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Women's Perception of Mentorship in a Saudi Arabian Post Secondary Context

by

Terumi Anne Taylor

A THESIS

SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES
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Abstract

Mentorship is an important development process that is assumed to have individual and institutional benefits. Few postsecondary institutions offer formalized faculty mentorship programs despite the perceived benefits for women and minorities, and effective institutional leadership. My research was constructed on a conceptual framework drawing from feminist principles toward an ethic of care positioned through feminist Islamic scholars, sustainable leadership, and a personal lens. Through my unique research setting at a private, non-profit women's university in Saudi Arabia, I posed the following research questions: What are women faculty members' perceptions of mentorship in the post secondary Saudi Arabian context? How do women's perceptions of mentorship affect their engagement with informal and formal mentorship opportunities? The findings indicated that women faculty members' perceptions of mentorship in the post secondary context were based on superficial and constrained ideals of mentorship. Through analysis of the findings, I was compelled to incorporate a post structuralist feminist viewpoint. Through the analysis and synthesis, I developed a nuanced recognition of the power flows invisible to each participant, but an integral aspect of their reality and survival. Their perception of mentorship affected their engagement with mentorship opportunities through a proposed concept of survival mentorship. Survival mentorship was postulated as a means to provide and gain guidance to survive the daily struggles as an academic without challenging the status quo institutional power structures.

Preface

A version of the conceptual framework has been published in *NASPA Journal about Women in Higher Education*, currently the *Journal of Women and Gender in Higher Education*:

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Chapter One Introduction

Overview

Effat University is a women's single gendered university in Saudi Arabia that creates the conditions for women to enroll in post-secondary education. Women and men academics teach these young women in the institution. Given this, there is a starting assumption of the ability of Effat University in an Islamic nation that the aim is to create the conditions for female students and faculty to flourish in this academic environment. The nuanced nature of this institution, calls upon a further aspect of whether mentorship among women academics can support the greater overarching aim of Effat University.

The placement of Effat University is situated within the larger historical and political backdrop of Saudi Arabia. To understand the nature of this institution necessarily requires an understanding of the conceptualization and formation of this institution. Women's education through access to primary schooling in Saudi Arabia was formalized in the 1960s. In some cases, the Saudi National Guard was called on to protect girls' schools (Alharbi, 2014). The expansion and acceleration of women's education started under Prince Faisal Al-Saud soon to be King Faisal Al-Saud, but was largely due to the efforts of his wife, Effat Al-Thunyan (Talhami, 2012). Queen Effat was successful in opening the first private girls' school in Jeddah earlier in 1956 named Dar Al Hanan (Talhami, 2012). Although Dar Al Hanan was supposedly commissioned only to educate orphans and servant girls in order to appease religious sentiment opposed to women's education, her own daughter went to school there (Commins, 2015). Queen Effat is considered a pioneer in women's education, where girls' schools are assigned numbers instead of names in order to protect the "honour" of women, she founded Effat College identified with her name. Effat College operated right next to Dar Al Hanan girls' school until Dar Al Hanan moved

to another location. In 2009, Effat College became Effat University. Effat University represents the struggle and reality of growth in women's education and leadership in Saudi Arabia in fields unavailable to them anywhere else in Saudi Arabia.

Effat University is located in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia. Effat University is a private, non-profit, English-medium women's university. All students are women. Academic faculty are almost equally men and women, although there are gender differences where men dominate the rank of associate professor and full professor, see Table 1. The leadership positions of president, provost, and deans are exclusive to women. Effat University's Board of Trustees is 71 percent male¹ Saudi Arabia is an Islamic Arab state in the Middle East, oil-rich Gulf region.

Islam is the state religion of Saudi Arabia and all citizens are officially Muslim. There are expatriate minorities of differing religions, but they are only permitted to practice their religion privately.

¹ According to the Effat University organizational chart of governance, the President answers to the Board of Trustees. Based on the Board of Trustees listed, the President is the General Secretariat of the Board of Trustees. Data accessed March 21, 2016 through www.effatuniversity.edu.sa

Table 1 *Male to female ratio and percentage of faculty by rank*

| <u>Rank</u> | <u>Male Effat University Faculty</u> | | <u>Female Effat University Faculty</u> | |
|---------------------|--------------------------------------|-------|--|------|
| | # | % | # | % |
| Professor | 6 | 8.5% | 1 | 1.2% |
| Associate Professor | 7 | 10% | 1 | 1.2% |
| Assistant Professor | 44 | 63% | 43 | 55% |
| Lecturer | 13 | 18.5% | 33 | 42% |
| Instructor | 0 | - | 1 | 1.2% |
| Total | 70 | 100% | 79 | 100% |

Note. The publicly available data on faculty gender and rank indicate men outranking women despite Effat University being a women’s university with women in the positions of president, provost, and deans. Data accessed March 14, 2016 through www.effatuniversity.edu.sa and does not include instructors at the Effat English Academy, a pre-university foundation program.

Effat University is a product of and functions within the religious and cultural practices of Saudi Arabia. As with any other institution, it is constrained by local laws and customs. Saudi Arabia espouses a very conservative Islamic ideology (Sallam & Hunter, 2013; van Geel, 2016). All aspects of Saudi society are highly gender segregated (Meijer, 2010). Women have only recently been permitted to drive when the driving ban was lifted June 2018 (Al-Khamri, 2018). Women are not permitted to travel, work, or marry without prior consent of a male guardian (Al Nafjan, 2011; Sallam & Hunter, 2013). Men and women, but especially women, observe strict dress codes in public places or when genders interact. Religious police enforce any public displays contrary to Islamic laws and ideology. For example, it is illegal to display red roses or

advertise Valentine's Day, businesses all shut down during prayer times, and alcohol is strictly forbidden. Effat University's motto, "aspire to achieve" within a generally restrictive context, let alone a gender restrictive context, creates tension and necessitates creativity.

Despite the broader political and religious norms in Saudi society, there have been significant change in recent years. In 2013, women were appointed to the advisory Consultative Assembly (*Shura* Council) as full members and guaranteed 20 percent of the seats (Thompson, 2015). Also, in 2013, women who had been permitted to study law were finally awarded licences to be practicing lawyers (Broomhall, 2013). In 2015, women voted for the first time in municipal elections and were able to run for office (Hanley, 2016). These trends toward women's empowerment and participation are real steps that call to a changing future.

Participation and key skills toward impactful leadership are an integral part of this changing future for women in Saudi Arabia. The networks and access in post secondary contexts that men have must also be built by women academics. These networks and support constructs could be considered a critical connection to mentorship. Mentoring in the post secondary context is one of the few shared characteristics of a successful academic career, particularly for women, and under-represented academics (Chandler, 1996; Jones & Osborne-Lampkin, 2013; Schlegel, 2000; Sorcinelli & Yun, 2009; Straus, Chatur, & Taylor, 2009; Yun, Baldi, & Sorcinelli, 2016).

This research sought to provide a contextualized voice for women in academia in a Saudi Arabian context and promote their experiences and perceptions of mentorship toward leadership drawing from liberal feminist principles. Naming and labelling this research as feminist offered an opportunity for action where research indicates, "the exclusive and singular importance of self-labelling for enhance feminist action" (Yoder, Tobias, & Snell, 2011, p. 9).

Locating Myself as a Researcher

As a woman academic constructing research on a feminist framework, I have a vested personal and academic interest in the promotion and success of women to academic leadership positions. I was formerly a faculty member at Effat University and formerly a practicing Muslim convert. In addition, I am a White Canadian-born, woman with fluency in both Arab language and culture. In the initial stages of this research I was a double insider, meaning I was inside the research setting as a faculty member as well as personally attached to Islam and Arab culture. During the research, I moved to a double outsider where I was professionally no longer with Effat University, geographically outside Saudi Arabia, and ceased to practice or identify as a Muslim woman with any cultural affiliations. The fluctuations in my positionality altered the privilege and power throughout the research. The fluctuations in positionality also offered unique opportunities for reflexivity. Based on my unique perspective and experiences, my subjectivities inspired and clarified my research.

As a feminist researcher developing a research project drawing on liberal feminist principles positioned with Islamic feminist ontology, I was called upon to be “cognizant and critically reflective” of my personal position and viewpoint. (Brooks & Hesse-Biber, 2007, p. 15). My positionality assisted and obstructed the research process and potential knowledge outcomes (Brooks & Hesse-Biber, 2007). Through an in-depth consideration of my standpoint and subjectivities in all stages of the research, I was asked to listen better and respond to participants’ voices, as well as support and empower those voices (Hesse-Biber, 2007). To present my positionality, I have addressed three aspects as they relate to the research process: (1) my values, attitudes, and beliefs; (2) my agenda determining my questions and findings; (3) my perspective’s impact on gathering, analyzing, and interpreting my data (Hesse-Biber, 2007).

My values, attitudes, and beliefs stem from my identity as a White Western Muslim convert woman raised and educated in a Canadian middle-class family. My research topic, 'women and mentorship', was presented as a deliberate synthesis of my experiences and motivations as a woman academic and Muslim, as well as the significance of the research location in a Saudi Arabian women's university. My assumptions of women's shared experiences of oppression inform my expectations that feminist research of women and mentorship act toward supporting and empowering women.

My agenda was based on a vested interest in women's roles in post secondary education and administrative roles for women in education. I personally witnessed the barriers that women face in moving into and remaining in administrative leadership positions in post secondary contexts. I have personal experience with a lack or absence of women in leadership positions to be role models or mentors. I asked questions that seek to gather knowledge to support and move toward empowering women. I positioned myself as an ally attentive to the women in this study.

I started from my personal experience in academia. As a graduate student in a male-dominated discipline of microbiology in Canada, I was one of very few women. Of those few women around me, few were married, mothers or in partnerships. Very early in my research career I was informed by other male and female graduate students, full-time laboratory researchers, and male faculty, not to expect any support from other women, especially women faculty members in the department. I was actively discouraged from seeking women to be on my committee. The male faculty members were very supportive, but had limited ability to provide guidance on matters where personal life intersects with the professional. The perceptions and stereotypes of gender in academia were apparent early on, and my experience parallels the research written on women's experience in academia (Bingham & Nix, 2010; Maranto & Griffin, 2011; Riger, Sullivan, Stokes, & Raja, 1997).

Having recently completed an appointment as a faculty member at a women's university in Saudi Arabia I can speak to a shift in the dynamics between male and female academics. However, even with an administration of women, there were few support mechanisms in place and little workplace flexibility. Arguably, my perceptions was that resources and awards are more likely to be directed to male faculty. In my Effat University experience, the post secondary context and culture were very gender segregated. On campus, there were separate areas for male and female office spaces and kitchen space. At most events, men and women sat apart from each other on opposing sides of venues. The gender segregation was planned, through office space allocation, but also culturally normative, through informal gender segregated seating at departmental meetings or luncheons. Support for women faculty was tacit in many cases and not formalized. According to Mizrahi (2004), the dynamics created by gender segregation "can lead to an environment in which women are more likely to undermine each other" (p. 1585).

Drawing from my perspective meant through gathering, analyzing, and interpreting my data, I assumed women increase their awareness in relation to ambition, goals, and desire for leadership. I assumed women learn from each other and learn about themselves finding inspiration and support in building authentic relationships. In addition, I assumed women construct, carry, and promote a message of empowerment that engages all faculty in post secondary contexts. This assumption expanded to all faculty involved in my research, moving toward self-reflection and continued promotion and construction of positive mentorship relationships. Although my assumptions may not have been met on every level, reflection is an integral part of learning and leadership in higher education (McDaniels, 2002; Rogers, 2001). These subjectivities elucidated my research due to my situation and experiences. With the conceptual framework and researcher positionality in mind, the research was developed.

Purpose

The purpose of this research was to explore formal and informal mentorship for women faculty members, specifically those in administrative roles at a private non-profit women's university in Saudi Arabia. There is great impetus for and importance of mentorship as professional development in the post secondary context.

This study was conducted for a number of reasons:

1. Mentorship is a powerful tool for enabling women to be successful, particularly in post secondary administrative roles.
2. There are institutional benefits when mentorship is successfully implemented.
3. Mentorship in women's post secondary contexts is under-researched and under-valued, specifically in the Middle East Gulf region.

Let me turn to each briefly here, which will be developed more fully in chapter two.

Mentorship can be effective for women and under-represented academic faculty in supporting "socialization, productivity, and satisfaction" while furthering career development toward positions in academic leadership (Yun et al., 2016, p. 442). Several institutional benefits of mentoring include, "increased research productivity, more effective teaching", and guidance for early career academic faculty, (Yun et al., 2016, p. 442).

The body of literature espousing the significant impact of mentoring on women's career development toward leadership is largely set in Western societies (Abalkhail & Allan, 2015). There are few studies within the Arab world and obviously fewer in the context of Saudi Arabia that explore mentoring and success of either women or men (Abalkhail & Allan, 2015). This may be due, in part, to a perception of a lack of mentoring and little exposure to professional mentoring and networking (Abdalla, 2015; Mathew, 2010). This is exacerbated for women in the Middle East Gulf region due to fewer same-gender role-models and mentors and to restricted

access to mentors or networks of any gender due to gender segregation practices and mobility restrictions within male-dominated cultures (Abdalla, 2015). Although mentorship is not a panacea for systemic gender inequalities in the Middle East Gulf region, exploring women's perceptions of mentorship provides tools for women's development and leadership within the Saudi Arabian post secondary context.

Researcher Assumptions

As a researcher, I brought the following assumptions to this research:

- Mentorship can be empowering and engaging for women academics. This assumption is supported by multiple research outcomes in a multitude of settings, including post secondary contexts. However, the perceptions and experiences of the participants may run contrary or differently to my assumptions and conclusions from research in other settings.
- Women may present negative experiences and perceptions that indicate disempowerment and disengagement.
- Women may also have conflicting experiences that neither indicate the promotion of women's leadership capacity nor the prevention of women attaining leadership roles. The complexity of participant experiences have been respected and included.

Problem Statement

Women in post secondary contexts often find themselves with no female role models or potential mentors; this is especially true in traditionally male-dominated disciplines. Furthermore, the few women that are available as mentors and role models are often over-burdened by gender specific roles outside the post secondary context in question (child care, housework, and so on).

Despite the general consensus on the possible significance of mentorship as professional development in post secondary contexts, mentorship programs of any description are not universal nor evenly offered, implemented or otherwise encouraged. According to Chuang (2015), even when offered, certain groups of faculty do not actively participate equally in professional development programs such as mentorship. One such under-participating group is women, who face gender bias and discrimination in their workplaces, as women are more likely to hold unequal positions in the economy, to perform different socially determined responsibilities, and to face different constraints (Chuang, 2015).

Even with participation, minorities and under-represented faculty, including women, do not necessarily benefit from mentorship programs (formally or informally) in the same ways as the majority of those in post secondary contexts (Duntley-Matos, 2014). The under-representation of women's mentorship relationships is currently exemplified in "The Mentor Hall of Fame" (n.d.) on the Mentors Peer Resources website. Under the heading of business, industry, education, science, and medical leaders mentorship pairings, 275 mentor pairs are posted, only 5 are female-female pairs, 18 are male-female pairs, and the remaining 252 are male-male pairs.

Specific to the post secondary context, the disproportionately low percentage of female college presidents suggests that there is a lack of diversity, which is linked to poor or absent mentoring (Brown, 2005). Women are finally in the "pipeline", meaning they are going through the academic system successfully, yet still do not hold positions of leadership and salary on par with their male counterparts (Johnson, 2016). Data shown in Table 1 from Effat University, where the research data was collected, shows significantly fewer women similar to statistics presented by Johnson (2016).

Research Questions

The primary research questions were:

- What are women faculty members' perceptions of mentorship in the post secondary context in Saudi Arabia?
- How do women's perceptions of mentorship affect their engagement with informal and formal mentorship opportunities?

These research questions were deconstructed to include concepts relating to mentorship implementation and impact for women academics in post secondary leadership contexts. Further deconstruction involved issues of women academics' engagement within a range of mentorship activities or experiences.

Conceptual Framework

In order to better develop mentorship, I have placed mentorship within the framework of leadership. I constructed a mentoring perspective toward leadership. The concept and definition of mentoring formed was drawn from liberal feminist principles and contextually appropriate ethics and Islamic feminist lens through an ethic of care. I have purposely positioned my research within the framework of an ethic of care that would resonate with the Islamic faith. This positioning toward an ethic of care more so than a critical feminist perspective decreases participants' potential resistance or nervousness in their willingness to see themselves through a more critical lens.

Based on my personal research situation with all female participants and being a woman, it was important to adopt a feminist ontology and epistemology. The necessity of adopting a feminist perspective was critical toward building an awareness of my own Western epistemological origins. In beginning this study, the way in which I positioned this research focused on how women may better support each other, and how that mentorship may look differently than from my previous work in a male-dominated science faculty. The more I

endeavored to understand and seek an emancipatory feminist stance, the more I found an urgency to avoid complicity in an openly oppressive, misogynistic society such as Saudi Arabia. Further to the current reality of women's lives in Saudi Arabia, were the real societal changes taking place where individual Saudi women are building and have built change through a feminist framework. I have built a conceptual framework that draws on liberal feminist principles and perspectives overlapping with Islamic feminist discourse in a culturally appropriate view that avoids both Islamic apologetics and Islamic rejectionists as well as avoiding hegemonic Western feminist constructs.

Further to the feminist theoretical basis is the feminist perspective I brought to my conceptual framework. The conceptual framework is developed in detail under Chapter Three Methodology.

Significance of Research

This research fits into the greater global cause of women's empowerment with the potential for illuminating particular potential discourse shifts in Effat University and greater Middle East, recognizing the reality of political, cultural, and religious norms.

The findings from this research highlight current perceptions on mentorship in a Saudi post secondary institution, and the potential momentum or barriers for further mentorship programs. The research may help to support a participant-led institutionally supported mentoring program within the research setting. The research outcomes of women's perceptions act to guide mentoring program development that may lead to increased leadership capacity for women academics. Research outcomes could be shared through traditional academic means of publication, and also by actively contributing to other local Saudi and Middle Eastern educational institutions' capacity for mentoring program development for women in academia. Finally, the

research promoted the voices of women and their perceptions of mentorship to empower and highlight regional gender issues in a manner that is both personal and contextualized.

Summary

In Chapter One, I presented the research context's relevant history and cultural issues. I provided specific details of the research setting at a private women's university in Saudi Arabia. My research questions are: (1) What are women faculty members' perceptions of mentorship in the Saudi Arabian post secondary context? And (2) How do women's perceptions of mentorship affect their engagement with informal and formal mentorship opportunities? My conceptual framework draws on liberal and Islamic feminisms actualized through an ethic of care. The research is significant in that I promote and empower the voices of women and their perceptions of mentorship.

In Chapter Two, I focus on relevant literature that informed this research. I take a broad survey of mentorship and refine the view with issues related to mentoring in a post secondary context specific to the Middle East.

Chapter Two Literature Review

Overview

In this research, I explored how women's perceptions of mentorship affect their engagement with informal and formal mentorship opportunities. In order to look at mentorship in the research setting of Saudi Arabia, broader issues of gender, politics, religion, and culture in this unique place and time were considered. This study was located within a women's university in Saudi Arabia and thus investigated mentorship within the complexity of women's lives and experiences within this context.

This research moved beyond imagined homogeneity and presents the existing complex traditions and realities that may not necessarily be promoted by an officially sanctioned narrative (Nussbaum, 2000). Nussbaum (2000) identified religious traditionalists as those engaged "in massive simplifications and rewritings of their own traditions, which distort and deform tradition and history by denying both diversity and dynamism" (p. 186). Additional simplification and homogenization of Saudi women's experience also occurs through Western feminism (Elia, 2006; Mohanty, 1986; Nussbaum, 2000). Women in Saudi Arabia live in dynamic and critical societies despite external, internal, and self-internalized views that may differ. All women deserve the recognition of a functional individual choice. While not seeking to undo or overwrite reality and history (Nussbaum, 2000), this literature review and specifically this research have sought to promote the voices and individuality of women's mentorship and leadership in post secondary contexts.

This conceptual framework placed mentorship within the broader framework of leadership and more specifically feminist leadership in post secondary contexts. The concept and definition of mentoring address feminist principles, feminist leadership, and contextually appropriate ethics through an ethic of care (Noddings, 2013). The literature review builds on this

framework through joining several strands of literature: (a) feminist leadership; (b) a feminist ethic of care; (c) gender and mentorship; (d) feminist mentorship; (e) women, mentorship and the Middle East. First, I will discuss sustainable leadership specific to the post secondary context. Second, I will explore ethics and develop a feminist ethic of care. The literature review will move to provide a working definition of feminist mentorship by examining women within mentorship drawing on feminist principles and perspectives. The literature review concludes with an analysis and comparison of Western and Middle Eastern research regarding women and mentorship identifying a compelling and complex social phenomena with few documented voices.

Leadership: Care, Gender, and Feminism

An important aspect of this research was bound by leadership. Mentoring is often a function of promoting and practicing leadership that enables women to build capacity. Therefore, to better place mentorship within the framework of leadership, I have constructed a mentoring perspective toward leadership. From the broad notion of leadership, I start from the premise of sustainable leadership. Hargreaves and Fink's definition and development of sustainable leadership state: Sustainable educational leadership and improvement preserves and develops deep learning for all that spreads and lasts, in ways that do no harm to and indeed create positive benefit for others around us, now and in the future. (Hargreaves & Fink, 2006)

The concept of sustainable leadership is relatively young with literature dating only to 2003 (Lambert, 2012). Sustainable leadership should not be confused with leadership for sustainability that refers mainly to leadership to maintain the environment (Lambert, 2011). Another issue is the development of sustainable leadership in educational contexts outside post secondary (Hargreaves & Fink, 2006). The elements of sustainable leadership are considered "independent of the phase of education" whether primary, secondary, or post secondary

(Lambert, 2012, p. 104) and have also been applied outside educational contexts (Gerard, McMillan & D'Annunzio-Green, 2017).

Hargreaves and Fink (2006) developed the following principles regarding sustainable leadership:

1. Depth – Leadership for learning and caring
2. Length – Preserving and advancing leadership from one leader to the next
3. Breadth – Distribution of leadership
4. Justice – Socially just leadership beyond the organization
5. Diversity – Learning from diversity through inclusion and cohesion
6. Resourcefulness – Avoid depleting and wasting human and financial resources
7. Conservation – Honour and learn from the past to create a better future

Under the first principle of depth, sustainable leadership proposes “commitments to and relationships of abiding care for others” (Hargreaves, 2007, p. 225). The concept of self care is also expanded upon in sustainable leadership under resourcefulness (Hargreaves, 2007). More broadly, the archetype of the caring leader has “received very inadequate attention from scholars; even encyclopaedias and handbooks of leadership research rarely include entries on care” (Gabriel, 2014, p. 321). Caring is of primary importance to both sustainable leadership and more obviously, an ethic of care. Sustainable leadership intersects and aligns in several ways with a feminist ethic of care and Islamic ideals which I will speak to in subsequent sections.

