phenomenon as a research outsider would only provide you with the tip of the iceberg. My own experience of leaving my homeland, besides sharing the same language, history and socio-political background, created a convincing environment in which participants shared their life stories openly. However, some scholars (for instance, Young 2004; Tinker and Armstrong 2008) have argued that conducting research as an insider could be associated with this assumption that the researcher is aware of the details of the participants’ experiences and, therefore avoid providing complete answers. Indeed, at the starting point of my study, I experienced this problem; the participants told me ‘as an Iranian woman researcher you should know better than me’. To clarify my position, I had to explain their important role in my study and emphasized that, although I am aware of certain events, there was still a need for them to explain their experiences further to provide better understanding for my British supervisors who knew little or nothing about Iranian migrant women and their problems.

However, as noted in foregoing sections, women in Iran have had to abide by Islamic rules and regulations. It is important that a social researcher reveals the causes of a social phenomenon such as migration. I observe myself as a research insider in that I am a woman, a migrant, a wife and an Iranian.

Data Analysis

I analysed the replies to the questions qualitatively by systematically looking for similarities and differences among the answers (Berg 1995). For the purposes of this research, I used two methods for analysis of the data from in-depth interviews: meaning condensation and meaning categorisation (Kvale 1996; Lee 1999). Meaning condensation is a ‘synopsis of the meaning expressed by the interviewee, as well as a diminution of large interview texts into more succinct formulation’ (Kvale, 1996:192).

This method involves a reduction in data, while expressing the most prominent subjects clearly. I tried to focus on my records and to discover interesting themes. Therefore, I reviewed each respondent's transcript several times. I read across all interviews in order to develop a sense of the entire data set. I identified 'natural meaning units' that gave me an opinion about identifiable issues. The 'natural meaning units' consisted of complete paragraphs, sentence fragments and some parts of passages (Lee 1999). I sorted the translated interviews and put these units into the Nvivo software package which made the collection of potential natural units quite clear.

Meaning categorisation intends to code the information from interviews into simple and clear categories. I coded and generated categories from the interview data, applied various symbols of key words and numbers. Kelle and Seidel (1995) explain that there are two models of code word: 'Codes as heuristic tools and codes as objective, transparent representations of facts' (Seidel, 1995:3). As Seidel and Kelle (1995) suggest, in qualitative data analysis, most code words locate between 'pure objectivist and pure heuristic coding' (Seidel and Kelle, 1995: 14). In practice, I used the code words as a surrogate for the main themes of the interviews, in order to focus the data analysis. To achieve this, I needed to be sure that, every time I used a code word, it could provide an unambiguous example of what was in the transcripts. Also, I identified every single instance which that code word represented. To test a code word's reliability, I examined a code among some different transcripts to discover if there is no ambiguity in the code.

In this study I divided the two generations for the purposes of comparative analysis. This method allowed me to set the factors defining the causes of migration and shifting gender roles among the Iranian migrant women as independent subjects, so that making comparisons between first and second generations was possible.

Conclusion

This chapter describes the research process in detail. This started with an articulation of reasons for choosing this topic for my thesis. It was followed by a discussion of the historical motives and background of Iranians in the UK. The research key questions were then presented, followed by the reasons for choosing the qualitative methodology.

There was a consideration of the epistemological perspective of research in the following section, where this research attempted to reveal the Iranian women migrants' lives. An emphasis on a postmodern feminist approach emerged in terms of how decisions to migrate related to different social structures. As this chapter shows, there is an interconnection between epistemology, methodology and ontology of the research. It is worth noting that being a feminist researcher has affected all these issues.

This chapter provided the opportunity to describe the research process and put the related issues into a methodological context. The noticeable issue was the researcher's position how far the researcher's own gender, education, age, and class affected the research. This chapter argues that, in terms of understanding social phenomena in ethnic groups, in particular within traditional culture, being a research insider is helpful.

In the next chapter, there is a discussion about the findings. I have selected three comprehensive themes: (i) motives of migration; (ii) shifting away from traditional roles and seeking new roles and rights; and (iii) intergenerational differences in the experiences of a migration process, as the initial points of starting the interviews. However, upon analysing the transcripts of the first five tape-recorded interviews, a number of new sub-themes emerged. The answers to the open-ended questions and the discussions that evolved from them have been described in the following chapter.

CHAPTER FIVE

RESEARCH FINDINGS

MOTIVES TO LEAVE THE HOMELAND

Introduction

The aim of this chapter is to explore the migration motives of the first generation Iranian women who are resident in the UK. It will highlight the experiences of the migrant women and chart the reasons for their migration. It will discuss how the consequences of the Islamic revolution and the socio-political climate of Iran have a significant contribution in shaping their decisions to leave.

As I noted in Chapter Three, there are two types of migration; those who migrate involuntarily and those who migrate voluntarily. The categories are based on the premise that people leave their homeland as a result of political pressure or in order to reach economic aspirations (Crosby 2006; Castles 2004). But the work of Lammervo (2005) and Toolo & Shakibae (2000) show us that there are different forms of involuntary migration, for instance, escaping political persecution, social restraints or family pressures, and voluntary migrants have different types of aspirations, such as seeking a better life or educational facilities. It will be explained in this chapter that these two types of migratory movement can be interlinked with respect to the socio-political situation of Iran.

As shown in Chapter Three, there are factors at individual, family and societal levels which are associated with women's migration. This chapter will firstly deal with the different motives and the circumstances of the first generation Iranian women that led these individuals to migrate to the UK. Secondly, the individuals' decision to live in the UK, which is not always the same motive for leaving their country of origin, will be examined. I will explore why those who came to England for continuing their studies never went back to their homeland. I will also discuss how the social-political situation of Iran is one factor that encourages people to stay in the host country.

A- Motives for Migration

Answers to questions about the factors which motivated their migration from Iran to the UK revealed that there are a variety of motives, such as anti-women laws, political repression, social constraints and religious constraints. It is worth adding that one cannot talk about this migration process without considering the 1979 revolution in Iran. The Islamic revolution made an important contribution to the immigration flow to different countries, for example, United States, Canada, Germany, Italy, Australia and United Kingdom (Bozorgmehr *et al.*, 1996).

In patriarchal societies such as Iran with an Islamic government (as discussed in Chapter Two and Three), women may decide to migrate to escape restrictions and inequalities in the homeland, seeking greater autonomy, self-confidence and social status in the host countries. Gender relations and hierarchies within the family and society in Iran mean that men very often hold power over their female counterparts (see pp 70-72). The work of Grieco and Boyd (2003) and Pedraza (1991) shows that, in this context, the family determines women's rights and roles; this could provide an incentive to migration or, on the other hand, it could be a disincentive to migration (Grieco 2003; Pedraza 1991).

The results of my research suggest that migration can be the consequence of a combination of social and political reasons. There is interplay between different motives for migration, and I have used these areas to organise the chapter to provide a better understanding for readers. One of the most important factors behind Iranian women's migration is the existence of harsh social laws against women in Iran. I will start these discussions by looking at the narrated experiences of my interviewees who were affected by anti-women laws in Iran (see Chapter Two).

A-1-Anti-women laws as a factor of making the decision to migrate

One of the major factors which emerged during my interview discussions with the Iranian migrant women related to the sufferings they endured as a result of the state's policies towards women. Women were considered to be second class citizens and were treated as such. I will start by considering Fariba's case; a 52 year old woman who came to the UK in 1983. An eye specialist, running her own clinic, she suffered family

pressure, and explained that her reason for immigration was due to her very difficult married life and the harsh social laws against women in Iran:

I decided to emigrate from Iran due to problems that I experienced during my marriage. My husband had many relationships with other women, and used to spend most of his time with them; when he did come home he completely ignored me and constantly said that it was my fault that first child was a girl. Gradually, my children grew up and were immensely successful in their studies. Their father did not take any responsibility for them, and only spent his time working or having fun with his friends. He never took us anywhere for our leisure time. I heard about the autonomy of women in England and its supportive laws for vulnerable families, in particular, for children. I decided that my daughter should not have to endure the same difficulties as I did. This was an opportunity for her find her self-confidence and lives in a society where the law actually protected women. She had become very fragile and distraught because of her father's disrespectful behaviour and my weakness towards applying for a divorce. Therefore I decided to leave Iran in order for my children to have a happier future, and also for me to enjoy more freedom. I asked my husband for a divorce on many occasions, he did eventually agree, but said that after divorce the children would stay with him and, I could not have custody. My main reason to emigrate was to escape the Iranian laws against women (Fariba, aged 52).

Jolly and Reeves (2005), note that the social pressures, restrictions and lack of freedom in the homeland, are strong factors to promote some women to migrate. These issues have been raised by the participants in this research who said that their migration was significantly influenced by the social problems in society and in family. One of them is Sharzad, who is an accountant. She indicated that her main reason to emigrate from Iran was to 'escape from a severely restrictive social and political situation'. She also emphasised:

We did not have any financial problems. I had a good job with good salary, and my husband was happy with his job, as well. As the years went by, we found that the political and social environment of Iran was going from bad to

worse. We were always nervous and anxious about our children's future. As we have two daughters, the lack of security and oppression of women in my homeland had a significant impact on our decision to migrate to the UK (Sharzad, aged 45).

Islamic values have been a part of the Iranian culture at different levels for almost fourteen hundred years, but the 1979 revolution created a new government with new rules and instituted controls over women's appearance, women's conduct and mobility outside of the home (Osanloo, 2009: 38-39). This data suggests that women in Iran were constantly worried about themselves or their daughters' future life. Women are also aware of the existence of patriarchal system in the society where men determine the duties of women and look upon them as second class citizens.

In patriarchal societies (see Chapter Three) laws tend to favour men. For example, the law in Iran permits men to have four permanent and as many temporary wives as they wish. A man as a father, a brother, a husband and a son can easily make a decision for a woman. It is very hard for a woman who is in a difficult marriage to apply for a divorce because she would have to provide evidence to a court. Men, on the other hand, can initiate divorce at will. Thus it seems that, when women move to the host countries, they enjoy greater freedom and make their own decisions for their future lives.

Fariba referred to her 'wretched' life and the reasons for staying in that situation. There is a very close family tie between this mother and her children; she could not have gone through with divorcing her husband as under Islamic law he would easily get custody of the children. Furthermore, he could have even stopped her from seeing the children, something which was totally unacceptable to her, but about which she would have been powerless to do anything. After the revolution, Islamic laws governed every aspect of life in Iran and women faced increased restrictions.

Although we can track the rise of women's rights movements in Iran, they still face repression at the hands of religious groups, to such an extent that this has led some of the most prominent female lawyers and journalists to leave the country after the revolution. The new situation for these women was filled with feelings of uncertainty. On the one hand, they were sad to be away from their homeland, family and friends, yet on the other

hand they could see that a better opportunities and facilities were available for their children outside Iran.

In the months leading up to the 1979 revolution, the clergy promised that there would be more freedom for people, in particular, for women. But within a very short period of time, after the revolution, the authorities did not keep any of their promises. For example, in the early days after the revolution it was not compulsory for women to wear a hejab (covering up from head to toe). But this changed very quickly, as the government brought a law in to make the wearing of the hejab compulsory. Women were not allowed in their place of employment if they didn't observe the new law. This ruling was to be observed at schools, high schools, universities, and all other public areas.

There were other changes too; women no longer had equal rights to men, in marriage or divorce. The age of criminal responsibility has changed from 18 to 9 for girls and 15 for boys. Men's recompense is twice as much as that of women's in cases of accidental injury or death. Inheritance laws favour men as their share of inheritance is twice as much as women would receive. With all these inequalities, more and more women started to leave the country, in search of a better life and a more hopeful future for their children. In some cases the migration actually improved the marital status of some of these women and changed their husbands' attitudes towards home and family. This could of course have something to do with the matrimonial laws in the host country and the fact that women's rights are enforced.

A-2-The impact of socio-political factors on making decision to migrate

The issue of anti-women laws, as the above interviews extracts show, is just one of many factors that mean that women in Iran do have limited rights, freedom or support from the government. With regards to socio-political circumstances and shariah law in Iran, some educated women, such as professors, doctors and so on, face difficulties in their everyday life, which encourage them to leave the country.

The narrative of one highly educated and successful woman in the academic environment in Iran indicated that one of the reasons to leave Iran was 'to escape from the social restraints and anti women laws'. She stated:

We came here because of a mixture of reasons. Firstly, an essential reason for moving from Iran was the fact that I didn't want my son to do military service. Had my son been 14 years of age or older, he could not have left the country. The Iran-Iraq war was on at the time, and going to military service was compulsory. There was a high chance that he would have died in the war. We did not want to put his life at risk, that's why we sent my son to his uncle's house in the USA and he started school in a new country.

Secondly, the politico-social situation in Iran changed radically after the revolution. Women were considered to be second class citizens and were treated as such. It became increasingly difficult for me to go to work as a direct result of these changes. For example, the guard at the university (an illiterate woman), always criticised the way I wore my hejab. Although I was the head of the department they did not show me any respect and were extremely impolite... I couldn't tolerate the working conditions... [Appeared to be sad]...I loved my job, my colleagues...but after the revolution and the Cultural Revolution in universities, everything changed for my family and me...Finally I decided to take early retirement; which proved to be quite a difficult task. Eventually after a year struggling with the administration office I received my retirement document. [Gita: Why struggle? Dokhi: Firstly I was not old enough to be considered for early retirement and secondly I had not put in 30 years of service. I was desperate to retire].

Thirdly, we faced social constraints and the oppression of women in society, and my daughter was young, highly successful in her studies, and I wanted the best for her future life. There was no light for the future (Dokhi, aged 72).

Dokhi referred to the socio-political climate which existed during their academic life in Iran. In 1980, one year after Islamic revolution, all the universities were closed for three years. After opening, the Islamic laws and regulations governed all aspect of the

academic areas, in the same way as governing all aspects of everyday life. Both men and women faced great difficulties in carrying on with their jobs. The lecturers, researchers and students had to observe very strict conditions imposed on them by the regime. Many professors from different universities across Iran applied for early retirement. A great number of students, who were supporters of different political organizations, were arrested and sentenced to long-term imprisonment or execution. And in addition, this was during the Iran-Iraq war, which affected many young and old people (see Chapter Two).

Dokhi's case shows that lack of respect and support towards women by the state within which she worked, has two negative results. Firstly, she felt undervalued, the authorities didn't appreciate the work she was doing nor did they realise her expertise and the effective work she had done over the past 20 years. Secondly, she was made to feel as though she didn't belong in her homeland any longer.

Dokhi was very politically aware, especially with respect to the position of women in Iran. She was also very concerned about her children's future in such a closed environment. She was anxious about her son having to do military service during the war and her daughter having to endure all the anti-women laws prevalent in Iran. Dokhi said that she knew it would be very difficult for a professional couple at later stages of their careers to leave their homeland. She would miss the position and prestige that her job brought her in her own country. It would be highly unlikely that they would enjoy the same level of remuneration in the host country. Although she was well aware of all the consequences of migration, she decided to leave Iran to escape the socio-political hardship after the revolution.

A- 3- Political affiliation as a factor in migration

Another group of research interviewees consisted of individuals whose decision to leave Iran was as a result of being members of political groups with opposing ideologies to that of the Islamic government. This process was influenced by the government's attack on political opponents whose only crime appears to be lobbying for freedom and liberty. Iranian governments have a long and troubled history of jailing their critics and political opponents on trumped-up criminal charges. A significant number of those arrested

during the current crackdown have previously been imprisoned by the Iranian authorities (both before and after the revolution).

A key motive for migration among these interviewees was their political opinion. This could result in long-term imprisonment or other severe punishment. It is worth adding that they were perceived threats and that danger depended on their circumstances and their personal experiences. One participant, an accountant in her mid-forties said that her reason for migration was due to the political repression during 1980s. She explained that:

I did not choose to emigrate from Iran. It was my parents' idea. They said that one of our relatives, who were residents in Europe, had a son who was looking for a wife and my parents thought that we would be a good match. They asked me if I would be interested in talking to him. I didn't object, so my parents introduced us. We got engaged after a few conversations over the phone and seeing each others photos. A short while after that, we got married and left Iran. It is worth adding that, after I had migrated to Europe, I heard that the authorities arrested some of my best friends for their opposing political beliefs. My parents told me that there was a very strong possibility of me also being arrested had I stayed in Iran. After 28 years, they are still extremely happy with their choice of husband for me (Roya, aged 47).

Roya claimed that it was highly likely that she would have been arrested and imprisoned for her political beliefs. Her narrative presents her as a woman who did not suffer any political punishment, but rather, shows her as an individual whose family, being extremely worried about their circumstances at the time, made the right decision at the right time.

It is quite possible that Roya had other aspirations, for example, to stay with like-minded friends and continue her studies in her homeland, but her family's decision to leave Iran could be taken as a choice which any voluntary migrant can make. It is not surprising that people with political involvement are advised, mainly by their families, that they should leave the country. The elderly have many experiences of the history of political

movements in their societies and usually advise their children not to get involved in any political organizations.

In Iran, in the earlier years of the revolution, the atmosphere within schools and universities completely changed. The majority of students became young politicians. All the political organisations held regular meetings, which were very well attended, all over the place. The foundations of these political organisations improved during the first year of the revolution, consequently managing to recruit many members and supporters. Gradually, the government's supporters, in the name of Allah, started to attack the meetings and beat up those who attended them. The opposition groups protested against these attacks, claiming that they too were part of and indeed helped with, the revolution. They asked for their rights to take part in the revolutionary state. Ayatollah Khomeini and his disciples (Ulama=clergies), never accepted the contributions of other groups in the revolution. Consequently, the gap grew between the Islamic group in authority and other groups, some were on the left, some being modern Islamic groups. Some famous people, who were instrumental to the success of the revolution, became enemies of the revolution.

This issue has been related by participants who explained that their migration was influenced by the political problems brought about by sympathisers of opposition groups. The Islamic regime was and remains intolerant and unwilling to accept ways of thinking and behaving that are different to their own. One of these sympathisers is Bitā; a dentist aged 50 who described her motive for migration as follows:

I left Iran 15 years ago. I was in jail for 4 years because I financially supported one of the opposition groups...After my release from prison; I tried hard to leave Iran. I am saying 'Hard' because, at that time, I was prohibited to leave the country for ten years. My husband and I took a risk and made a decision to migrate from Iran and start a new life in a new society. Whilst trying to leave Iran We lost everything; our property and clinic, and we miss all our family and friends who still live in Iran... I was always worried about my future and felt nervous and anxious about what the future held for me...It was a nightmare, and I could not deal with any more consequences of the events mentioned here (Bitā, aged 50).

