The Effect of "Our Brothers and Sisters in Humanity" Programme on Omani Secondary School Girls' Cultural Tolerance.

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by
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Dedication

To those who lost their lives as a result of intolerance, Prejudice or
discrimination.

To those who dream about a world full of peace and tolerance.

To the soul of my father who taught me how to dream of a better world.

Acknowledgment

Abstract

The globalization phenomenon is becoming a driving force of era–defining changes in the nature of societies and economics across the world. To a large extent, it has created a borderless world in which different cultures have become closer and interact with each other. In this multicultural world, relations between Muslims and non-Muslims, particularly those in the West, have become a pertinent and contentious issue. Events such as the attacks of September 11th, 2001, the Bali nightclub bombings in 2002, the London bombings on July 7, 2005, and the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan have questioned the relations between Muslims and Westerners, and renewed interest in Huntington's "clash of civilization thesis". This study explores the potential effects of the school-based intervention titled "Our Brothers and Sisters in Humanity" on Omani 10th grade female students, regarding their tolerance toward other religions, Western culture and Westerners. The effectiveness of the intervention programme was determined using a quasi-experimental design using two experimental and two control schools. The questionnaire was administered before and after the intervention to a sample of 241 girls, of whom 116 were in the experimental group and 125 in the control group. A semi-structured interview was conducted before and after the intervention with 16 participants, of whom 8 were from the experimental group and 8 from the control group. Analysis of the quantitative data in post-intervention round reveals that there were statistically significant differences between the experimental group and the control group in tolerance toward other religions, Western culture and Westerners. Analysis of the qualitative data from the pre-intervention interviews conducted with the participants in both the experimental and the control group revealed low tolerance toward extending liberties to those who were different in terms of religious faith. Yet in the post-intervention interviews the experimental groups showed greater tolerance. The findings gave empirical support to the Social Identity theory, one of the most important theories to explain Omani girls' intolerance toward other religions, Western culture and Westerners. Future research should be directed towards examining the effectiveness of the interventions for different populations and school levels.

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1 Chapter One: Introduction and Background of the Study

1.1 Introduction

The notion of the global village was introduced by McLuhan in the 1960s. It implies the emergence of a subjective identity in relation to living on a relatively small planet which, as Roland Robertson also noted in the 1990s, has transformed human realities as a result of what is called the globalization phenomenon (Dalby, 2003). Globalization increases levels of global interdependence and has created a situation in which different cultures and religions have become closer and have had to interact with each other more regularly (Green, 1999; Petras and Veltmeyer, 2004). The phenomenon of multiculturalism, defined as the "acknowledgement and promotion of cultural pluralism as a feature of many societies" (Wieviorka, 1998: 881) or as "the public acceptance of immigrant and minority groups as distinct communities which are distinguished from the majority population with regard to language, culture, and social behaviour" (Banks, 2004a: 26), is becoming a global phenomenon even within many of the countries which were long considered mono-cultural. For example, despite the apparent homogeneity in the Arab countries, Ibrahim (1998) has observed cultural heterogeneities in at least nine countries: Sudan, Lebanon, Iraq, Syria, Algeria, Morocco, Mauritania, Bahrain, and Yemen. He indicates that around 35% of the population in these countries differ from the Arab, Muslim, Sunni majority. Similarly, Oman, the context of the present study, is multi-ethnic and multi-religious, as will be discussed further in this chapter. Borrowing a phrase from Harvard sociologist Nathan Glazer (1997), "We are all multicultural now".

However, the convergence between cultures and religions in this 'village' does not mean a perpetually peaceful and tolerant environment. Conflict, instability and loss of trust characterize the relationships of people in the global village. Schwab (2008) indicates that relations between Muslims and the Western communities represent the most severe and specific instances of deficit in trust in the recently globalized world. Schwab's comments are in line with Tessler's (2003) study, which concludes that some people in the Arab and Muslim world hold stereotypes and prejudices that are just as troubling as those held by some Americans. Tessler (2003) indicates that many people