The principle of justice as described in Hargreaves and Fink’s (2006) original work is reworded in Hargreaves (2007) to describe leadership that “does no harm”, “is not self-centred”, and “is socially just” (p. 225). This principle of sustainable leadership aligns closely with feminist ideals of social justice (Hargreaves & Fink, 2004), as well as Islamic principles of harm avoidance (Svensson & Wood, 2007). Further points of intersect were more broadly present in

sustainable leadership principles such as diversity and conservation. These principles seek to include all individuals and ideas as well as honouring individual experience “through coherent life narratives” (Hargreaves, 2007, p. 232). Using a feminist framework, an integral part of sustainable leadership means giving equal voice to women’s experiences and ideas.

Leadership studies, in general, have moved toward “a stronger emphasis on a shared, relational, and global perspective” (van Dierendonck, 2011, p. 1229). This in turn moves leadership away from leaders as “individualistic, opportunistic, and self-serving” (van Dierendonck, 2011, p. 1229). Sustainable leadership could be seen as part of a larger shift in leadership that offers more flexibility and nuance than many of the highly characterized traditional leadership catalogue types found in many guides to leadership (Lambert, 2011). One example is viewing traditional charismatic leadership and balance seeking as patriarchal norms that sustainable leadership can actively avoid (Perrakis & Martinez, 2012).

Sustainable leadership as feminist leadership. Feminist leadership is often a difficult concept to define both in theory and practice. Using a feminist lens drawing on liberal feminist principles, this task is simplified to mean broadly that feminist leadership is related to feminist values and systems as opposed to gender (Lott, 2007). Feminism prioritizes women’s rights and equality, while gender identifies gender-specific issues, there is no action to problematize subjugation and oppression based on gender. Feminist leadership must recognize “diverse leadership styles across diverse groups” (Chin, 2007, p. 357) using feminist models to advance different pathways to leadership (Lott, 2007) that are both “culturally competent” and “gender-equitable” (Shapiro & Leigh, 2007, p.88). Feminist leadership functions within the multiple identities leaders have based on gender, culture, race, and so on (Chin, 2007). Feminist leadership ought to move beyond a “leadership style based on female socialization” (Caldwell-Colbert & Albino, 2007, p. 70). Research and literature “related to feminist leadership is young” and

research on feminist leadership of women as academic leaders is even younger (Caldwell-Colbert & Albino, 2007, p. 71). Research must evaluate effective leadership that is not based on stereotypical male characteristics or research that draws almost exclusively from male leaders (Chin, 2007). Sustainable feminist leadership is well placed to inform “post-heroic forms” of leadership (Bosetti, Kawalilak, & Patterson, 2008, p. 95).

Gender equity at the highest level of academic leadership requires “cultural changes regarding how we think about productivity and contribution” (Perrakis & Martinez, 2012, p. 218). Sustainable leadership does not require “adherence to cultural norms and expectations” (Perrakis & Martinez, 2012, p. 218). Sustainable leadership does not privilege masculinity (Perrakis & Martinez, 2012) and can arguably avoid what Blackmore (1999) described as “hegemonic heterosexual masculinity” (p. 10) in educational administration. Sustainable leadership as a practice that encourages complex multiple perspectives aligns with feminist principles and principled feminist leadership. With intention and commitment, sustainable leadership fulfills feminist criteria. Although sustainable leadership is connected to care, this research seeks to support and care for women in more specific and concrete ways. One of these concrete incorporation of care as a value is through ethics.

Whose ethics? Generally, and for the purposes of this research, ethics are morals in line with values and principles (Caza, Barker, & Cameron, 2004). Everyone has ethics; the concern is whether these ethics are ‘good’ and how these ethics are ‘good’. “Ethical principles serve as fixed points. They indicate what is right and wrong, appropriate and inappropriate” (Caza et al., 2004, p. 171). The concept of ethos is the backdrop of ethics. Ethos are “the internal values that characterize an individual”, people or even larger culture (Caza et al., 2004, p. 173). Each ethic must be transplanted, implemented, or overlapped with consideration for the cultural norms and

societal fabric (Ciulla, 2004). This cultural relativism positions ethics as “rules, practices, and attitudes shared by a historically situated community” (Nagel, 2006, p. 390).

Feminist ethics are explicitly committed to challenging traditional ethics and male-biased ethics (Jagger, 2001). In order to build ethical feminist research, traditional ethics must be deconstructed and reconstructed to create a gendered ethics “that aims to eliminate or at least ameliorate the oppression of any group, but most particularly women” (Anderson, 2017). Feminist ethics begins with a conviction that “the subordination of women is morally wrong and that the moral experience of women is as worthy of respect as that of men” (Jagger, 2001). Feminist ethics forms practical goals of criticizing the actions that perpetuate women’s subordination, advocating for moral ways to resist such actions, and to envision morally desirable courses of action to promote women’s emancipation (Jagger, 2001). Feminist “ethics should be built on a model that fits life as most people experience it on an everyday basis” (Tong & Williams, 2016, 2.2 paragraph 1). Feminist ethics in the context of Saudi Arabia ought to build a voice and space for women’s views to be heard and considered fully. Women’s perspectives of Nonwestern origins are often restricted within their own communities as well as on a global level where power inequalities are substantial (Jaggar, 1998). Feminist ethics questions who can speak for whom and raises questions regarding insider and outsider status (Jaggar, 1998). Exploring cultural relativism from a feminist ethical perspective requires one to question the origin of claims; relativism from either the subordinated or those in power (Jaggar, 1998). In my research context, I walked a line between insider and outsider in the community both physically and figuratively, which again requires individual voices of women to be supported and cared for in order to promote local “strategic gender interests” (Jaggar, 1998, p. 23).

An Ethic of Care

Care is set apart from other traditions in ethics because “care is not an attitude or a virtue but a practice” (Gabriel, 2014, p. 323). “Care means attention to what is going on in the world and emotional concern about the well-being of others” (Ciulla, 2009, p. 3). “Unlike the golden rule, which is objective and egalitarian, care entails having certain dispositions and feelings.” (Ciulla, 2009, p. 3). An ethic of care is an ethics that is constructed on human experience of everyday life based on dynamic daily practices between unequal and interdependent humans (Tong & Williams, 2016).

The more delineated, defined, and contemporary ethic of care grew out of an opposition to the ethics and claimed universality of justice. The traditional morality of justice does not provide a standard for morality and is often male-biased (Jaggar, 2001). Gilligan’s 1982 book, *In a Different Voice*, is considered the starting point of the contemporary ethic of care. Gilligan’s seminal book challenged her mentor Kohlberg’s work on moral development as moral justice. Gilligan argued that Kohlberg’s ideal of morality was a predominantly male conception that was overly abstract and impersonal (1982). An ethic of care builds upon a practical morality where all people are socially dependent and relational and “does not rely on claims of universality, absolute judgements of right and wrong and perfect virtues” (Gabriel, 2014, p. 323). Noddings’ 1984 work entitled, *Caring: A Feminine Approach to Ethics and Moral Education* (see Noddings, 2013), furthered Gilligan’s (1982) concept toward a more comprehensive philosophical account.

There are several key differences between an ethic of care and other constructions. These differences are usually placed in opposition to Kohlberg’s moral ideals and more generally justice (Blum, 1988). Noddings (2013) began with general assumptions of caring relationships that draw on maternal perspectives and examples, but makes strong claims that an ethic of care is universal, although there is no set of “universalizable moral judgements” (p. 28). Caring relationships are

assumed to be basic and integral to human consciousness and existence, where there is a natural caring sentiment and the memory of being cared-for that both shift to a conscious ethic of care (Noddings, 2013). Within relational caring, Noddings (2013) described two parties: the “one-caring” and the “cared-for” that both have obligation to care but with differing levels or types of reciprocity. Noddings (2013) characterized the act caring as a form “engrossment” where the “one-caring” deals with the “cared-for” on their own terms. This form of engrossment resists projection of the self from the “one-caring” onto the “cared-for” and motive become displaced. Caring moves from the first stage of “caring-for” to the second stage of “caring-about” (Noddings, 2013). These stages in caring represent physical caring or caring services and then secondarily more abstract caring for ideas or intentions (Noddings, 2013). Often an ethic of care is seen to “valoriz[e] the virtues and values traditionally linked to women” in contrast to what are more historically masculine descriptions of ethics (Tong & Williams, 2016, part 2.1, para. 16). Noddings (2013) argued that a contextually developed and explicit ethic of care is necessary to address social issues and complexities in many spheres including education. An ethic of care is: self-situated; reliant on and involved in the situation; requires understanding of others; involves bound agency; involves emotion; requires situationally based responses, and; is concerned with relations over morality (Noddings, 2013).

Criticism of an ethic of care. An ethic of care is frequently opposed by a variety of forces (Gabriel, 2014). The four main criticisms are:

1. an ethic of care is costly in terms of time, energy, and effort;
2. an ethic of care is frequently opposed by an ethic of justice;
3. an ethic of care can conflict with itself, and;

4. an ethic of care is fundamentally at odds with the current trends in impersonality, individualism, and insecurity. (Gabriel, 2014, pp. 329-330)

There are negative associations of care as an ethic that builds dependency (Gabriel, 2014). Houston (1990) claimed that “the ethics [of care] is a dangerous one, especially for women, precisely because the ethics can abet exploitation” and “reduces the ability of women to resist physical and sexual abuse” through a “misplaced responsibility” (p. 116). An ethic of care is criticized for linking women intrinsically with care and being a carer, no matter the personal cost (Tong & Williams, 2016). Some critics argue that an ethic of care could potentially unravel as self-sacrificial if understood from the perspective of individuals rather than a communal perspective (Groenhout, 2003). We should not and cannot understand ourselves as isolated individuals, but rather complexly integrated community members where an ethic of care and caring is not an “economic transaction” of giving care only (Groenhout, 2003, p. 168). An ethic of care requires that we love ourselves, as we may love and care for others, to the point that the self is valued as one values and cares for others (Groenhout, 2003). In addition to social obligations to the moral community, there is a natural tendency of humans to choose evil which in and of itself curtails the duty to care (Groenhout, 2003). Therefore even within certain risks an ethic of care could be construed to have in patriarchal societies, this does not mean that an ethic of care loses credibility (Tong & Williams, 2016). Rather, an ethic of care should and must be constructed within feminist frameworks to avoid those very risks so long as patriarchy exists and people face oppression.

A common criticism of the ethic of care is its perceived feminist essentialist origins and thus "too feminine" or not universal (Tong & Williams, 2016). This is also to call out all other ethics as "too masculine" and proscribed and experienced by only men and therefore not universal either. The argument becomes a genetic fallacy. Arguing for sameness or difference of

genders enables men to become the measure of all things (Noddings, 1990). There is concern about the origin of the claim and not the meaning of the claim of the ethic of care. Or perhaps even the logical fallacy of guilt by association; if the ethic of care is in anyway associated with feminism and feminists, this is more problematic than the content and philosophical argumentation that are the basis of an ethic of care (Noddings, 1990). However, simply having roots in feminist philosophical discourse does not imply that an ethic of care is only feminine or only has meaning in communities of women. For the purposes of this research, an ethic of care will be positioned as part of a larger feminist ethic drawing on a liberal feminist framework supported by Islamic feminist principles.

Gilligan's more recent work argued for an ethic of care that seeks to address criticism of essentialism (Heyes, 1997; Taylor, Gilligan & Sullivan, 1996) An ethic of care may represent one of the many feminist perspectives and frameworks, but not necessarily. There is a strong argument, especially pertinent for those that fear feminism or claims of essentialism, that an ethic of care is a "gender-integrative ethical framework" (Reynolds, 2013, p. 62). An ethic of care is sufficiently robust and developed to include men and women while not erasing power differentials and subjugation in society (Tong & Williams, 2016). However, I would argue that an ethic of care as part of feminist ethics is a more empowering ethic for women.

A feminist ethic of care guides the struggle of women and those oppressed or marginalized toward equality (Tong & Williams, 2016). A feminist ethic of care premises equal voice and this promotes different voices (Tong & Williams, 2016). Gilligan suggested we should regard caring as an integral human capacity (1982). We should understand our loss of empathy, mutual understanding, and care as opposed to looking toward gaining the capacity to care (Gilligan, 1982). In an interview in 2011, Gilligan framed this question as "how do we come not to care" (Gilligan, 2011). A feminist ethic of care moves beyond gender binaries and hierarchies

that make up current cultural and societal structures (Noddings, 2013; Tong & Williams, 2016) providing relational ethics that allows for self-governance and agency (Noddings, 1990).

Intersections between an ethic of care and Islamic feminism. As ethics are an integral part of any society, an effective ethical framework must overlap and mesh with current societal and cultural norms. In Saudi Arabia, and any orthodox Muslim community, religion provides guidance on ethics and morals. Many Muslims, regardless of their stance on feminist values and Islamic feminism, make clear justifiable claims of the “ethical egalitarianism” of Islam that is both caring and equitable (Ahmed, 1992, p. 66). These voices representing the ethical and spiritual aspects of Islam are often in contrast to the historically and current powerful androcentric political, religious, and legal authority (Ahmed, 1992).

In Islam, an important source of jurisprudence and general ethical guidance is provided to Muslims through orally relayed and validated words, actions, and habits attributed to the Prophet Mohammed (*ahadith*, plural noun; *hadith*, singular noun) (“Hadith”, 2003). The historical and contemporary “validation” of prophetic sayings and actions has been and still is a contentious issue for many Islamic scholars, sects, and laypeople (Demirel, 2011). Fabricated prophetic sayings and actions have been and still are circulated or mentioned without context or correction (Brown, 2011). Brown (2011) used historical examples dating from the ninth century (third century after the death of the Prophet Mohammed) where scholars knowingly permitted the use of forged and weak prophetic sayings or actions to make legal rulings. Only very recently have Islamic revivalist (also known as *Salafis*) and Islamic modernists called for more stringent sorting of unreliable and fabricated prophetic sayings from those that are considered authentic and strong (Brown, 2011). Other contentions are based on the original relaying of the prophetic sayings and actions, which were collected almost exclusively by men and then contextualized, interpreted,

authenticated, and canonized almost exclusively by men, many hundreds of years ago in classical Arabic language (Sayeed, 2009). Islam is often portrayed as a cult of authenticity, and much historical discourse constructs or discredits authenticity through gender-based argument (Sayeed, 2009). This criticism of exclusionary male domination of religious perspective is extended to not only to prophetic sayings and actions but also to lay interpretation and formal exegesis and hermeneutics of the Quran, the primary Islamic text (Umar, 2004; Wadud, 1999).

The discussion of sayings related to the Prophet Mohammed is from my perspective as a non-Arab, but Arab-speaking Muslim layperson who resided in a historically and currently conservative Sunni Muslim Arab culture and population for a decade. A blessing is typically recited or written when the Prophet Mohammed's name is mentioned, especially when attributing a prophetic saying or action. The conventional blessing is: Peace be upon him.

Despite the possible contentions regarding sources of Islamic knowledge, Islam offers rich history, extensive literature, and contemporary knowledge of caring and ethics (Rassool, 2000). Islamic epistemology and ontology as a complete way of knowing and living informs many of these cultural ideals (Al-Islam, 2006).

The Islamic tradition identifies the premise of “do no harm” as the basis of interactions before moving explicitly toward care. It was narrated that the Prophet Mohammed (Peace be upon him) is reported to have said: There should be neither harming nor reciprocating harm (Ibn Majah Al-Qazwini, 2007)¹. From prophetic saying there are maxims related to harm or more specifically the concept of ‘do no harm’ from Abu Dawood (Hasan, 2000):

¹ After mentioning each prophetic saying or action, I have simply indicated the canonized origin of the saying or action. As discussed previously, it is not the purpose of this paper to discuss or

1. Harm is to be prevented from appearing as much as possible.
2. Harm is to be eradicated.
3. Harm is not to be removed by a similar harm.
4. A greater harm can be removed by a lesser harm.

Based on maxim number four, if someone has no other options, that person should take the lesser of the two harms. Another situation is a conflict between two harms, precedence is given to avoiding the greater harm.

5. The presence of a particular harm is accepted towards a general harm.
6. Preventing harm takes precedence over gaining or attaining benefits.
7. If there is a conflict between factors permitting something and others prohibiting something, the prohibition takes precedence.
8. Something harmful is not given precedence just because it was pre-existing. In other words, the pre-existence of something does not allow it to continue to exist and be the cause of harm.

Particularly salient to this research is the additional maxim related to a conflict between individual harm and public harm. In the context of Saudi Arabia, the personal and individual rights of women are often impeded in order to diminish perceived public harm. This is the maxim that was regularly used to explain the ban of women driving (Lewis, 2016). Where an equal argument pertaining to men could logically be made, this is not acted upon as the individual rights of men are generally more valued than those of women in society. Accordingly, the

analyze the authenticity, context, and origin of the mentioned prophetic saying and actions, but to understand that the canonized prophetic sayings and actions are integrated into general Islamic and Arab cultures.

prohibition of public harm will take precedence over individual harm, meaning that the society is generally of greater importance than women as individuals are.

These maxims are commonly used to form ethical principles and rules for society at large. These ideals clearly emphasize a difference in prioritizing the interests of society over individuals, especially when compared more particularly with Western ideals of individuality. Saudi society has a more pervasive sense of care and duty toward the larger society and communality measured as collectivism, than individual rights (Bejerke & Al-Meer, 1993; Hofstede, 2011). This can and has led to peculiar benefits for families and community building, yet to the disadvantage for individual rights and freedoms. In Saudi Arabia for example, in order to protect society, women were not permitted to drive until 2016, among other less visible limitations (Al Nafjan, 2011). In the United Arab Emirates, a neighboring Gulf country, for the betterment of greater society for example, it is not permitted to eat in public during Ramadan fasting hours regardless of your religious affiliation with pain of fine or jail term (Shaaba, 2015). There are also many manifestations of political and religious suppression because of this societal and communal priority.

Critics of the ethic of care posit that limits ought to be placed on the priority of society and selflessness. Indeed, there is clear guidance if one draws upon the prophetic sayings and actions from an Islamic lens. The Prophet Mohammed (Peace be upon him) is reported to have said:

Whoever harms others, then Allah will harm him. Whoever is harsh with others, then Allah will be harsh with him. (Ibn Majah Al-Qazwini, M., 2007, p. 338)

Do not let yourselves be 'yes-men', saying: If the people are good then we will be good, and if they are wrong then we will be wrong. Rather, make up your own

minds, if the people are good then you are good, and if they are evil, then do not behave unjustly. (Al-Tirmidhi, 2007, p. 95)

Good character ... is a smiling face, doing one's best in good, and refraining from harm. (Al-Tirmidhi, 2007, p. 95)

In general, there is an ethic of care in Islam, based primarily on harm avoidance and the well-being of the larger society over that of the individual. Constructing caring leadership on a small institutional scale is possible based on the Islamic principles of care present in Islamic societies. Moving ethical, caring, and sustainable leadership toward ethical sustainable mentorship requires developing strong guidelines based explicitly on commonly accepted and canonized Islamic maxims as exemplified through the prophetic sayings above. The concept of a contextual ethic of care, where the value of care is assumed to underpin the notion of mentorship. In addition, sustainable leadership requires attributes of care as core principles. Sustainable leadership acts to further connect mentorship and an ethic of care where mentorship is placed as support for women's leadership in post secondary contexts.

Defining Mentorship

Mentorship as professional development in the post secondary context has two main functions where certain mentor roles have historically been categorized (Chandler, 1996). The first function of mentorship in the post secondary context is a "career-enhancing function that includes sponsorship, coaching, offering challenging work, and protecting a protégé from criticism ... these roles help the protégé establish credibility in the organization and prepare for advancement" (Chandler, 1996, p. 81). The second function is psychosocial, "which involves the mentor as a role model, counselor and friend" who assists a young adult to develop personal identity and competence (Chandler, 1996, p. 81).

Although the previous definitions and descriptions are thorough, there is some inconsistency and conflict in the roles of a mentorship relationship in the post secondary context (Núñez, Murakami & Gonzales, 2015). Mentorship in the post secondary context has the additional complexity of addressing teaching, research, and service as well as the multitude of academic disciplines (Flecknoe et al., 2017). Through the synthesis and review of definitions of mentorship in the post secondary context there are five major components that function as the foundation of mentorship: there is a focus on achievement; the relationship is reciprocal; the relationship is personal; mentors are defined by demonstrating greater experience, influence, and accomplishments, and that mentors take functions which can be summarized as emotional and psychological support, career support and professional development, and role modeling. (Arnesson & Albinsson, 2017).

Mentorship in the post secondary context is often presented as a professional development program. There are generally five types of mentorship programs: formal versus informal; internal versus external mentors; faculty stages; teaching, research, service or combination academic profile (Jones & Osborne-Lampkin, 2013; Law et al., 2014).

There is great impetus for and importance of mentorship as professional development in the post secondary context. Mentoring in the post secondary context is one of the few shared characteristics of a successful faculty career, particularly in women and under-represented faculty (Chandler, 1996; Jones & Osborne-Lampkin, 2013; Núñez & Gonzales, 2015; Schlegel, 2000; Sorcinelli & Yun, 2009; Straus et al., 2009). Mentorship could also be argued to be a critical part sustainable leadership through ensuring institutional memory as well as preserving continuity of leadership lines (Hargreaves, 2007).

Women and mentorship. Mentorship can be effective for women and under-represented academic faculty in supporting “socialization, productivity, and satisfaction” while furthering career development toward positions in academic leadership (Yun et al., 2016, p. 442). Several institutional benefits of mentoring include “increased research productivity, more effective teaching”, and guidance for early career academic faculty (Yun et al., 2016, p. 442). Despite the general consensus on the possible significance of mentorship as professional development in post secondary contexts, mentorship programs of any description are not typically universal nor evenly offered, implemented or otherwise encouraged.

Even when mentorship opportunities are offered, certain groups of faculty do not actively participate equally in professional development programs such as mentorship (Chuang, 2015). One such under-represented and under-participating group is women, who face “entrenched and global discrimination” in post secondary contexts (Chuang, 2015, p. 29). Minorities and under-represented faculty, including women, do not necessarily benefit from mentorship programs (formally or informally) in the same ways as the majority of those in post secondary contexts despite active participation (Duntley-Matos, 2014).