Farah holds similar opinions as Bitā:

When I decided to leave Iran everything seemed very bleak. I could not see the light at the end of the tunnel and felt that I had no future. After the revolution, many people my age got involved in the political atmosphere and chose an organisation to support. Also at this time, there was an explosion in the publication of books which were banned by the previous regime. Many people rushed to bookshops to buy these books. Little did they realise that the present regime would also ban these books and deal severely with individuals who had possessed one of these books or had even read such materials. The government also passed a law making illegal the activities of organisations which did not agree with the regime's ideology. The members and supporters of these organisations were arrested and severely dealt with. It was an extremely difficult period of time for me. During that time, some of my friends were amongst those arrested. As a result of all of this my family and I decided to emigrate from Iran (Farah, aged 43, lawyer).

It can be considered that the psychological trauma associated with the political organisation's supporters forced them to recognize themselves vulnerable as in such a situation, a mere threat of violence and death would not be underestimated. Indeed, as interviewees explained, since 1980-81, the ruling government have utilized punishment against opposite political groups' prisoners.

The Islamic Penal Code (IPC) in Iran labels opponents *mohareb* (a person or persons waging war against God and Islam) and defines them as follows: 'Any person resorting to arms to cause terror, fear or to breach public security and freedom will be considered as a *mohareb* and to be corrupt on earth' (IFHR 2010). The penalty for being a '*mohareb*' or '*corrupt on earth*' is execution. From the first days of the revolution, many high-ranking officers and politicians who served under the previous regime, faced the death penalty. They were not allowed legal representation when their fate was being decided in the Islamic courts of Iran. This trend has continued to this day and still the defendants do not receive International standards of an impartial court. An individual, who has suffered a long-term prison sentence, does not feel jubilant after being released. This is because they will encounter a lot of difficulties trying to rebuild their lives.

Normally the bail for release is astronomical, for example, the family home could be used as bail. The released person would be under constant surveillance and have to report in on regular basis to an Islamic Guards' station (*Komiteh*).

They would also be forbidden to travel abroad. This restriction could last anywhere from 15 to 20 years. Some of the political prisoners, who were students at various universities, were forbidden to attend university to continue with their studies upon their release. This included political prisoners from various walks of life, for examples, lawyers, whose crime would have been to try and defend one of the political prisoners; doctors, whose crime could be that they associated with a known political activist; directors of companies; even some members of the clergy.

It is not difficult to understand why people would consider migration to get away from such harsh living conditions, and a government that deals most severely with political opposition. Although the migrants missed their relatives and friends and had their homes and other belongings confiscated, they still preferred to leave their homeland.

A- 4- Aspiration for one's children as a factor in migration

My interview data suggest that the future life of the participants' children was an important reason to migrate. Even the parents who were not unhappy with their own lives chose to migrate to secure a brighter life for their children. Aspirations relate to educational, occupational or value-based desires. Some scholars (for example, Solozano 1991; Dandy and Nettelbeck 2002; Marks 2005) have argued that educational achievement and social mobility as key desires and major incentives for migrants. The findings of some studies show that migrant parents hope that their children will attain higher education in response to limited educational opportunities in the host societies (Zhou and Bankston 2001; Lopez 2003).

In answer to the question about motives for migration in this study, one factor explores the extent the migration process effects the future desires of migrant parents. My empirical findings show that in some cases the migratory movement was associated with parents' hopes for their children. In particular, the socio-political avoidance theme

recurred significantly in the first-generation respondents' accounts on the migration narratives and desires. This was the main concern of Farideh, an Iranian migrant woman and 15 out of 19 women I interviewed did mention children's future life as one of their motives to emigrate or as a reason to stay. Elham's decision to migrate to the UK is as follows:

We left for a better future for our three children ...my husband is a civil engineer and ran his own business ...we were happy with our economic situation...my husband knew many different people with different opinions in our neighbourhood; he was aware of their problems and unpleasant events that had happened to them...gradually as the children were growing up, we felt that they could not fully realise their potentials in such a strict socio-political situation as the one prevalent in Iran today...we had heard about many parents whose children had encountered many difficulties while studying at various universities...we were always worried about our children's future...we had three small children and were not sure about their prospects, for example, schooling, university, marriage...my husband and I heard about England and became interested to try a new society with fresh possibilities and opportunities, particularly for our children. We are very happy with our decision, especially as our children are successful and satisfied with their lives in the UK (Elham, aged 48).

The data suggest that children grew up with a great deal of ambivalence about cultural values inside and outside the family. Some families who were not happy with the educational system and social pressure in Iran decided to emigrate to provide a better chance of life for their children. The cases of Elham, Dokhi, Fariba and Sharzad show how their decision to leave was a direct result of their judging the conditions for raising a family in Iran as unacceptable.

Fariba and Sharzad described how schools were trying to catch families out by asking children to raise their hands if their parents drank alcohol at home, which movies they watched, whether the child's mum wore hejab in front of the guests and so on. If the answers were not socially acceptable, for example, parents drinking alcohol, watching satellite movies and the mother doesn't wear a scarf, there could be punishments for both

child and parents. The child would most likely be subject to caning and the parents would be arrested and could face public flogging. The findings of this study explain how the decision to migrate was influenced by the treatment of children at school, in that they were forced to report on their parents. Interviewees felt that children should never be put under such pressures by the authorities. One of the respondents had this to say:

It was a competition between my child's teachers and me over instilling the basic values, for example, the role of religion in a family life, the opinion about Western culture and so many other things. On one hand, I was worried about brain washing at school; on the other hand, I thought if I win the competition, my kids will face difficulties in her future life. My daughter was always curious about my hejab and it was very difficult to explain the details of our beliefs when she was very young... We were in a dilemma about whether to move or not, but finally decided to move (Dokhi, aged 72).

Sharing similar sentiments, Sharzad and Fariba, explained that:

I faced serious challenges raising my children in Iran. This was because teachers would ask the children about our home life. For example, they would ask if I always wore my hejab, if my husband and I carried out our daily prayers, which movies we watched, if females relatives wore the hejab in front of my husband and so on. All these questionings would start the first year of school when the kids are 6/7 years old. I had to constantly remind my children of how they should respond to these questions. This was very difficult for me because as you know children just answer very honestly. I feel that the authorities are taking advantage of children in this manner. For example, if my sister visited and she did not wear her hejab in front of my husband, this would be noted by the teacher against my name as not observing the Islamic rules. This is just one example of the way they would question the children. I could give you many more examples if you wish but I think you understand what I am trying to say (Sharzad, aged 45).

The present regime has tried to abolish all the traditional Iranian celebrations which have no connections with Islam. For example, they tried to abolish the New Year's celebrations, saying that this is not an Islamic event and only

important events in the Islamic calendar should be celebrated. I remember that when my children were at school they were always force fed Islamic ideologies which are contradictory to our family beliefs and way of life. I feel that there is a lot of pressure on children in Iran from the moment they start school and the majority of these children grow up in an ambiguous culture...Even though living abroad has its own difficulties, it is my personal belief that coping with the host society's culture is much easier than coping with the existing Islamic culture in Iran (Fariba, aged 52).

The above narratives highlight Iran's existing regime's willingness in using children against their parents and trying to instil in them Islamic culture only. There may often be a contradiction between what children learn at school and what they learn from their parents as far as culture and traditions are concerned. This data also implies that these Iranian mothers were anxious about the consequences of an Islamic training at schools. All these mothers wished to raise their children with Iranian values and teach them the culture.

My data show that the experiences of migrant women who lived and graduated in Iran, created an environment in which a desire to avoid socio-political challenges was developed. A study of Portes and Rumbaut (2001), which investigated the importance of incentives on second-generation migrants, contributes data in support of my findings. They stated that aspirations for the future life of children 'positively and consistently' affect the parents' decision to migrate (Portes and Rumbaut, 2001: 215).

A major dilemma for the parents is whether they let their children to be controlled by the educational system or try to teach their children the traditional values and culture themselves. According to the data the interviewees can cope with the East-West divide abroad, but they find it impossible to adjust to the new culture being forced on them in their own country. As the above narratives illustrate, the enforcement of an Islamic culture can be a great motive for women to migrate. Indeed, socio-cultural pressures and the cultural divide forced them to leave when they were being treated like second class citizens in their homeland. Migration process could provide the family with the opportunity to live their lives as they would like to, free from an oppressive regime. Although migration is beyond the reach of many people and it is not an easy decision to

make, but one major factor which drives people towards migration is to create an opportunity for a better life for their children.

A-5- Post-divorce stigma as a motivation for women to emigrate from Iran

Cultural constraint was one of the main reasons of migration among divorced women between 50 and 55 years of age. These women explained that, after their divorce, it was extremely difficult for them to carry on living their lives the way they wanted to. Although, they did not face any difficulties within their own family, as divorced women, they were not truly welcomed at parties or at their places of work. They gradually refused to attend friends' parties, and in particular, tried not to attend any wedding parties. Migration was a strategy followed by these women when they divorced. Ypeij (2005) illustrated 'The possibilities for women to take initiatives to migrate are related to local cultural meanings and gender hierarchies in the countries of origin.' (Ypeij, 2005:2)

Two respondents in their mid-sixties, a retired professor and a retired art teacher, who got divorced in Iran and came to England thirty years ago, discussed their views towards migration as a mean to achieve autonomy from restrictions of the patriarchal system in Iran. They explained their experiences in a similar vein:

It was a very difficult period in my life after my divorce and having a baby to look after. I suffered from depression due to relatives' reaction to my divorce. They rebuked me, although they were aware of my private life, and all the trials and tribulations of being in my husband's home. They all wanted me to be patient because of my child. I ignored them and began to seek a better life abroad. Finally, I found an English language school in the UK and that was the starting point for my new life (Nika, aged 55, art teacher).

Sharing similar sentiments, Parvaneh, explained that:

I had terrible experiences after my divorce. Everyone interfered in my life and made decisions for me. I decided to leave Iran to develop a new life in the UK. I was familiar with English culture and language. I knew that I would be able to achieve my independence. I started to study and completed my education and became a professor at university (Parvaneh, aged 58).

There are some expectations and norms in Iranian traditional culture that view women as a member of a family, not as an individual. In fact, social values encourage women to stay in unsympathetic family life and a cruel marriage. Women are discouraged against even thinking about divorce, let alone applying for one, or living alone. This is not to say that women do not apply for divorce or live alone. A small percentage does with the support of the immediate family, but still the society looks down on them. Ypeij (2005) demonstrated 'The social position of divorced women and single mothers is weak. They normally fall back on their families for economic security and are married off again as soon as possible' (Ypeij, 2005: 2-3).

It could be the pressures of society that make women sacrifice their early years of adulthood in order to have a better future for their children and themselves. For Nika and Parvaneh, both from upper-middle class families, moving to a new country was the only way for them to live their lives the way they wanted to without interference from family or judgment from society. The process of migration has provided them with a second chance to make a new life based on their own opinions, and allowed them to have access to socio-cultural freedom. They escaped repression and restrictions on their liberty.

According to interviewees they left their homeland to achieve autonomy and self-confidence. Scholars (e.g. Afshar 2007, Mahdi 1999a) have discussed that Iran is not only a patriarchal society, but is also governed by Islamic laws, that cause various cultural restrictions on women. For example, women are kept within the limits of a particular role as a wife or a mother. It seems that many divorced women in Iran are suffering from depression because of the way family and society treat them. All their friends and relatives try to limit their connection with them. Even though divorce is legal, it is often frowned upon. The society expects women to remain in a difficult marriage and preserve the family ties.

Many women stay in unhappy marriages in order to avoid the stigma associated with a divorced woman. Those who do get divorced either re-marry quite quickly or leave their homeland, mainly to avoid how they are treated in the society after their divorce. The above interviews show that arriving in a new society with a high degree of social and family supportive rights have provided the divorced women with another chance to

rebuild their lives. Ypeij states 'The ambiguity and contradictions within the autochthonous gender discourses that migrant women encountered in the host society may offer space for new interpretations and reconstructions of existing ones' (Ypeij, 2005:10). The data show that these participants were extremely satisfied with the decision to migrate from Iran which other researchers (for example Ypeij) describes in their studies.

A- 6-Cultural Revolution: A factor of increasing migration from Iran

As mentioned in Chapter Two, the Cultural Revolution, which took place in 1980, resulted in an increased rate of migration among professional people. Again, in 2006 there was talk of a second 'Cultural Revolution', with tighter state control over educational bodies, university faculties and the mandatory retirement of experienced lecturers and professors, who might not be fully supporting the present regime. These lecturers and professors would then be replaced with state appointed ones, who support the regime fully. All these restrictions and monitoring have further increased the rate of migration among the talented people.

Despite these restrictions, the participants' narratives present the desire for learning and continuing their education among the first generation migrants. The respondents explained a strong willingness to continue their education despite the Cultural Revolution in Iran. During 1980-1983 all universities were closed and many students at universities or on the last year of high school applied for universities abroad. It seems higher education played an important role in their decision to leave the homeland. Homa's narrative explains her motive to migrate to the UK:

I was a second-year student at Tehran University when the 'Cultural Revolution' happened. The atmosphere at the university was horrible. There were quarrels, hard arguments and even physical violence between Khomeini's supporters and the opposing groups, on a daily basis. These arguments went on and on, some people were injured and there was damage to the lecture rooms and resources at the university. At the time, I wanted to continue my education; but I was a supporter of an opposite group, which made it very

difficult for me to attend my lectures, because of the restriction in place for those who didn't support the regime. Finally, they closed all the universities, in June or July 1980. All the universities were closed for three years. After re-opening, many of the students and professors had left Iran. The atmosphere of the university and departments were not any better than before the closure. I heard that some of my friends were arrested and sentenced to long-term imprisonment or were executed. My family and I decided to leave Iran and I carried on with my education abroad. It was always my desire to be a dentist and I managed to finish my studies and am a qualified dentist. I am pleased with my present situation. I should say that I have never forgotten my friends and their memories (Homa, aged 51).

During the first years of the revolution, Iranian universities were the centre of political activity. There were daily discussions and arguments between different political groups. Each group and organisation tried to recruit as many supporters as they could. The State was not happy with this phenomenon and after a while, Khomeini the supreme leader of Iran, condemned all these different groups and ordered the closure of all universities. He claimed: 'Our university students are Westoxicated. Many of our professors are at the service of the west. They brainwash our youth' (Rahnema and Behdad, 1995: 193). In another speech, Khomeini declared 'All of [Iran's] backwardness has been due to the failure of most university-educated intellectuals to acquire correct knowledge of Iranian Islamic society' (Khomeini, 1981: 291). The universities eventually were re-opened, with a major restructure in their approach to teaching. They had to base all their teaching foundations on Islamic principles.

The above interview presented here shows that educational opportunity plays a crucial role alongside socio-political factors, in encouraging people to think about migration and make a decision about leaving their own country. During the Cultural Revolution, the interviewee believed that there was limited access to higher education in Iran and cites educational opportunity abroad as the main reason for leaving Iran for the UK. It seems that carrying on her education was a good reason to keep her safe. It is hard to look at the phenomenon of migration from Iran without considering the socio-political climate at the time of migration.

In a similar vein, Mona made the following claims:

I left Iran after the Cultural Revolution of 1980...I was a student at Melli University (Shahid Beheshti)...I tried to continue my education when the universities re-opened, but faced many problems due to my political views. The officials at the university accused me of being a supporter of one of the anti regime organisations. I denied that I had any connections whatsoever with any political movement and they could not prove that I did, but I was living in constant fear...Shame on me for leaving my friends behind...but I was afraid that I would be captured like some of my friends and the thought of imprisonment was unbearable. I was not strong enough to go through all that... My family and I agreed that the migration was the best way to protect my life. Sometimes I think if the government did not establish the Cultural Revolution and did not restrict different perspectives of liberty, how much better everyone's life in Iran could have been (Mona, aged 50).

Remodeling the educational system had a devastating impact on the universities and the whole society. Lots of university courses were withdrawn as the government claimed that there was no benefit in anyone offering these courses. The closure of the universities for three years resulted in the migration of many of the elites, such as professors and highly promising students. The loss of the elite group who had knowledge and extremely specific skills had a detrimental effect on Iran's economy.

According to the International Monetary Fund, 'The Islamic Republic of Iran had a substantial drain of highly educated individuals (more than 15 percent) in the early 1990s' (IMF 1999). The international Monetary Fund report in 2007 indicates that 'more than 150,000 Iranians left the Islamic Republic every year in the early 1990s, and an estimated 25% of all Iranians with post-secondary education then lived abroad in 'developed' countries of the OECD (IMF 2007). Collymore (2004) indicated 'Educated, young Iranians are fleeing the country in large numbers in search of better lives' and she also calculated that 'Strict social codes imposed by the Islamic government as well as economic pressures are pushing Iranians, particularly those in their 20s or 30s, to leave the country. This brain drain is one of the biggest economic and social problems facing Iran today' (Collymore 2004).

Mossayeb and Shirazi (2006) also explained that the purge of anti-regime individuals had an adverse effect on governmental jobs. Many posts, including crucial management positions, were filled with people who had neither the required qualification, the basic skills nor the experience, to manage a new post (Mossayeb and Shirazi 2006).

The entire educational landscape of Iran was influenced by the Cultural Revolution. The policies of the Revolution were associated with a variety of challenges in the educational system, for example, discriminating against the students, in the form of only admitting those with the right ideological background rather than the student's merit. It means that the state utilised political screening to control the atmosphere of universities and public sector jobs. Mossayeb and Shirazi (2006) explained that the screening political policy has created 'a discriminatory carrot-and-stick policy that has punished those who have been labelled as incongruent with the State's ideology, and rewarded those who have supported it' (2006:31).

The application of the abovementioned process has led the universities to become less valuable, and filled with students who support the government. There are special offers of places at universities for the children of martyrs (those who sacrificed themselves during the Iran-Iraq war), and for applicants from the deprived provinces of Iran. The universities were purged of anyone the government considered dangerous. The state was looking for a single voice from the universities, supporting the government in whatever they did. The atmosphere of universities became stifling and students were under severe control.

While religious conservative students were integrated into the educational system, secular and minority populations have been marginalized. In fact, the government established a situation within the country where its population faced a duality in their citizenry. On one hand, there were students who came to the universities as a result of their contributions to the government's ideology, and on the other hand, there were a marginalized population who were outside the universities or if they were in the educational system, they were under extreme control. The State's screening policy caused an increasing rate of migration to European countries, USA and Canada. In my opinion, limited access to higher education associated with Socio-political pressures in

Iran and socio-political freedom in Western countries were strong motivations for Iranians to emigrate.

