

My adolescent socialization term paper sample

[Sociology](#), [Women](#)



Growing up in the theocratic male-dominated society of Saudi Arabia has had a tremendous impact on my personality. The minimal degree of socialization, the disregard of women in the society, and the excessive rules and regulations in which I have grown up in had great effects on my roles in the society. However, attending a coeducational British School in Saudi Arabia and later ending my last 2 years of high school in a coeducational boarding school in Amman, Jordan, gave me a greater insight to the world. It is a common knowledge in the world that women in the Middle East are degraded and denied equal rights to men.

In the Middle East, it is a common notion and expectation in society that the role of a woman in the society is to cook, clean and take care of the household. The gender roles, as the society assigns, predominantly affect the way in which society functions. The masses of the women in Saudi Arabia submit to the given roles. However, a very small percentage of the population does not submit to the given roles of society. They go beyond the roles assigned by the society.

In my case, my family has had a tremendous effect on the role I assume in the society. The typical Saudi fathers do not permit their daughters to make choices on their own, let alone leave the country to pursue education of their choice. My father, having spent a great deal of his earlier years in the United States has gained a different view of the gender roles. From my experiences, it is evidently clear that the family socialization is a critical feature in shaping one's ideology.

Although a chapter of my life has been spent outside Saudi Arabia, Having come from a part of the world that did not acknowledge freedom of speech,

equality of gender, or even integration into society gave me a narrow-minded vision and mindset on such life issues. The Boston city, where I live has completely different set of principles and values. Socializing with the diverse range of people opened my eyes to a completely different world. While surrounding myself with people of different races and ethnic backgrounds, I was able to gain a different perspective of the world. Such is what C. Wright Mills may refer to as “The Social Imagination.” The majority in Saudi Arabia do not defy the rules set forth by authority that is presumed as completely legitimate.

However, through my interaction with the students at Boston University, I’ve noticed that the Saudi culture has allowed me to gain “an underlying sense of being trapped.” Although my people do not agree with it, the monarchy and theocracy does not allow the people to question the rulings. We do not possess the social imagination, the people did not “understand [their] own experience,” and are not aware of it. Such is because they have not gained the education to answer the questions that Mills believe are core to gaining a sociological imagination;

- “What is the particular structure of society as whole?”
- “Where does this society stand in human history?”
- “What varieties of men and women now prevail in this society and in this period?”
- What is the meaning of human nature of each and every feature of the society we are examining?

Therefore, life in Saudi Arabia has “demonstrated the power of social roles in guiding human decisions and conduct.” The roles in which society has

compelled us to play, allowed us to form our self-identities. The common notion of a woman in Saudi is to wear the abaya everytime in the public. This is an illustration of McGrath and CallanMartins's assertion that " each different environment can assign an individual a different role which can carry with it strikingly different expected behavior." The environment has a profound impact on our interaction in society and our self-identities; who we believe we are. The environment in the Boston, specifically Boston University has allowed me to deeply understand the American culture. This is primarily due to the fact that I have changed my " definition of the situation."

The economy of Saudi Arabia is extremely complex. With its massive wealth in the oil industry, Saudi Arabia has one of the highest concentrations of rich households in the world. Accessing and publishing information in the Kingdom is very difficult, as the media is greatly controlled by government. However, a world of extreme poverty is hidden from the rest of the world. Saudi Arabia is an evident portrayal of Karl Marx assertion that " people, who stand in a common relationship to the means of production, constitute a social class." This has resulted in an extremely stratified nation based on social class.

In comparison to the Saudi economy and culture, the United States shuns the idea of class, believing it is a classless society. The American people believe that any individual has the ability to rise to the top. Nevertheless, during my socialization within the American community so far, I have realized that class stratification is evident in the society. There is an upper, middle and lower class. However the underlying difference lies in the fact that the United States promotes the notion of rising to the top as opposed to

the Saudi Arabian approach that is suppressive.

The notion of social stratification on the basis of class is a critical aspect of the Saudi Arabian society. It is against the rules of the country for a non-Saudi individual to start an enterprise or investment without a partnership with a Saudi member. Thus, Saudis are either employees or the bourgeoisie. Since women cannot drive in the country, it is expected for a household to have a driver. The driver's role is to take the kids to school, take the mother to the supermarkets, or just drive the women around while running their daily errands. In this case, the driver is a member of the proletariat.

However, seldom is the driver from Saudi himself. "The number of expatriate workers in the Kingdom is about 7 million ("Saudi Arabia," n. d). The nationalities of the proletariats employed as manual laborers, drivers, waste collectors vary between Indians, Egyptians Pakistanis, Bangladeshis, Philippines and Indonesians. It is, therefore, apparent that the country is stratified based on nationality and ethnic origin.

. While in America, I've come to realize that social stratification on the basis of ethnic origin and nationality is of no significance. Whether you are an Asian, Caucasian, Black, White, there are ample opportunities for individuals to rise to the top of the class system. However, this idea of an individual with a different ethnic background rising to the top is an utterly unacknowledged in Saudi. The poor citizens are fostering resentment on the distribution of the wealth (Aryn Baker, 2013).

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