Seminal work by Roche (1979) highlighted the necessity for women to have a mentor. In this study, all the successful female participants had a mentor and usually more women had mentors than men. Mentorship was identified as an important factor in the development of corporate executives and business in general and became more common in the late 1950s and 1960s (Roche, 1979). Those who were active as protégés tended to earn more and have higher personal career satisfaction than those who did not have a mentor relationship. Roche’s work is often cited as an impetus for mentorship in the post secondary context (Cartwright, 2008; Detsky & Baerlocher, 2007). Roche’s research still resonates and also extends to the post secondary context. The disproportionately low percentage of female college presidents suggests that there is

a lack of diversity, which could be linked to poor or absent mentoring (Brown, 2005). Today, women are finally in the “pipeline,” meaning they are going through the academic system successfully, yet still, many do not hold positions of leadership and salary on par with their male counterparts (Johnson, 2016).

There are many serious challenges women face in receiving or participating in appropriate mentorship. Núñez et al. (2015) suggested that women faculty members, especially those of color, are expected to take greater roles and responsibilities guiding and mentoring minority students. Women faculty members, particularly visible minorities can face pressures to provide support and advising to students and others due to the scarcity of any other minorities amongst faculty members (Núñez et al., 2015). Under-represented minority faculty have reported isolation, racism, and devalued research without access to appropriate role models and mentors facing similar barriers and constraints (Zambrana et al., 2015). This increase in responsibility for women and women of color has given white male faculty an advantage in writing, research, and working toward tenured positions. In addition, “women’s different choices concerning family life and careers (or the assumption by senior male colleagues that this choice exists for women) may contribute to the perception of women as less committed scientists” (Chandler, 1996, p. 92). Chuang (2015) summarized four main deterrents to women’s participation in any professional development program as: family and time constraints, cost and work constraints, lack of support systems, and lack of career advice and resources.

However, the biggest challenge women face in obtaining or participating in mentorship professional development activities is the sheer lack of women in the post secondary context (OECD, 2019). This lack of women is exacerbated in senior positions and certain male-dominated disciplines within and throughout almost all post secondary contexts (OECD, 2019). Women faculty members face isolation within a competitive scholarly culture (Bosetti et al.,

2008). This is reiterated in the literature most recently in Johnson's (2016) update on the status of women in post secondary contexts.

Effective mentorship. In order to overcome these challenges facing the effective implementation of mentorship as professional development in the post secondary context there are some general recommendations as well as aspects specific to women that have been proposed in the literature.

Active networking between students and faculty and by extension between faculty, presented positive relationships between mentors and career success (Chandler, 1996). Traditional faculty mentorship is aimed at junior faculty, however there is a clear need for mentorship at every level faculty academic life (Law et al., 2014). Optimized mentoring relationships and programs will benefit both the mentor and the protégé. In addition, the individual post secondary institution at large will benefit as their faculty actively collaborate, cooperate, and communicate (Marino & Yost, 1998).

Law et al. (2014) made several recommendations for successful and mutually beneficial faculty mentorship professional development programs in the post secondary context:

1. The mentor's role should be defined and discussed upon protégé initiation.
2. A mentoring program should be formal and systematic.
3. Internal mentors should be placed with junior faculty, while external mentors might be considered for mid-career to senior faculty.
4. Resources are required for successful mentorship programs.
5. At different stages of an academic career, multiple mentors may be beneficial.
6. Assessment must be performed periodically to ensure success and efficiency, and in order to implement required change to structure and processes. (p. 3-5)

Some of these recommendations do have limitations, for example there is no consensus on mentorship programs being formal and systematic. Law et al. (2014) recognized that there are “many factors that contribute to a successful mentorship program and there is not one prescriptive ‘one size fits all approach’” (p. 6). In fact, some researchers clearly call for spontaneous and informal mentorship programs (Schlegel, 2000). Although the programmatic aspect surely implies some formality. Furthermore, Law et al. (2014) only mentioned there is significant literature regarding women and minorities *vis-à-vis* mentorship programs, but then did not address either of these important factors even in passing throughout their research.

Significant barriers to mentorship include communication, respect, and ambiguous roles (Merriweather & Morgan, 2013). These concerns must be addressed to enhance mentorship in a cross-cultural (cross-generational) mentoring relationship. The inherent ambiguity in a mentoring relationship must be deconstructed in order to analyze the relational power dynamic. A shared view of the power dynamics of the mentoring relationship can be developed through explicit and visible expectations between the mentor and protégé (Merriweather & Morgan, 2013).

Merriweather and Morgan’s (2013) work on mentorship provided insight on non-traditional mentoring roles through the voices of multi-generational women and a woman of color, where the mentor, Merriweather, is African American and twenty years younger than her protégé, Morgan. There is immense importance of a good mentor for new and junior faculty in terms of decreasing isolation and improving retention (Zackariasson, 2014; Zambrana, 2015). A mentor must be differentiated from a supervisor accentuating the mentor's role in providing focus, techniques, and academic knowledge (Zackariasson, 2014). Post secondary institutions are founded on knowledge, and therefore knowledge is the most consequential concern (Bosetti et al., 2008). Mentorship should be implemented and cultivated within and between faculty much

more frequently in order to develop greater collegiality and develop future faculty members (Zackariasson, 2014).

Beyond the general recommendations for improving and enhancing mentorship as professional development in the post secondary, there are recommendations specific to women faculty members focusing on feminist practice. According to Jones and Osborne-Lampkin (2013), it is necessary to focus on the general academic and professional challenges and recommendations, but also give careful consideration to the person.

Brown (2005) clearly found that “mentorship and multiple mentoring relationships are invaluable in advancing women through the ranks of higher education administration and for increasing the number of female presidents” (p. 659). The suggestion of multiple mentoring relationships for women faculty is supported by Marino and Yost (1998) and reiterated with several years of research data by Yun et al. (2016). In fact, Marino and Yost (1998) recommended looking for multiple mentors, both in one’s department and outside for issues pertinent to women and other under-represented faculty, especially in predominately white male disciplines. In Saudi Arabia, there are similar parallels, where instead of white men in the patriarchal context, there are Arab men with similar patriarchal functions and patterns of oppression (Varshney, 2019).

Savage et al. (2004) highlighted the usefulness of mentorship programs in “creating a balance between professional and personal life, especially for women faculty and faculty of color” (p. 23). A mentorship program as professional development following some of the mentioned recommendations may well be able to overcome some of the deterrents to women’s participation in professional development as described previously by Chuang (2015). Nevertheless, mentorship relationships must be reinvented in order to provide women with a

vehicle for substantial change (Chandler, 1996, p. 93) that avoids a false perception of inclusiveness that according to Duntley-Matos (2014) can be tenuous and also lack transparency.

Feminist mentorship. The reinvention and re-imagination of women's mentorship requires successful programs based on proven mentorship models. McIntyre and Lykes (1998) re-imagined feminist mentoring relationships by providing an alternative perspective of mentoring between women that is not based on the "traditional patriarchal system of mentoring that assumes the faculty member is a banker depositing knowledge in the student" (p. 429) which in turn permits patriarchal groupings to replicate power structures (Colley, 2002). Nor should mentoring follow the mother-daughter analogy that is both insufficient and limiting while replicating oppressive norms and maintaining inequality (Colley, 2002; McIntyre & Lykes, 1998).

Feminist mentoring in academia is paradoxical in that women academics are encouraged toward mentorship designed to assist in succeeding in post secondary contexts that are inherently unequal as well as function to support and proclaim feminist principles (Humble, Solomon, Allen, Blaisure, & Johnson, 2006). Building and analysing feminist mentorship is therefore more complex than many traditional mentorship relationships and arguably distinct from nonfeminist mentoring (Humble et al., 2006; Levitt, 2010). Integral themes in feminist mentoring include self-disclosure, analysis of power structures, confronting resistance to feminism, and promoting social change (Humble et al., 2006). Feminist mentoring seeks to reduce the oppressive aspects of mentoring to, in turn, diminish possibilities to abuse power inequalities (Fassinger & Hensler-McGinnis, 2005). Many models of mentorship are intrinsically masculine and do not develop or support feminist values (Levitt, 2010). Mentorship models that align with feminist principles and are successful or not successful for women must be analysed and deconstructed. To draw all the

pieces together, feminist mentoring following an ethic of care presents opportunities to develop sustainable leadership principles to support women's advancement in Saudi post secondary contexts.

Mentorship Models

Despite there being many challenges women face and the recommendations regarding mentorship as professional development in the post secondary context, there are many institutions that have implemented and currently follow mentorship programs as faculty professional development (Arnesson & Albinsson, 2017). A variety of mentorship as professional development program models, including feminist mentorship models, in the post secondary context will be discussed. Some of these are clearly defined as formal mentorship programs and others are presented as guides for mentors, mentees and administrators. These models represent only a few current mentorship programs in the post secondary context in order to contextualize women's experience with mentorship and provide insight rather than an exhaustive list of mentorship models available.

There are post secondary institutions that implement traditional mentorship program models which often also promote hierarchical patriarchal practices (Alvarez & Lazzari, 2016). Despite these inherent problems with tradition mentoring when viewed through feminist principles, women faculty must still navigate this setting (Alvarez & Lazzari, 2016). Traditional mentorship can be developed as a mandatory program, as for example at Durham University (2015). According to their program guidelines, Durham University appoints a mentor to assist in induction, regardless of seniority of incoming faculty member. Interestingly, the guidelines indicate that a mentor may provide input regarding the protégé to the department head for the purposes of annual or probation review, although not in any formal way (Durham University, 2015). This mentorship model, as presented, acts to raise significant issues for any mentorship

program with regards to faculty autonomy, overall participation, under-represented faculty receiving appropriate mentoring, and trust building to reduce isolation.

Further mentorship programs built on traditional models (See Cartwright, 2008; Gratto & Hess, 2015) may appear 'friendly', but do not sufficiently address the concerns and needs of women and under-represented faculty in participating in mentoring activities. Gratto and Hess (2015) presented the University of Dayton's extensive mentorship program for the development of both incoming and experienced department chairs. Unfortunately, inclusionary practices were not discussed, nor were program outcomes beyond the authors' experiences and other anecdotal evidence. Although outside the scope of this article, the mentoring program described raises questions regarding faculty attendance at multiple weekend retreats. These mentorship events, which on the surface appear inclusive, could create dilemmas for faculty members that also have caretaker responsibilities, the majority of whom are women. This impact may be increased further due to cultural expectations intersecting with gender expectations, again disproportionately impacting women minorities (Alvarez & Lazzari, 2016). This again brings up academic mentorship programs as ladders to leadership that are in fact potentially exclusionary.

A more specific model of mentorship as professional development in the post secondary context was put forward by Ralph and Walker (2014). Ralph and Walker (2014) proposed Adaptive Mentorship as an effective mentorship model that assists to 'clarify participants' conceptualization of the mentoring process and to help mentors divert potential conflicts by re-adjusting their respective behaviors to match each [other's positions]" (p. 225). The model fails to mention gender, race or generation and this is a serious limitation based on the gender-biased and non-inclusionary reality of post secondary contexts. This acts to cast some doubt on the overall relevance of Adaptive Mentorship and its ability to potentially confront and overcome the challenges of mentorship in a diverse post secondary context.

A non-traditional model of mentorship is peer-mentoring, where the mentoring relationship is non-hierarchical. Preston et al. (2014) proposed a student peer mentorship program that fosters transformational student learning. The concept is of junior students receiving support from fellow junior students, this is easily extendable to that of faculty and peer mentoring in faculty through bypassing the common hierarchical mentoring approach (Preston et al., 2014). A similar model of successful peer mentoring is presented by Rieske and Benjamin (2015). Although peer-mentoring may benefit some faculty, this general model only builds one-to-one mentoring relationships and does not overcome barriers women face in finding appropriate mentors to begin with, nor women's need for multiple mentors. One possible benefit to informal peer-mentoring is the opening of possible episodic mentoring. Instead of building and sustaining relationships, episodic or short, occasional and perhaps serendipitous peer-mentoring encounters benefit women and fall outside of hierarchical patterns (Alvarez & Lazzari, 2016).

Recent work by Yun et al. (2016) reported their success in piloting and implementing a mentorship model from 2006 to 2014 for early-career and underrepresented faculty using "Mutual Mentoring". Originally presented as a guide (Sorcinelli & Yun, 2009), Mutual Mentoring has been substantiated as a working model (Yun et al., 2016) with the presentation of an enhanced and in-depth updated guide (Sorcinelli, Yun & Baldi, 2016). Yun et al.'s (2016) "Mutual Mentoring Initiative" encouraged faculty to voluntarily create mentoring networks that avoided the traditional and inflexible one-to-one mentoring model. Mutual mentoring networks were incentivized through a grant process and microfinancing (Yun et al., 2016). Yun et al. (2016) collected data through interviews and surveys which included data from faculty who were not participating in the initiative for comparison. Women and underrepresented faculty were consistently over-represented as participants in the Mutual Mentoring Initiative (Yun et al., 2016). Mutual Mentoring is a mentoring model that is designed to be both empowering and

participant propelled (Yun et al., 2016). Mutual Mentoring is therefore a mentoring model that aligns with the principles and goals of inclusivity and flexibility as required by women faculty in post secondary contexts within a feminist framework and sustainable leadership principles.

Feminist mentorship models are often built on Fassinger's Feminist Mentorship Model (Fassinger, 1997; Gormley, 2013). The feminist mentorship model (Fassinger, 1997) had six main facets: (1) rethinking power and openly discussing power differentials, (2) emphasizing the relational through congruency and valuing, (3) collaborating on projects and networks, (4) committing to diversity, (5) integrating dichotomies, and (6) integrating political awareness. A feminist mentorship model does not necessitate the creation of relationships where the mentor and mentee have equal and shared power (Benishek et al., 2004). Fassinger (1997) indicated an objective of equality between mentor and mentee is both unattainable and counterproductive as there are indisputable power differences between the two. Feminist mentorship models must incorporate a critical examination of power dynamics and avoid an environment of denial and subjugation of these power differentials (Benishek et al., 2004).

Using an ethic of care to underpin feminist mentorship would aid through constructing reciprocity and care despite inevitable power differentials (Noddings, 2013). In a revision of Fassinger's Feminist Mentorship Model, Benishek et al. (2004) advocated for the incorporation of multicultural issues to better address inclusivity of minorities, whether those mentees are part of visible or hidden minority groups. The Multicultural Feminist Model of mentoring better addresses assumptions of similarities within apparently similar cultural groups and provides opportunities for identity intersection based on multiculturalism and feminist values (Benishek et al., 2004). The Multicultural Feminist Model of mentoring seeks to actively enhance social justice and thus aligns with core principles of sustainable leadership, justice and diversity.

In sum, confirming and extending mentorship models could develop mentorship within feminist values to enhance sustainable benefits, perceived and real, for all post secondary stakeholders, especially women.

Women, Mentorship, and the Middle East

There is substantial literature demonstrating the impact of mentoring of women's careers and leadership potential. However, the body of literature espousing the significant impact of mentoring on women's career development toward leadership is largely set in Western societies (Abalkhail & Allan, 2015). There are important cultural contexts to consider in mentoring which limits the transferability of many of these Western studies to post secondary contexts in the Arab world, the Middle East, and more specifically Saudi Arabia (Abalkhail & Allan, 2015). There are few studies within the Arab world and obviously fewer in the context of Saudi Arabia that explored mentoring and success of either women or men (Abalkhail & Allan, 2015). Even when there is research in Saudi Arabia the context of the work environment is often within a Western organization with a Western work culture and expectations (Abalkhail & Allan, 2015).

The paucity of research may be due in part to a perception of a lack of mentoring and little exposure to professional mentoring and networking to research (Abdalla, 2015; Mathew, 2010; Thompson, 2015) or a "marked absence of mentoring" in the Arab context altogether (Abalkhail & Allan, 2015, p. 157). Further complications may arise due to differing conceptualizations of mentoring (Abalkhail & Allan, 2015, p. 160) and little civic engagement in Saudi society (Thompson, 2015).

This was further exacerbated for women in the Middle East Gulf region due to fewer same-gender role-models and mentors as well as restricted access to mentors or networks of any gender due to gender segregation practices and mobility restrictions within male-dominated cultures (Abdalla, 2015). Saudi women faced one of the largest mismatches between educational

attainment and labor force participation in the Middle East and North African region (The World Bank, 2013). Even when women build strong networks amongst themselves it was often necessary to rely on male networks for access and permission (Abalkhail & Allan, 2015). Saudi women also faced conflict between creating effective mentorship toward leadership and gender role stereotypes (Abdalla, 2015).

Women in general, and specifically women in Saudi Arabia, need support toward mentoring whether formal or informal in post secondary contexts (Abalkhail & Allan, 2015). Access to same gender mentors would be ideal, but any form of mentorship would be beneficial (Abalkhail & Allan, 2015; Abdalla, 2015). Another central strategy for effective mentoring for women in Saudi Arabia required reformation of gender stereotypes and raising awareness of the potential benefits of both formal and informal mentoring (Thompson, 2015).

Although mentorship is not a panacea for systemic gender inequalities in the Middle East Gulf region, exploring women's perceptions of mentorship may provide tools for women's development through an ethic of care and sustainable leadership within the Saudi Arabian post secondary context.

Summary

The benefits of mentoring for women in post secondary contexts were diverse. However, the challenges in effective mentorship toward sustainable leadership for women present an opposing force that must be deconstructed and understood. The challenges women face in Saudi Arabia whether in everyday life or in obtaining mentoring opportunities were complex and less well understood and researched than women in Western societies. Women's progression in career development was missing an ethic of care. Literature was generally silent on an ethic of care as an essential component of mentorship for women in the Middle East and Saudi.

The voices of women in academia in the Middle East and specifically Saudi Arabia were few and limited in the discourse on mentorship in post secondary contexts. My conceptual framework supported women's participation and moved toward equality that provides culturally appropriate context through the lens of liberal Islamic feminism that was both caring and potentially empowering. A feminist framework was necessary to encourage participation in opening a conversation and positioning an ethic of care that underpins mentorship that develops sustainable post secondary leadership. My research explored women's perceptions of mentorship on their engagement with informal and formal mentorship opportunities provides fresh insight and forum for women's voices and experiences specific to the research context.

In Chapter Three, I will explain and detail my research methodology.

Chapter Three Methodology

Overview

The primary purpose of this research was to examine formal and informal mentorship for women faculty members at a private non-profit women's university in Saudi Arabia. This study was situated in a feminist framework that draws broadly from liberal feminist principles with a particular Islamic feminist lens toward building and supporting women through sustainable leadership practices emphasizing an ethic of care in mentorship. A qualitative approach of a single case-study with embedded sub-units provided opportunities for in-depth understanding (Creswell, 2013; Yin, 2014).

Ontology and Epistemological Underpinnings

To situate the research, first I have built a foundation for feminist thought and theory through feminist ontology and epistemology.

Ontology refers to the nature of reality or being. Feminist ontology involves theorizing being while uncovering our normative classification of primary categories and their implicit opposites (Haslanger & Sveinsdóttir, 2011). One way to view this is through actively refusing Cartesian binary understanding and radically breaking Cartesian ontological feminine associations (Stanley & Wise, 1993). Although feminist ontology builds differentiation, it is only where these differences are not necessarily dualistic in nature and avoid the hegemony of men (Haslanger & Sveinsdóttir, 2011).

Epistemology refers to how we know reality. Feminist epistemology maintains that dominant knowledge practices systematically disadvantage women (Anderson, 2017). At the center of feminist epistemology is the situated knower, and thus situated knowledge (Anderson, 2017). More specifically, feminist epistemologies focus on gendered situated knowledge that promotes agency (Anderson, 2017). One fundamental concern of epistemology for feminism and

thus feminist epistemologies is to “wake us up to layers of sexist, racist, homophobic, and colonialist points of view... [providing] insights into knowledge building that upend traditional epistemologies and methodologies, offering more complex understandings and solutions toward reclaiming subjugated knowledge.” (Hesse-Biber, 2012) Although feminist epistemologies can generally be demarcated as feminist empiricism, feminist standpoint, and feminist postmodernism, these alternatives are often found altogether and should only be understood to represent a few of the epistemological possibilities (Anderson, 2017; Stanley & Wise, 1993).

Feminist epistemologies generally are understood to:

- include women in inquiry,
- support women’s epistemic authority,
- forward ‘feminine’ cognitive styles,
- produce theories that serve women’s interests,
- produce social phenomena theories that promote women’s activities, and
- produce knowledge that is useful for people in subordinate positions and challenges gender and social hierarchies (Anderson, 2017).

Philosophical Assumptions – Conceptual Framework

This research followed a feminist research process that fulfills the following criteria as set out by Letherby (2003), where the overarching principles as a feminist researcher is attentive to the following principles:

- attend to issues of gender in all aspects of the context and within research;
- contest traditional views and assumptions of objectivity;
- build the significance of studying “the personal and the private”;
- advance “non-exploitive relationships within research”;

- foster emotion and reflexivity for insight and as a central research element. (p. 73)

This research assumed that an experiential view does not necessitate commonality of experience, but rather commonalities of women's diverse experiences of inequality, exploitation, and oppression (Letherby, 2003; Stanley & Wise, 1993).

To build the feminist research process and research relationships, I assumed that power, empowerment, ethics, and responsibility are central concerns (Letherby, 2003). Power, empowerment, ethics, and responsibility are central to women's lived experiences of inequality and oppression (Letherby, 2003). My research framework addressed and built connection with each of these concerns through both sustainable leadership and Nel Noddings' ethic of care drawing from liberal feminist principles with an Islamic feminist lens. The research negotiated the space and tension between liberal feminist principles and Islamic feminism that is attentive to the women in the study and attempts to avoid colonizing their world views. The proposed ethic of care is purposeful and resonated with women providing an opportunity to understand and listen at the margins where there are constant fluctuations and possibilities to empower women.