A-7- Affiliation to minority group as a factor in migration

There are different minority religions in Iran such as Christian, Jewish, Zoroastrian and Baha'i. The members of these minorities have sometimes encountered persecution from the Islamic government, in particular, the Baha'i faith's members. The Government of Iran does not accept the Baha'i faith as a formal faith; therefore the members of this faith have not the same rights as the members of the recognised religious faiths in Iran. Many of them have been imprisoned due to their refusal to accept the Islamic faith. A majority of these left Iran after being released from prison, and have started a new life abroad.

One respondent in her mid-seventies, whose husband was killed by the Islamic government after the revolution, explained her main purpose of migration was due to pressures from the government for them to change their religion to Islam. She also added:

We are a Baha'i family...we were satisfied with our own religion and Iranian nationality before the revolution...After the revolution everything changed...My husband was arrested and shortly after his arrest he was executed because he was a missionary of the Baha'i faith.

When I lost my innocent husband, who his friends, relatives and colleagues described as a man of considerable patience, I was forced to flee the country for two reasons. Firstly, in order to keep my children safe and give them a chance to attend universities and provide them a happier future, and secondly, I was determined to keep my faith. My children and I had trouble coping with the trauma of my husband's death...Some of my relatives are in the same situation as me and are scattered in different European countries, United States, Canada and Australia in order to maintain their religion (Mehri, aged 71, a retired professional woman).

The above interviewee presents how followers of Baha'i are not allowed to study at university, seek employment in the public sector or even obtain a shopkeeper's licence. The relatively tranquil lives that Baha'is had led before the revolution were made insecure and harsh by the new regime (Visit www.iran.bahai.us/tag/bahais-of-iran/ to become familiar with this minority religion group in Iran). The 1979 revolution has affected other minority religious groups in similar ways.

Migration offers women a solution to religious persecution. Mehri is an example of one such person who decided that the difficulties of migration were worth enduring in order to attain security, safety and a better way of life for their family.

A-8- Marriage as a factor in migration

There is also another type of migration among Iranian women. Among the interviewees were Laleh and Shaghaeg whose migration experiences related to the type of their marriage. They married to Iranians who lived in England, and found a way to leave their homeland as explained by the following narratives:

I married an Iranian man who is a British citizen, so that I could get away from the hard socio-political situation in Iran. For example, I did not feel safe even when just going shopping. My parents always worried about me. I think that Iranians have paid a very high price for emigrating from their homeland, in terms of not being with their family, leaving friends behind, and so on. There is no guarantee that you would see them again. My dad passed away a few months after I had left Iran. This was a very difficult time for me. I kept thinking that I could have done something had I been there, even though I knew that my siblings would have done everything they could. I still feel guilty that I was not with my family at that time (Laleh, aged 46).

In a similar vein, when asked about the motive of her decision to migrate, Shaghaeg made the following response:

I was 19 years old when I got married. My husband was a citizen of a European country and I knew that this marriage could provide me with a new life in a new society... I felt unhappy in my own country and I was looking for

a complete change...in the religious city of Mashhad where I was born, my friends and I always faced limitations, for example, for our appearance, laughing in the street, having a party... I was tired of all these restrictions and longed to leave Iran... I always dreamt of living abroad. I was overjoyed when my parents told me that their friends' son had proposed. This feeling of happiness was partly due to the fact that he also wanted to live abroad. Initially my parents were not happy with the idea of me moving abroad, this is despite the fact that my husband's family were close friends of my parents and my husband had a very good job prospects. Finally I got married and here I am now (Shaghaeg, aged 42).

In the socio-political atmosphere of Iran, respect for basic human rights, for example, happiness and freedom of appearance have not existed from the early days of the 1979 revolution. During the past 30 years, hejab (covering hair and body) has always been and still is a crucial issue in Iran: those Iranian women who believed that hejab is a personal issue were warned that they should wear their hejab properly, and several hundred were arrested for bad-hejab (did not cover hair and body as the law dictates). Even shopping became a dangerous pastime, as the police would observe the women at shopping centers and warn them or even arrest them if they were not wearing their hejab properly. The police even stopped female drivers if their hejab was not worn in the correct way.

The above narratives illustrate that Iran is not considered as a country of peace. Its citizens, especially women, faced and still face many different and difficult challenges, which lead them to try to leave their homeland. Those who have managed to emigrate have paid a huge price, emotionally, for achieving more freedom. This high price is in the form of leaving their families and loved ones, unsure when they would see their parents, siblings or friends again. It is not surprising that harassing young women over their appearance, happiness and basic rights has encouraged them to find ways of leaving the country.

B-Do women migrate on their own or accompany their relatives?

The findings of this study clearly demonstrate that some of the participants, who were not married, came to England alone. Among the women I interviewed were participants whose experiences confirm that making the decision to migrate was a joint one with their husbands. When I asked about their involvement in making the decision to migrate, Dokhi, whom I cited earlier as a retired professor stated:

The initial idea to leave Iran was constructed by me. I was always worried about the socio-political atmosphere in Iran. It took a long time for us both to reach an agreement on where and when to go for building a new life... My husband disagreed with this decision as he was not sure about migration consequences. We were both retired...I started to do some preparation for our journey, and little by little he became more comfortable with the idea of leaving Iran and starting a new life... of course this had to be a joint decision for two reasons; firstly, I never wanted to leave him alone, and secondly, as a married woman I needed his permission to leave the country (Dokhi, aged 72).

In a similar vein, when I asked about her role in making the decision to migrate, Sharzad the accountant, made the following claims:

My husband and I felt the same about emigrating. We talked at length about the possibility of migration, and finally decided to consult with an immigration lawyer, in order to find out the best way to set the wheels in motion...I would like to emphasise that all the way through the migration process, all decisions were jointly made by both my husband and I. We felt that migration was the only option for our family...it was not an easy decision, but we supported each other in order to achieve our goal... (Sharzad, aged 45).

For Fariba who was an eye specialist in Iran and continued her job in the UK, her narrative represents her determination to emigrate:

I made the decision to migrate to the UK. I always dreamt that my children would have the opportunity to study at the best universities abroad (e.g. Oxford

or Cambridge University)...I managed to persuade my husband to come here despite his reluctance to emigrate; It is just as well he agreed, if he hadn't, I would not have been able to leave the country without his permission...I am extremely happy with my decision to move to the UK (Fariba, aged 52).

Bitra, a dentist in Iran, and her husband, jointly decided to emigrate. As mentioned earlier, she left Iran, after being in prison for four years for her political beliefs. She provided the following which describes her role in making a decision to migrate:

I was a successful dentist before going to jail... After being released, I was in a terrible situation and lived in fear...my husband was extremely supportive and helped me to overcome my fears...together we thought about migration and considered all the pros and cons... (Bitra, aged 50).

Among the participants who left Iran after the revolution because of opposing political beliefs was Roya, whose parents persuaded her to leave Iran. She said that she hadn't even thought about emigrating. She added:

At the time, I was involved with a political organization and I never thought that I would one day leave the country...I have often asked myself, was it fate that I ended up here or my parents being very protective of me? I think a combination of both...anyway; I always thank my parents for making it possible for me to be here, by introducing me to my future husband...I believe that they saved my life...I hate to think what would have happened to me had I stayed in Iran being politically active (Roya, aged 47).

Farideh, a qualified IT engineer with a master's degree in engineering, came to the UK accompanying her husband who insisted on their migration. She explained her experience as follows:

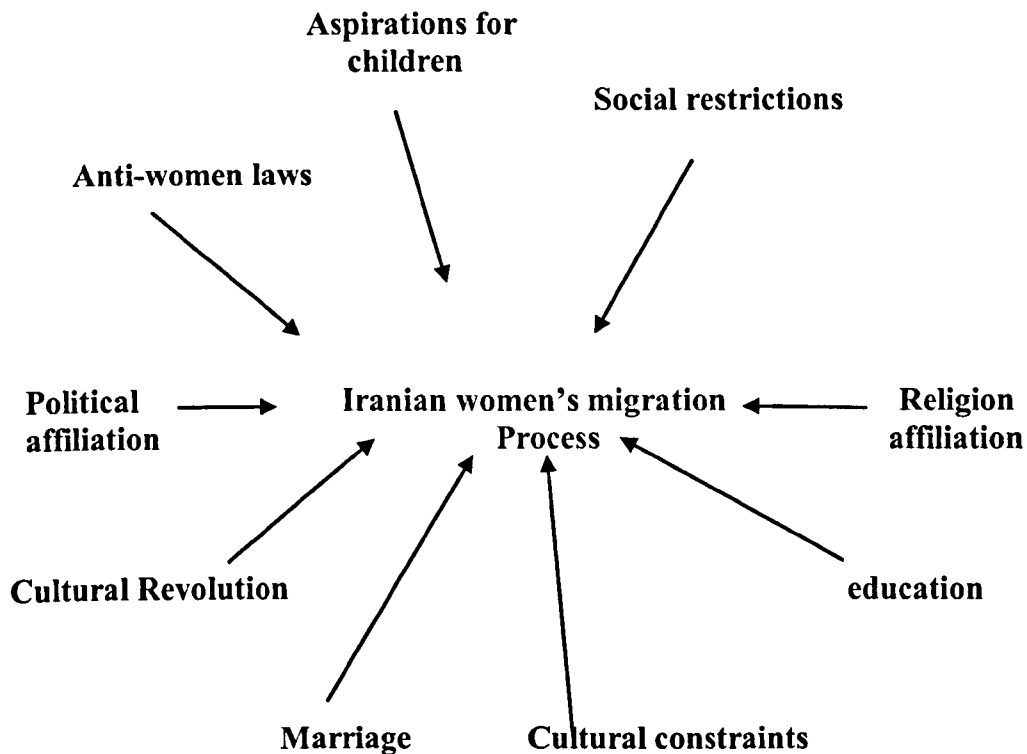
My husband and I did not feel the same about migrating abroad. I really loved to stay in my homeland. I only came here to accompany my husband. I think we had a good life in Iran and I was quite happy to spend my leisure time with my family...but my husband was not happy in his job...he told me how

difficult it was to work in an unpleasant work atmosphere...then he suggested migration as the only solution to end his problems...I was not happy with his decision but I followed him to keep our family together (Farideh, aged 49).

It seems that there are two patterns to the migration of women from the patriarchal society of Iran. Firstly, some women migrated to escape the socio-political pressures in the hope of achieving a greater social status; secondly, the rest of the interviewees came to the UK either as a spouse or as a teenager. Many of these teenagers were sent by their parents so that they could continue with their education and to get away from a repressive regime that treated and continues to treat women as second class citizens.

Conclusion

Figure 5-1- Reasons for Iranian Women's Emigration



This chapter has revealed that the migration of Iranian women takes place under the influence of some interweaved reasons. How the 1979 revolution of Iran is mapped onto a migratory movement of Iranian women, especially through women's narrative of dissatisfaction with their rights, has been the focal point of this chapter. Iranian women's experiences in Islamic republic of Iran also reflect the socio-political climate in Iran. Migrant women's articulations of the migration process provide examples of a number of factors that appear to determine the decision of Iranian women to emigrate:

- Anti-women laws
- Social restrictions
- Political affiliation
- Aspirations for children
- Cultural Revolution
- Religious affiliation

- Cultural constraints
- Marriage

Most of the participants in this study said that their socio-political circumstances played a major role in forming their decision to migrate, whether as an independent migrant, or as a spouse. Migration was the only option for many to achieve a level of safety, security and freedom. This was, in part, to ensure a better future for their children.

As some participants in the study explained, political persecution and anti-women laws were among the factors that prompt women to leave. The findings also show that none of the interviewees stated that they had migrated for economic reasons.

It would appear that the 1979 Revolution in Iran had a considerable impact on some of the 19 migrant women who took part in this research. They have come to the UK to escape the social restrictions, anti-women laws, political repression, religious constraints and cultural constraints.

This chapter shows that apart from the socio-political restrictions and anti women laws, the Cultural Revolution in 1980 also played a role in influencing the decision to migrate. Some of the respondents in this research persuaded the family to migrate, whereas others just followed their husbands.

CHAPTER SIX

RESEARCH FINDINGS

Shifting Away from Traditional Roles and Seeking

New Roles and Rights among Iranian Women

Migrants

Introduction

Chapter Three outlined how sociologists have paid attention to the structure of families in the homeland and also to migrant families' structure abroad (Fukuyama 1994; Mindel *et al.*, 1998; Mahdi 2001). It has been posited that studies on gender roles within Iranian families, and perspectives of gender roles among first and second generation Iranian migrant women, are relatively new. The 1979 revolution and subsequent reinvigoration of 'private and public patriarchy' (see Walby 1999 in Chapter Three) by the government and ruling clergy has resulted in the rolling back of female rights. However, the revolution itself has had the effect of raising awareness, increasing energy and broadening vision among women, as evidenced by their cultural and political activities in Iran (Mahdi 2001). Even in today's Islamized Iran, women believe in and demand much more freedom in their relations with their male counterparts both within and outside the home (see Chapter Two e.g. Mahdi 1995; Hooglund 1995; Mahdi 2001).

This chapter will explore the effects of migration on male-female relationships and migrant women's perspectives of gender roles inside and outside of the home. The chapter will firstly consider the experiences of first generation Iranian migrant women regarding relationships between men and women. For instance, are women equal to men in social and private life? Are men good decision-makers? And should women obey their rules at home? And so on.

The chapter will then consider Iranian migrant women's perceptions of gender roles and how these appear to have been influenced by the migratory movement.

Finally, the differing views between the first and second generation, with regards to relationships between men and women will be examined.

The aim of this chapter is to show the perspective of Iranian migrant women and their daughters about traditional gender roles in Iran and with respect to the same issue in the host country. This study explores to what extent these migrant women imported their traditional roles to the new environment. It also reveals the viewpoints of Iranian migrant women towards the culture, values and norms of the new society.

A- Relationships between Men and Women

Before analysing the experiences of Iranian women about their family structure and men-women relationship during their marriage, I would like to shed some light on the typical family pattern in Iran.

In my observation, it is traditional for an Iranian family to follow an autonomous pattern which is based on a patriarchal system. In such a system the oldest male member of the family is to be obeyed. For example, if a couple decide to get married, the eldest male of both families concerned must agree and give consent to the marriage. During the past century, a wave of modernization (see Chapter Three) across Iran has affected not only socioeconomic and political aspects of the society, but has also had an impact on the cultural structure of the society.

The data shows that there are three different types of family structure among the interviewees in this study. Firstly, women who were dissatisfied with their marriages and their roles as wives, and complained that they did not make any significant contributions towards family decision making. They stayed in unhappy marriages only to protect their children. Secondly, there were interviewees who were satisfied with their marriages because the Islamic laws describe each gender function clearly, and these women wanted to follow the Shariah law. It is notable that three of these interviewees married English men who converted to Islam. Thirdly, there were the women who married open-minded Iranian men who believe in equality between men and women. These women were extremely pleased with their family lives.

One of the important themes which emerged during my interviews with Iranian migrant women was about men-women relationships and how migration affects their perceptions of gender roles. As I earlier cited in the chapter discussing motives for migration, this issue was raised by some of the migrant women who said their decision to leave was closely linked to their relationships with their husband. These statements need to be understood in the context of the patriarchal culture in Iran (see Chapter Two and Three), in particular in traditional families within which women should obey in-laws and respect their beliefs. Women are expected to tolerate other people's views. According to some observers (e.g. Kousha 2002; Mahdi 2002) Iranian women remain in difficult marriages to protect their children, to preserve family harmony, and to keep families together.

One example is Sharzad, a 45 year old woman who came to the UK twenty years ago. She said that she had a very unreasonable husband and was stuck in an unhappy marriage. When asked about her marriage relationship, Sharzad stated:

I married my husband despite our parents' objections. My father and father-in-law have different religious and political perspectives. This difference in viewpoints was the main reason for their objection. The interference from both sides of the family was intolerable. My in-laws always told my husband that he is the main breadwinner and decision-maker in our home, even though I did have a good job with more than adequate income (Sharzad, aged 45).

The data illustrate the social structure of a traditional Iranian family which allows a man to have power over his wife and children and to see himself as the head of family. This is actually encouraged by his parents from an early age. By comparison, the duties of women as mothers and wives establish their domestication within the family and maintain their traditional role as mothers, caregivers, nurtures and so on. Therefore, Iranian government and most of traditional family structures see women as subordinate to men.

Another interviewee recollected her experiences as follows:

As far as my relationship with my husband goes, little has changed since migrating to the UK. He still likes to make all the important decisions, even

after living in the UK for the past 23 years, without any input from me. When I do offer my thoughts, he claims that he knows better than me, even though some of the decisions he has made in the past have not gone to form and he admits that I was right in what I was saying (Elham, aged 48).

The foregoing narratives tend to support Mahdi's (2002) generalisation that Iranian men still disregard women's status in society and also ignore their potential to contribute to the family's decision makings. In at least nine out of the 19 families studied, the patriarchal structures typical of Iran still existed among them. Dokhi is one of the first generation migrant women who explain their experience:

My husband has very traditional views and has always believes that he is the breadwinner and therefore the decision-maker. I don't believe that his viewpoint will ever change. Iranian men are arrogant selfish men. They think that they are superior to women. During our marriage, my husband and I usually had big arguments. Then, I gave up trying to change him because I wanted to keep my family together. At one stage my husband suggested divorce, but this was not an option for me as we had two children and I wanted us to stay as a family. Although I now feel that I did not make the right choice at that time, I believe that maintaining the family unit helped my children to realise their full potential. My children's future was all that really mattered to me (Dokhi, aged 72).

For Zari, who used to be a psychologist, the prevailing social attitudes in the UK have made little impact on her husband's beliefs:

During my marriage, I always tried to keep a happy and peaceful atmosphere in my home. My husband and I had a loving marriage. (I am saying 'had' as I think we only lived together because we were used to it). After a while, he started to control my actions inside and outside the home. I understood that he was extremely jealous and also is always worried about my dress code and my appearance. After having two daughters, I started wearing a head scarf which made him extremely happy and even more so when our daughters started wearing the scarves. I can remember that during 30 years of marriage he always has been the breadwinner and decision-maker. He believes that the

reason for any unpleasant event is my interference in his decisions, and that men should never trust women. My husband has been living in the UK for over 43 years, but still thinks that men are superior to women. I have stayed in this marriage because of my children and my determination to preserve family ties (Zari, aged 52).