The first perspective is liberal feminism as built by Mary Wollstonecraft in 1792 that declares women and men as equal and therefore deserving of equal rights before God, before the law, and to education. Wollstonecraft's (1792/2000) use of religious terminology and examples throughout her treatise provides an interesting overlap with Islamic feminism. Although critics of liberal feminism, such as bell hooks or other radical feminists, would likely use the label Western liberal feminism. This would be the reality of my perspective and experience as a White middle-class heterosexual presenting woman. However, liberal feminism is a large construct where I have conceptualized a third wave narrative that actively avoids an "established, or homogenous image" and builds comfort with contradiction (Renegar & Soward, 2009, p. 11-12). The third wave feminist narrative is not monolithic, it promotes a "multiperspectival version of feminism"

and “embrace[s] multivocality over synthesis and action over theoretical justification” (Snyder, 2008, p. 175). Through rejecting a “universalist claim that all women share a set of common experiences”, third wave feminist narratives tend to expose the “human costs of hegemonic narratives” (Snyder, 2008, p. 184-185). It is through a liberal feminist framework with a third wave narrative that my conceptual framework seeks to avoid feminist hegemony. This framework permits the recognition of differences in histories, privilege, culture, religion, and so on. The concept of commonality of oppression and experience is “a false and corrupt platform disguising and mystifying the true nature of women’s varied and complex social reality” (hooks, 1984, p. 56).

Parallel to the third wave feminist narrative and within third wave feminists is the conceptualization of Islamic Feminism. Islamic feminism, a contested construct in and of itself, is crucial to the context of Saudi Arabia providing a culturally appropriate framework. Margot Badran identifies Islamic feminism as "a feminist discourse and practice articulated within an Islamic paradigm... which derives its understanding and mandate from the Qur'an, seeks rights and justice for women, and for men, in the totality of their existence” (Badran, 2002; Barlas, 2016). Asma Barlas (2016) and other scholars have frequently resisted the label of Islamic feminism arguing that their work on “gender affirmative analyses” are motivated by faith not feminism (Seedat, 2013b, p. 415). The issue of naming relates to maintaining space to theorize “sexual equality from alternative cultural and intellectual paradigms” while using feminist theory and methods and avoiding feminist hegemony of Western intellectual tradition and history (Seedat, 2013a, p. 27). Therefore I have framed Islamic feminism as to avoid feminist political hegemony however employ feminist theories and methods. This may be possible within a context such as Saudi Arabia that does not have a formal history of colonization from Western powers.

Islamic feminism is not monolithic any more than other feminisms. Islamic feminism can be viewed, albeit simplistically, on a spectrum ranging from apologist, reformist, hermeneutic, and rejectionist (Eyadat, 2013). At either extreme of the spectrum are apologist and rejectionist. Both apologist and rejectionist refuse the connection between Islam and feminism but for dissimilar reasons (Seedat, 2013a). Apologists are the most conservative form of Islamic feminism, where Islamic texts are re-read, but only to rationalize gender (in)equality and concede to patriarchal interpretations (Eyadat, 2013). The notion of gender equality is presented as an entirely Western construct with no bearing on Islam. Whereas, rejectionist Islamic feminism claims that Islam and gender equality are irreconcilable where Islam is inherently and irredeemably patriarchal and misogynistic (Eyadat, 2013; Seedat, 2013a). Generally, rejectionists perceive any Islamic feminism as having an “intimidating and silencing effect and discourages serious dialogue about the possibilities and limitations of feminist projects of different sorts for Muslim societies” (Moghissi, 2011). Reformist Islamic feminism presents modernization of Islamic interpretation through traditional male Islamic scholars for the purpose of increased participation of women in society and economy without an express movement for women’s equality in all aspects of her private life and larger society (Eyadat, 2013). Reformist Islamic feminism is usually perceived as having roots in the cultural and national Arab movements as Arab feminism within a Western colonial framework (Amin, 1900/2000; Eyadat, 2013). For my conceptual framework, I identified the hermeneutic category of Islamic feminism.

Hermeneutic Islamic feminism is an approach that has built momentum since the 1980s and 1990s where primary Islamic texts are completely reinterpreted in a feminist context to create a valid and authoritative alternative Islamic discourse to the historically almost exclusively male-dominated interpretation (Barlas, 2016; Eyadat, 2013). Hermeneutic Islamic feminism uses scriptural hermeneutics of the Quran, the accepted primary source of Islamic knowledge, to argue

“against patriarchy and discrimination in addition to ... a radically egalitarian view of equality” (Barlas, 2001, p. 135).

My feminist framework consists of nuanced adaptations that draw from both liberal feminism and Islamic feminism that is culturally and contextually appropriate. In order to maintain cultural and contextual feminist standards I have attempted to avoid hegemony and colonizing forms of feminism while engaging women “to give voice to an ethical and egalitarian vision of Islam [that] can and does empower Muslim women from all walks of life to make dignified choices” (Mir-Hosseini, 2006, p. 645). Active engagement, reflection, and revision of my conceptual framework throughout this research has acted to check my personal privilege and prevented complicity with contextual patriarchal norms and practices.

In order to actualize my feminist conceptual framework, a personal set of ethics has been considered. These ethics guided my research and required me to reflect on the feminist framework on which they were scaffolded. Constructing ethics outside of Western contexts or within culturally diverse Western contexts required researched respect for differing values and a deep understanding of the historical source of those values and norms.

My own context as a woman having lived in a forthright Muslim Arab community steeped in history made it even more important to derive ethical principles for mentorship from existing cultural ethos, while maintaining feminist underpinnings. The perception of colonial or Western origins of moral and ethical claims are not easily accepted or integrated into existing cultural values. Developing an ethic of care is suitable to explore women’s perceptions. Adopting an ethics of care is representative of feminist ethics, where traditional morality of justice does not provide a standard for morality and is often male-biased (Jaggar, 2001). Held (2006) claimed “[t]here can be no justice without care, however, for without care no child would survive and there would be no persons to respect” (p. 17).

An ethic of care is not a women's ethic but a gendered ethic where all humans should care and are capable of care. An ethic of care built on feminist values "aims to eliminate or at least ameliorate the oppression of any group of people, but most particularly women (Tong & Williams, 2016). My own criticism of ethic of care critics is the prioritizing of individuality and the diminished value of service to others toward common good, communal life, or community. There are persuasive arguments "for the importance of elevating the ethics of care beyond the domestic to the public sphere" (Pettersen, 2008, p. 176). It would then be ideal, for example to promote caring mentorship in order to normalize and align positions of power with an ethic of care. Promoting an ethic of care is important instead of relegating care to domestic and healthcare contexts where the majority of individuals are underprivileged. This diminished value for care perpetuates caring as undervalued and unrewarded.

In the research context, the Saudi government enforces strict gender segregation. Gender segregation has required men to fill typically female care roles. For example, in boys' public schools where there is strict gender segregation and only male teachers, staff, and students, you will find only men teaching and caring for grade one boys and all male students. Male participation in care-related professions and situations extends into many care settings where primary care is preferentially same gender and not necessarily enforced through gender segregation rules and laws. Therefore, men often request male nurses and aides at their bedsides and female Saudi nurses have refused to provide male patients with intimate care when qualified male staff are available (Alotaibi, Paliadelis, & Valenzuela, 2016). The exclusivity of positions of care for the under privileged or female is not entirely practiced in Saudi Arabia. The enforced segregation and cultural practices of segregation has also led to the creation of women-only spaces, run by women. In many circumstances, women are in advanced leadership positions in all-women organizations and spaces, of course not without contention from both modernists and

traditionalists (van Geel, 2016). This may make Saudi culture and society more receptive to an ethic of care and thus caring mentorship. Recent moves toward Saudization (replacing foreign workers with Saudi nationals) has also put pressure on a variety of jobs and work places to ensure Saudi men and Saudi women are in the workforce in all levels and places (Al-Asfour & Khan, 2014). The focus is especially acute in healthcare and education fields and extends to increasing women's participation in economic activities (Nieva, 2015). Care ethics may offer an option for greater appeal globally outside Western contexts because an ethic of care is situated as an alternative to the perspectives related to and originating from Western domination (Held, 2006).

To summarize, my conceptual framework has drawn on an adapted and adaptive liberal and Islamic feminisms actualized through a culturally appropriate ethic of care.

Methodology

This research was guided by case study methodology, which developed “an extensive and ‘in-depth’ description of [a] social phenomenon” (Yin, 2014, p. 4). Case study is characterized through rich and thick description (Merriam, 1998, p.29). Case study is suitable for focusing “on a particular situation, event, program, or phenomenon” that enables contextualized insight (Creswell, 2013; Merriam, 1998, p. 29). This contextualization draws on a feminist framework, both liberal and Islamic, through the presentation of women's voices and experiences as individuals (Badran, 2002; Letherby, 2003). The research design assumed case study as a comprehensive methodology (Creswell, 2007; Merriam, 1998; Yin, 2014).

This project developed a single case design with embedded sub-units. Women faculty members in Saudi Arabia was the major unit and the embedded sub-units were individual faculty members at Effat University. The unique context, access, and researcher membership means that the single-case study was revelatory in nature and not generalizable (Yin, 2014).

I drew upon Merriam (1998) for my case study design. Merriam (1998) orients case study under the philosophical assumption of constructivism based on “the view that reality is constructed by individuals interacting with their social worlds” (p. 6). Case study is an “all-encompassing method” that can excel in any epistemological stance so long as the case study is developed to align with the conceptual framework or theory (Yin, 2014, p. 17). A feminist framework considers and values the voice of participants while recognizing power differentials inherent in the society and the research process itself (Letherby, 2003). Case studies can give voice to those with less power and those that go unheard (McAndrew & Warne, 2005) in addition to “captur[ing] the perspectives of different participants” (Yin, 2014, p. 17). McAndrew and Warne (2005) provided an example of feminist praxis and research using case study methodology. McAndrew and Warne (2005) explored three women’s experiences through semi-structured interviews and identified key themes developed under feminist praxis and case study methodology. Im (2010) presented McAndrew and Warne’s (2005) research as a recent exemplar of a published feminist nursing study. Although McAndrew and Warne’s (2005) study is in the field of nursing and psychology, Im (2010) examined their research for alignment with key characteristics of feminist research as proposed by Hesse-Biber (2012). The critical elements to case study methodology or any methodology within a feminist framework rely on recognizing the importance of women’s lived experiences, consideration of hierarchies of power, deconstructing structures of oppression, and challenging androcentric bias (Hesse-Biber, 2012).

Case study as proposed by Merriam and practiced by others is to provide voice to participants (Im, 2010; McAndrew & Warne, 2005; Merriam, 1998; Yin, 2014) that draws from feminist praxis and research. Merriam’s (1998) principles of case study refers to and compiles case study information and guidance from both Stake and Yin. In addition, other figures in case study research have been referred to throughout this chapter in order to provide alternatives to

and additions to Merriam's work as a diverse arrangement of elements that best serves and supports my research (Yazan, 2015).

Delving into preparation and case study layout, Yin's (2014) case study builds a detailed research plan and timeframe using a clear process moving from design preparation, data collection, data analysis, and reporting. Yin's (2014) design for case study research requires significant fore thought and planning before implementation (Yazan, 2015). Yin's (2014) case study design contrasts with Stake's (2010) and Merriam's (1998) more flexible case study structure. So in terms of planning, Yin's (2014) high level case study guide was followed, however, in terms of implementation, analysis, and "understanding of the phenomenon under study", Merriam's (1998) case study application in education was followed (p. 30).

Another consideration was ethics board approvals. In this situation, Stake's (2010) flexible design, where major changes could be introduced even after moving from design to research, would lead to additional requirements for ethics approvals and amendments. Although I refer to Yin, Stake and Merriam in the methodology section, Merriam's (1998) work was followed the most closely as an example of case study methodology from epistemological underpinnings, conceptualization, toward implementation, analysis, and reporting that aligned with this project's conceptual framework and feminist principles.

Research Setting

The research setting was Effat University located in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia. Effat University is a private, non-profit, English-medium women's university. All students are women. Faculty are almost equally men and women. The leadership positions of president, provost, and deans are exclusive to women.

Saudi Arabia is an Islamic Arab state in the Middle East, oil-rich Gulf region. Islam is the state religion of Saudi Arabia and all citizens are officially Muslim. There are expatriate minorities of differing religions, but they are only permitted to practice their religion privately. All women in Saudi Arabia are obliged to wear the *abaya* or full length loose black cloak in all public places. Covering or veiling women's head and faces is common and encouraged, although not mandatory.

Effat University is located in Jeddah on the Western coast of Saudi Arabia. Jeddah as a city is more diverse and open than other Saudi Arabian cities. This is due in part to being a historical port and the receiving city for religious pilgrims from all over the globe. Over the course of the millennia, these religious pilgrims did not always return to their homelands and stayed in Saudi Arabia. This has made Jeddah a more cosmopolitan and diverse city that does not conform to the typical cultural and tribal customs in the rest of Saudi Arabia. For example, in Jeddah it is common to see women wearing colourful *abayat* and instead of traditional black, or open cloaks revealing the woman's clothing and form, or women out alone.

Effat University exists almost as an anomaly against a backdrop of gender segregation and conservative orthodox Islamic practice in Saudi Arabia. Although Effat University was founded on and continues to build on Islamic principles and values, the university has much more liberal practices. A few examples of this are in terms of mixing of students with male faculty, diversity of student and faculty appearance, access to and promotion of women's sport, and empowering women toward leadership. This is in contrast to other local public universities, where women sitting their candidacy examinations or doctoral defences will only interact with men through a one-way screen; the women will see the men but the men can only hear the women. The uniqueness of the research setting is alluded to in Chapter One.

Research Participants

The research participants included women faculty members at Effat University, Jeddah, Saudi Arabia. All participants were current or former Effat University employed full-time faculty members and were over the age of 18. All participants were women faculty with differing levels of administrative duties. Most participants were Arab Muslim women, and included Saudi nationals and other nationalities. A demographic matrix and other participant details are not presented to protect the anonymity of participants. All participants had post-graduate degrees with professional academic levels of English language skills.

Recruitment. Non-probability purposive diversity sampling was used to identify and recruit participants (Daniel, 2012). Purposive sampling is suitable for “research focused on particular segments of a target population” where there is in depth knowledge of the research site and population (Daniels, 2012, p. 92). Research participants were initially identified and recruited by the researcher through a personal email using the faculty directory. Using a participant selection criteria of variability of elements, diversity of the participant sample was the target (Daniel, 2012). This research project was designed for a total of eight to ten participants. There were nine participants. Participants meeting the following diversity of elements were recruited:
Required elements:

1. Female
2. Faculty member
3. Currently holds or previously held an administrative portfolio of any level (President, Provost, Dean, Chair, Director, Coordinator)

Diversity of elements:

1. Academic experience where senior indicates more than ten years' experience and junior indicates five or less years' experience.
2. Religious identity where participants either identify as practicing Muslims or non-Muslims.
3. Cultural identity where participants either identify as Arab of Arab descent or non-Arab.
4. Social situation indicates participants were either married with children or unmarried.

Table 2 *Breakdown of participants' diversity of elements*

| Total of 9 participants | | |
|-------------------------|--|-----------------------|
| Experience level | Senior faculty | Junior faculty |
| | 56% or 5 participants | 44% or 4 participants |
| Religious identity | Practicing and self-identified Muslims | Non-Muslim |
| | 78% or 7 participants | 22% or 2 participants |
| Cultural identity | Arab | Non-Arab |
| | 67% or 6 participants | 33% or 3 participants |
| Social situation | Married with children | Unmarried |
| | 44% or 4 participants | 56% or 5 participants |

The researcher was formerly a faculty member at Effat University. Although I am acquainted with almost all faculty members at my institution, purposive diversity sampling enabled me to reach those with whom I had less direct contact. Purposive sampling may assist in avoiding some concerns associated with the comfort and ease of convenience sampling, in that I was required to contact and interview faculty members I was only partially acquainted with

moving me outside my comfort zone (Saldaña, 2011). Additionally, purposive diversity sampling avoided coercion of close colleagues to participate in the research. Information collected was primarily perceptual, but also included contextual and demographic data.

Methods

Data was collected through semi-structured interviews, which occurred over one or two sittings for a total of 90 minutes over the course of several weeks and based on participant availability. Semi-structured interviews were developed to collect participant behaviour, attitudes, and perceptions of mentorship. Additional evidence was sought through available university documentation or archives on mentorship (e.g., strategic plans, faculty handbooks, and so on) and researcher generated self-reflections. Publicly available university documentation was not found for any current or historical formal faculty mentorship activities or operations.

Semi-structured interviews. Interviews for this research project were semi-structured. Drawing on feminist principles for a conceptual framework requires that interviews uncover the “diversity of women’s realities” that are significant to women’s lives (Hesse-Biber, 2007, p. 113). The interview is one of the most important sources of case-study data (Yin, 2014). The intent of the semi-structured interview is “to capture an interviewee’s own sense of reality” and perceptions (Yin, 2014, p. 112). A semi-structured interview is not a structured query, but should be conversational (Stake, 2010; Yin, 2014). This required an acute awareness of power and authority as they are related to my personal identity as the researcher and potentially an insider to the interview participants (Hesse-Biber, 2007).

Two levels of questions were included in the interview guide (Appendix I). Level one questions pertaining to the interviewee herself were asked to build communication between the interviewer and interviewee (Yin, 2014). Once rapport was established, I asked level two

questions pertaining to the research topic and line of inquiry (Yin, 2014). Probing follow-up questions were asked ‘to clarify and refine the information and interpretation’ (Stake, 2010). Participants provided responses as recurring stories that gave rise to focal points. The interview questions were aligned to both sustainable leadership definitions and elements of an ethic of care within larger proposed themes.

Document analysis. Upon ethics approval, I requested permission to access university documents and archives that refer to mentorship activities. A general search of public archives for written university publications pertaining to mentorship was also undertaken. There were no public documents referring to current or historical formal faculty mentorship programs. All references of mentorship referred to mentorship of students and specific student skill sets.

Propositions. Propositions provide direction for case study synthesis. Each proposition guides and assists to determine the scope and topic of research. Ideally, these propositions are connected to data and data analysis (Yin, 2014). The main question that guides this project is: How do women’s perceptions of mentorship affect their engagement with informal and formal mentorship opportunities? From this question, the propositions for this study were as follows:

- Women have shared experiences of oppression, exploitation, and inequality;
- Sharing experiences of mentorship provides support;
- Mentorship activities support women’s leadership initiatives in a post secondary context;

Concepts of sustainable leadership and an ethic of care compliment and contribute to a feminist understanding of mentorship in a post secondary context.

The researcher-participant role. In my research, I investigated within an organization where I was formerly employed. This conferred insider status as a researcher who had privileged knowledge of, and shared experiences with research project participants (Mercer, 2007). Insider status has positive and negative aspects connected to access, intrusiveness, familiarity, and rapport (Mercer, 2007). My insider status was in contrast to my outsider status as a White Canadian woman. As an insider, through my position as a former employee at the research setting, I had a certain level of access already granted. Due to the gender-segregated nature of the broader society, access is rarely granted to outsiders in any meaningful capacity. With regards to intrusiveness, purposive sampling assisted to identify faculty members with whom I was less well acquainted and avoid coercion of faculty members with whom I may have worked more closely. Familiarity, while providing back explanations and histories as an insider, also may lead to “myopia” and general inability to view larger themes and connections (Mercer, 2007, p. 7). Finally, rapport was assumed as an insider, but may have devolved into preconceptions about the researcher’s identity and motives rather than the research topic and process (Mercer, 2007).

In sum, being a researcher-participant was contextually necessary, but required ethical safeguards for research participants as well as frequent refocusing and contact with external supervisors.

Data Analysis

Qualitative data included analysis of interview transcripts, researcher generated written reflections, and any other artifacts such as documentation pertaining to present or previous university mentorship activities. Qualitative analysis included data coding, emerging themes, pattern matching.

Initial interview audio recordings were researcher transcribed. A master file of all compiled transcriptions was used to code the data. The transcription file was physically produced

and an electronic file was maintained for searchability. The researcher captured emerging themes and research question related data on an Excel file. Themes and initial codes were also informed by the researcher's written reflections. Each interview had an associated researcher written reflection that highlighted words and ideas that seemed significant and interesting at the time of the interviews. The researcher reflections provided nuance to each interview pulling out issues of tone, emotion, silence, hesitation, etc. The researcher reflections encouraged review of each transcript beyond the words and often back to the recordings themselves to ensure participants' voices were captured appropriately. Data was coded "according to topics, themes, and issues important to the study" (Stake, 2010, p. 151) where interpretation followed the research questions (Kohlbacher, 2006). Emerging themes in the data coalesced as "code categories [were] progressively focused" (Stake, 2010, p. 151) through iterative data combing, re-coding, and revision as "feedback loops" (Kohlbacher, 2006).

An inductive model of category development was followed (Mayring, 2000) that aligned with feminist research process (Letherby, 2007). Iterations within the data collected were considered complete when data saturation was achieved. Often themes emerged in one transcript that went unnoticed in previous transcripts. Data saturation was defined as: "no new data, no new themes, and no new coding" (Fusch & Ness, 2015, p. 1409). Pattern matching was also used to compare between case study sub-units and to themes present in current literature on women's mentorship in post secondary contexts (Yin, 2014). Pattern matching between sub-units also addressed possible rival explanation and interpretations (Yin, 2014) that may indicate large disparity between participant perceptions as well as differences compared to recent literature.

Publicly shared folders and web-based publications were reviewed for additional documentation and artifacts pertaining to present or previous university mentorship activities. This entailed using cached and current university web pages and public facing intranet to search

for materials relating to mentorship, mentor, or mentoring. Physical publications produced by the university going back over 15 years were scanned for mention of mentorship, mentor, or mentoring.