One of the interviewees, Laleh, had a very different life style in Iran, before getting married and joining her husband in the UK. In the past, she had been an active individual and had a well paid job that she loved. She told me that she feels her freedom has been limited by her husband and she has no rights in making any decisions, not even for herself. Although she is now a married woman living in the UK, she explained how her individuality was overwhelmingly misunderstood because of her husband's attitude towards gender roles and family structure. She believes that her husband's viewpoint is that a male's work is more important than a woman's. She summed it up as follows:

Every time I asked my husband to look after our children, so that I could do my job, he told me that he had to go out, had an appointment and he always had a reason for not helping me. Although I have a good job with an adequate income, my husband feels he is the main breadwinner (Laleh, aged 46).

Roya who used to work as an accountant told me that her husband believes that men are superior to women and subsequently a man's career is more important than that of a woman. Now she is struggling with her status as an active woman with a considerable income, to achieve her right to share her ideas in family's decisions.

She claimed:

The strange point is that he always borrows money from me and without ever paying it back, telling me that we should share everything. The strange thing is that this is the only thing we share, and the other responsibilities are on my shoulders. He only tells us what to do and what not to do (Roya, aged 47).

It is worth adding that, 10 out of 19 interviewees of this study were pleased with their equal relationships in their marriages and described it as being fantastic. Three of them

stated that their family structure (men-women relationship) was based on their understandings of the Islamic laws.

Islam has always encouraged me to be a good person. When a couple have the same aim in their lives, I think they both should help each other in all aspects of life. For example they have to communicate and share the important issues within their marriage and lives. In Islam, the family responsibility is on the man's shoulders as he is the main breadwinner. The main duty of women is being a good house keeper and a good mother, raising children in accordance with religious laws. Although, women are able to work outside the family, to increase family income, I believe maintaining the warmth and kindness at home is one of the most important roles of women as mothers. Well, at least I have tried to act in this way (Nahid, aged 61).

Sharing similar sentiments, Nika explained that:

I believe raising children is a full-time job for mothers, and if they have a job, at the same time, it could be torture for women. In Islam, a woman can receive money from her husband for breastfeeding her child and tidying up the house. Although no one claims any money for these chores, it is their right. I think we should accept men as the main breadwinner but not as the main and only decision-maker. In my opinion, the most fundamental responsibility for women is to raise their children (Nika, aged 55).

When asked about the family structure and their relationship, Mina explained that:

We discuss almost everything with each other. However, sometimes my husband makes the final decision; he thinks women's decisions are based on emotions. I might mind this at first, but after I see the result, I approve of the decision. I enjoy the fact that my husband is the main breadwinner and it gives me security and a happy feeling. I try to be a loving wife and a good mother. I think in Islamic law the crucial role for a woman is being a good mother, and I have tried to do my best in raising my children (Mina, 45).

The data show that all the women interviewed, religious or non religious, with happy or unhappy marriages, strove to maintain their family structure, focusing their energies primarily on the children, accepting the main responsibility for creating a peaceful home environment. That said their experiences of family life have differed depending on a variety of issues, for instance, educational background, social class and the nationality of their husbands.

In this study, two out of 19 cases were religious women who were satisfied with their marriages and managed their life according to Islamic law, married to English men who converted to Islam. They both believed that their husbands grew up with the values and in circumstances that taught them treat women as rational and reliable individuals. They did not feel vulnerable to the same insecurities affecting religious wives in Iran. They did not risk losing the custody of children as a result of a divorce or losing other rights such as they might have experienced if they were living in an Islamic country.

Among the participants who were satisfied with their family structure and their role inside and outside the home was Shaghaeg who said:

My husband has been my companion in 22 years of marriage. He is a faithful husband, a loving father and a constant friend. My husband is a dentist and I am a practice manager. I can say that my husband is the main breadwinner but it does not mean that I do not spend my income at home. We make decisions together and share every responsibility as much as we can. I try to be a good wife and mother but I would also like to preserve my independence. My mother always obeys my father's orders, in complete contrast to my sisters and me. I think that every woman has the right to have some time for herself during the day, and I always make sure that I have time for myself (Shaghaeg, aged 42).

Sharing similar sentiments, Ahang an IT engineer, described her experiences of men-women relationships and the efforts to which she and her husband go to in order to create a peaceful and loving atmosphere for all members of the family:

My husband and I have always had mutual respect for one another. Every decision no matter how big or small is discussed, and both of our opinions are taken into account. We were both brought up with the same values, and we both believe in equality between the sexes. Had this not been the case, I do not believe that we would still be together after 25 years of marriage (Ahang, aged 50).

Some interviewees, like Parvaneh, had been brought up in an environment where boys and girls were treated equally:

I agree that women and men are equal and should share everything in their marriage. In my educated family, girls and boys were not treated differently. There was never any discrimination between my brother and me. The family gave us the same opportunity to have access to everything we wished. My brother was never superior to me (Parvaneh, aged 58)

B- What factors appear to influence relationships between spouses in this study?

The majority of participants in this study (15 out of 19) believe that men and women should be treated as equal in both social and private life. One of my interviewees, Farideh, who identified herself as a subordinate wife because her husband ignores any suggestions from her and never consults her about making major decisions, answered the question with the following:

I believe that when a man and woman are married they must contribute equally to the relationship, in terms of financial and emotional support. Both males and females have different opinions and attitudes towards varying situations, however they should work together to make decisions for the family (Farideh, aged 49).

Co-operation for the sake of the family is offered here as one explanation for accepting male dominance at home. Dokhi explained her perspective in terms of work outside the home:

In my opinion, women are equal to men in social and private life. However, women who choose to go into employment, have two responsibilities, going to work and running the household, which puts all the duties on their shoulders. If a woman complains about this situation, a man asks her to stay at home and only look after the family. I think when a couple is working, they are both breadwinners, and should consult each other about all crucial issues (Dokhi, aged 72).

The prominent viewpoint held and taught in Iran is that men are superior to women and that men hold the power in society. This ideology is taught and reinforced from primary school. The pupils are taught fathers are the main breadwinners and the head of the household. When people enter Iranian society, they see that everything everywhere is under the control of men. The most important jobs are allocated to the men. If a man and a woman have the same job and the same skills the man would receive a higher salary than the woman.

In recent years, there have been changes in women's attitudes towards such inequality and these changes are particularly noticeable in the new generation. For instance, one of the participants (Dokhi) told me that many of the women have enough information to know how to fix a car, and there are many men who know how to cook, both in Iran and in the UK. Despite all the restrictions that the younger generation faces in everyday life in Iran, they do not seek to copy their mothers' lifestyle. An attitude of gender equality is more prevalent among educated people from middle and upper-class section of Iranian society (Mahdi 2002).

Mina, a religious woman, had the following to say about men-women relationship:

On one hand, I believe that women and men have specific roles and responsibilities, but on the other hand, in modern life, it seems essential that both sexes should have knowledge about different issues. For example, men should know how to cook or change a baby's nappy, and women should be able to do some very basic car maintenance, checking the engine oil, water and so on. My generation was expected to get married, have children, be a housewife and obey our husbands. By contrast, the new generation of Iranian women, want more from their lives, even my daughters who wear headscarf,

have a different point of view on the roles of men and women. They still want to get married, have a family, but they want to further their education, have a career and have equality in their relationships (Mina, aged 45).

In summary, in 9 out of 19 cases, data shows that women who have always had a subordinate position at home regard their role in a different way from those who are in a more equal relationship.

All the participants in this study say that all people are created equal, and they deserve to have the same rights and chances in everyday life as their male counterparts, both in society and at home. It can be shown that it is the government, society and cultural values that affect a person's identity; for example, women stay at home, as mothers and home makers whilst men go to work, earn the daily bread and make all the decisions at home and in the society.

It can be shown that migration has challenged the structure of traditional religious beliefs. This element is a recurring feature within my data as it forms a part of my participants' narratives, including the case of Faranak, whose migration reflected significantly on her family life:

My husband was a very selfish man and never helped me with any of the household chores. For example, when we had guests; he never helped me with anything and would shout at me if I did not show him enough respect in front of our guests. My spending was under his control, and most of the time he tried to keep me at home. Everything changed for the better when we moved to the UK. Away from his parents' influence, my husband became a different person. Decisions on important issues are taken jointly and he even helps with the household chores. He has at long last realised that he is not superior to me and we are in fact equal. We are both practising Moslems and are knowledgeable about Islamic laws. We believe that the sexes have distinct roles, but it does not mean that males are superior to females (Sharzad, aged 45).

The following narratives illustrate how migration influenced divorced interviewees self-confidence, well-being and prosperity. Parvaneh is a participant who describes how after her divorce she decided to emigrate from Iran; she explained:

In my experience, life for divorced women in Iran is very difficult; this is due to fact that society treats them very negatively. I decided to migrate to the UK, where I was able to rebuild my life and get a job. This decision has changed my life completely for the better (Parvaneh, aged 58).

On summarizing the impact of migration on a participant's life, Nika claimed that:

Migration has had an extremely positive effect on my life. I came here after my divorce from a dictator husband, who made my life a living misery. After immigrating to Britain, I was able to further my education. Whilst at university I met my present husband. After a short time, I realised that marriage can be peaceful, friendly and a two sided union (Nika, aged 55).

The above narratives show that migration for these women seems to have been a means to establish greater self-sufficiency. For at least three interviewees, it paved the way to a better social position. It appears that the goal of higher education and career motivated these women to overcome the obstacles they faced in their marriages and enabled them to assimilate into the host country. Overall, migration helped to empower them, as they adopted some of the host culture's more liberal attitudes on gender roles, and worked towards a relatively sustainable situation in the long run.

Mina, who is from a traditional Islamic family, told me that migration had a very positive effect on her life. She added that being away from her family forced her to become more independent. In comparison with her friends who still live in Iran, she feels that she gained more life experience. Mina told me how working in a hospital as a nurse for 9 years has given her tremendous job satisfaction and experience; these things she could never have achieved in Iran. She believes that belonging to a traditional family restricts the women's activities in society. She summed up as follows:

The knowledge and information that I have gained from having such a good job is invaluable to me. I feel so proud when I look at what my husband and I have achieved as a couple without interference from our parents. I sometimes do miss my family, but being away from them, living our lives the way we want and without their constant intrusion, is well worth it. Migration has also had an effect on my husband's attitude. He had really a negative outlook towards men's contribution to house-work. After a few months of living abroad, he changed and started to help with the chores around the house. I have to say that I normally do not ask him to help, as he works long hours but any time he is at home he always asks me if I need any help (Mina, aged 45).

Analyzing the narratives of the first generation, some of the similarities in experiences provide valuable insights into understanding the complex effects of migration on women's lives.

C-First generation and second generation perspectives on men-women relationships and gender roles

The migratory process has had a positive effect on some first generation migrant women, for example, enjoying greater freedom, having better access to further education, leading to greater career opportunities and so on. This new found independence for some of these women means that they are not afraid to voice their opinions at home and expect to be involved in decision-making for the family. By contrast, the second generation women, who were brought up with traditional values, learning to speak and write Persian, did not experience the same restrictions as their mothers did in the UK, and were exposed to many different values of British culture.

When asked about dating, marriage and divorce, Anahid, a second generation migrant who is a dentist, and is living with her partner, stated that these issues are personal and the couple concerned should think and make their own decisions. She believes a successful relationship is possible if both partners have grown to know each other, respect each other, and talk honestly and openly with each other about any issues they might face. She thought that dating is necessary as it gives the couple an opportunity to

get to know each other. In terms of divorce, Anahid, like the other second generation participants in this study, believes that it should be considered if a couple are not happy and it is possible that their relationship will have a negative impact on their children, if they have any. Anahid had this to say:

As far as I can remember my parents always argued over everything. I asked my mother, as she is also my close friend and we talk about everything very easily, which is in total contrast where my orthodox father is concerned, why carry on if things are always so bad? Surely you'd be happier apart! And she said they were together 'because of you and your brother'. It is not reasonable for two people to destroy their lives for their children. Children in a life full of stress and quarrels might face psychological problems in their teenage years and even in their adult life. I agree with divorce, unlike my mum. She believes that a marriage should continue until death do them part (Anahid, aged 33).

When I asked Dokhi (Anahid's mother) about transferring the Iranian gender roles to her daughter, she said:

I have tried to set a good example for my daughter. I do realise that there is a generation gap between my daughter and I, and would never expect her to be like me or follow in my footsteps (Dokhi, aged 72).

One of the interviewees, Anali, said that she did not have the same amount of freedom as her brother, as her parents are much more strict with her than they are with her brother, she said:

That is a point that I would like to mention. Boys and girls are treated very differently in a traditional Iranian household. The boys always seem to enjoy much more freedom than the girls. I was never allowed to go on school trips whereas there was no such restriction where my brother was concerned. The boys are brought up with the notion that their role in society and family is somehow superior to the role of a woman. I do not agree with this at all. I used to constantly complain about the different treatment that my brother had, but my parents never listened (Anali, aged 27).

Elham (Anali's mother) is another first generation interviewee who identified herself as a mother with traditional beliefs. She stated, 'I do not wish to transfer any of these roles and responsibilities to my daughter'. She believed if a woman decides to have children, her important role is to be a good mother and home maker. Elham also feels it is important for a woman to have a career that gives her financial independence. She told me that she raised her children (a daughter and a son) with very orthodox values, without realising that there are cultural differences, and that her children have to adjust to the new values in the UK. She expressed this in our conversation:

I tried to raise both my children with very traditional values. I did not realise that there are cultural differences between two countries (Iran and England). I also did not know that my children have to give in to the new values from the new society. There was always growing concern about keeping the family's decency within the Iranian community. Now, I can see that trying to be quite strict about my kids' upbringing has not done them any favours. This is particularly noticeable in my daughter, because I was much stricter with my daughter than I was with my son (Elham, aged 48).

According to the interview data, gender roles can be explained as both cultural and personal issues. These factors determine how males and females should interact within the context of society. Second-generation Iranian migrant women in the study tended to complain about the restrictions imposed on them by their parents. First generation migrant women were able to act as a cultural resource for the second generation, some of whom had never been to Iran, so that their knowledge of the country came through their families' stories, photos and so on.

Laleh is a first generation migrant, with three children, who married when she was only 17 years old. On discussing her experience of marriage, she struggled to open up to me that she had no right to make a decision for her future life:

I got married because my parents asked me to do that. I was very young and I can say that I had no other choice. I grew up in a traditional family that their biggest challenge in bringing up the children was their marriages. I continued my studies at my husband's house while having three children. I would not like

to transfer any of my responsibilities to my daughter. I have tried to treat my two sons and one daughter in the same way and give them the same freedom. Fortunately, we have a close relationship and they talk to me about everything they want. It is not easy for them to make connection with their father who is more traditional (Laleh, aged 46).

When asked about dating, marriage and divorce, Laleh's daughter Siana, who is a law student, had this to say:

My mum did not work when she was living in Iran. She was a housewife and raising her children. My brothers and I have a good relationship with my mum. We talk with her about everything that happens to us. She is a mediator between us, who want to have freedom, and our old-fashioned father, who could not tolerate us going out with our friends at nights. In terms of dating, marriage and divorce, I think these are personal issues and parents should not make a decision on their children's behalf. I have to say that I disagree with my mum that she believes a marriage should continue until death (Siana, aged 21).

One of the themes which emerged during my interviews with the second generation Iranian women was related to their different points of view about gender roles. Anahid, Anali and Siana mentioned some differences such as sharing a house with friends or a partner, having the same rights as their brothers, having a different view on divorce and so on.

These differences in attitude towards gender roles between first and second generation Iranian women can be attributed at least in part to consequences of the migration process. According to the data, the mothers' socialization into the host society seems to offer the second generation of women a chance to have access to the same rights as their male counterparts. By contrast, the study has found that most Iranian fathers wish to maintain their patriarchal power and the traditional culture while living in England. Therefore, the first generation play two roles: firstly, they moderate paternal domination over children, especially over daughters, and secondly, mothers control and direct their daughters' lives. As Anahid and Siana stated in the interviews, it seems that the second generation Iranian migrant women gained an understanding of responsibility for their future life

because of the freedom their mothers (the first generation) allowed them. Siana testified to the positive role that her mother played in her socialisation:

I get on very well with my mum. She is my best friend and we discuss everything. My mother was very instrumental in helping me achieve my freedom, for example, getting me to travel with my friends. Although, my mum was raised differently, the way she was bringing us up was going to be a lot more flexible than the way her parents were with her (Siana, aged 21).

The data suggests that the perception of gender roles for the second generation has developed under the influences of both parental culture and the culture of the host society. The freedom enjoyed by the second generation enabled them to develop their skills, acquire education and even gave them a choice of religion. This element of choosing one's religion formed the narrative of one second generation migrant. Arezoo said that she converted from Islam to Christianity, in spite of her mother's disagreement:

I grew up in a traditional family with our ethnic beliefs. My mother is a traditional Muslim woman who practices all the Islamic laws. It was hard for my mother to accept that I converted to Christianity. I liked Christianity when I was in Iran and I had lots of Christian friends. When I came here I looked into it more. I read books and I used to read Bible everyday. My mum is still sad, but my father has always told me I should choose what I like. I think if it wasn't for my father's support, it could be harder for me. But my mum has always disagreed. When I converted, I tried to behave better to show the good effects of my new religion (Arezoo, aged 18).

On discussing her experiences of gender roles in her family Arezoo added that her parents are stricter with her than they are with her brother, and even her brother controls her appearance and her going out. She stated:

In Muslim families more freedom is given to boys, but I think in Christian families there is no difference between girls and boys. My mother always obeys my dad's orders and has no complaints about his ideas. Decisions are made for her. I would not like to be like my mum. I would like to be my

child's best friend and provide him/her with a situation that my child feels free to talk to me about everything that s/he would like. I think marriage and divorce are personal events and only the couple concerned should make decisions about these issues (Arezoo, aged 18).

Farah is Arezoo's mother who answered the question about gender roles in family and society as follows:

I observe everything through Iranian and Islamic rules. I believe that there are some differences between men and women that give them specific roles. For example, a woman should be a good mother and a man should provide all facilities for his family. I believe creating a comfortable home is a vital role of women as mothers. Although, my daughter complains about my behaviour of being an obedient wife, I think it is the best way to keep peace at home. She always tells me that she will never act like me at home. I tried to teach her some women's roles but she does not accept all of them (Farah, aged 43).

Sharing similar sentiments, Nika's daughter Bahar who is married to an Iranian man, explained her view about gender roles:

I have the same ideas towards gender roles as British girls; the main difference is I grew up in an Islamic family, especially my mum, who taught me how to live with a combination of two different cultures (Islamic/Iranian culture and English culture). I am happy with that. My mum is a religious person, and does not like her daughters to have boyfriends. My father does not say anything; he lets me do everything I want. At home, my mum is a rational decision-maker. She pays considerable attention and is thorough in making sure that something is right. I believe the relationship between boys and girls before marriage must be only a friendship, and during the time they have to try to know each other. I disapprove of living with a partner before marriage. It is not acceptable in my religion and the way that I grew up (Bahar, aged 24).

Nika (Bahar's mother) is another interviewee of first generation who identified herself as a mother with Islamic beliefs and her narrative below illustrates this:

I think it is not possible to transfer the traditional gender roles to the next generation. I have tried to teach my daughters how to be a good wife for their husband but I am sure that now they are old enough to find their own way to live. In my opinion, it is very important for a woman, if she decides to have any children, to be a good mother and home maker. I feel it is also important to have a career to give you financial independence (Nika, aged 55).

According to the data, Iranian migrant women are generally inclined toward integration into the host country, occupationally, spatially and otherwise. However, for many Iranians, particularly the first generation, the tendency to be part of the larger society is in tension with keeping the traditions of their heritage. Along with the eagerness to preserve the traditions of their homeland, the women interviewed showed no inclination to ward off the influences of the mainstream culture. This accepting and open attitude toward other cultures may have played a role in the upward mobility of this population in the UK.

While there is a tendency among Iranians to integrate into the receiving country, some may not fully embrace the culture of the host society (for example, ways of dressing, and relationships between the sexes) fully. The results of this study show that the first generation tried to teach the second generation right from wrong, while some of the second generation are well on their way towards adjustment into the British society. Generational gaps may be increased as mothers and daughters identify with contrasting on gender roles. Although second generation Iranian migrant women in this study challenged their mothers' attitudes towards gender roles, and despite the other differences between these two generations, a number of second generation Iranian migrants were found to value aspects of both Iranian and British ways of life, leading to a position that can be called 'bicultural'.

As I stated earlier, Bahar, Siana, Anali and Anahid openly discussed their views towards gender roles, claiming that they combine the best features of the two cultures as far as they are concerned. For example, on the positive aspect side, they don't have to wear the hejab and are allowed to socialise with their friends. They avoid negative aspects again this is according to them, such as staying out until the early hours of the morning, getting drunk, acting irresponsibly and so on. The second generation participants in this study

acknowledged that their participation in the host society (England) improves their confidence in following the direction of their lives. For Arezoo, migration meant having a 'right' to express her opinions in front of her family, and becoming a Christian implied taking a stronger stance that could set an example for others, in particular, her mother.

Conclusion

In my observation, the migration process for the Iranian women migrants has both positive and negative points. I believe that the main positive attributes are the facilities and opportunities that exist in the host country to enable them to further their education and strive for a meaningful career. This allows people to achieve a better lifestyle with good prospects. Migration has been found to pave the way to empowerment for migrant women. However, living in England did not automatically improve their position; education was a key factor in finding well paid work and entering the labour market in the new society. Gradually, therefore, as they gained qualifications, first generation Iranian migrant women experienced some improvement in their socioeconomic status in England. The down side to all this is the fact that they are far away from their family and friends, whom they miss very much. Even more difficult to bear is the fact that the first generation children may not be able to spend any time with or indeed see their grandparents for very long periods of time, particularly if the first generation migrant women cannot travel to Iran freely.

Although some attitudes of first generation Iranian women in the UK, as presented in this chapter, conflict with some Western values, many of these Iranian women hold more liberal attitudes than their husbands. It could be obvious that the declining economic status of many male migrants introduces a new dynamic to the family. This may be brought about as a result of both sexes having to be employed in-order to generate sufficient income to maintain the standard of living. In this way, some women become equal contributors to the financial situation in the household, therefore, giving them a greater say in decision/making in the home. In some cases, the woman could be the main breadwinner.

Reading more deeply into the interview data, it appears that in some cases there are also sacrifices associated with migration, for example, the loss of grandparents' assistance in

child care and other household chores. Combined with the mother's restricted time at home due to her employment, this may lead to more Iranian men sharing house-keeping and child rearing duties.

While the greater contribution made by migrant women to the family often leads to reassessment of gender roles, in some families, the husband appears to seek compensation for perceived loss of status by imposing his authority on his wife and daughters.

Migration and living in a host country has influence on some migrants' family structure and gender roles. Migration is associated with deep changes and alternations in definition of different terms for an immigrant community whose traditional values and norms belong to their shared past. Various socio-cultural aspects of the home features are abandoned or re-evaluated. The selection of new cultural elements happens in light of exposure to the new experiences in the host country.

One of the significant aspects of these changes is the shift in focus from community to individual. This increases individualism in the second generation and consequently causes differences between second generation behaviour and first generation expectations. Growing up in two different cultures (with different levels of autonomy) seems to enable migrant women to develop different opinions on the same subject.

Second generation Iranian women contest gender roles through a critical reappropriation of their mothers' past, and create a new definition of what the host society offers them. They select a combination of traditional values with modern norms. The data shows that those Iranians who restrict their daughters do show concern about their reputation in the Iranian community. First generation women want to uphold family values and social standing just as they once did in their homeland. Daughters learn that the family reputation requires their mothers' direction. Iranian second generation migrant women are supposed to be properly trained for assuming their mothers' roles in due course. In contrast, the second generation do not slavishly follow their mothers' lifestyle; they exercise different options in their life and hence manage respond differently to their circumstances. The second generation face tensions that exist between the culture of their new environment and the one that their parents, especially their mothers, left

behind. Iranian first generation migrant women in this study are attaining high positions in the UK and having entered the labour market subsequently became more significant contributors to family finances.

The traditional cultural values of ethnic groups are influenced by the liberal views of the host country and consequently affect the life structure of migrant families. As my data suggests, social and cultural changes offer migrant women an opportunity to have independence from the societal bond of the home. Iranian migrant women have an increased presence in universities abroad and participate in the labour market. Gradually, these women embraced the opportunity to consider their new gender roles. In fact, Iranian migrant women construct new gender roles through a critical re-appropriation of their past and a creative redefinition of what is available to them in the host society. Iranian first generation migrant women combine traditional and modern values to accommodate the changes in the family. They have a significant role in transferring the cultural values to second generation migrant women.

The next chapter will consider the intergenerational characteristics and how they integrate into the host society.

CHAPTER SEVEN

RESEARCH FINDINGS

INTERGENERATION TRANSMISSION

Introduction

Outcomes of different empirical studies regarding the transnational trends of second generation migrants have categorised researchers into two distinct groups. On the one hand, some researchers agree that transnationalism concerns the first generation greatly, but not their children (Portes 2001; Rumbaut 2002). For example, Portes (2001: 190) held transnational events to be a 'one-generation phenomenon' and Rumbaut (2002: 91) argued overall that the level of transnational attachments among the second generation, unlike their parents, was quite small.

On the other hand, others disagree and claim that the second generation preserve their mother tongue and participate in some cultural organisations to further their understanding of their heritage. Levitt and Waters (2002) found that the second generation had a range of transnational practices, which implies that we need to consider the cumulative effect of parental values with the host society's culture. Levitt and Glick-Schiller (2004) suggest that researchers need to explore different aspects of 'multiple interconnected networks of social relationships through which ideas, practices and resources are exchanged and transformed' (Somerville, 2008:25).

Levitt and Glick-Schiller (2004) argue that, to achieve this, research should pay attention to the differences between 'ways of being' and 'ways of belonging'. 'Ways of being' refers to individual engagement in actual social relations and practices, whereas 'ways of belonging' refers to communication of migrant people with the country of origin through imagination, visiting and memory (Somerville, 2008:25). Purkayastha (2005) in a study of second generation South Asians, looked at how this migrant group select 'bicultural

identities' by using their encounters with both societies. She further adds that South Asian Americans choose a 'hyphenated identity label' according to the intersection of global and local forces; and discusses ethnic limitations through transnational networks (Purkayastha, 2005: 2).

In this chapter I will present the views of nineteen second generation Iranian migrant women in the UK. This chapter describes the experiences of these women and tries in particular to reveal some nuances and contradictions that exist within this migrant group. These differences are related to their understanding of religion, ethnic background, family background and so on. The chapter aims to provide an insight into the experiences of this migrant group, who differ for example with respect to religious identity. I will also discuss how family background and the cultural environment of the host country can be weaved together where the second generation is concerned.

This chapter will firstly consider the second generation's perception of identity and the various means they have used in order to preserve their Iranian and Islamic culture in the UK. I will be discuss how the parents, particularly the mothers, have successfully merged the two different cultures in order to help their daughters to learn about and retain some, if not all, of their heritage.

Secondly, the chapter will go on to pursue the second generation opinions about living in England and the way in which their views and beliefs are different to those of their mothers (the first generation). This chapter addresses the extent to which the second generation migrant women in the UK express transnational relations about their self-identification.

Therefore, the aim of this chapter is to represent the complexities of life that the second generation has faced living in the UK. It also considers the similarities and differences between the two generations, especially focusing on the idea that women are continually striving to preserve their cultural values and native language.

A – Identity Process among the Younger Generation of Iranian Migrant Women

(Conceptualizing Iranian in the UK)

This chapter will start by revisiting the conceptualisation of identity. As I cited earlier in chapter three, the work of Somerville (2008) argued that identification of migrants is demonstrated at three levels: emotion, appearance and allegiance. This part of the chapter shows how the second generation migrant utilises each of three levels of identification in expressing their identity formation (chapter three, pp 66-71).

A-1- Identity and Emotions

In this study I encountered three forms of emotional connections. Iranian migrant women described their emotional communication to their parent's homeland (Iranian) or their country of settlement (British) or a mix of both nationalities (Iranian-British). One of the respondents, who was born in Sweden to Iranian parents and grew up in the UK, described herself as follows:

Even though I am Iranian, my parents are Iranians and I am proud of this fact, I somehow do not feel as though I am completely Iranian as I was born abroad. Sometimes I feel that I do not identify with my nationality, but maybe when I am older, I may understand myself better, (shaking her head), sorry but it is not a good feeling (Donya, aged 18).

Through her unclear understanding of her heritage, Donya demonstrated that her annual visit to Iran to see her relatives makes it difficult for her to select one identity. The interview data illustrate her feelings about her identity right now, which means it may shift and she may have a better understanding of her identity in the future. It seems that different factors such as family networks might influence this change.

Another participant, Anali, 27 years old, who migrated to the UK as a child, described the synthesis of identities. She told me that she considers herself as Iranian-British, as she has grown up in Britain, although she was born in Iran. Moreover, she explained that when she spends time with her Iranian friends she feels more Iranian, but when she goes

to Iran for a visit, she feels more British because she feels that she is different from her friends and family living in Iran. Anali stated:

Although I feel I am an Iranian woman but growing up, going to school, university and working in the UK has formed my dual identities. I think I look like my Iranian friends in the UK and I am different from the young Iranian women living in Iran. I observe these differences on my annual visit to Iran. For example, our perspectives on the life styles are influenced by the society we live in. Iranian women in Iran have to comply with Islamic-focused values that the government has created for them, like the compulsory wearing of the hejab. I think that during the past 30 years they have played a different role in their public life than they have in their private life. I did not grow up under such extreme regulations. Here, in the UK, the government or other political organisations did not set down laws dictating how I should dress. I felt no social pressure forcing me to play two different roles at the same time. I have learnt to make joint decisions at home and have understood that a man and a woman are equal and should make decision together. I can even see that there is a flow of modernization among Iranian women in the big cities of Iran; they still face some major barriers to achieving their rights. For example, they need to have their male relative's permission for leaving the country, but men do not require permission. These differences are not acceptable for me and do not make sense. I feel the same ideas towards lifestyle and gender roles as British girls. I think this feeling causes me to think that I am different from my relatives in Iran and sometimes I am in doubt about where I am from (Anali, aged 27).

In a similar vein, Bahar, born in the UK to an Iranian mother and a British father, described her identification in the following way:

This question of identity has always been with me. When I was at school, I perceived myself to be an Iranian. After two years living in Iran, I felt more British than Iranian. I eventually wondered where I belonged; sometimes I think I am more British than Iranian. On the other hand, when I compare my

self with a British girl I can not find much similarity. It is a very strange feeling (Bahar, aged 24).

One of the interviewees had a strong sense of Islamic identity: Nazanin, a married woman with two children, stated:

When I was younger I considered myself an Iranian-British. When I was at school I felt that I was different from the other students. For example, we never celebrated Christmas because my mum is a Muslim and my father converted to Islam, so as Muslim children we took part in Islamic Eids and the Iranian New year. When I got married to an Iranian man I decided to live in Iran. After five years living in Iran, I saw myself as British. Now, I would rather be known as a Muslim rather than a British or an Iranian (Nazanin, aged 31).

Among the participants, Lila, born in the UK to an Iranian mother and a British father, explained her identification as a British woman. She stated:

I always considered myself British. When I was at school I never felt any different to the other pupils. We still celebrate Christmas every year and my siblings and I try to be at home during that time. However, I know a little bit about Iranian culture that my mother observes at home, in particular, during the Iranian New Year. As you can see, I can not speak Persian language and I think it is my mother's fault that she did not teach us her mother tongue. When I grew up and went to university, in respond to my classmates' questions about my nationality, I sometimes said that I am from an Iranian mother. I think when I was a child I could give an easier answer to where I come from (Lila, aged 20).

Bahar and Arezoo stated that they saw themselves as Iranians, although they were born and raised in England. They claimed they were Iranian but not totally like their parents. They wondered about a strange feeling of growing up in a society but belonging to another country. They felt they had roots in England, but the Iranian part of them was still extremely strong. They acknowledged that identity is a difficult term for second generation migrants in the UK. They believe that, on the one hand, the nationality of

their parents had a considerable effect on forming their self-identification, and, on the other hand, growing up in a different culture than their parents grew up in, put them in an ambiguous position and in an identity crises.

The data suggests that difficulty in choosing a particular nationality leads these participants to get involved in a vague perception of their identification. It seems that this process is rooted in both countries, Iran and the UK, which creates a sense of transnational belonging. The above narratives illustrate that second generation migrant women in this study feel that one identity does not represent the sense of who they are or where they belong. It appears that this meaning of self is a reflection of emotional connection to their parents' homeland and symbolic belonging to the country where they live.

It appears that a drastic change in the social context in Iran since the 1979 Revolution combined with the participants' refusal to observe the Islamic-focused rules and regulations brings about a certain degree of ambiguity of identity where the second generation is concerned.

Similarly, Anahid, a dentist who migrated to England when she was about 10 years old, expressed her feelings as follows:

I am always an Iranian woman. Maybe I adapt to European culture, but it does not mean that I have forgotten my Iranian identity. My parents always tried hard to make my brother and I familiar with Iranian culture. Although, I left Iran about 25 years ago and have never gone back, not even for a short visit (because my parents have been living here with my brother and I), but I still see myself as an Iranian and am happy with this feeling. I believe that my mother had an important role in shaping my Iranian identity. Some of my friends from mixed marriages, Iranian father and British mother; do not have any connection with Iranian culture and values (Anahid, aged 33).

Anahid pointed out that women's roles as mothers are essential to their children's self-identification, and she also stated that it is unusual for Iranian men to help their children with the process of understanding their identities. Anahid's ties and loyalty to Iran were

influenced by her mother. First generation migrants have friends and relatives in Iran and seem to keep their communication with them via technological facilities. Glick-Schiller (1999) described that 'intimate, personal, and emotionally charged relationships link transnational network and the emerging ideologies and practices of transnational nation-states' (Glick Schiller, 1999: 115). This connection reinforces the first generation's ability to transfer and teach Iranian cultural values to these children who grew up in different socio-cultural context. Moreover Bahar, in her earlier statement, referred to her identity as a Muslim that was influenced by her mother. She described how her experience of living in Iran and her social network shifted her identity as an Iranian or a British to a Muslim woman.

As one participant, Arezoo, a Christian woman from a Muslim family explained her identity transition:

On the one hand, I feel Iranian, on the other hand, I feel British. I learn everything about Iran at home; however I have always been surrounded by British culture for as far back as I can remember. It is very difficult for me to be Iranian and a Muslim, as my parents wanted me to be (Arezoo, aged 18).

The above narrative describes how this second-generation learned their parental values in other socio-cultural context (school and pupils at first step and then the common culture of the host country).

According to the data, investigating identity and emotional structure among the second-generation participants indicates that they faced challenges as a result of feeling one way or the other with regards to their identities. Some of the participants feel that they are Iranian; some feel that they are English and some feel that they have two identities. It appears that the connection to their parents' homeland and also their individual experiences of living in both countries has a great effect on the way they see their identity. For example, those participants who have lived in Iran for three to five years feel a personal belonging to Iran but at the same time are developing very strong ties to the UK. They have strong bonds with their parents' families back in the homeland, grand parents, cousins and so on, while at the same time developing and expressing their ties within the host society.

In the section that follows, further explanation of the second generations identity will be presented through considering their clothing.

A-2- Identity and Clothing

As I noted earlier, appearance (clothing) is another factor in shaping the identity of second generation migrants (Somerville 2008; Levitt and Glick Schiller 2004). Dress-code is a symbol of different ethnic groups. Choosing to wear clothes conforming to religious laws or ethnic culture is a way in which second generation migrants 'express their transnational belonging' (Somerville, 2008: 28). This however, is not the case as far as Iranian migrants are concerned, as their dress code is more westernised.

According to the data, the form of clothing among Iranian migrant women distinguishes the religious group from the non-religious group. It is worth adding that some of the children of migrants have their own fashion style, both religious and non-religious groups; that is a reflection of their parents' backgrounds, also their surroundings. Moreover, they may experience some changes when they are older. For example, a second generation respondent, Atoosa, who was born in Tehran and migrated to the UK when she was a child, told me that, at the age of 15-16, she became a punk with colourful hair and torn clothes. She added that her parents got extremely sad and angry with her, because they were religious people who disagreed with this fashion style. After two years, she re-evaluated herself, changed her hair style and her dress code, and then decided to wear a head scarf like her mother. She said wearing the hejab in the UK is not exactly the same as Iranian women do in Iran; they have to wear dark and loose clothes; otherwise they may face punishment. She told me that she now regrets her appearance when she was a teenager, but she feels that she gained a valuable experience that led her to know herself better.