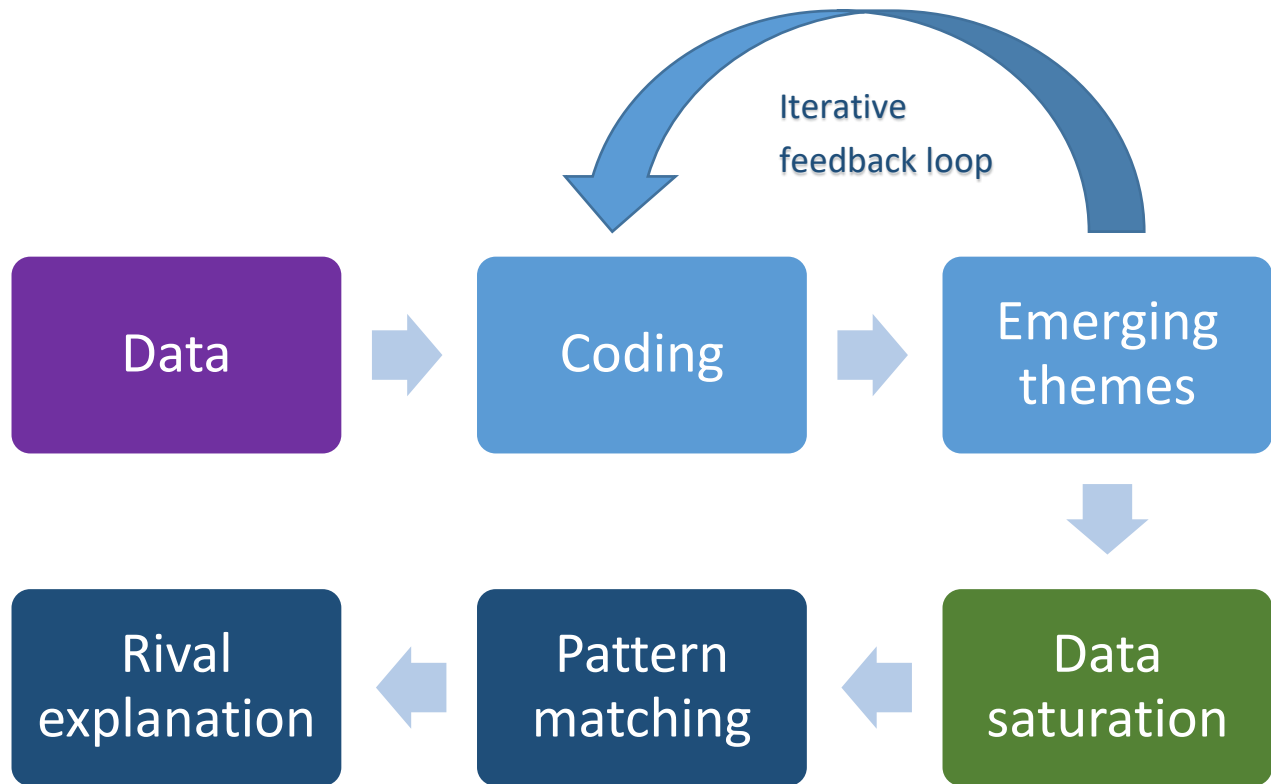


Figure 1. Data collection process.

Ethical Considerations

The ethics approval for my research was obtained from both my study site through the Effat University Research Ethics Board and from the University of Calgary Conjoint Faculties Research Ethics Board¹. There were no difficulties or resistance in obtaining ethics approval in my research setting as it was aimed at voluntary faculty participants and not students. At the time that the informed consent form was presented to participants, they were informed of their right to withdraw from the study at any time and that they may refuse to answer any questions that they

¹ Ethics certification and decision information is found in the Preface

did not wish to answer. Information that was collected prior to a participant's withdrawal could still be used as part of the overall data collection, as noted on the consent form. Digital copies of the data were kept by the researcher in a password protected format desktop computer. Hard copies of data were kept in a locked filing cabinet. Data may be archived indefinitely by the researcher. This has been indicated on the participant consent form, so they were aware that this may occur. My role as a faculty member at the university research setting had minimal issues of power, coercion, or influence as I did not supervise faculty, nor did I maintain power of authority. In addition, the interview participants were from other colleges and departments.

Validity

Stanley and Wise (1993) and Dallimore (2000) discussed critiques of feminist research based on perceptions and issues of validity. Dallimore (2000) points out in her description of the response to issues of validity in feminist research as "strong resistance or even open hostility" (p. 157). Feminist research is often discredited through claims that it does not meet traditional standards of validity and thus objectivity. Dallimore (2000) underlines the reality and source of this criticism as general discomfort with the goals of feminism and more specifically a discomfort with feminist researchers.

One key area of critique of feminist research is objectivity within the frame of validity. Stanley and Wise (1993) argue that feminist research ought to avoid the dichotomies of objectivity and subjectivity. The notion of two mutually exclusive categories is a conventional and sexist way of constructing social realities (Stanley & Wise, 1993, p. 41-42). According to Dallimore (2000), there are feminist scholars that claim that objectivity is impossible while others emphasize that objectivity is neither desirable nor a measure of feminist research validity. Dallimore (2000) argues that feminist research can be valid and rigorous so long as commitment

to feminist goals of social change and emancipation of women are actively understood, pursued, and perceived.

Internal validity. Collaboration of participants in feminist research in both design and research modes provides more credibility to research findings and increases “accuracy or trustworthiness” (Dallimore, 2000, p. 165). Collaboration between the researcher and the researched is effective demonstration of internal validity for feminist research (Dallimore, 2000). My research project involved participants in both the undertaking, and interpretation of data. This should stand as a necessary but an insufficient part of validity. Internal validity improves through reflexive accounts of the components that “impact on data collection and analysis” “enhance trustworthiness, transparency and accountability” of my research (Finlay, 2002, p. 212).

Women faculty member participants checked the accuracy of transcripts. Researcher checked relevance, and authenticity of emerging themes, and results. Researchers confirmed outcomes and themes generated from literature, data, and other sources and developed alternative explanations. Most or all participants were active academic researchers and all were familiar with the research process and expectations and therefore actively contributed to project integrity. Collectively developing alternative explanations for the data outcomes further improved rigor and trustworthiness (Levin, 2012). Another mode of alternative analysis to enrich expanded trustworthiness is “contrafactual analysis” (Levin, 2012, p. 145). The project researcher identified “what it would take to disconfirm the research findings and subsequently apply the data for such an analysis” (Levin, 2012, p. 145). To obtain high quality case study analysis, Yin (2014) identifies this as “rival explanation and interpretations” (p. 168).

Trustworthiness and Reliability

The value established in the trustworthiness of interpretations and conclusions is of greater import than concerns of validity in feminist research (Dallimore, 2000). The research

outcomes are trustworthy so long as the participant voices are authentically presented while also attentive to aspects of power (Hesse-Biber, 2007). Trustworthiness depends on honoring women's experiences rather than significance (Dallimore, 2000). The research project relied specifically on listening to women's voices through interviews. This necessitated reviewing transcripts as words and language, and also re-listening to interview recordings for the other side of language beyond words; such as pauses, silences, interruptions, disruptions, emotional aspects, and so on (Hesse-Biber, 2007). Through careful listening and attentiveness to participant voices, trustworthiness is possible.

Further data was collected through documentation as reflective writings from me as a researcher participant (Yin, 2014). Taking a reflexive stance presents research materials that are relatable in varying ways (Finlay, 2002). Reflexivity also supported me in dynamically avoiding "sanitizing the research encounter and [my] own reactions" (Finlay, 2002, p. 224). Researcher self-reflective practice followed all interviews in order to highlight initial themes and other non-verbal data that would not appear in the transcript or in the original recordings.

Limitations and Delimitations

Limitations. In general, to qualitative research, single case studies are not generalizable beyond their context and setting. Participants face limitations due to serious restrictions on the independent movement of all women in Saudi Arabia. Due to the political climate, cultural sensitivity, and participant well-being within the research setting, participants may have self-censored responses and discussions. Participants also had an opportunity to redact contributions and data.

A further limitation was full participant commitment for the duration of the project. The participants in this project were very limited in number, numbering nine. Those that choose to participate, may not have provided data that is generalizable beyond the research setting.

Feedback and participant input were critical. Building significant participant buy-in at the start of the project was crucial to completion and preventing participant drop out, delay, or apathy.

Participant commitment was cemented through well-planned interviews and contact.

This research project was conceived within the framework and timeline of a dissertation for a doctorate of education. Therefore, there were time constraints that had to be considered for the entire project. The time constraints dictated that data analysis and write-up should be completed within twelve months. Further time constraints were related to the availability of participants during the year; faculty participants, especially expatriates, were generally only available from September to May.

The participants in this project were very limited, numbering nine. Those that did choose to genuinely participate and commit, did not provide data that was generalizable beyond the research setting.

The budget for this research was nil. Therefore, any costs were managed out of pocket or altogether avoided.

Delimitations. This project did not directly address professional development proper, peer-coaching nor teaching skill enhancement. The focus of the project was women's mentorship in academia with the goal of empowered leadership in order to properly plan and reasonably complete as an individual researcher.

Only women's mentoring relationships were considered. This focus meant that there were no male participants or direct stakeholders in this research undertaking. The conceptual framework of research was based on feminist ideals and praxis. There was a clear need to empower and build capacity for women leaders in the research setting where the president, provost and deans are all women, therefore women were included and men were excluded.

There was no involvement with the university quality standards and quality development connected to national accreditation or international accreditation. The technical and reporting requirements of quality development within the research setting were not publicly available and were not be made available in any meaningful way to the researcher.

Summary

In this research, I explored women's perceptions of formal and informal mentorship as faculty members at a private non-profit women's university in Saudi Arabia. I employed a single case-study with embedded sub-units drawing on feminist principles aligned with sustainable leadership and elements of an ethic of care. Women faculty members in Saudi Arabia was the major unit and the embedded sub-units were individual faculty members at Effat University. Semi-structured interview, researcher generated reflective writings, and university documentation and archives pertaining to mentorship were collected, compiled and coded as evidence toward trustworthiness of themes and concepts supporting women's experiences and voices. In chapter four, I will present my research data.

Chapter Four Findings

Overview

This chapter presents the findings of women's perception and experience of mentorship in a post-secondary context. The primary research question in this study was to examine women faculty members' perceptions of mentorship in the post secondary context and examining how these perceptions affect their engagement with mentorship. The findings were articulated through the process of reviewing the stories and listening to the voices of my participants, both as individuals with unique and singular experiences and as a compilation. In order to respect each participant's voice, their quotations are presented exactly as they spoke without the use of *sic*¹ or corrections. Looking at all participants or groupings of participants, I noted connections and parallels within and between participant voices. I catalogued intersections between an ethic of care, sustainable leadership, and Islamic feminism with a lens to participant perceptions of mentorship and engagement with mentorship. Three key themes emerged and are presented: (a) relation over morality; (b) cultural, religious, and gender bounded agency, and; (c) situational perception affecting engagement. Each key theme was expanded and scaffolded to the next. The findings indicated a nuanced perception of mentorship connected to three key concepts. First, participant perceptions of mentorship were driven by kin-like relationships. Second, their perceptions were layered with survival and complicity. Finally, participant perceptions of mentorship fell within larger strictures of cultural and religiously bounded agency.

¹ Sic, often [*sic*], signals that a quote appears in its original form indicating language or phrasing that precedes may be unexpected or unusual.

Relation over Morality

Throughout my conversations with participants, the power of relationships in their lives, studies, and careers became a focal point for stories. These relationships built on filial ideals of sisterhood and motherhood were connected to their perception of mentorship and leadership. An overarching theme of relation over morality was evident. I start from the assumption that morality is aligning one's actions with contextualized values and principles (Gert & Gert, 2017). Specifically, relationships as the center of how they navigated morality became a central pillar in the way the women conceptualized mentorship.

Madina, a current junior faculty member and a mother of several young children, focused on her own actions, relationships, and the strength offered by others. She saw that mentorship “comes from empathy and the fact that you consider others and their needs.” Although empathy is a disputed concept in care ethics which I develop further in chapter five. Madina's succinct recognition of the fundamental role of responsiveness and concern for others' perspectives anchored her view of mentoring as relational and caring. This relational and caring vision of mentorship was highlighted in all participant stories.

Madina felt there was a strong connection between mentorship and leadership indicating “as a leader you must have mentorship skills” and “should be considerate of others”. This was a clear emphasis of “consider others” quoted in the preceding paragraph. Here she made a relational connection from caring and consideration within the context of mentorship to caring and consideration within leadership. Her experience of mentoring relationships was at the center of her navigation of morality. Consideration as a general concept seemed to provide nuance to the stated foundation of empathy by opening the potential to understand the other. She gave the example of a former informal mentor who “would extend her help beyond the class as well and not just in academia but you know in life decisions”. Her former mentors were caring holistically

and demonstrably practicing emotional morality through extending mentorship past academic environments. Madina felt that one woman in particular was a meaningful mentor and “a very strong pillar”. The use of the word “pillar” was recognition of the foundational impact of the mentoring relationship on her academic life and larger life decisions. Each of Madina’s stories voiced a clear relational strength and imbued meaning to her experience as a woman faculty member in Saudi Arabia. Her mentoring relationships as empathetic, considerate, and caring were a moral compass constructing a spontaneous foundation for care ethics. An ethic of care was a connecting thread amongst all the major findings’ themes.

Sarah, a senior faculty member who is not married and with very few family responsibilities, discussed a sense of exchange in mentoring emotionally between women. Emotional mentoring refers to intense exchange and discussion of feelings and emotions toward work-life situations (Montgomery, 2017). She spoke to a bond in co-mentoring that is potentially mutually beneficial. She indicated a preference for peer-to-peer mentoring but also recognized that learning from others regardless of age and seniority differences must be embraced. She referred specifically to her experience with women faculty members at Effat University:

So what else I must say based mostly actually on emotional support you know that comes from certain people. You really embrace it. I thrive on one on one mentorship with people with whom I am all equal. Yeah I had a few peers and superiors..., some people who are way below me.¹

This is connected to how she viewed her faculty position and support network as relationship based and emotionally substantive. She felt she was “supposed to be a mentor to all

¹ All participant voices are presented exactly as they spoke. I have chosen to honour their unique voices and have not used *sic* or other formulative corrections to language.

kinds of people like faculty chairs, department chairs, coordinators and students”. She felt as if she was duty bound within these relationships to provide mentorship despite indicating that, “I’ve never really seen myself as a mentor.” The relationship of mentoring permitted her to learn from others. She said that, “What is mentorship point to me is actually a relationship between two people or a group of people who would like to learn from each other basically”. For her mentorship is built on “good communication” and “emotional support”, again emphasizing the relational and the emotional in mentoring.

As a senior faculty member, Sarah wielded great administrative power in her faculty. She spoke to her experience with and duty toward mentorship using ideas of exchange, learning, and ideals of emotional support. The power dynamic with junior colleagues, many of whom reported directly to her was problematic from a relational perspective. She did not consider whether those under her felt the same connection based on the unequal power dynamic. Although she indicated a sense of duty to mentor, she never presented an awareness of her place of power which in turn obliged her junior colleague to participate in these exchanges and emotional support. Sarah presented an almost maternal relationship driving her moral obligation toward mentorship without questioning the structure or seeing the structure where these relationships functioned. Suggestions from other junior and senior faculty participants intimated that senior faculty and administrators ignored their emotional and extended needs. For example, women who were both faculty members and mothers with family obligations were not perceived as a priority and according to several participants’ experiences were ignored, diminished, or chastised.

Rahima was also a senior faculty member and not married with few family responsibilities. She saw mentorship as a role mandated in her job profile and the job profile of her peers and other institutional leaders, connecting the relationship strongly to teaching. Although she indicated she did not “have a lot of academic support” in her current role, Rahima

stated that, “teaching itself, I can say is a form of leadership, and therefore a mentor also is a form of leadership”. She elevated her obligations beyond her perception of being solely mandated by her job profile to duties of spreading knowledge and leading. Despite stating that she had insufficient academic support, she did not question the structure where these relationships functioned mirroring Sarah’s and other participants’ inability to see causation in their realities.

She discussed her mentoring relationships in terms of friendship and sisterhood, making a clear distinction between the roles men and women have had in her experience. She related this to being mentored in her graduate studies:

I've had experience with both [women and men as mentors]. I've had a male supervisor and the female supervisor and I think my experience with the female supervisor was it sort of, yeah, we almost became friends. Yeah, I knew that there is an element of friendship involved. In addition to the academic mentoring when it was a male supervisor it was only academic mentoring.

This experience echoed Sarah’s view of woman-to-woman mentorship extending beyond the scholarship. Rahima has categorized her experiences based on gender. Her perception is impactful within the gendered confines of the larger Saudi society. More specifically she has constructed gendered perceptions in the university setting which functioned to develop ideals of mentoring as sisterhood and close female friendship. These relational ideals of sisterhood and female friendship were indicative of how she navigated morality in her academic relationships and mentoring. Rahima’s stories continued to highlight the long lasting impact of the mentoring relationships from her graduate studies. The impact and long lasting relationships developed with supervisors over the course of graduate studies, including both references to a participants’ Master’s and Doctorate studies, were a very common sub-theme all participants touched on.

Rahima's concept of the mentoring relationship was one of "passing experience" and "helping somebody step from one state to another". The relational aspects of mentoring were driven by "sharing experience". Rahima emphasized throughout her stories the central importance of building a relationship through the lens of each person's past experiences. In essence, each of her prior relationships, either from graduate studies or ideals of sisterhood and friendship informed her current relationships. These gendered relational ideals pushed her choices and participation giving the foundation to her moral compass within each mentoring relationship.

Wajihah is a junior faculty member and not married with few family responsibilities. She presented a more pragmatic take on mentorship and the relationships built through mentoring. She indicated that, "The ultimate goal of this point is to improve the performance of the academic institution to which you belong." She specified that mentorship was not necessarily self-serving and self-promotional but rather mentorship primarily served the institution. She felt that mentorship was inherently unbalanced as the relationship is built on a junior-senior dynamic. She said, "Basically it's an academic human relationship between a senior and junior." Despite the unique purpose for mentorship she presented, mentorship was relational and drove moral choices. There was more recognition of the power imbalance from junior faculty who do not wield the power and privilege of their senior academic faculty peers.

She did alter her pragmatism in her recollection of prior experience with mentorship saying, "I'm still in touch with my professors who were my supervisors in my Master's and in my PhD." Specifically, Wajihah mentioned her graduate school mentoring experience with her supervisors on three separate occasions during her conversation. Again, this highlighted the importance of each participants' graduate studies supervisor mentorship experience. Yet, there is an inconsistency of the power dynamics that she is troubled by when two academics provide

mentorship, but sees less dissonance between the mentorship she received from her supervisors as a recipient. This dissonance may be related to gendered roles of deferring to power structures within graduate studies compared to the difficulties in developing peer-to-peer mentoring relationships. Academic mentoring relationships typically require power dynamics that fluctuate and may not follow culturally standardized deference to power structures.

Kate is a senior faculty member, who is neither an Arab nor a Muslim. She is married with adult children. She presented her seniority in a different light than other participants with recognition of her position and potential to positively influence her peers and students:

In terms of my professional life, and well in students' minds, let's think. Okay for students, I think it's kind of being a role, a role model to them and sort of actively directly teaching them but hopefully demonstrating through good behavior. So being a role model to them and to my colleagues. I suppose that's also in a way mentoring through my seniority sort of being like a big sister to people so that they can come to me for advice and discuss things and to learn the ropes and find out about Effat University.

Kate broached the relationship of sisterhood using the term "big sister", echoing Rahima's stories. Both Kate and Rahima presented friendship between women as analogous to sisterhood as a relationship to view mentoring and be a mentor. Kate not only characterized mentorship as the potential to act as a role model, but also likened it to sisterhood through the use of the term "big sister". Through a framework of sisterly relationships, participants determined appropriate, ethical, and caring actions. This was more striking from Kate, a non-Muslim and non-Arab, where sisterhood is not necessarily imbued with intense cultural and religious ideals and doctrine. Often Arab and Muslim women will refer to one another as "sister" as a generalized ideal

between women or use the term sister as an honorific. Sisterhood is a highly desirable connection that has religious and cultural connotations utilized in everyday interactions between women.

In sum, all participants mentioned relationships as the central focus in their conceptualization of mentorship. Their stories of positive mentoring relationships all included or touched on aspects of each participant's graduate supervisor relationship. A common theme of friendship and sisterhood was a relational role that constructed positive and negative nuances to perceptions of mentoring and perceptions of themselves as mentors. The relational stories of the participants developed connections to ideas and ideals of being considerate, having empathy, caring, embracing emotional connections, sharing, and exchange. The next theme will move from participants' past experience and general perceptions of mentorship into patterns of bounded agency.

Cultural, Religious, and Gender Bounded Agency

The participants relating their stories and experiences all live and work in a very religious and gender focused society. Saudi Arabia is a theocracy. The cultural and social norms prevalent in Saudi Arabia powerfully created questions around influences determining behavior and perception of choices. The participants contextualized their past experiences and future possibilities in their present situation as bounded agency. Bounded agency, for the purposes of this study, indicates an individual's view of possibility of choices that are limited in the context, confines of cultural, religious, and government status quo, often imperceptibly (Evans, 2007). Individual participants only took action and saw within their bounded agency. A larger theme of bounded agency was evidenced in participants' stories and frustrations. Their bounded agency was shaded with concerns stemming from and often overlapping with cultural, religious, and gender concerns.

Qadira is a senior faculty member and is married with family responsibilities. She spoke of the administrators and leaders, all women, at Effat University with some derision. The focus of one of her stories was presenting empowerment as the reason women feel obliged to prove themselves while simultaneously getting ahead at the expense of other women:

I realize that those women when they leave with this idea with this mentality [empowerment, feminism] so they try to prove themselves. They try to prove to everybody around them that they are equal to men and they can do more than what men can do. Those women unfortunately they maybe create more problems to women than help them like in the usual normal situation. University is her life. She wants to prove that she can do better and she's the best and she can do everything like any man. She neglected so many important issues that affect women [sick leave due to kids, family, breast feeding, etc.]. They [women leaders] make women's lives miserable.

From her perspective, the leaders at Effat University do not follow the “normal” trajectory of women, meaning these leaders were not married, and if they were married did not have children, or they came from privileged families with available child care. She felt that if more leaders were men, it would be better because men would not pretend to know what it is like to have the responsibilities of women and mothers. She viewed having women in leadership positions as only empowering certain women sometimes, once you count who is married and who has children. Qadira’s choice of the words “usual normal situation” postulate a situation where men were in charge. She implied that women in leadership and power was not a societal or religious norm. Whether she was placing this norm within the larger Saudi and Arab landscape of societies, or larger Muslim religious edicts or culture was unclear. As a women academic, there was a sense of dissonance in her feelings toward women in power. She both appeared to want power and to

contribute to academic discourse as a full participant while also demonstrating disdain toward women authority figures.

Qadira's stories showed a specific experience along with her view of gender as a limiting factor to the choices she saw possible for women faculty members. Her analysis of the situation was limited to the hierarchy of the university administration and not larger systemic inequalities present in Saudi society. Her choices and the choices of all the other faculty were strictly located within the university walls. This constriction of agency neglects larger social and religious norms that would be impossible as a non-Saudi to alter in any meaningful way. Her complaints although cutting and real, also revealed complicity in the exact problem she felt she faced, this became clear when she said, "If you tell me to choose between men and women I would take men." She would not choose women if there were men available for the task or situation and would therefore never choose herself.