Another participant who was born in the UK to an Iranian mother and a British father expressed her clothing preferences as follows:

As my mother is religious, she brought up my sisters and me in a strict manner. My dressing preference is Islamic style (not chador). I have to say that we are three sisters with three different style of dressing. My oldest sister's (step-

sister with an Iranian father) dress code is westernised. My second sister wears a big head scarf with loose and long dresses. I wear jeans, long skirts and long-sleeve shirts with a head scarf. I think we had enough freedom to choose what we want to wear (Bahar, aged 24).

A second generation respondent explained how she and her sister chose to wear a hejab and why after two years her sister changed her mind and put away the hejab; this decision caused her sister a lot of conflict with her father. She added that although they both have the same parents and grew up in the same environment their attitude about the hejab changed when they became teenagers. The participant is still wearing hejab and lives with her parents; however her sister left home four years ago and lives in another European country to escape her father's interference in her personal life.

The finding that members of the same family adopt different dress codes indicates that this is a way to construct identity and one that can reflect either Iranian heritage and or UK identity.

The interviews illustrated that the second generation are influenced both by their parents' culture and homeland and by the country in which they live. Iranian second generation seem to allow themselves to keep a cultural belonging to both countries. However, the non-religious interviewees in this study regarded themselves as similar to British girls. Anahid, a participant who identified herself as an Iranian, stated:

Despite my appearance (black hair and black eyes), I am not very different from a British girl. I have the same fashion style as my British colleagues. I think the main difference is that I combine my British culture with Iranian beliefs and customs. I think the clothes that I choose for different occasions are not very different from ones my mother chose in her younger ages. I think the new generation in the whole world are wearing more naked dresses in comparison with their mother's generation, and Iranian girls in Iran and in the receiving countries are not exceptional (Anahid, aged 33).

Considering the participants' narratives regarding the way they dress in comparison with British girls, I found that only five out of 19 respondents still wear a hejab due to their religious beliefs. Through their selection of clothing, these second generation

respondents may reveal how their Western choices maintain an Iranian-British identity, while at the same time confirming antagonism towards the compulsory wearing of the hejab in Iran.

One of the second generation participants drew a comparison between her same-age cousins and friends in Iran with herself in the UK and stated:

I think although we are living in two different countries with two different dominant cultures, one with freedom for women and the other with restrictive laws for women, we all follow the fashion. I think the new generation in Iran conforms to Islamic dress-code in public, but in private their dress-code is very similar to the UK. I have to say that many of these young women in Iran, even in public, combine modern fashion with their compulsory hejab (albeit they are aware of the consequences of disobeying the rule). I mean fashion is embedded in all aspects of their dress-code. They definitely have to cover their hair and body in public, but they do this by wearing a scarf and clothes that have been westernized (for example in the fashionable colour of the year), even it is still Iranian/Islamic looking (Donya, aged 18).

Some of the second generation participants in this study (16 out of 19) told me that the new generation of Iranian women in Iran are following the same fashion as they do. They believed the main difference is the compulsory wearing of the hejab that exists in Iran. Otherwise, Iranian women with the similar socio-economic status always buy the latest fashions wherever they live. They also mentioned that lots of young women in Iran wear makeup, and these women were surprised by the lack of makeup that the visitors would have on. It was surprising for the migrant women to observe this attitude among friends or cousins, particularly as they could be punished by the authorities for wearing makeup.

For example, Bahar, a married second generation migrant, explained:

In Iran, there are social restrictions which all residents must observe. They don't even have any freedom to choose their dress code. They could be arrested very easily, for example, for wearing too much make-up, laughing

loudly, walking with the opposite sex, etc. It was interesting for me that in spite of the restrictions and existence of special police guards to control people's appearance (clothing, make up and so on), many young Iranian women are very fashion conscious. They wear famous brands and the latest make up. One of my relatives was once arrested for wearing colourful hejab, but she still wears colourful clothes and told me that this was her way of refusing to accept the government's orthodox perspectives (Bahar, aged 24).

The Iranian culture is a combination of old and new styles which sometimes contains two opposing ideas. In this section, I have discussed Iranian migrant women's fashion sense and their experiences. The participants of this study tended to blend into the crowd, wearing local fashion. These second generation migrant women were very fashion-conscious and followed the trends in their respective environments. According to the data, Iranian women that have been living inside of Iran, due to the pressures of the Islamic laws, tend to use more make-up as a way of expressing their opposition to the authorities.

Another participant, Atoosa, an art student, described her observation of dress sense among Iranian women inside and outside of Iran:

I think my Iranian background is embedded in all my attitudes, beliefs and lifestyle. I express some part of my identity through the way I dress. I wear Westernized clothes like my mother did and still does. I believe that there is not really a huge difference between Iranian youths inside and outside of Iran, except compulsory hejab in public in Iran. Every time I go to Iran I see how the young women try to obtain their rights. For example, they have to wear a hejab to cover their hair and a loose and long coat to cover their body, but most of the young women wear short and tight coat and colourful hejab. As I saw, they usually wore the fashion colour scarf and more make up than we do in Britain. They wear a hejab in public, but they wear very fashionable dresses at their parties. It was surprising for me, so I asked why they wear the type of hejab that they do when they are all aware of the consequences. They told me it is the only way which we can express our opposition (Atoosa, aged 21).

Islamic dress code must be observed in Iran by both men and women. The law for women is to cover their hair, neck and arms by wearing a chador or loose and long overcoat. According to the data, young women in Iran try to be fashionable through a combination of Western fashion with the common type of clothing in public. The participants believe that there is no noticeable difference between their dress code and that of young women in Iran. Through their fashion choices, these second-generation women show how they are influenced by their parents' cultural values and the society in which they live.

This section has illustrated that 'identity' has a unique meaning for the second generation Iranian women. While they follow a lifestyle and a dress-code different from their mothers, and do not necessarily follow the same lifestyle as young British women. It seems that both religious and non-religious participants drew on different elements of both cultural identities in order to construct their own individuality. The data suggest that the second generation is able to create a transnational style of identity that is a reflection of their inner integrity to the host society and their Iranian background.

A-3- Identity and Allegiance

According to the data, the second generation feels a sense of loyalty to both Iran and England. They expressed their emotional connection to both countries and this sense converted into an expression of support for both societies. As Somerville (2008) argues: 'In this way, the second generation converts their emotional connection to both' the receiving country and their parents' homeland 'into vocal expression of loyalty' (Somerville, 2008: 29). For instance, Anali one of the second generation participants described this sense of loyalty:

I feel support for and am loyal to Iran because that is where my parents are from. My grandparents and other relatives still live in Iran and my loyalty to Iran will be reinforced by annual visit to Iran. At the same time, I feel loyal to England because I was born and raised in Europe. All my friends are British; I do respect the English values even though they are opposite to my cultural values (Anali, aged 27).

The data suggest that, this sense of loyalty to two countries and cultures was strong. Living in the UK does not destroy her individual connection to her parents' homeland.

Another interviewee, who describes herself as Iranian-British, explained that she was loyal to England because she grew up here, and she was also loyal to Iran because it was her background. She was proud of her parents' homeland and its history. She told me that their visit every two years to Iran for their holiday helps them keep their connection with the relatives extremely strong. She added that she is in touch with her cousins in Iran through email and Face book. It appears that social networking websites play an important role in developing and maintaining the connections between a second generation migrant woman and her counterparts in the country of origin. These facilities provide a condition for them to construct their identity. Glick Schiller (1999) explained 'Transmigrants become part of the fabric of daily life in more than one state, simultaneously participating in the social, cultural, economic, religious, or political activities of more than one locality' (Glick Schiller, 1999:107).

Anahid, who migrated to England as a child, expressed her loyalty to both countries as follows:

I have great respect for all countries' cultures around the world, in particular Iran, my homeland, and UK where I was raised, went to the secondary school, attended university and have made friends. I do have English friends with whom I normally socialize. I generally socialise with both English and Iranian friends. Overall I defend both countries as I feel I belong to both societies. I feel that I am at home in the UK, but that does not mean I have forgotten my country of origin (Anahid, aged 33).

In a similar vein, all the second generation participants in this study except one explained their loyalty to both countries and they agreed to strongly defend these two societies. These children of first generation migrants feel a deep sense of allegiance towards both Iran and England. For example, Bahar, a second generation married woman who lived in Iran for three years and now lives in the UK, stated her attempt to support positive features of two societies as follows:

I have experience of living in two different societies and I also have an experience of having parents with two different nationalities. When I was in Iran if somebody said something about British culture that was not true, for example, some of the relatives thought that British families are extremely unstable; I tried to tell them that this was not the case at all and they should not generalise. I have lived in both countries, and I was aware that both societies have their fair share of unstable families. I will also try and correct my English friends and family if they say something untrue about Iran (Bahar, aged 24).

The second generation participants mentioned that they regard the UK as their home and consider Iran as their parents' and other relatives' homeland and feel a strong sympathy with it. It appears that at the same time the second generation participants tried to point out the constructive features of both societies, and also tried to inform others about the merits of each society. According to the data, the second generation explained how they expressed dual-loyalty by correcting both countries citizens' misunderstanding of each other.

Among the respondents, Nazanin, who has an Iranian mother and British father, is the one exception that I mentioned above. Nazanin told me that she has a great respect and support for both the UK and Iran. Moreover, she said that the most crucial issue for her is Islam and Islamic values. She explained:

I am loyal to both countries of Iran and the UK, as Iran is my mother's homeland and the UK is my father's homeland. I am and was proud of my two backgrounds, in particular, when I was young. My mother helped me to become familiar with Islam and taught me the sharia laws. This familiarity leads me to support Islam more than my two backgrounds. I always try to defend Islam against people who criticise the religion as I feel it is a main part of my life (Nazanin, aged 31).

It seems that supporting two countries is a creative approach for these second generation migrants helping them to know who they are and where they belong. Findings of the section about identity construction among second generation Iranian migrant women in this study illustrates that their identity is based on whether they perceive themselves to be

English and also their parents' background. In fact, the study found that these second generation participants keep in touch with their relatives in Iran, whilst at the same time they are able to create a strong connection to the host country. This active transnational bond seems to act as a conduit for their identity construction.

The following section demonstrates the transnational issue among the young migrant Iranian women and intends to explore how these second generation women relate to Iranian cultural values.

B- The present status of Iranian cultural attachment

One aim of this chapter is to consider to what extent growing up in the UK impacts on cultural immersion and the maintenance of Persian language amongst the second generation. This section addresses two issues: first, the impact of migration on their attitudes towards maintaining Iranian cultural values and second, their feelings about retaining the Persian language.

According to the interview data, during the past several years, Iranian migrants have been trying to introduce Iranian culture to their children. As I cited in review of literature chapter (pp 40-84) the first generation migrant women are very interested in Iranian cultural heritage and wanted to develop the understanding of the second generation about their cultural background. I asked the second generation women about preserving native culture, its traditions and customs. One of the interviewees from a Muslim family stated:

I like to practise all the Iranian customs. I have a religious family and I have got used to it. My mother introduced all Iranian and Islamic customs to my siblings and me. I would like to keep Iranian New Year (No Rooz) with its traditional settings (The last Wednesday of the year, the thirteen day of New Year) (Marzieh, aged 20).

The findings indicate that all participants in this study celebrate customary events such as No Rooz, regardless of their religious background.

Similar sentiments were expressed by Parisa who was a lawyer:

I like to preserve, as far as possible, all the Iranian customs, for example, celebrating Iranian New Year (No Rooz), Yalda night (shortest day), last Wednesday in the year, and other celebrations. My mother always prepares everything ready for celebrating the New Year (e.g. special foods, special cookies and special decorations). My sister and I have been learning about Iranian customs at home from our mother and now we try to help mum as much as we can with Iranian New Year celebrations (Parisa, aged 26).

Three out of 19 respondents wanted to preserve Islamic ritual and Iranian cultural values at the same time. In Iranian culture there are two ceremonies, Sizdah Be-dar and Chahar Shanbeh Soori, which some religious people believe should not be observed as there is no religious basis for these events. Most Iranians, however, believe that these celebrations are lucky and bring health and happiness for families. Two of the interviewees (mother and daughter) told me that they never celebrate these occasions and do not take part in special Iranian gatherings for these events. They told me that preserving religious rituals and Islamic laws is the most important aspect of their cultural values. This is unusual as Iranians from any ethnic persuasion normally celebrate these events, whereas attending Islamic rituals is not as popular. In fact, some of the first generation migrant women attend these religious gatherings to pray and have contact with other religious women. By contrast, the children of these first generation migrant women are not always interested in taking part in religious rituals. For example, Marzieh, a 20 year old student, stated:

My family observes all the Islamic Eids and go to the Mosque but they never push us to take part in all religious ceremonies. It is the same for most of my Iranian friends with religious parents. I think we all are more interested in observing and taking part in Iranian celebrations such as Iranian New Year (No Rooz) (Marzieh, aged 20).

For the second generation women I interviewed the main point was to take part in happy celebrations such as the New Year and even religious Eids which are associated with happiness.

Regarding the role of first generation women in maintaining the Iranian cultural values and customs, in this study I observed that, in different cities of the UK, various cultural

institutions have been established either with the Iranian embassy support or with financial contribution from Iranian migrants in that area. It is interesting that the organizers of these societies are Iranian women. They were active and tried to encourage second generations to attend in their different classes to improve their Persian language and further their Iranian cultural knowledge.

The data reveal that the first generation migrant women are still adhering to the values, practices and language of their homeland. These women expect their children, particularly their daughters, to preserve the Iranian culture. For example, Nazanin, Marzieh, and Anali's mothers expect them to embrace the Iranian cultural values as the first generations do, despite religious, ethnic and socioeconomic diversities. According to the data, although the second generation participants have little access to the sources of transforming the cultural values, they are still encouraged by their mothers to learn as much as they can about Iranian customs. Their responses to these cultural demands seem to be associated with a link to the cultural values of the UK. These second generation women, unlike their first generation mothers, learn Iranian cultural values with no 'environmental' support (close relatives like grand parents, attending host societies' schools and so on). This means they learn two different cultures simultaneously, the culture of their parents at home, and the culture of the host society in which they live, and shows that first generation women want their daughters not to forget who they are.

Anali, a 27 year old second generation Iranian, said that there is more pressure on females than males to preserve the parents' culture. She added that her mother always refers to their Iranian group of friends and Anali's responsibility to maintain family respect when in the company of their friends. Olsen (1997) claims that this pressure on female second generation migrants from traditional and orthodox culture, who apply stricter gender roles, is more difficult than other migrant women from Asia and Latin America (Olsen 1997).

B-1- Civility or 'Tarof'

Another important point made by the second generation was the use and display of the term 'tarof'. This term is a Persian word that emphasizes both self-deference and social

rank, an equal meaning of civility. The term includes a range of polite behaviours such as a man displaying etiquette by opening the door for a woman. This means that when you are a guest and you are offered tea, coffee, biscuits, cakes, you would refuse a couple of times before accepting the hosts' offer.

All the second generation participants in this study explained their experiences of this behaviour among the relatives in Iran or among their parent's friends in the UK. In terms of modifying parental traditions; it is the notion of 'Tarof'. Anahid, one of the second generation migrants stated:

This term is regarded as being polite. I do not like to abandon this completely, only to modify the term. I mean it is a charming custom and shows Iranians' hospitality. It shows that I am happy seeing my guests in my home. It is their custom and a way to show their respect to the guests, but I know sometimes it makes people feel uncomfortable. I would like to keep the custom and only modify it in a way that my guests feel welcomed and comfortable at my home (Anahid, aged 33).

The term of 'tarof' is tighter on younger migrant women. Unless they visit their relatives in Iran or visit the Iranian family friends regularly in the UK, they are faced with this concept of Iranian culture that is not always welcome to them. Siana, a 21 year old woman described her opinion:

One of the attitudes that I don't like is Tarof. I don't like it when people push hard on offering me something when I really don't want it. I would abandon the notion of 'Tarof' and if I offer something to someone and they say they don't want it, I won't offer it again. It is sometimes very tiresome (Siana, aged 21).

For some second generation women who have experience of living in Iran, this issue is very embarrassing. Sogol explained her experience:

I have abandoned all together the notion of 'Tarof'. This is where for example if you offered a piece of cake, it would be rude of you to accept instantly, you should really refuse at least twice, by the third time of asking, you would accept the offer of a piece of cake. I lived for two years in Iran but every time we were guest or had guests I felt embarrassed about how rude I was in their eyes, I always accepted everything that I wanted only after one 'Tarof'. I grew up in the UK and would like to omit some unfair Iranian customs such as 'Tarof' (Sogol, aged 25).

It appears that, for some second generation women (Sogol and Siana), some customs are modified when they derive from fragments of tradition. Traditions may also be abandoned in the longer-term by the second generation because of their familiarity with new values in a host country.

The Tarof custom, important custom among Iranian families and Iranian first generation migrants seems to be frustrating to some of the second generation which has led them to abandon this tradition. At the same time, some of the second generation participants mentioned the effect of 'Tarof' in shaping their politeness, and also teaching them how to interact with other people. It is noticeable that the latter group of second generation decided also to modify this tradition.

B-2-Language

Among the second generation participants in this study, 17 out of 19 attended classes to learn or improve their Persian language and also become familiar with the Iranian customs. These classes provide an opportunity for second generation migrants to learn and use their mother tongue, particularly reading Persian newspapers and books and writing Persian, which makes communication with their relatives in Iran easier. The Persian courses are offered outside the national curriculum and are mostly only available at weekends, often in cities where there is a considerable number of Iranian migrants. It seems that during the past 30-35 years, Iranian Institutes and the first generation of migrants have been playing a crucial role in preserving the Persian language. One of the

second generation participants mentioned her mother's role in the teaching and maintaining the Persian language, she stated:

My mum is teaching Persian language at an Iranian school that she established 25 years ago. She taught us how to read and write in Persian; many of the second generation Iranian migrants in this city have learnt Persian from my mum or other volunteer Iranian women who had experience in teaching different Iranian subjects. I believe that preserving Iranian culture is the main concern to all first generation Iranian migrant women (Bahar, aged 25).

Among 19 second generation participants in this study, 18 interviewees told me that they always speak Persian with their parents, as their parents do not answer to their English. There was only one respondent who did the interview in English. Even though she understood Persian language she was not comfortable speaking in Persian. Her mother told me that her husband is British and they will never return to Iran and it is not necessary for her children to learn the Persian language.