Qadira spoke to her experience as a graduate student. After her first child, she explained how "supportive and helpful" her male PhD graduate supervisor was. She briefly mentioned she also was able to have "hired help" – maids, daycare workers, and nannies – who were all women. She did not recognize this as a contribution from women and only saw the assistance and support provided by her graduate supervisor. This is typical of more educated women in developing countries, and occasionally in developed countries, who use a system of underprivileged, under-educated or uneducated women for their own gain and advancement (Hesse-Biber & Yaiser, 2004).

Madina is a junior faculty member and a mother of several young children. She presented a disembodied view of empowerment in her statement about women mentoring as, "empowering women to stand up for themselves and fight for their rights." She did not identify with the statement and proclaim these rights as *hers*, she used "their rights" instead. Her view of self and

agency limited her seeing the potential collaboration and power of the choices she made to be in Saudi Arabia and to work in a women's university. As with Qadira not choosing women and in essence not choosing herself, Madina similarly excluded herself from rights and power. Her perceived choices and agency were bound. This was clearer when she stated later in the conversation, "I am not sure if I was a man it would be any different." Madina seemed almost defeatist in her self-presentation and ignored any possible implications of gender. She carried on stressing the uniqueness of Effat as a women's university. Madina felt if she was in a mixed university then maybe things would be different, that changing her physical location within Saudi Arabia would be more impactful than any other changes. She admitted that there actually may be more potential for leadership positions in Effat compared to other public mixed-gender universities, but of course not being Saudi and not being an Arab sets her at a disadvantage, but still past men who were similarly not Saudi and not Arab. This is related to the Saudi government policies to hire and promote Saudi nationals over all other expatriates. Madina seemed to forget the fact that there were issues about which she was concerned and was mentored for during her graduate studies that were outside the scope of academics and in the space of "life decisions", referring to marriage, motherhood, and child care. She also blamed women faculty for creating their own barriers, in essence placing blame on herself for trying to teach well. She said, "Female faculty are teaching way too seriously so they don't have enough time for research." She did not connect being a woman, those "life decisions", and commitment to her students as part of larger gender issues. Although her graduate studies were completed outside of Saudi Arabia and prior to coming to Saudi Arabia, she now felt her choices restricted in the context of the limits imposed in Saudi Arabia.

Alia is a senior faculty member and married with adult children. She suggested gender should not be a consideration in mentoring when she said, "In my opinion, mentoring should not

be sexualized and there must not be any gender bias while considering this noble responsibility.” Her statement and subsequent conversation evoked a sense that gender ought not to be a point of discussion or concern. Her constructed reality placed religion at the center of decision making where gender should not be perceived. She presented religion and religious ideals as pure where issues of gender were imported priorities that had better developed within Islam. The reality of Saudi Arabia was different than the ideals of religion she presented and described. As other participants, she echoed Madina and Qadira’s disassociation from self. She presented “gender bias” as promoting women unfairly without recognizing she was part of the group of women as well as ignoring the impacts of government and cultural gender policies in Saudi Arabia.

Shefaa is a junior faculty member and is not married. She was new to administrative duties and finds the system at Effat University overwhelming. She found her choices limited through a desire to please authority figures, which manifested as guilt and self-blame:

For me, I think I'm still surviving every day that and afraid that if I leave the office they will say 'oh you're never in your office or something'. Feeling guilty that you are leaving your family for a long time. Sometimes I stay a lot longer hours. My brother has to pick me up. You have to beg. So all these...the balance between the career and the family is difficult. But I always say I choose this for myself. I don't know how to balance.

Shefaa selected strong words; “surviving”, “afraid”, “guilty”, and “beg”. She seemed to feel as if it was her burden alone and did not see the larger institutional responsibility and cultural pressures. The refrain, “I always say”, demonstrated this was a constant or regular thought process she embarked on when faced with “surviving every day”. She was essentially blaming herself for her decisions and her perceived inability “to balance”, and not holding those organizationally responsible accountable. Her bounded agency allowed her to see only choices

within the limits of what was socially acceptable and promoted in Saudi society. She internalized these limits and structures.

This notion of guilt and rationalization of inability to take action was highlighted again in her stories when she said, “But I feel like whenever I want to ask, you know someone's help or something, so, I say, ‘Well you're a leader you shouldn't be, you know complaining or something.’” She has equated asking for help as a complaint and a negative social behavior. She was describing constructed norms and taboos as an integral part of her bounded agency driving her daily decisions and interactions. Shefaa did not describe her administrators with derision or bitterness, but instead laid the blame squarely on herself. This was an example of broad and intersecting culturally bounded agency, where the culture could be seen as cultural norms associated with authority figures, gender roles following religious submissiveness to authority, and work-place culture.

She described administrative positions as very unpredictable in terms of timing where new tasks could be assigned any time, weekend or evening regardless of your family commitments. Shefaa felt that taking up an administrative position so early in her career was difficult when she said, “I took other responsibilities. So it's my main job and I ignored, you know the research activities and even research activities or you know being involved in conferences or you know even involved with the rest of the scholars in the world.” She worked many hours that were not contracted and answered emails and executed plans outside of working hours as well. From her perspective these hours spent responding to emails or calling sponsors from her own phone were considered a requisite part of being an academic faculty member and administrator.

Rahima is a senior faculty member and not married. She echoed Shefaa's description and sense of work-life imbalance, she said, “It's continuous work and juggling between different roles

and different responsibilities and it's always has been.” She described a strong sense of limited choices:

Now it feels like it's so endless race there is always this race to finish to catch up with all these unfinished chores whether they are in research or teaching or community service. It should be balanced. You should have time for work and time for family and social life. But for some reason trying to juggle all these things at the same time it tends to take from the time you have for your family and for your social life.

As with Shefaa’s sense of self-blame and guilt, Rahima spoke to a different facet in her difficulties in “trying to juggle” and “catch up”. Her words showed she felt solely responsible for her inability to better manage her workload and social responsibilities. Her conversation highlighted her concerns with gendered roles and competing demands. However, the sub-text of the gendering and work-life requirements were her feelings of limitations through bounded agency.

In her quote above, she said, "but for some reason". This was not a sarcastic statement, nor a tongue in cheek attitude pointing toward some obvious entity. Rahima was searching herself honestly in a self-blaming tone for a reason as to her perceived ineptitude in balancing her work life and social life. As with Shefaa and Madina, she did not blame any person or construct outside herself. Both Rahima and Shefaa sensed and spoke of a lack of balance which seemed internalized as if they were the problem that could just be solved by doing more and being there for everything and everyone all the time.

Rahima, Shefaa, and Madina never questioned the larger system in a direct way. They ignored or demonstrated complicity in the system. There were general complaints of the greater administration and issues related to the governance model in their stories and conversations, but

nothing was directed at larger concerns that actually govern the governance and model, and authority of the university. This included no mention of the government through religious claims directly controlling women's lives. Male guardianship rules applied to all these women, except those who have left Effat and Saudi Arabia in addition to not being Muslim or Saudi in the first place. Participants were all bound by the regulations they lived in, the gender they presented, and the larger culture and religion.

Some of the more senior participants indirectly mentioned these inequalities, as well as those that were outside, having left Effat University speaking of their experience in the past. For those participants inside physically, culturally and religiously it seemed as though they did not see the forest for the trees.

Two outsider participants were Kate and Kendra. Kate is a senior faculty member who is neither Muslim nor Arab, but was still fully invested in her work at Effat University at the time of the interviews. Kendra is a junior faculty member, who is neither Muslim nor Arab, but had left Effat University and Saudi Arabia at the time of her interview.

Kate presented a longer view of living in Saudi Arabia and the choices she faced in her position. She said referring to be a woman in academia that:

To be honest I think it changes and has changed over time. And I'm slightly older than a lot of people so I'm very well aware of recent history, whether you're talking the West, and certainly Saudi Arabia, that women, women don't do that and women can't do this and that was it. There's that perception put upon people, on all the women, not just through men but women themselves.

She drew a focus to women acting to limit other women and themselves, although she did not identify with those women by referring to "themselves" and not *ourselves*. She emphasized her otherness to women in general stating, "I don't think of myself particularly as a woman I think of

myself as a human being.” She recognized the changes to available choices of what women can and cannot do. She recognized that women everywhere, even the West had and continue to have limitations put on them. In this sense, Kate challenged the bounded agency and limitations other participants found imperceptible.

Kate extended her story of choices and women’s choices to include her specific experience in Saudi Arabia as a non-Muslim, “So and it's, it's kind of slightly difficult for me in Saudi Arabia because a lot of this stuff is wrapped up in religiosity.” She saw everything around her have some reference to religion, this aspect was not discussed by the Muslim participants. She continued examining the pressures women faced to follow religion and follow Islam, “So I think the thing about it is that as a non-Muslim it's very difficult for me or I feel inhibited, let's say to go and tell the girls, ‘Look you don't have to do Islam.’”

Kate worked within a group of strong women, day in and day out. All the tables she sat at were almost exclusively women. She was never the only woman in the room or had to work harder because of gender. She had some exclusivity to administrative functions as a result of her gender. She was also non-Arab and not Saudi, not Muslim, and older which meant she was exempt from much of the “religiosity” and “doing Islam”. She would also have been exempt from much of the cultural and societal guilt and pressure to conform. Her agency was less bound and she stated that in her stories. There was a particular positioning of Kate’s identity of what she was in opposition to Muslim women in the university and the state. The notion of “Othering” is presented, placed in opposition or contrast to those from the religious grouping.

While in the very reality of her day to day life in a highly segregated women-only administration, she was actually “doing Islam”. Her clothing, time, and day to day life was regulated and her decisions and agency were bound by her surroundings. She seemed to have more choice in being there, and faced fewer restrictions as a foreigner, non-Muslim, she however

still faced many obligations and boundedness. As any woman in Saudi Arabia she faced strictures on physical movement, being careful what she said to whom and when, etc. These came across as only vague complaints. She became used to binding. Even as she continued her life and career in Saudi Arabia as neither Muslim nor an Arab, she was still bound by the rules around her and only called out the sense that students were feeling obliged to “do Islam”.

Kendra is an outsider in the sense that she was no longer in Saudi Arabia at the time of the interview and that she is not a Muslim or Arab. She reflected on the strange feeling of entering a room after leaving Saudi Arabia that was entirely men and not entirely women, this distinction was "palpable after my experience in all women rooms or at least women-led areas at Effat.” While she was in Saudi she followed cultural and gender norms. Certain aspects of the boundedness she experienced in Saudi Arabia was eliminated once she was no longer in that setting. She stated that while she was actually at Effat University her choices within the walls as a woman did not seem limited, that being surrounded by men again made "gender more salient". Again, while she was in Saudi her bound agency diminished her perception of choices and actions surrounding gender. Kate recalled certain aspects of difficult situations that were restrictive within the university that were unrelated to gender:

Like I don't know, there's just so many dynamics like and, you have to you have to tread cautiously. You know there's like politics you know you can't just teach whatever you want.

She stated the limitation she felt she had on her freedom of expression and general “politics”. Kendra never mentioned religion, culture, or gender as part of the pressures constructing the norms and taboos for which she needed to “tread cautiously” around.

In closing, many of the participants voiced strongly worded stories describing self-blame, guilt and disconnect from themselves. A general sense of a lack of balance in their lives was a

common experience between the participants. There were varying degrees and bounded agency depending on the status, experience and physical locality of participants. They all discussed institutional and organizational pressures and often a desire to please authority figures indirectly. Culture, religion, and gender all intersected to varying degrees, with differing situational impacts on each participant's bounded agency. The final theme will move from participant's bounded agency informing their perception of mentorship and the impact on mentorship engagement with a lens to the context of leadership.

Situational Perception Affecting Engagement

Each participant presented a unique experience related to mentorship, the qualities of a mentor, and the relation to leadership. These perceptions of mentorship and leadership were bound by each participant's position and view of culture, religion, and gender. Their situational perception was informed by their experience of relation over morality and placed within their bound agency. This complex array of competing priorities affected participant perception of mentorship and subsequent engagement with mentorship. The perceptions of mentorship shared by participants were related to: growth, knowledge transfer, guidance, and responsibility. Perceptions affecting engagement were interconnected to education as respectability.

Several participants mentioned growth as the main purpose of mentorship. Kate, a senior faculty member and married said, "I think the purpose of mentorship is to facilitate the growth of your companions in life, let's say, and so I understand her." This was echoed by Kendra, a junior faculty member and not married, who emphasized growth three times in her conversation:

"I think the purpose of [mentorship] is *growth* right"

"So you know whether it's personal *growth* because you could have a spiritual mentor"

"I think the goal of mentorship is *growth*"

She also used vocabulary associated with growth, such as, “development as a person”. Rahima, a junior faculty member and unmarried, perceived mentorship as a necessary component of growth both in personality and academically. She referred to the necessity of mentorship when she said, “I don't know how else they can grow in terms of personality in addition to just academically”. There was a perception that growth is an integral part of mentoring activities.

Another frequently mentioned perception of mentoring were ideas of knowledge transfer. Qadira, a senior faculty member and married, said very clearly that mentorship is “transferring skills to somebody”. Shefaa, a junior faculty member and not married, repeated ideas of knowledge transfer when she said, “the purpose of a mentor is that you want to transfer the knowledge and skills”. She repeated this idea again later in her conversation about the purpose of mentorship in saying, “These knowledge and skills need to be passed on to other generations.” Another participant, Rahima, a senior faculty member and unmarried, described the purpose of mentorship as “passing our experience”.

A further repeated perception of mentorship was a strong connection to guidance and guiding. Alia, a senior faculty member and married, said mentorship to her was “Guidance provided by an experienced person to a less experienced one.” Kendra, a junior faculty member and unmarried, connected mentorship to guiding with caring and safety. She perceived mentorship “in terms of learning that you need like a helper or like a caring individual to guide you along”. Madina, a junior faculty member and married, connected mentorship to “being a guide voluntarily”. Guidance was reiterated by Rahima, a senior faculty member and not married. She mentioned guidance throughout her stories:

“There is a certain sense of *guiding* walking them through steps, taking their hand”
“when women *guide* one another and it makes sense”

“We have all these values and so one so you are actually *guiding* students you're helping them become better women”

“walk them through certain ideas, provide help”

Along with stories of graduate studies mentors, guidance was brought up directly or indirectly by most participants.

The notion of knowledge transfer, either as guidance or development, positions mentorship in a particular way – one of passive recipient, and a hierarchical relationship of the knower to the uneducated. The participants did not present a reciprocal relationship of mutual benefit, but a linear relationship of mentoring. Coupled with the growth metaphor, there was demonstrated complicity in the hierarchical arrangement of their notions of mentorship.

An additional repeated perception amongst participants were concepts surrounding responsibility. Either participants felt responsible or assigned responsibility to ideals of mentorship and leaders mentoring. Alia, a senior faculty member and married, stated that mentoring is a “noble responsibility”. While Rahima, a senior faculty member and unmarried, placed mentorship among the many competing and “different roles and different responsibilities” that are part of what she saw as “continuous work”. Shefaa, a junior faculty member and not married, spoke about responsibility multiple times in her stories and conversations. She placed an importance of the mentor knowing “the responsibility of the position and tries to show and help”. Shefaa also highlights responsibility while connecting leadership to mentorship when she stated, “These leaders has a responsibility, like I will teach this person. I will support them to reach their full potential. So, yes to me a leader is a mentor.” She further mentioned responsibility in the context of teaching and mentoring students, she said, “You feel the responsibility and the honor that they ask you for recommendations.”

Perceptions that affected participants' engagement with mentorship were variously discussed as limitations they faced as perceived within themselves or larger entities beyond their control under the previous section entitled "Cultural, Religious, and Gender Bounded Agency". However the idea of education as respectability, which is linked closely to gender, did not follow a similar pattern of pressures, conformity, and blame. Kendra, a junior faculty member, not married, discussed education and respect:

Well I feel like that in education it's one of the few places that a woman could be respected in Saudi Arabia. You know like, there's not a lot of other positions that a woman can be respected. Yes, you know so, that's really that's the only sphere of respect.

She felt that education was a precondition for respect in society. Through her reference specifically to Saudi Arabia, she situated the preconditions for perception of engagement. She referred to mentoring in academia as secondary to the respect acquired through education. She explained the excitement of having worked in a changing and evolving environment. She placed education alongside mentorship and leadership as avenues of respectability for women in Saudi Arabia, where there were few visible avenues. Kendra was very excited remembering this sense of potentiality driving perceptions of mentorship and leadership.

Qadira, a senior faculty member and married, spoke about the roles available to women in Saudi Arabia where education and research were of primary importance. She viewed engaging in mentorship and academia as if "it's like it's the need of this is like our need of water". She felt that engaging in academia was fundamental to her being and survival. She indicated that women's activity in education was essential. She spoke to the possible respect for women active in research and supporting women in research. She felt that "So it's a necessity. It's something if we don't do it, so it will be a disaster." This imperative to participate and "take some

consideration for women” was affecting her perception of engaging with mentorship and leadership activities.

Shefaa, a junior faculty member and not married, is Saudi. However she was not always immediately recognized as such. Being a younger Saudi woman academic garnered great respect. It was motivational for other Saudi nationals to see a woman dressing culturally and religiously appropriately as well as participating in academia holding a full time job. She said her position was motivational to many women she had met, including students who had no women with post secondary education in their families. She related an experience with a student’s mother who felt that studying to be an academic was years of suffering:

Why the objection? She, the mother, said ‘Because I don't want her to suffer like I did. And I said [my dear one] suffering for five, four years, six max, seven, is nothing if you compare with or compared with the, like the lifetime that she will have people respect her.

She mentioned some concerns with presenting 'modestly' and wearing hijab in her position, how that could be difficult if she is requested to show her face etc. She had some issues with being judged as showing too much or covering too much. Respectability crossed quickly into socially constructed norms and taboos based on gender. However the issue of respect was a key part of situational perception affecting engagement with mentorship and mentorship as related to leadership.

To summarize, there were a multi-faceted range of concerns that affected participant perception of mentorship and subsequent engagement with mentorship. The situational perceptions of mentorship that participants emphasized and repeated were: growth, knowledge transfer, guidance, and responsibility. There was a generalized perception of mentorship as non-reciprocal, hierarchical, and linear. An intersection of educated women earning and maintain

social respectability was an impactful repeated perception affecting engagement that participants stressed with emotional conviction and pride.

Summary

This chapter presented the findings of this study. The findings reveal key themes that position the way in which women consider themselves as mentors, within the broader discourse of a faith-based society. Through highlighting the participants' words, their voices are heard and their reality is intimately represented. The main findings of this study fell into three interrelated themes: (a) relation over morality; (b) cultural, religious, and gender bounded agency; (c) situational perception affecting engagement.

The first theme, relation over morality, presented the finding that participants demonstrated relationships and relational experiences driving morality and perceived choices. This finding was derived from participants' stories of their academic relationships constructing their perception of mentorship. This finding is connected to developing faculty members' perceptions of mentorship.

The participants located themselves within the broader cultural, religious, and gendered bounded agency in how they made informed choices within a Saudi Arabian post secondary institution. There is an awareness in their limitation as women within the particular accepted norms and discourses of society, despite some of the protected gated features of being employed within a women's institution. Yet there is a cognitive dissonance in reconciling their own agency within the broader expected norms. As such, some participants indicted a sense of self-blame and guilt surrounding constructed norms and taboos. This finding was connected to participants' past experiences and builds a more comprehensive perception of mentorship as well as leading to issues of engagement with mentorship and leadership opportunities.

The final theme, situational perception affecting engagement, indicated that participant perception of mentorship and subsequent engagement with mentorship was interwoven with concepts of growth, knowledge transfer, guidance, responsibility, and respectability. This finding evolved from participants' consistent emphasis of specific ideas associated with perception affecting engagement. This finding constructed an intersection of past experiences of relation over morality with unperceived limitations presented as bounded agency. This finding provided nuance to both perceptions of mentorship and implications for engagement with mentorship opportunities.

These findings are interrelated in several ways. There are feminine qualities of care that govern participants' actions to support other women in their profession. This sense of kinship and sororal relation is in tension when issues of gender are addressed or raised. This tension is especially acute when dispositional qualities of gender are also political. Mentorship has been constructed to situate gender as uncomfortably apolitical. The faith-based Islamic context, situates the first two findings, relation over morality and bounded agency, within how participants perceived their ability to negotiate the larger institutional and societal constraints. These larger constraints develop and nuance the final finding of participant's situational perception affecting engagement.

In chapter five, I will present the analysis and discussion of the findings of this study.

Chapter Five Analysis and Discussion

Overview

In this chapter, I reflect on these findings and argue that mentorship, in this research setting, may constrain women's advancement and undermine more complex notions of engagement and empowerment through mentorship. I develop the concept of *survival mentorship* to capture the superficiality and constrained nature of mentorship the participants perceived using a post-structuralist feminist lens.

I began this study with assumptions about mentorship based on my own experiences and review of relevant literature. These assumptions included: mentorship can be empowering and engaging for women academics, women may present negative experiences and perceptions that indicate disempowerment and disengagement, women may also have conflicting experiences that neither indicate the promotion of women's leadership capacity nor the prevention of women attaining leadership roles. While I did find support for these assumptions in the data, I also discovered layers of contradiction and dissonance in women faculty members' perception and experiences of mentorship.

The conceptual framework of this study was drawn on adapted and adaptive liberal and Islamic feminisms actualized through an ethic of care. Through my analysis, I was not expecting participant narratives to refer explicitly and implicitly to: power flows rather than power structures, self-subjection, and simultaneous inhabitation of multiple contradictory positions. As part of the analysis and discussion, it is essential to bring in concepts of poststructuralist feminism. I will present the recurring participant perceptions of mentorship building toward broader discursive practices that remain uncontested within the research setting.

The conceptual framework constructed for this research involved components of liberal feminism and endeavored to follow a feminist research process. Several overarching feminist

research principles were established within the methodology section. A key liberal feminist posit as feminist research criteria set out to study the significance of the “the personal and the private” as well as positioning power as a central concern (Letherby, 2003, p. 73). Upon analysis of the findings based on participant experiences shared in this research, questions of how power flowed and shifted were more relevant than where power resided. Poststructural feminist concepts and ideas are required for analysis.

For my analysis, I moved toward a poststructural feminist approach “that pays attention to the issues of knowledge, power, difference, and discourse and how these intersect and entwine in the lives of women” (Mills, Durepos, & Wiebe, 2010, para. 1). Using a poststructuralist feminist lens gives insight to power flows that produce reality and become the principle of one’s own subjection (Allen, 2016). A poststructuralist feminist approach provides nuance to the women’s interrelationships with each other and self-surveillance demonstrated in the findings. This approach will also highlight participant self-constructs that are simultaneously multiple and contradictory (Mills, Durepos, & Wiebe, 2010). The findings required a more critical lens to uncover the discursive practices within their understandings and practices of mentorship.

In the next section, I will analyze key principles of mentorship as connected to an ethic of care and move toward a more implicit second layer. The analysis and discussion starts with cultural aspects of mentorship and structures that both build and undermine mentorship through silence and complicity. The analysis shifts to knowledge transfer, notions of care, and collective recognition of select mentorship functions. Subsequently, I draw upon the concept of “Tall Poppy Syndrome” where within the specific culture, high achievers tend to be discredited or disparaged. Tall poppy syndrome permits a connection and lens to issues of self-surveillance and mediocrity within mentorship. Finally, I close the analysis and discussion by proposing the concept of

survival mentorship as a synthesis of the explicit and implicit aspects of mentorship in the research setting.

Mentorship as Embedded Culture

Throughout my research I have drawn upon a definition of mentorship that is specific to the post secondary context and women faculty members. Mentorship in the post secondary context can be constructed as a synthesis of five components:

- achievement;
- reciprocity;
- the personal;
- mentors are defined by greater experience, influence, and accomplishments; and
- mentors take functions which can be summarized as emotional and psychological, career support, and role modeling (Arnesson & Albinsson, 2017)

As with mentorship best practices in post secondary contexts, women academics participating in successful mentorship require focus on general academic and professional challenges. In addition, successful mentorship involving women faculty requires careful consideration of the individual (Jones & Osborne-Lampkin, 2013).

Although there were no formal mentorship programs or practices at Effat University, informal mentorship practices as presented by the faculty member participants indicated that some of these post secondary mentorship principles were fulfilled. Several participants spoke of generalized informal mentoring relationships where they found emotional support in colleagues at Effat University. All participants referred to mentorship activities that provided assistance in navigating general academic and professional challenges. There was mentorship to provide assistance in submitting required administrative documentation and preparing required teaching documents and files.

Delving a little deeper, the findings revealed that three components of mentorship were superficially apparent: achievement, role modeling, and personal relationship. I describe these components as superficially successful because participants indeed referred either directly or indirectly to an institutional focus on achievement, role models, and personal relationships under the guise of informal mentoring. However, there was complexity in the definition and perspective of achievement, role model, and personal relationship. The assumption in developing a definition of mentorship from the literature accepts a synthesis of the components of mentorship described in an overall positive light (Jacobi, 1993; Yun et al., 2016). The contradictory social realities of women faculty members participating in mentorship activities is discussed extensively in literature (Chandler, 1996; Jackevicius et al., 2014; Marino & Yost, 1998; Straus et al., 2009). This space is incomplete for women academics in the Middle East and specifically Saudi Arabia.

This complexity appeared more acute within the Effat University setting where achievement in the academic context conflicted with larger societal and cultural norms associated with women. This proves problematic if mentorship is only viewed within the constraints of Effat University. According to participants' narratives, Effat University women academics were systematically encouraged from within their institution to be great teachers, researchers and leaders, but then are relegated to male guardianship rules and second class citizenship outside the physical and literal university confines.

Again, this is repeated with the concept of a role model. Several participants felt obliged to repeatedly choose between their families and work with perceived negative repercussions and real negative self-perception of ability to cope. Participants presented the ideal faculty role model as singularly committed to Effat University and all the encumbrances of being a teacher-researcher faculty member. These unachievable ideals were presented within Effat University, however participants indicated that when they attempted to follow and look up toward these role

models it revealed an impossible model for women faculty members. This impossible model, is more likely institutionalized discriminatory practices “because women have discontinuity in careers, familial responsibilities, and the like” (Blackmore, 2008, pp. 76-77).

Personal relationships were developed amongst women faculty members, but again in superficial and potentially negative ways that participants felt acted to limit growth and development. Participants consistently used maternal and sororal terms to describe their mentoring experiences at Effat University. Sisterhood and mothering are all very personal, but also indicative of a larger cultural and societal control complex. Being mothered and being a little sister are all suggestive of relationships of obedience, compliance, and conformity. These forms of limiting and stereotypical relationships do not permit professional growth and development in authentic and significant ways, research has indicated that peer-to-peer, and mutual forms of mentorship where information is shared and non-hierarchical benefit women (Yun, Baldi, & Sorcinelli, 2016).

Seeing that personal relationships were formed superficially, but were not always mutual, suggests that mentorship practices of reciprocal relationships were not fulfilled at Effat University. Senior faculty members discussed their sense of obligation to mentor other women faculty, but in turn seemed to expect junior faculty to be empty vessels requiring filling with knowledge. More junior faculty repeated this from their perspective as requiring guidance and proverbially filling as well and not discussing or disrupting the authority of more senior faculty members. Within Saudi culture, and by extension, Effat University, gender inequalities and deeply rooted power hierarchies are deeply ingrained, institutionalized, and structured (Varshney, 2019).

Further mentorship practices not fulfilled at Effat University included support toward career and professional development. Several participants detailed their struggle with completing

requirements to teach and research. All women faculty members were intensely aware of their requirements to research and publish in order to develop professionally. Many of the participants mentioned the university's mandate as a research institution, but felt overwhelmed and without support to move forward in their careers. Again the perception and reality of those in administrative positions meeting a male norm, especially in terms of required supports and lower family responsibilities (Blackmore, 2008; Blackmore & Sachs, 2007). The mentorship participants discussed was very much toward daily institutional requirements rather than their own development or even the larger institutional mandate. Development is typically a longer range activity with significant planning and partitioning of activities (Shapiro & Leigh, 2007). Within the setting, participants were focused on their day-to-day survival. This concept of survivalist mentorship will be added to and developed more thoroughly in the next sections.

Undermining Mentorship

In my research, mentorship was defined to include aspects of achievement and development connected to success along with emotional and psychological supports. The findings suggested that mentorship was being undermined in the context of Effat University. The invisible power functions and hierarchies that exist in participants' construction of reality impair productive forms of mentorship, regardless of their conscious perceptions and experience of mentorship. As described initially in this chapter, mentorship is superficial and limited. Upon synthesis with other findings, participants' conscious and unconscious perceptions of mentorship undermined authentic growth and sharing. The layer of complicity and power structures that each participant was a part of, seemingly without choice, prevented movement from complicity to implicature (Dace & McPhail, 1998). The very otherness that each participant seemed to present and project on her peers and administrators required a movement from a state of experienced

perception of separateness toward connectedness (Hekman, 1999; Irigaray, 1993). This is supported by the discussion of empathy as a form of projection that precluded care.

Much of what undermined participants' engagement with mentorship was most likely connected to issues and concerns left unsaid. The disconcerting reality of women's lives under Saudi law and culture was sufficient to create varying levels of fear and distrust which without focus were returned upon the participants themselves (Irigaray, 1993). This was evidenced through self-surveillance and willingness to be fingerprinted coming and going from the university grounds.

Effat University as a private sector, educational system is a gray space within the larger Saudi society and community. Empowerment and development was designed to lead astray and contributed to the larger institutional sustainability. Effat University as an institution required strictures on faculty and limited discursive practices to maintain the larger power structure that supports its very existence. The institution required conformity from faculty and presented opportunities in duplicitous fashion. Participants were not mentoring or engaging with mentorship to their full capacity and benefit. Mentorship was for survival.

Mentorship Structures

The mentorship structure at Effat University is informal and hierarchical. The informality of the mentorship structure at Effat University was highlighted through participants' stories of not feeling they had access to sufficient and meaningful mentoring, as well as their use of negative self-talk. This mentorship structure is typical in the Middle East, where the little research that does exist regarding women faculty mentorship in post secondary contexts is scarce, but indicates that any form of mentorship would be beneficial (Abalkhail & Allan, 2015; Abdalla, 2015).

Participants did not challenge the structures in their work place nor the larger culture, let alone embedded informal mentorship structures. Issues of complicity and silence are discussed in later sections. Although participants were aware that they functioned in a steep hierarchy, there was still a false sense of peer to peer equality. The situation for women faculty at Effat University calls out to Fassinger's Feminist Mentorship Model where power differences are inherent in an academic setting and mentorship models do not require equal and shared power and this is counterproductive (Benishek et al., 2004). Five of the six main facets of feminist mentoring are glaringly absent from Effat University in any meaningful way. Beyond the aspect of institutionally mandated collaboration on projects and networks, participants did not: openly discuss power differentials, emphasize relational through congruency and valuing, commit to diversity, integrate dichotomies, or integrate political awareness (Fassinger, 1997 as cited in Benishek et al., 2004).

A main theme in the findings was connected to the relational, but this was not based on congruency and valuing. The internal cultural ethos at Effat University placed relational within the context of kin, sororal, or maternal relationships. The cultural and religious weight of these categories of relationships drove the interactions instead of congruency and valuing. Again this reflects the theme of relational over morality driving decisions and mentorship at Effat University. Effat University, as presented through the experiences of the participants was a cultural site for women. The historic position of Effat University on the former physical location of the first girls' school in Saudi Arabia as well as a mandate to serve women highlights Effat University as a cultural site for women, both within the minds of women faculty members and administration and the larger community.

The sororal and maternal relations drove and initiated mentorship. Participants' sense of obligation as a sister, mother, or daughter had strong religious undertones that did not allow room

for the diversity of women's experiences in a post secondary context. Some participants indicated that their roles and the roles of their peers as biological mothers were not considered and incorporated into the workplace for guidance and support. Working mothers and many women face consuming familial requirements, in addition to extended informal work (Blackmore, 2008). This exacerbates women's sense of unmet research goals and work requirements while also setting up unsaid preferences for women with fewer family obligations to fill leadership roles (Blackmore & Sachs, 2007). The contradiction of the university president and senior administrators presenting and being presented as mothers, whilst erasing the needs of women faculty members who are biological mothers with young children is problematic if mentoring is to actually provide individual support and access to professional development and growth. Several participants indicated that their mentoring and development needs were not supported, but at the same time contributed to the sororal and maternal relational drivers through consistently referring to and building perceived mentoring relationships within these specific structures and guises.

This research was constructed on the assumption that mentorship can build women's success and contribute to women establishing leadership capacity (Brown, 2005). The leadership culture at Effat University built up and broke down women's capacity in a variety of ways described through the participants' stories. More generally, leadership at the university was a matriarchy upholding the values and principles of male leadership and domination through the hierarchical relational aspects of mothering. The leadership framework at Effat University acts to uphold and promote "hegemonic heterosexual masculinity" (Blackmore, 1999, p. 10). Women in leadership positions were privileging masculinity through the auspices of women in leadership with pretenses of empowering women. This adherence to cultural norms and expectations along with advancing patriarchal power is in opposition to sustainable leadership practices (Perrakis &

Martinez, 2012). A shift in focus “from women to the social relations of gender, and how different masculinities and femininities are constructed in relation to each other in specific contexts” provides a poststructuralist feminist lens to frame the apparent pretense and contradiction participants stated they experienced (Blackmore, 2008, p. 81).

Participants’ perception of and engagement with mentorship operated within confines of a larger political and religious landscape. As discussed previously, Saudi Arabia is a religious state presenting a single version of Islam, history, and Arab-centric culture. Saudi Arabia presents complex religious and political realities. There were no participants who directly confronted any of these power structures. The most political comments were aimed at Deans and Chairs, who were seen as academically mismatched to their assigned faculty or department.

Mentorship could provide larger advantages, but the contextual situations are complex. Mentorship could build women and their capacity within society. Participants indicated that education was one of the few reputable avenues for women to gain respect and status in society; but for that very reason women’s education is seen as problematic and challenging to gender, cultural and religious norms. I argue that the participants have internalized those cultural constructs in that the participants have developed a set of capacities to allow them to function within society and those capacities were developed because of societal constructs (Hekman, 1999; Searle, 1995). The participants are seemingly unaware of their complicity in both the intuitional machinations and larger societal and political scheme.

Silence

Interviewing participants required listening to their words, emotions, pauses, and silences. In addition, participants’ avoidance, glossing over or absence of specific topics has meaning (Hesse-Biber, 2007). Silence has meaning and silence can be constructive and destructive (Wettstein, 2012). Silence is a powerful mechanism in data. Silence might be especially pertinent

when positioned in the setting of Saudi Arabia, where participants were part of their own and others' oppression while seemingly unable to see their reality (Hekman, 1999; Searle, 1995). Throughout the conversations, religion, culture, and concerns about gender were rarely mentioned and never challenged. Several participants used self-blame to evoke their frustration with the system they never saw nor provided concrete descriptions. They searched themselves honestly for reasons as to their perceived ineptitude in balancing work life and social life. Going over my reflective journals for those interviews, I was moved by their authenticity, but also interested that certain conversations and topics were left silent.

The silence might suggest a sense of inaction and unawareness. They seemed to be silent on issues that had direct impacts on their lives and the lives of the women around them. Their seeming inaction, while arguably also connected to unawareness, cannot be explained entirely away through the space of bounded agency. This might mean a participation in their own subjugation and domination of other women. This is best constructed through the lens of post structuralist feminism, where individuals are subjects of their own subjection both on and against themselves (Allen, 2016). This complex presentation of participants being both oppressed and privileged depending on the relationship is captured by kyriarchical interpretations. A kyriarchy is generally described as “a complex pyramidal system of intersecting multiplicative social structures of superordination and subordination... built on elite male property rights as well as on the exploitation, dependency, inferiority, and obedience of wo/men.” (Schüssler Fiorenza, 2001, *Dualistic Categories of Analysis, Kyriarchy*). In democracies, these structures of oppression are in tension and contested, within monarchical religious systems such as Saudi Arabia, the kyriarchy is institutionalized and normalized (Schüssler Fiorenza, 2001).

The silence within the interviews on issues of culture, religion, and gender can be explained by the normalization of kyriarchical structures. Participants existed within a complex

patriarchy and normalized their own subordination and exploitation, as well as, the subordination and exploitation of others. However, the participants were all educated outside of Saudi Arabia at some point and have experienced the tensions running against these power structures. The participants spoke of inconsistencies and unfair practices within the setting based on their mention of teaching loads, restrictive research practices, lack of intellectual freedom, or reliance on others for transportation. This suggested a certain silent inaction as to determining a cause or solution. A concept more frequently associated with corporate practices is silent complicity. This concept relies “on the existence—and subsequent violation—of *positive* moral obligations, rather than the merely negative duty to do no harm” (Wettstein, 2012, p. 38). Avoiding silent complicity obliges individuals to speak out with a view to help to protect others. Silent complicity is distinct from other forms of complicity (Wettstein, 2012). Participants seemed to experienced dissonance due to maintaining silence out of self-survival, but also maintaining silence at the expense of others.

An important facet of silence and complicity that I inferred through the initial reference to both Hekman (1999) and Searle (1995), is the complex invisibility to the participant. Individuals have a capacity to impose functions on a phenomena, and “equally remarkable is the fact that functions may be imposed quite unconsciously, and the functions once imposed are often – so to speak – invisible” (Searle, 1995, pp. 21-22). This invisibility can also have unintended functions supported by the individuals’ primary agentive function such as maintaining the system of power relationships in an institution or larger society (Searle, 1995). These multiple power relationships can also be supported not only through individuals, but the collective. This was evidenced by all participants referring to their self-perceptions of inadequacy and all participants abstaining, whether consciously or unconsciously, from condemning any other causative agent. There is an advantage to cooperative behavior through inclusive fitness that in turn improves survival

(Searle, 1995). This can also correspond to collective power retention and domination, where those who both hold power and are dominated such as the participants, collectively behaved oppressively and were collectively oppressed (Hekman, 1999; Schüssler Fiorenza, 2001).

Mentorship as Knowledge Transfer

Participant perceptions of mentorship repeatedly referred to concepts of knowledge transfer. Knowledge transfer was discussed in terms related to guidance, development, and passing one's experience on. These perceptions all represented one of a passive recipient with a hierarchical relationship the knower to the uneducated. Other positions of the conversations with recipients identified the non-mutual and non-reciprocal nature of mentorship practices at Effat University. Concepts of knowledge transfer replicate "traditional patriarchal system[s] of mentoring" (McIntyre & Lykes, 1998, p. 429). In turn, mentorship as knowledge transfer within the research context appeared to continue dominant groups reproducing their own power and subordinate groups reproducing their own oppression (Colley, 2002, p. 257).

With the notion of knowledge transfer, mentorship at Effat University was generally a linear relationship. The perception of these relationships were indirectly controlled and maintained by those in positions of power, maintaining the larger cultural status quo (Colley, 2002) and the complex intertwined power structures of the kyriarchy (Schüssler Fiorenza, 2001). When the concept of knowledge transfer is connected to metaphors of growth, there was demonstrated complicity in the hierarchical arrangement of their perceptions and notions of mentorship.

Placing knowledge transfer in for foreground of the participant described sororal or maternal relationships of mentoring further complicates female-to-female power relationships. The framework of maternal relationships frames "issues of power, competition, envy, betrayal and unresolved familial conflicts - issues that are seldom discussed openly among women

academics” (Colley, 2002, p. 429). These perception of linear, non-reciprocal mentorship informed participant engagement with mentorship opportunities.

Notion of Care

In my research I positioned an ethic of care within my conceptual framework as a way of knowing and understanding mentorship relationships. I draw on a definition from Noddings (2013), where an ethic of care is self-situated, is reliant on and involved in the situation, requires understanding of others, involves bound agency, involves emotion, requires situationally based responses, and is concerned with relations over morality (Noddings, 2013). Care was defined as a practice, not an attitude or virtue, where attention is assigned to world goings-on and emotional concern about the welfare of others (Ciulla, 2009; Gabriel, 2014).

While care was evident in the participants’ voices, there was a narrow parameter of how care would be embodied and lived among the participants. To describe an ethic of care at Effat University, meant looking more closely at whether the necessary definition of care had been met. I argue that participants lacked externalized care as conveyed through a general absence of attention to world goings-on as well as inadequate emotional concern for the well-being of others. It is the absence of conversations about women in the world and concern for others that supports this argument. Attributes of an ethic of care, without fundamental caring is immediately self-serving but not sustainable and in fact self-destructive in the long run. This survivalist tendency will be discussed in the closing of this chapter.

Part of the construction of mentorship for the research sought to build reciprocity and care within the mentorship practices. In the previous section, I discussed the lack of reciprocity in defining fulsome mentorship practices amplifying power differentials. The amplification of power differentials is only increased where there is little care in addition to limited reciprocity (Noddings, 2013).

Another aspect of an ethic of care is emotion. Emotion was also presented initially as part of successful mentorship practices. Although there were several participants who discussed the importance of an emotional connection with a mentor, it was not placed within the necessary component of building personal capacity or professional development. Often emotional support contextualized to mentorship was a recollection of an experience unrelated to Effat University and specific to the relationship with their graduate supervisors. Western post secondary contexts have a long history of construction as “an emotion-free zone”, reflecting Cartesian binary views (Leathwood & Hey, 2009). The apparent participant emotional detachment is exacerbated in Saudi contexts where the academy is presented in rational and traditional norms under the scrutiny of a male political and public power (Blackmore, 2008; Varshney, 2019). The research context is full of contradictions due to shifting policies within a deeply conservative society. These contradictions of tradition and modernity are juxtaposed to create a sense of volatility and complexity (Alsubaie & Jones, 2017). Emotional detachment within this context possibly belies a survival mechanism to overcome “particular forms of masculinity as the leadership norm-being rational, unemotional and objective” (Blackmore, 2008, p. 73).

Empathy was a specific emotion brought up by one participant. Empathy is contested in an ethic of care as to whether it is truly caring, and to what extent and what definition and limits are assigned. The argument over the place and definition of empathy in an ethic of care is overshadowed in this research context by the impact of power, societal and political influences on empathy. Empathy is inexorably intertwined with power (van Dijke, van Nistelrooij, Bos, & Duyndam, 2018). In societies where care responsibilities are not equally distributed, empathy can maintain structures of subordination and overburden the powerless (van Dijke, van Nistelrooij, Bos, & Duyndam, 2018). The participants exist in a society where domination and political power form a steep hierarchy in the university and outside it, empathy must be understood in

relation to power. Through the stereotypes of sisterhood and maternal relationships, there is a stereotype of self-denial through feminine care. These relationships reinforce the power hierarchy (Colley, 2002). There is a critical difference between a feminine ethic of care and a feminist ethic of care (Gilligan, 1995). This difference, through the lens of empathy, supports the participants' experience of a perception of feeling undermined in their mentorship experiences. Participants did not question Saudi cultural norms of stereotypical feminine care, leading to undermined opportunities for interpersonal connection and bonding (Gilligan, 1995). The reinforcement of power structures, through ideals of empathy and care, frustrate any positive potentiality of mentoring. There was no recognition that caring represented a form of control over those who do the caring and empathizing (Colley, 2002).

The findings support Noddings' (2013) view of empathy as form of projection that is biased and inaccurate. In my research, I have built an ethic of care on Noddings' (2013) term engrossment that resists projection and bias. The participant used the term empathy in conjunction with the term "others". This co-construction of terms seems to support Noddings' (2013) view of empathy, where there is no true grasp and respect of the "otherness of the other" (van Dijke, van Nistelrooij, Bos, & Duyndam, 2018, p. 1). Although empathy was only mentioned specifically by one participant, the use of these two terms together highlighted the pressure participants discussed in their personal lives to take on care activities that were also not equally divided in society. This also connected to other participants' unwillingness and inability to place any blame for their perceived work-life imbalance on administrative powers or any agent outside themselves. The separation of self and other is separate and distinct, indicating bounded agency and complicity in the very situation they complained about (Dace & McPhail, 1998).

Administrative powers at Effat University may be seen as using empathy to demonstrate or maintain power and control over others under the banner of caring through use of familial

figurative language. Participants described how university administration placed the university structure and Effat employees as a family with implied familial obligations and limitations (van Dijke, van Nistelrooij, Bos, & Duyndam, 2018). This extension of an analogy of a caring family only seemed to fuel participants' self-blame and substantiate the post-structural feminist lens of shifting intersections of power and apparent contradictions. Effat University does not exist in a vacuum, it is an institution representing, promoting, and propagating state cultural, religious, and gender ideals under false pretences of empowerment. Mentoring was stripped of emotion and constructed caring within the framework of mentoring as inherently self-limiting and disempowering at its essence.