The foregoing narratives confirm Fishman's (1996) claim that preserving the native language in minority migrant groups is an important role taken on by first generation migrant women as mother of the second generation. Bahar, an accountant, with Iranian mother and British father, explained:

I always was and am hoping to keep my mother tongue. I did Persian Studies in the UK to improve my skill and knowledge of it. My husband is an Iranian, and he also likes to teach and transfer Iranian identity to the next generation. My mother always encouraged my sisters and me to learn and practise Persian language and Iranian customs. I would like to preserve the Persian Language and teach it to my children. I always spoke in Persian with my mum when I was a little girl. At the moment, if I know somebody knows the Persian language, I prefer to speak Persian with him/her (Bahar, aged 24).

Sharing similar sentiments, Marzieh, discussed that:

My mother's main concern was for her children to maintain the Persian language. She took us to Iranian Saturday school when we were young. We

have learnt how to read and write in Persian. However, it was and is much easier for my siblings and me to speak in English than in Persian. I speak Farsi with my parents and English with my siblings. I like to speak and read Persian fluently. My Farsi is not that good (Marzieh, aged 20).

According to the data, it seems that it was easier for the second generation respondents to speak English than Persian. All participants told me that speaking Persian and their enthusiasm to learn their mother tongue was stronger than that of their brothers. Donya, 18 years old, who was born in Sweden, described the mentioned subject as follows:

Every Saturday my brother and I both go to a Persian class. I really enjoy speaking Farsi but my brother finds it very difficult. He does try to speak Farsi but half way through he starts speaking English. I ask him why he doesn't carry on speaking Farsi, and he says 'I don't know the right words in Farsi'. Learning Farsi is amazing, I am very happy that I can read and write some Persian words. I hope when I next visit Iran I can show my cousins that I can read the street names in Farsi (Donya, aged 18).

Donya also mentioned her mother's role in teaching them Iranian customs. She told me that her mother loves the Iranian New Year and always tries to do every custom to make the New Year celebration as perfect as possible. She added that her mother encouraged them to take part in different ceremonies that are related to Iranian culture. Preserving Persian language is an important issue for her mother, which is why she sent them to Persian classes so that they could learn how to read and write in Persian. This young, second generation participant pointed out that the family observe all the traditions which go with Iranian culture, for example, the Last Wednesday of the year, the thirteenth day of the New Year, The Yalda night and so on.

The findings of this study show that an important factor for first generation migrant women to maintain cultural values is their use of Persian language to communicate with their children. The majority of participants (36 out of 38) explained that they always speak Persian at home. Second generation participants seem to speak Persian and are familiar with Iranian cultural values and customs but do not know how to write and read Persian fluently. It appears that although the second generation women have learned Persian, their English language is much better than their Persian language and is not

comparable to their parent's knowledge of two languages. My personal and limited observations show that the second generation migrants whose mothers taught Persian to them have a better understanding of Persian language and Iranian culture.

However, Iranian communities which enable at the second generation migrants could be a part of the community, learn the language and become familiar with their heritage, do not exist in all the cities of the UK. Those mothers who are passionate about retaining the Persian language and Iranian cultural heritage struggled to teach and transfer all their Iranian knowledge to the next generation. Generally speaking, it seems that Iranian mothers play a crucial role in preserving Iranian culture; also their daughters will continue this duty. My interview data shows that daughters are more likely than sons to preserve the language and cultural values taught by their mothers. All the first generation migrant women in this study told me that they taught their daughters and sons all the traditions and the language, but it is only their daughters that have maintained the values and talk in Persian whenever they can. They also added if their sons were to marry Iranian girls, it might make them observe the cultural values and traditions more.

In terms of maintaining some aspects of Iranian culture, the majority of the second-generation interviewees (18 out of 19), mentioned that the Persian language and the Iranian national celebrations as their most valuable factors of Iranian heritage. Anali, a 27 year old IT engineer stated:

I like to keep my mother tongue (Persian) and improve my knowledge of it. I also make every effort teach my children to speak Persian. I wish to keep our traditional events such as the Iranian New Year and all its trimmings. I would also like to transfer and teach the ideas and values behind these events to the next generation (Anali, aged 27).

In a similar vein, Sara a 22 year old woman explained:

I want to improve my knowledge of Persian language and learn how to read and write in Persian fluently. If someday I have a child, I would like to teach him/her the Persian language. I think learning both Persian and English languages should start at the same time. The best start time for learning is the

first year of school age. Thus, the children will be fluent in both languages. I also wish to maintain the warmth and kindness that exist among Iranian families (Sara, aged 22).

Rumbaut (2002), in his study on the effects of transnationalism amongst second generation migrants, concluded 'The role of language emerges as central to maintenance of transnational ties, both attitudinally and behaviourally' (Rumbaut, 2002: 90). The findings of this section indicate that visiting the parental homeland and in some cases living there for two or three years can be an effective motivation for the second generation to preserve their mother tongue. Despite language playing a crucial role in maintaining transnational ties to the parents' original country, the data showed that the children of first generation speak Persian only with their parents, while at the same time they speak English with their siblings. The finding illustrates that preserving the Persian language can be a serious challenge amongst the second generation participants of this study. Moreover, as I noted in Chapter Three, many Iranians fled Iran because of socio-political opposition to the Islamic government; it can be difficult for subsequent generations to maintain their Persian language when they know that they are not able to visit their parental homeland.

C- Parental traditional customs

In this section I will examine the perception of second generation participants in this study about some aspects of Iranian cultural customs, looking at their maintenance, modification and in some cases, abandonment. This study describes the parents' expectations and considers the effect of their beliefs on intergenerational relations. The relationship between the two generations is sometimes associated with conflicts and arguments. The second generation accepts the values of the host country easier than their parents, and then becomes distant from parental expectations. The aim here is to investigate to what extent some traditions have been abandoned, modified or preserved by the children of the first generation migrants.

There were a few points highlighted during the interviews about which the respondents taking part in this study felt strongly, for example, type of marriage. An arranged

marriage was the most common type of marriage among the first generation Iranian migrant women, in particular, those who got married in Iran, before migrating to the UK.

As I discussed in Chapter Three, such marriages have deep roots in Iranian culture but in bigger cities and among upper and middle class families, parents seek their daughters' agreement before introducing them to someone whom they believe could be a suitable husband. The findings of this study are that only one of the second generation participants believes in an arranged marriage and most are looking for a love marriage. There was one exception who told me about her unsuccessful arranged marriage. She explained that she obeyed her parents' decision about her future life although she did not agree with it; and then after two months she finished the relationship. She stated:

My parents were very keen for me to get married despite my objections. In the end I agreed to meet the person that they had chosen for me. This person arrived from Iran, the first time I met him, he approved to be ok; but on subsequent meetings I realised how little we had in common and everything had to be done his way or not at all. Despite all the shortcomings, I agreed to our engagement. In the eyes of shari'a law is as good as being married. It was after this, that I realised I could not live with somebody who would have tyrannical tendencies. Even my mum agreed with me that this was a big mistake on their part, so she supported me in nullifying the engagement (Anali, aged 27).

The above narrative shows that some of the Iranian families in the UK still have a problem understanding their children. Since the children have grown up with two sets of values, Iranian ones at home, the host country's ones at school and their surroundings, it is difficult for them to entirely accept their parent's expectations. A researcher stated that 'marriages in Iran usually take place within the kinship network or through a system of arranged marriage...' (Hanassab, 1993:223).

These experiences and beliefs of the first generation could create tensions between the two generations; the young children of migrants strive for a new lifestyle, whereas their parents expect them to follow old traditions. It is important to note that family conflict does not mean the second generation's denial of their original background. The

responses of the participants in this study in earlier paragraphs indicate a strict adherence to their Iranian heritage. According to the interview data, the two generations are not opposed to one another's ideas and beliefs. It would appear that the second generation migrants are looking at their Iranian customs through critical lenses. Since many of the first generation Iranian migrant women left Iran because of incompatibility of their beliefs with the Islamic government rules, it seems that their children's critical views are an echo of the first generation migrants.

According to the findings, talking about sex was not easy for the first generation migrant women. Family pressure from the first generation attempts to lead children to keep cultural customs and its marriage customs, for example dowry, spouse selection and so on. Most of the first generation respondents tried to control their daughters' life. In doing so they would encourage their daughters to get married rather than have a boyfriend or live with a partner. One of them told me that she asked her daughter to let her know when she felt ready to get married. This religious woman took her daughter to Iran and selected a husband for her. She was only worried about the decency and maintaining a good reputation, it was not important for her that the couple did not know each other's language. In a similar situation, a second generation respondent who was born and raised in the UK has left the parental home and England because her parents, particularly, her father, wanted to preserve his family's good reputation. Her father felt that her appearance and the fact that she had a boyfriend was a strong threat to the family's reputation. It appears that children's denial of their parental beliefs can bring the children a lot of difficulties. In my opinion, even though not all parents are such extremist, they are still worried about children's sexual life.

Contrary to these two narratives, all the other second generation participants told me that they have to get to know their future husband on their own terms and would not accept their parents' selections. They believed that there must be a modification or even abandonment of the views of the first generation about marriage, in particular in controlling their daughters' behaviour. Anahid, a 33 year old dentist stated:

I rent my own apartment and live with my partner. My parents, especially my dad, objected to my moving from their home to my new apartment. I had no problem with my mum; we have a close relationship and talk to each other like

two friends. My father does not agree with relationship between girls and boys. He was always worried about my future life; actually he still worries about how my life will turn out. He does not accept nor believe that couples should live together out of wedlock. I usually go to my parents' house without my partner. I find it really sad to do something opposite to my beliefs. I do not understand why my dad does not believe that I am old enough to make my own decisions. Although I should add that he is a little bit better now than before. I still see many other Iranian parents with this traditional value. I think it is time for some changes in Iranian opinion about male-female interaction (Anahid, aged 33).

Anahid's case is not an isolated one, if anything, far from it. Most of the second generation migrant women are faced with the dilemma of their parents not approving of them having boyfriends or living with a partner out of wedlock.

Another participant explained:

I have a boyfriend but my family doesn't know about him. He is a Christian like me. We met several times when we were participating in different Christianity events. We have a very healthy relationship, because we are both very religious. As he lives in another city, we see each other when he comes here. My father doesn't know about him at all. My parents are so against this kind of relationship (Arezo, aged 20).

This conflict is due to the parents' cultural values that are in contrast to the host country's values. It seems that Iranian migrant women adapt to British culture easier than Iranian migrant men. As I cited in chapter three, first generation migrant women play a role as a mediator between young daughters and their conservative fathers. Confronting and/or coming to terms with second generation's sexuality causes serious problems for Iranian migrant families. This is mainly due to the fact that the first generation grew up in families where talking about sex was a taboo subject.

It seems that the second generation chose not to tell their parents anything about meeting a boy because they believe that it is difficult for parents to understand their children and

the society that they grew up in. The majority of participants in this study, even after 25/30 years living abroad, do not discuss sex with their daughters freely. They believe that teenagers have best source of information about sex and also about great evils such as drugs and HIV at school. Many of the first generation respondents showed a great concern about their daughters' sexual life because of an Iranian cultural belief about female decency. A majority of Iranians believe that women are more vulnerable than men; therefore they need to be protected from social evils by their parents. In contrast, the second generation disagree and believe that this type of value system should be abandoned or modified.

Conclusion

Second generation Iranian migrant women's identity can be a positive self-identification that fastens their individuality to a particular ethnic group. Moreover, this feeling is associated with a commitment to their parents' cultural values, customs, conventions and behaviours. This chapter has intended to explore construction of identity among second generation Iranian migrant women by showing how their notion of identity is based on the ties between their parents' cultural background and the culture of country in which they live.

It seems that the participants of this study feel a personal tie Iran; they express this feeling through their identity perception (Iranian, Iranian-British) and their allegiances to both countries. Exploring transnational identity through emotions among the second generation participants illustrates different identities that relate them to two societies at the same time. Construction of their self-identification was associated with personal ties and connection to Iran; however they have been integrated into British society through education, employment and other socio-cultural activities. Growing up in transnational social field and keeping contact with relatives in Iran had an impact on the first generation migrants' children's identification. They were unsure how to express their feelings towards their identity as they felt that they were connected emotionally to both countries. It appears that respondents stay in touch with their relatives in Iran at the same time that they try to create contacts with the members of the host country. Transnational communication and social networking enable the second generation to

reinforce their ties to both Iran and the UK. Phone calls, the Internet and visits to Iran enabled the respondents to connect emotionally to both countries.

The findings suggest that the regular transnational communications shape the identity of the second generation migrant women. Frequent connections with relatives in Iran provide an adequate context for second generation to improve their transnational identities. These connections provide them an opportunity to ensure that their process of identity construction would not be limited to the cultural values of the UK. It appears that at the same time they can obtain cultural information from both their parents' homeland and their own social environment. However, some of the respondents faced challenges in describing their nationality and the data indicate this feeling among younger participants.

Findings from this chapter show that the participants maintain some of their parents' cultural values, although some aspects of them are modified based on the effect of their social surroundings. Moreover, these second generation migrants modified or abandoned some of their parents' cultural values to express their identity through selecting their ideal factors from both societies to show their respect and loyalty to parents' homeland and the country which provided facilities for them.

Most of the second generation participants in this study were bilingual and opted to learn or maintain their mothers' native tongue. The first generation migrant women played an important role in encouraging the second generation to keep the Persian language and attend Iranian celebrations. The close connection with relatives in Iran provided adequate practise for the second generation to preserve some aspects of their Iranian culture. Moreover, having access to transnational social networking helps the second generation to keep in touch with their relatives around the world, therefore maintaining connection with their parents' homeland.

In the case of maintaining Iranian culture, in spite of lots of efforts from Iranian institutions and parents, in particular mothers, to teach the next generation the importance of maintaining the Persian language and cultural conditions, it seems that some Iranian migrant women are more supportive than their male counterparts. It appears that male migrants are affected by the socio-cultural elements from the host

country and the responsibility of transferring the parents' cultural values is on the shoulders of migrant women.

In the context of Iranian families' pressures on one hand and in the context of British cultural pressures on the other hand, it appears difficult, particularly for second generation migrant women, to express their self-identification. For instance, some of the participants are still shy of expressing their opinions in front of their parents, or if they did so, they would face punishment from their parents and other Iranian relatives and friends.

To sum up, this chapter has shown that there are some significant implications of a dual culture transmission, with respect to the UK, among the second generation Iranian migrant women. Although the first generation migrant women (mothers) tended to pass some of their traditional customs (language, New Year ceremony and so on) to their children, biculturalism is seen as an issue affects the younger generation of migrants. These individuals practise two different cultures at the same time and select different values from their experiences. For example, they may choose their husbands from among those Iranian men who were born or raised in the UK because of their similar understanding of the same conditions. It is important to recognize that second generation mix the parents' cultural heritage with the socio-cultural context of the UK, and according to their new perceptions, decide to abandon, modify or preserve some aspects of parents' traditional culture.

In this chapter, I have tried to show that the first generation's main focus is on their values and customs and to what extent they try to pass these values and customs on to the second generation, which can in turn create cultural conflict for the second generation, for instance if the second generation's choice of dress is not approved of by their parents. As previously discussed, many young Iranian females experience a clash of the two cultures, mainly concerning issues such as gender roles, marriage and relationships. They are often forced to conform to their parents' ideology, resulting in a feeling of resentment. This resentment towards the parents means that the relationship is strained, sometimes leading to teenage children leaving home (an unacceptable action in the view of Iranian parents).

Among the participants of this study, some of the mothers encouraged their children to learn about Iranian culture while at the same time adjusting to some aspects of the British culture. It is important to understand how two generations of migrant women resolve their opposing cultural values in their daily life. Some of the young female migrants complained that their parents, in particular their fathers, want them to observe all the traditional Iranian cultural principles but the young migrants are unfamiliar with these ideologies. However, many of these second generation participants show a certain attachment to some of the Iranian cultural values, even if they were born in the UK, at the same time exhibiting aspects of social attachment to the British cultural ideas.

The data illustrate that there is some level of biculturalism among the second generation participants in this study that leads to behave differently in front of their parents than when they are with their friends. It means that every respondent takes the best parts of each culture.

CHAPTER EIGHT

CONCLUSION

The aim of this thesis has been to explore the ways in which the migration process has affected the lives of first and second generation women migrants by charting their experiences and considering how they maintain their Iranian cultural values and at the same time adapt to the host society's values. The focus of this research is middle-class Iranian migrant women who left their homeland between seven to 33 years ago and are now living in the UK. The purpose of this research is to consider Iranian migrant women according to intergenerational differences in the experiences of the migratory process; the first generation (who individually decided to migrate to the UK) and the second generation (the daughters of the first generation who had no other choice but to live in the country that their parents had selected). This study has specially explored how Iranian women migrant (first and second generation) understand their gender roles constructions in their homeland (Iran) and in their host country (Britain), therefore mapping the impacts of migration on their gendered subjectivities.

It was important to find out the reasons behind the first generation's decision to migrate to the UK. The areas covered in this thesis were: Can existing migration theory and evidence account for the experiences of Iranian women migrant? Were there other considerations, such as, whether their traditional gender role constructions have changed in the host society? How have they adapted to the host society's cultural values and how much of their Iranian culture have they retained? I considered their role as cultural protectors and as mothers with a traditional identity formed in Iran. I found that all these respondents wanted to transfer Iranian cultural values to the next generation.

With regard to the second generation participants, I investigated how this generation fits into a role which has been ascribed by the host country; what part do second generations play in Iranian migrant families and can they reject dominant cultural values of the country they live in? Another issue facing the second generation is their self-identification. How do they perceive themselves? This question raises issues about

nationality, gender role, and so on, as they left Iran when they were very young or were born in Britain.

Listening to both generations draws attention to the women's role at home as mothers and daughters, providing an understanding about the challenges which these two generations have faced. The stories of the two generations helped to articulate the experiences of first generation as mothers and to further the understanding of the important role they play in preserving the Iranian culture in the host society.

This study set out to describe and analyze three aspects of migratory movement among the Iranian migrant women in the UK; first, the motives for leaving the homeland among the first generation migrant women; second, the shifting away from traditional values and embracing of new roles and rights by both generations. Thirdly, to offer a discussion about intergenerational transmission between first and second generations, considering their perspectives on their identity by looking at the extent to which they have preserved the mother tongue and maintained Iranian values and customs.

A few words to the readers in explaining my role as an insider- researcher in the study. I believe that I was in a unique position as an insider interviewer because of similarities in race, language, educational levels (BSc, MSc, M.D. and so on) between the participants and myself enabling me to conduct a meaningful social research.