Collective Recognition

There is also collective recognition of functions (Searle, 1995). As in Saudi Arabia and the general research setting, there was a collective recognition of certain limitations imposed on women. This was not consciously determined by individual women and participants, but recognized and constructed as such. There was a strength to this collective agreement, consciously or unconsciously, and forced acceptance in a communal society such as Saudi Arabia, where the position of the individual is placed lower than the community (Hekman, 1999). There was acceptance of the imposition of institutional functions not only due to collective agreement, but also due to another related theory or set of beliefs, such as religion (Searle, 1995). Individual social reality evolves from habituation and moves toward institutionalization into social structures (McLeod & Chaffee, 1972; Sotirovic & McLeod, 2001). There was Islamic imperative to follow pious religious leaders, where in Saudi Arabia leaders were propagandized and aggrandized as pious and beyond reprimand, selected by the will of god. The king of Saudi Arabia, for example, is not referred to by His Majesty, but rather the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques as a constant reminder of his leadership in religion and the requirements of those who

have pledged allegiance to his reign. The use of power through reification and deification produces standards for leaders in all aspects of Saudi culture and life (Irigaray, 1993). Saudi cultural power structures, whether internal to the research setting or external, paralleled pyramidal power structures in non-democratic religious communities as presented in a kyriarchy (Schüssler Fiorenza, 2001). Saudi Arabia and other institutions were “codified in an ‘official’ form” each institution sanctioned by another higher and more powerful up to the proverbial hand of god (Searle, 1995, p.52). Saudi Arabia are the official purveyors of Islam as the custodians of the Muslim holy land and holders of the "truth" and holders of the codified religion and codified texts the Quran (Searle, 1995). Where the political is religious and vice versa in Saudi Arabia, the monarchy’s continued transmission of communication act to “amplify, shape, and direct the impact of social structural location, cultural and subcultural forms” (Lee, Shah, & McLeod, 2013, p. 674). The impact was the collective deference to institutionally sanctioned power structures, such as Effat University, recalling that Effat was a queen and de facto religious leader through her marriage and royalty. The power structures and the power of individuals, or more appropriately within a post-structural feminist frame, power flows constructed “interlocking institutional realities” (Searle, 1995, p. 35).

In my findings, I present participant differences based primarily on whether or not each individual was married, had children, was Arab, was Muslim, or was a junior faculty member. Interestingly, all participants and myself as a researcher, were all Arabic speakers with varying degrees of literacy and fluency. This was key to socialization and learning community beliefs and attitudes through language, as even those participants who did not cultural or religiously identify with the larger community were subject to similar discursive practices (Buchanan, 2018). Discursive practices within the setting encoded specific societal values and socialized all participants to varying degrees toward Saudi cultural and religious values and norms. This was

perhaps best highlighted by the only non-Arab, non-Muslim participant, who had left Saudi Arabia. Kendra immersed herself in Saudi culture and language and normalized cultural and gender norms to the point that she had to re-integrate to Western societal norms of working formally with men again. In this setting, discursive practices remained uncontested due to the previously discussed kyriarchy and collective recognition of institutional functions.

Discursive practices and language construct social reality with the creation of the other (Irigaray, 1993; Searle, 1995). Arabic is a gendered language. In Arabic, standard references to power and god are not neutral, but masculine. The impact on women's perception of self and place in society as constructed through language is lesser (Irigaray, 1993). Irigaray (1993) used the French language as an exemplar to present gender imbalances and the discursive societal creation of women as lesser and the other. In Arabic language there are similarities, even to the point of gendering the sun and moon, as in French. While no participants mentioned language as a direct gender barrier, Shefaa mentioned there was no Arabic alternative for a woman departmental chair and in the public universities women were at most supervisors. This language created limitations on women and their place in society while also creating dissonance for women working in Effat University where it is possible to hold those titles and positions but with continued external and internal constraints.

The findings highlighted a theme of bound agency through the prism of culture, religion, and gender. The participants demonstrated this boundedness through language. Their reality was both constructed and constrained by language (Irigaray, 1993; Searle, 1995). The larger social obligation to serve, the country, their religion, their institution ensured power flows, hierarchies and active participation in their own creation as subjects (Mills, Durepos, & Wiebe, 2010). These constraints were further exemplified through uncontested discursive practices. Participants and the minutiae of their everyday practices, such as grading, teaching preparation, end of semester

paperwork, research activities gave insight into how each of the women affected others and themselves. These “micro-practices” and their specifics demonstrated the interrelationship of each participant with one another and potentially places of resistance and submission with the institution and the larger world around them, despite participants not necessarily actively recognizing this (Mills, Durepos, & Wiebe, 2010, para. 5). Examples of micro-practices of resistance were participants’ insistence on completing bureaucratic requirements toward teaching load reductions and travel opportunities, even if declined with subsequent commiserating with colleagues. However there seemed to be more examples of submission as opposed to resistance. Micro-practices that demonstrated submission included aspects of working more hours than contracted for, rearranging family responsibilities to meet workplace requirements, and deferring to existing power structure and hierarchy.

The examples of resistance and submission were constructed around a strongly wrought sense of obligation and self-surveillance. Participants consistently blamed themselves and felt obligated to fulfill multiple, competing priorities without and thought of reprieve. There was a strong sense of duty, as an academic, to produce research; as a family member, to fulfill familial responsibilities; as an employee, to be loyal and hardworking; and as woman; to essentially be and do everything else. These contradictions through these ideas of obligation and ideals were exemplified through language of self-surveillance. Participants stated that felt they should be able to do more and were intensely aware regarding the exact quantity of time they had spent on any number of workplace activities, or the specific details of teaching assignments historic and present. In each case, participants indicated indirectly that they wished the situation they were in was different. The desire for a different situation was not presented with solutions, but rather a fatalistic desire for change that was neither disruptive, nor really change. They tended to feel continued obligation and resigned that the situation was “just the way it is”. In sum, discursive

patterns were uncontested both through collective silence and collective recognition of institutional and larger power functions and hierarchies.

Tall Poppy Syndrome

The issue of self-surveillance brings up the concept of the tall poppy syndrome. Tall poppy syndrome is a term that originated in Australasia as an “example of a societal constraint whose function ... is to enforce society-wide ideologies such as egalitarianism and the gender order.” (Holmes, Marra, & Lazzaro-Salazar, 2017, p. 1). Tall poppy syndrome acts as a restricting structure which keeps self-promoting discourse contained. While cautious self-promotion is tolerated in some situations, there are others “where individuals are expected to behave with modesty and humility” (Holmes, Marra, & Lazzaro-Salazar, 2017, p. 1). Although tall poppy syndrome is not applicable to women only, studies have tended to focus on tall poppy syndrome and competitive behaviors amongst women more frequently (Mancl & Penington, 2011). One aspect of tall poppy syndrome that is relevant for this research was connected to the role of restricting women from reaching their full potential, where women all operate at the same level of mediocrity to avoid being cut down to size (Mancl & Penington, 2011).

All of the participants were successful and talented academics in their own right. However, none of the participants presented themselves in favorable or even reasonable light as to their achievements and success. Kendra had described a very specific situation where her senior supervisor would cut her down and quell her creativity. Other participants described the maternal nature of administration and examples of being chastised for work-related indiscretions or errors. The institutional narrative of ‘being the Effat family’ contributed to forcing a culture of restriction to avoid faculty self-promotion and independent activity. Additionally, many aspects of the extensive paperwork required for teaching load reductions or conference travel permissions

that participants discussed seemed to further constrain growth and according the tall poppy syndrome, keep everyone clipped (Mancl & Penington, 2011).

Participants also made comments about modesty and appearance, which are culturally and socially connected to humility. There was a specific and expected way of dressing, the Effat hijab that participants mentioned. Although the initial impetus for women dressing modestly was government enforced women's modesty, there were limits in the Effat University setting. Generally women, faculty and students, were required to follow the cloak requirement, but not the formal cultural veiling of the face or wearing gloves. The Effat hijab described by participants was colored as opposed to traditional black and often more loosely worn to only graze shoulders. One participant mentioned she chose to cover her face when around men while at the university. She found that administration and other colleagues disapproved of what was seen as religious zealous¹. Other participants dressed differently within the confines of the university and outside the walls. The participants had to reconcile these different expectations of modesty and behavior. Participants had to constantly ensure they were neither more nor less modest than what was proscribed institutionally and reinforced through peers. Using tall poppy syndrome as the metaphor, participants were checking their respective 'height' to others, both to ensure they were not standing out taller or shorter. The tall poppy syndrome reflects back to invisible collective recognition and self-surveillance of cultural, religious, and gender standards.

The rationale presented for assimilating was presented most acutely through the oft-repeated institutional narrative of one big Effat family. This is a false narrative, whether the institutional administrators promoting the narrative or the faculty repeating it recognize it as false

¹ Due to the very few women who do cover their faces at Effat University, I have not mentioned even the participant's pseudonym to ensure anonymity.

is irrelevant. False beliefs maintain institutional facts and power (Searle, 1995). The participants may also hold a variety of other false beliefs about why they perform certain tasks and the importance or origin of beliefs. This was demonstrated through the statements of the participants who were not Muslim. Kendra and Kate, although had different belief systems and cultural currency to Muslim participants, each recognized the normative status of institutional power and function. They did not recognize they were recognizing and normalizing these functions. This was emphasized when Kendra described the almost otherworldly attributes of having lived and worked in Saudi Arabia with almost exclusively women. The individual and the collective assign and proscribe institutional facts and function (Hekman, 1999; Searle, 1995).

Survivalist Mentorship

Through the analysis and synthesis of the findings, I argue and postulate the concept of survival mentorship. I developed this concept as a specific response to the research questions regarding participants' perception of mentorship and how their perceptions of mentorship affected their engagement with mentorship opportunities. I presented the notion of survival mentorship to integrate and underscore the superficial and constrained participant perception of mentorship.

Literature mentioned survival mentorship in the limited context of North American biomedical and social science academic researchers, which differed from the research setting of Effat University (Anderson, Horn, Risbey, Ronning, De Vries, & Martinson, 2007). Anderson et al. (2007) described survival mentoring as “guidance on how to build relationships and survive in the profession” (p. 854). Survival mentoring was contrasted to other forms of mentoring: ethics, research, personal, and financial (Anderson, 2007). Anderson et al. (2007) found that survival mentoring for junior faculty was associated with a greater likelihood of reported engagement in

ethics and financial misbehavior. It was suggested that the results of Anderson et al. (2007) were connected to the intensely competitive, pressurized, and dynamic nature of scientific research.

In the research setting of Effat University, professional survival was connected to research generation as found in the literature, but was contextualized through my research findings to larger cultural, religious, and gendered issues. I argue that survival mentoring for participants moved beyond professional survival, and into physical and psychological survival. Participants implicitly and explicitly presented a reality that was volatile and unpredictable at the level of their day to day work toward the institution and toward regional politics. Participants who lived in Saudi Arabia and those who had left, would have internalized the larger regional conflicts and war as their reality. As recently as June 2019 there were missiles fired at the southern Saudi Arabian city of Abha, which is approximately 500 kilometers away from Effat University (Sudarsan, 2019). Power structures and the conflicts inherent within these, are internalized and often invisible and normalized (Schüssler Fiorenza, 2001; Searle, 1995). The contextual impacts, societal pressures for conformity, psychological pressures in many aspects of their lives, along with the construction of problematic social norms may lead to ethically questionable behaviors (Hesse-Biber & Yaiser, 2004). Within the setting participants intimated there was little to no negotiation of agency. Participants felt they had needed their mentors to navigate and survive administrative requirements. Participants indicated that documentation to reduce teaching loads or participate in conferences was tedious and not beneficial. There was sense that participants completed the applications and forms knowing they would be refused but feeling obligated to at least make the request to ensure administrators understood their workload and desire to continue as academics. Again, participants were acting to survive. Positioned with the tall poppy syndrome, participants' perceptions of mentorship were survival and not personal nor

professional success. Those who were perceived as tall poppies would be admonished either through peers, administrators, or most worryingly themselves to be cut down to size.

Participant criticism was negligible and never directed at the institution or the larger society and never religion. Criticism was generally directed to the self and peers who were direct superiors. Recalling that there was no freedom of press¹ in Saudi Arabia, nor academic freedom provided for faculty or any members of society². The repercussions for speaking out would be severe thus silence and solidarity of silence would be a strong form of survival. The solidarity through survival mentorship was non-disruptive of power structures and power flows.

Participants seemed to have ensured compliance, first from themselves through self-surveillance and then through others with survival mentorship, guiding and showing others the skills necessary to persist. I would place the concept of survival mentorship both on a base level of daily survival but also in the context of surviving and evading the very powerful Saudi Arabian state engine of control. When transgressions of administrators were discussed, who were not direct supervisors, the discussion was apologetic and fulfilled maternalistic rites of an obliging and grateful daughter continually reinforcing the kyriarchy.

In the context of this research and specific setting, survival mentorship was a means of informal mentorship engagement to persist and maintain one's tenuous position in a shifting and bound cultural, religious and gendered paradigm.

¹ Reporters without Borders ranks Saudi Arabia 172 out of 180 countries in the world ranking for the 2019 World Press Freedom Index (World Press Freedom Index, 2019).

² From the Freedom in the World 2019, Saudi Arabia has an aggregate score of 7/100, compared to Canada's aggregate score of 99/100 (Freedom in the World 2019, 2019)

Limitations

As in every study there are limitations to the conclusions and generalizability of findings. This study was a single case design with embedded sub-units looking at the very specific and unique setting of Effat University in Saudi Arabia. In addition, I was an insider researcher as a former faculty member and colleague of the interview participants.

The participants selected for the study were few and represented their personal experiences, which may not be generalizable or transferable to other individuals at the same setting or similar settings in Saudi Arabia. It was also noted in the undertaking of this research that there were few prior research studies involving women academics in the Middle East, let alone Saudi Arabia. As there was little similar research to provide guidance on similarities or the uniqueness of the results, the findings and analysis were presented to provide women's voices with a space and start a conversation rather than add to it. The case study used voice-based interviews to collect data. These were impersonal and may have detracted from the potential richness of data had the interviews been face to face. Participants may have had fears of repercussions or reprisals at work, in society, politically, or with family for participating in a research study.

As a researcher, I was an insider having worked previously at Effat University as a faculty member. In addition, all participants were former colleagues. I cannot speak to the power of my relationship to each participant and their perspective of me as an insider or an outsider. Nor can I address any biases created due to my position as a researcher leading this study. There were also limitations related to the physical separation between participants and myself that were exacerbated by time differences and differences in holiday schedules.

These limitations could be addressed in future research through further studies that incorporate other groups of women in other locales in Saudi Arabia. Further studies could adjust

methods to include face to face interviews or larger participant pools in several settings to increase participant sense of anonymity and safety.

In the next chapter, I will provide recommendations and my researcher reflection.

Chapter Six Conclusions

Conclusion

Women faculty members' perceptions of mentorship in the post secondary context were found to be based on superficial and constrained ideals of mentorship. The findings and subsequent analysis and synthesis was constructed initially in reference to liberal and Islamic feminist theories along with concepts drawn from sustainable leadership and an ethic of care. Upon analysis of the findings, I found it necessary to use a post structuralist feminist lens to understand the implied participant experiences and discourse, or lack thereof. The post structuralist feminist viewpoint enabled a more nuanced recognition of the power flows and kyriarchy invisible to each participant, but an inherent part of their reality and as such their survival. Their perception of mentorship affected their engagement with mentorship opportunities through a developed concept of survival mentorship. Survival mentorship was proposed as a means to provide and gain guidance to survive the daily struggles as an academic, as well as avoid and arguably ignore their lack of agency.

Recommendations

Based on the findings, analysis, and conclusions of this study, there are several recommendations I can offer. The following recommendations call for: (a) further research; (b) constructing and imagining gender as visible; and (c) continued mentoring as solace to political and cultural oppression.

Further research. In the Middle East, and more specifically the Gulf Region, and very specifically Saudi Arabia, there is little or no research and information regarding women's mentorship and leadership activities in post secondary contexts (Alsubaie & Jones, 2017). The connection of mentorship to growth and improving leadership outcomes for women in general needs more focus and research. This is even more critical in the Middle East and Saudi Arabia in post secondary contexts.

Since undertaking this research project there have been many highly visible and publicized Saudi government efforts and initiatives to reform and catalyze women's entry to the workplace. In the years spent formulating and completing this research, Saudi women have started driving cars and several male guardianship rules have been removed. These shifts are still in contrast to the deeply ingrained social conservatism of daily life (Varshney, 2019). Many of the reforms pitched as empowering women are glib attempts at international public relations and gaining the younger Saudi generation's support, cloaking the real imperative of the capitalist economic value of women entering the workforce (Sakr, 2008). This is not the first attempt of Arab nations, or any nation, to capitalize on women's economic force through reinterpreting religious or cultural edicts to suit patriarchal economic desires and needs (Amin, 2000; Salhi, 2008).

Gender as visible. Using a post structuralist feminist lens, each woman wields power in a variety of differing ways. There is no central position of power, but rather multiple points of power residing internal to and external to individuals. The multiplicity of power nodes needs to be addressed and can be addressed by individuals. This is especially true in situations where women's lives and freedom are at risk for acting against perceived central power and authorities. I suggest to radically re-think and re-imagine the "patriarchal phallogocentric order" away from targeted authority figures (Irigaray, 1993, p. 41). Irigaray (1993) suggests a powerful re-imagination of public spaces and art to include and normalize women's existence and women's relationships. One of Irigaray's suggestions was to produce images of Mary and her mother Anne, instead of Mary and her son Jesus. Within the context of Effat University, women could move the presence of university women leaders into the walled university space. Effat University is already an anomaly within Saudi society in that the name of a woman is publicly displayed, let alone her image. Although there are religious edicts regarding the human image and form as idolatry, this has not slowed propaganda materials showing images of the Saudi king and his male entourage. Having women see themselves and be promoted within the university walls outside the reins of the monarchy may address

individual perceptions of self-imposed restrictions. Although, recognizing that this may not necessarily address the serious concerns women face regarding continued control of their lives by male guardians despite certain reforms. This makes gender visible, albeit limited to the university setting, even superficially.

More profound shifts in making gender visible require reconciling the multiplicity of care with the complexity of being a woman academic in an Islamic state. Mentorship cannot address the larger political and religious contexts, but women need to negotiate their places and take up more space. This is especially germane given the high maternal expectations within the faith based society. There is a strong requirement for individuals to view themselves as gender-less humans in order to discern the disconnect as humans rather than as gender specific culturally assigned roles as mothers, daughters, or sisters.

Continued mentoring under oppressive forces. Although survival mentorship arose from the findings, this is not an ideal form of mentorship. I do have some trepidation in proposing cutting political recommendations or radical actions. What *would* I tell these women in light of the challenges of their institution, and their country? There is obviously complexity in their lived experiences, where individual participants were simultaneously oppressed and potential oppressors. Their sense of frustration was palpable and for the most part directed at themselves. Having lived and worked alongside the participants, I probably portrayed this sense of frustration and reality of oppression more starkly. There needs to be an explicit conversation with women academics in Saudi Arabia to build an awareness of how these small interruptions about gendered leadership and mentorship may provide openings for future generations of women in their country. Discursive techniques may help to identify the power in acknowledging the disconnects that occur in micro and macro levels in their daily lives. There should be an acknowledgement that mentorship may provide some solace within the broader aspects of complicity, even though individuals may be unable to address the root of the issue.

Researcher Reflection

In the research process, I moved through different spaces beginning as an insider and ending as an outsider. I began as what I will call a “double insider”. First, I was a physical insider as a faculty member at Effat University, living and committed to my academic and professional development. Throughout my tenure at Effat University, I was a lecturer and then an administrative director for several programs. It was in the middle of this process that I became a student again, taking up research for my thesis. Secondly, I was also an insider in the sense that I was a married Muslim woman who spoke Arabic fluently with children and presented in terms of dress, demeanor and behavior as culturally Arab. I was at that time married to an Arab man, and thus according to cultural norms, the mother of Arab children.

The research process led me to personally question my own complicity in an oppressive dictatorship, as well as my association with a contextualized specific set of religious beliefs weaponized against women and minorities. Through the research process, I analyzed my perception of complicity, which highlighted initially contradictions in my fundamental values for all humans. These contradictions appeared as self-sabotaging and self-limiting. I had become immersed in the theocratic Islamic state complex of Saudi Arabia. In fact, I was an active and willing participant. The negative impact stunted my own professional and personal growth. I was not only impacting myself, but the lives and future of my children who emulated similar contradictions.

Through my research, I shifted from unaware and occasionally apologetic complicity to perceiving contradictions and finally to seeing the shattering hypocrisy of contributing professionally and economically to Saudi society as a foreigner. This shift in my perception of myself, led to me to leave Effat University and Saudi Arabia. I became a physical outsider as a researcher and performed all interviews from Canada. While compiling the interview data, I

realized that the interviewees saw me as only an outsider to the physical location of Effat University and Saudi Arabia. I still maintained some insider status in their perception because I had lived and worked there. In many ways, my physical location enabled participants to feel more at ease as we had shared experiences (insider) but I had no authority (outsider).

The final portion of my research focused on the participants' self-surveillance and issues of agency. I moved to the space of "double outsider" through deliberate disconnection with Arab norms and practices as well as disconnect from Islamic practices and obligations. I am no longer bound by the physical constraints of living in Saudi Arabia, nor the self-binding of Arab culture and Islamic rites. I am bound by my current situation in Canada, but with a well-researched and internalized sense of less dissonance, contradiction, self-harm and harm to those I am responsible for.

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Appendix I

Interview Guide

Level 1 – Building rapport

The researcher will begin the interview by introducing herself and also stating the date, for the purposes of the recording.

- Please state your name.
- What is your title and position in the university?
- How long have you worked here?
- What is your area of expertise?
- What courses are you teaching this semester?

Level 2 – Related to research topic

For an interview that lasts an hour or less, about eight questions are recommended (Stake, 2010).

| Category | Sustainable leadership | Ethic of care | Question |
|--------------------|------------------------|------------------------|--|
| Perception | Length | Self-situated | What is mentorship to you? |
| Purpose | Depth | Relation over morality | What do think is the purpose of mentorship? |
| Hierarchy | Breadth | Bound agency | What kinds of barriers do you face in promotion? |
| Informal mentoring | Resourcefulness | Relation over morality | What is your academic support network? |

| | | | |
|------------|------------------|--|--|
| Gender | Conservation | Situationally based with emotion | What is an experience you had with a woman mentor? |
| Leadership | Length and depth | Relation over morality | What is the connection between leadership and mentorship? |
| Feminism | Justice | Understanding of others | What is feminist mentoring? |
| Context | Diversity | Understanding of others Bounded agency | What does it mean to be a woman in academia in Saudi Arabia? |

Additional probing follow-up questions may include:

- Can you give an example of what you mean?
- Can you explain more?
- What do you mean by the term/ word _____ ?