In the following section I review findings to show how this data links with the literature of sociology of migration and feminism migration theories. As research literature on Iranian migrants in the UK, and in particular on women migrants, is relatively limited, the findings from this study also provide some guiding principles for further studies in the related contexts.

The existing migration literature has not provided much insight as to the reasons why Iranian women migrate in the first place and how they have adapted to their new surroundings and the host country's culture during the past three decades. Migration literature on women has focussed on poorer/working class women who migrate, often to work in the informal sectors, and often illegally and without documents for example, migrants from, the Philippines, Bangladesh or Africa (Buijs 1993; Anderson 2001;

Kofman 2003; Dumont *et al.*, 2007). The experience of the Iranian women studied here was a unique 'socio-cultural' migration in that these women, whether single or married, decided to leave their homeland (Iran) principally because they were not able to accept and adhere to the new roles defined for women in the new Islamic government (Sadeghi 2006). I believe that many Iranian migrant women would still be living in Iran had it not been for the 1979 Revolution.

This study therefore adds significantly to a limited amount of research on middle-class, well educated Iranian migrant women in the migration literature, by looking at the Iranian women from a middle-class/educated background who decided to emigrate to the UK due to a number of factors, such as inequality in the job market and restrictions on further education for women in certain subjects and so on.

Through qualitative methods, based on the points of view of two generations of Iranian migrants in the UK, I identified different factors that can describe the motives for their migration. The findings of this study demonstrate that there were many reasons prompting the 19 migrant women whom I interviewed to leave their homeland. The motives were categorized as, anti-women laws, social restrictions, Iran-Iraq war, political oppression, Cultural Revolution, political and religious affiliation, and aspirations for their children.

Having explored their motives for migrating, the study went on to describe the perceptions of two generations of migrant women about gender roles and family relationships in the UK. The findings reveal that migratory movement is associated with some changes in gender roles for some of the participants. For instance, displacement has provided them with an opportunity to live their lives without facing gender discrimination.

Finally, the study sought to explain intergenerational transmission among second generation Iranian migrant women in this study. The outcomes of the research show the crucial role of the first generation migrant women in transforming and maintaining Iranian cultural values (e.g. The Iranian New Year with all its trimmings). The findings also indicate some differences between the two generations in preserving cultural values. For example, the majority of the second generation in this study were not interested in

preserving the custom of Tarof (civility). In other ways the findings reveal that some of the second generation migrants would not follow their mother's lifestyle, for instance, would not stay in an unsuitable marriage. The following discussion will address the main questions in turn.

Research Question 1: Iranian migrants' motivations: What were some of the motivating factors which made Iranian migrant women leave Iran?

As I showed in Chapter Five, one of the factors that led two out of 19 interviewees to migrate from Iran was the Cultural Revolution. As mentioned in Chapter Two, the aim of the Cultural Revolution was to purge all perceived non-Islamic professors, staff and students from the academic arena. The Islamic government thus isolated various segments of its population and this prompted migration for those who were not integrated into the ideological construction of the Islamic State. Information from the World Bank reveals that Iran has one of the highest rates of brain drain in the world, as many scholars, professionals and skilled people left their homeland to work or study abroad and most of them have chosen to stay in the host society due to social and cultural pressures in Iran after the 1979 Revolution. Hence some possibilities for further research might include the economic and social impacts of the brain drain on Iranian society including its effects on artists and culture following the Revolution. Are there benefits from Iran's isolation, either economic or social advantages?

From my observations, political pressure, socio-cultural restrictions, anti-women laws and behaviours, the Cultural Revolution, political and religious oppression are interwoven. They may be classed together broadly as socio-political persecution and this should be acknowledged as an important factor in the participants' decisions to migrate from Iran to the UK. These Iranian women migrated in order to have a chance of achieving their aspirations and multiple restrictions thwarted these ambitious women, increasing their desire to migrate from Iran.

This investigation dealt with a group of Iranian women migrants from a well-educated middle-class background enjoying a comfortable standard of living in the UK. Sociological studies on migrant women from middle/upper class backgrounds are rare and more research is needed into how such identities are integrated personally and

professionally into a host country. It could be helpful to consider more skilled sectors of the labour market.

Within the framework described above, themes and topics meriting greater research emerged from my study of Iranian migrant women. In the last 30 years, there has been a substantial period of migration expansion among Iranian women. This study shows that there is a need for more analysis of the ways in which the 1979 affected women who decided to migrate from Iran. Most of the earliest Iranian women migrants interviewed in this study had experience of Iran's liberal, pre-revolution society and preferred to live in that situation on their lifestyles, although there have always been cultural constraints on women in Iran, both before and after the 1979 Revolution. The data also illustrates that anti-women laws and socio-political pressures are significant factors which prompted Iranian women to migrate, either as spouses or as independent migrants.

Research Question 2: Shifting away from traditional roles and seeking new roles and rights among Iranian women migrants

Migration exposes people to a huge cultural disparity between the country of origin and the receiving society. It takes time for new migrant people to integrate into the host society, in particular, the challenges of a new language and a new culture. While all migrants face cultural differences, migrant women may often be torn between the two cultural values. The new society presents a different lifestyle which may clash with their responsibilities and traditional roles in their homeland. It is notable that the effects can be twofold: on the one hand, conditions in the host society can bring migrant women empowerment, happiness, freedom and self-confidence but, on the other hand, migration means uprooting the family, moving away from friends and becoming isolated from one's native culture.

Participants in this study placed great emphasis on how some of their aspirations have become a reality since living in the UK, for example, freedom to choose their dress code and political freedom. They explained how the social and cultural surroundings in the host society have made them feel like different people. Some of the interviewees believed that migration provided them with an opportunity to obtain higher education

and valuable employment, which decreased men's authority in the family. Some of the participants were nostalgic about how life used to be in Iran when they were surrounded by their family. Many of them have tried to bring their relatives to the UK to reduce the longing for how things used to be.

It seems that Iranian women's participation in the labour market may increase their influence in making decisions in the home, particularly when male migrants face challenges to gain adequately paid jobs. It appears that the declining economic status of male migrants and women's participation in paid employment may change the lifestyle and men-women relationships in the family. Some of the participants explained how their husbands have lost their authority and the privileges they enjoyed in Iran, while at the same time, Iranian women have obtained some social gains. It seems that many of the new roles for most of the respondents have given them a level of satisfaction and self-fulfilment.

According to the data in Chapter Six some attitudes of the two cultures came into conflict with each other when first generation migrants initially arrived in the UK. Gradually, by attending colleges or universities and obtaining some qualifications they started to work. Communicating with British people outside the home helped them to understand and adjust to the new culture. For some of the participants living in the UK, this was associated with a shift of traditional gender roles (sharing in making decisions, sharing in rearing children and so on). They considered higher education as an opportunity to enter the labour market. However, even though educational attainment brought them well paid jobs with career prospects, for some respondents it did not result in fewer household chores and duties. Many of them decided to join the labour market after their children had reached school age. It seems that cultural expectations of the Iranian women as a wife, a daughter and a mother had not changed for some participants during the years of living in the UK. Mir-Hosseini in a study of the dual identity of Iranian women pointed out:

The society crafted the new educated women because this scientific mother and the concerned wife would produce better children (state scribes, doctors and professors) and she would also prevent her man from behaving badly (1999: 112).

The narratives of some participants show that the migration process to the UK created changes, some of them quite drastic, in family relationships, transforming a patriarchal system into a more equal structure where both parents share decision making and other duties at home. The findings of shifting gender roles among Iranian migrant women have raised some further questions. For example, how would second generation male migrants (sons of first generation) deal with the changes of gender roles in the family?

The findings from this study show that the second generation women see gender roles through a critical lens. This leads them to re-evaluate their mothers' cultural background and create a new definition of men-women relationships. The experiences of the daughters show how growing up into two different societies with two different cultures created significant differences in attitudes between two members of the same family. For example, there seem to be indications that the second generation's focus is less on the community than the individual, which increases individuality among second generation expectations. These changes enabled the second generation subjects to develop their opinions on a diversity of subjects.

My study indicates a tendency among the second generation to break with some Iranian stereotypes of gender roles. A combination of Iranian cultural values with some new norms could be observed among them. Daughters of the first generation have been learning about the Iranian values, but it does not mean that they follow their mothers' lifestyle. The study revealed a weakening of male dominance in women's lives as they look for individual freedom to make decisions for themselves without interference from any male counterparts.

Based on what the second generation have said about their parents' attitudes towards gender roles, their mothers' position at home was subsidiary to their fathers'. They believed that while the first generation (their mothers) were attaining high positions in the UK and contributing to the family finances, they still had an unequal role in the process of family life. They thought that their mothers should re-define their status and achieve more visibility in this new environment and put away their customary gender roles.

The second generation believes that women in the UK have support from the state and family laws protect women against men. They told me that they felt self-confident and were able to arrange their own life without obeying any male counterparts. In contrast to the first generation, they believed that independence can have a positive impact on men-women relationships. They said that selecting a partner for marriage is a personal issue but they also wished to have their parents' agreement. This attitude among second generation women makes it difficult for Iranian migrant men to continue their cultural heritage of patriarchy as a means of holding all the power at home and in family unit.

Research Question3: Intergenerational transmission

In the chapter about intergenerational transmission I addressed the influence of the migration process on the identity of the second generation, which led to discussions on national belonging and loyalty to two countries and was followed by a consideration of the importance of preserving the parents' cultural values among the second generation migrant women.

In response to questions of identity, the first generation claimed that they are Iranian because they were born and raised in Iran, yet answering this question is not easy for their children. In contrast to their mothers', the second generation expressed two types of national belonging: Iranian or Iranian-British. The first generation participants still have immediate family members in Iran who share memories with them. The second generation have some knowledge of relatives in Iran through their parents' memories, photos and from visits. The findings here indicate that the level of cultural and social interaction with their homeland affects the identity of the second generation in this study. The study found that most of the second generation inclined towards cultural integration, trying to preserve a relationship with the Iranian community as well as with the members of the host society.

The findings from this study show how the first generation participants make efforts to preserve Iranian cultural values and transfer them to their children. Also, the findings pointed out that this tendency to integrate with both cultural communities did seem to be affected by gender. Almost all first generations interviewees except one, believed that it would be their daughters who would preserve Iranian customs and values because their

sons are not interested in maintaining parents' cultural values. Moreover, it appears that the pattern of maintaining Iranian culture is more prevalent among those Iranian migrant families who have contacts with relatives and friends in Iran and also have regular visits to Iran and have visitors from their home.

The majority of second generation migrant women indicated that Iranian culture sees children through a patriarchal lens and treats the socialization of women and men differently. Some daughters indicated that parents expect them to adopt Iranian cultural values, whereas their brothers are not under the same cultural pressures. Observations of first generation migrant women's anxieties seem to point to a higher level of concern regarding their daughters' upbringing. These can be related to the first generation's native culture which implies that males do not require as strict an upbringing as females.

The data suggest that 'relativizing' (see Chapter Three) is a very important factor to Iranian migrant women in the UK in that they continue to preserve their ties with relatives in the homeland, while at the same time improving their integration into the host society's culture. Living in the UK, in British cultural environments such as schools, colleges, universities and work places, has led the second generation migrants to adjust to British lifestyles and cultural values, experiencing a different identity from their parents. The outcome showed the role played by transnational family networks in the process of migration, forming the second generation identities. The data specifies that the social field context of both receiving and sending countries has an influence on migrants' identities.

The data indicates a change from community to individuality among the second generation participants. Exposed to the British lifestyle and its prevalent individualistic ideology, a tendency to individualism was noted in these participants. It seems that their own priorities in personal life have become the most important issues. For example, choosing their husband, selecting the field of education and so on was among their desires for many of respondents.

In the context of Iranian religious ritual, members of the second generation were not interested in practising religion as much as their parents. Religious first generation practices reflect on the children's understanding of religious law and practice.

According to explanation of their parents' attitudes towards the participants' non-attendance in religious ritual, it appears that a shift has occurred in the religious of the first generation of Iranian migrants.

In the context of Iranian families' pressures and British cultural pressures, it appears difficult, particularly for second generation migrant women, to express their self-identification. For instance, some of the participants are still shy to express their opinion about sex and marriage in front of their parents, or if they did so, they fear punishment from their parents and other Iranian relatives and friends.

The findings have shown that there are some significant implications of dual culture transmission in the context of the UK among the second generation Iranian migrant women. Although the first generation migrant women (mothers) tended to pass some of their traditional customs (Language, New Year ceremony and so on) to their children, biculturalism is seen as an issue that are embracing the young generation of migrants. These individuals practises two different cultures at the same time and select different values from their experiences. This bicultural transmission lead the younger generation to choose their future husband among those Iranian men who was born and raised in the UK because of their shared understanding of the same conditions. It is important to recognise that the second generation mix the parents' cultural heritage with the sociocultural context of the UK and, according to their new perceptions, decide to abandon, modify or preserve some aspects of their parents' traditional culture.

The narratives of the first generation migrant women have represented their concentration on Iranian cultural values and customs. Passing some of these values to the young generation can put their children in an uncomfortable position. One aspect of this is due to their lifestyle, in particular, the way they look at marriage and relationship between couples. As I cited in different cases, for some Iranian young females when the two cultures clash as they often do around issues such as gender roles, marriage and teenagers' behaviours, they are usually forced to conform, even with a feeling of resentment against their migrant parents. The restrictions that parents impose affect their relationships with their children to such an extent that in some cases their children leave home (an unacceptable action in the view of Iranian parents).

Among the participants of this study, some parents (mothers) were serving to motivate their children to learn their heritage while also adjusting to some aspects of British culture. It is important to understand how two generations of migrant women resolve their opposite cultural views in their daily life. Some of these young female migrants complained that their parents, particularly their fathers, want them to be frozen in a culture that belongs to them where this new generation are only familiar with it from their parents. However, many of these second generation participants demonstrate ties to Iranian cultural values even though as native-born British citizens they are showing some aspects of their social attachment to the UK.

It can be observed that from the data collected that there is some level of biculturalism among the second generation participants in this study that lead them to employ a special strategy in the way they live their lives. It means every respondent takes advantage of the two cultures, both their parent's background and the facilities that were created by the host society. The analyses of the narratives reveal a glimpse of the complexities involved in renegotiating identity in the midst (sometimes) opposing cultural influences, creating a portrait of the lives of Iranian women in the UK today.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1: CONSENT FORM

**School of Sociology and Social Policy
University of Nottingham**

**Project Title: Intergenerational differences in the experiences of middle-class
Iranian migrant women post-revolution (1979) who are living in the UK**

In signing this consent form I confirm that:

	Yes	No
I have read the Participant Information Sheet and the nature and purpose of the research project and my involvement in it has been explained to me.		
I have had the opportunity to ask questions.		
I understand that my participation is voluntary and I may withdraw from the research project at any stage, without having to give any reason and withdrawing will not penalise or disadvantage me in any way.		
I understand that while information gained during the study may be published and any information I provide is confidential.		
I agree that extracts from the interview may be anonymously quoted in any report or publication arising from the research.		
I understand that the interview will be recorded using tape recorder.		
I understand that data will be securely stored.		

I understand that I may contact the researcher (or supervisor) if I require further information about the research, and that I may contact the Research Ethics Officer of the school of Sociology and Social Policy, University of Nottingham, if I wish to make a complaint relating to my involvement in the research.		
I agree to take part in the above research project.		

Participant’s name

Participant’s signature

Date

Researcher’s name

Researcher signature

Date

APPENDIX 2: INFORMATION SHEET

**School of sociology and social policy
University of Nottingham**

**The title of the research: Intergenerational differences in the experiences of
Middle-class Iranian migrant women post-
revolution 1979 in the UK**

Researcher: Gita Salimi
Tel: 07873273621
Email: lqxgs3@nottingham.ac.uk

The purpose of this research is to consider the similarities and differences between two generations of Iranian women migrants, who have settled in the UK during the past thirty years, according to their economic roles and cultural identity.

In this research two generations are being asked to take part, mother and daughter.

The researcher wants the participants to answer questions about their immigration process, arriving in England, their present life in England, a comparison between Iran and the UK according to their situation in both countries...

The interviews will take place in participants' homes as it is felt this would be more convenient and offers a more relaxed atmosphere for the participants.

Interviews will take place after appointments, which will be mutually agreeable between the participant and the researcher, have been made.

There is no risk to the individual who participate in the research, because the information will be confidential and their name will not appear anywhere on the study.

Participating in this research is voluntary and the individual can withdraw at anytime without any reasons.

All data collected will be stored in accordance with the requirements of the Data Protection Act 1998. Participants have the opportunity to know about the research findings. Data will be retained (in a secure location) for 7 years and after which time it will be destroyed.

The information provided may be used in other projects which have ethics approval, but the participant's name and contact information will be removed before it is made available to other researchers.

You, the participant, can contact the researcher if further information about the research is required. You may also contact the Research Ethics Officer of the school of Sociology and Social Policy, University of Nottingham, if you wish to make a formal complaint about the researcher or other aspects of the research.

Supervisors: Professor Justine Schneider & Dr Esther Bott

Email: Justine.Schneider@nottingham.ac.uk

Email: Esther.Bott@nottingham.ac.uk

If you wish to complain about the way in which research is being conducted or have any concerns about the research then in the first instance please contact the supervisors, if this does not resolve the issue then please contact the Scholl's Research Ethics Officer, Professor Bruce Stafford, Tel:0115 846 7439

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APPENDIX 3: INTERVIEW GUIDE:

Personal Background:

- Marital status
- Education
- Employment history
- Children

Emigrating from Iran:

- Date of leaving Iran
- Motivating factors that made participants to leave
- Active or passive role of women in making decision to emigrate

Arrival and settlement in the UK:

- The process of settling in the new country
- New circumstances and feeling at the time

Views on present life in the UK:

- Comparison of economic situation before and after the
- Migration
- Spending leisure time and relationships to the Iranian community
- Integration to the host society
- Observe Iranian traditions and customs
- Participate in religious ceremonies

Shifting away from traditional roles and seeking new roles and rights:

- Men-women relationship before and after migration
- Have traditional roles import to the UK?
- Has household roles changed since migration?
- Factors appear to influence relationships between spouses
- First generation and second generation perspectives on men-women relationships and gender roles

Intergeneration Transmission:

- Identity process among second generation
- The present status of Iranian cultural attachment
- Preserving parental traditional customs or adapting the cultural values of the host society

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