in the Middle East believe that the attacks of September 11 were justified. A survey of 337 Sunni and Shia Muslims in Beirut, conducted in October and November 2001, found that 30 per cent approved of the attacks and another 12 per cent were unsure. A journalistic inquiry carried out in Kuwait in the summer of 2002 reported that many Kuwaitis admitted to being happy about what happened to the U.S. and that parties had been held in celebration. A survey conducted by the Pew Global Attitudes Project in 13 Western and Islamic countries in 2006 showed that most Muslims and Westerners believe that relations between them are generally bad. Many Westerners see Muslims as violent and fanatical, and as lacking tolerance. In the meantime, Muslims in the Middle East and Asia generally see Westerners as selfish, immoral, greedy and, interestingly, also violent and fanatical (Pew Research Centre, 2006). Similarly, the World Economic Forum Community of West and Islam (2008) published their First Annual Report on the state of dialogue between Muslims and the West, and it shows that the vast majority of Muslims believe that the Western world lacks respect for Muslims. Equally, the majority of Westerners believe that Muslims do not respect Westerners.

Undoubtedly, the contemporary relations between Muslims and Westerners are problematic and they make the need for tolerance between the two groups increasingly pertinent. The question that may be raised is why tolerance should be the answer to conflict between Muslims and non-Muslims, particularly Westerners? The answer is because tolerance is a key protection for both individual citizens and minority groups, and in general is the predominant ethos of all moral civilizations. In addition, tolerance is necessary where different groups have conflicting beliefs – moral, political, or religious – and realize that there is no alternative to their living together except armed conflict, which will not resolve their disagreement and will impose continuous suffering (Williams, 1996; Levine, 1999).

Recently the concept of tolerance has become central to many organizations. UNESCO, for example, announced the year 1995 as an international year of tolerance and proclaimed the 16th of November as an annual International Day for Tolerance (Rodden, 2001:59; UNESCO, 1995). Similarly, the report of the International Commission on Education for the Twenty-first Century to UNESCO, which is known as Delors' report (1996), highlighted the need for a new form of education for the new

millennium. This report (1996) specified four pillars as the foundations of education in the future. These pillars are learning to live together, learning to do, learning to know and learning to be. It (1996) claimed that:

> We must be guided by the Utopian aim of steering the world towards greater mutual understanding, and greater sense of responsibility and greater solidarity, through acceptance of our spiritual and cultural differences. Education, by providing access to knowledge for all, has precisely this universal task of helping people to understand the world and to understand others.

The effect of education on tolerance has been investigated in many systematic studies. Stouffer (1955), in his pioneering study of attitudes towards civil liberties, indicated that the reduction of authoritarian strictness in classrooms has resulted in a system which challenges traditions and stimulates independence of thought. The replication of Stouffer's (1955) classic work by Williams *et al.* (1976) supported these findings. They maintained that "among all of the independent variables being considered, education is the most important in the development of tolerance (379). Later research studies on the same topic, such as those by Bobo and Licari (1989), show that the effects of education on tolerance are positive even when a person has negative feelings towards the out-group to begin with.

Although education is considered to have a positive impact on tolerance, it seems to be rarely used to spread a culture of peace and tolerance between Muslims and Westerners. School textbooks, which are believed to be one of the vital means by which a nation conveys certain attitudes and knowledge to young generations (Wiele, 2001), seem to be rarely used to spread the culture of peace and tolerance (Leirvik, 2004). Until recently, the image of Muslims in school textbooks in the West was problematic. Muslims were often portrayed as fanatic, backward and aggressive and Islam was viewed as a violent religion (Otterbeck, 2005). As Muslims become a part of many Western societies and as Western societies become increasingly multicultural, great attention has been given to multicultural education that exposes students to the diversity that occurs in the Western societies and in the world.

In some Muslims countries, school curricula and textbooks are biased not only against Westerners and Western civilizations but also against others who are different. Negative terms are used to portray "others" who have a different religion, ethnicity and culture. For example, a report that reviewed 103 Egyptian textbooks used in state schools and 16 textbooks used in the religious Azharite school system concluded that there is no adequate and objective information about Western civilization. The report emphasized that religions such as Judaism and Christianity were both respected as monotheistic religions. However, various aspects of these religions were described in negative terms. The same conclusions can be drawn from a report that reviewed some major textbooks that are used in Saudi public schools and published by the Ministry of Education in Saudi Arabia. The report found that these textbooks instructed students in an ideology of hatred against Christians, Jews and non-Wahhbi Muslim dominations (The Centre for Monitoring the Impact of Peace, 2002; Littman, 2005). Similarly, Hamburg and Hamburg (2004) indicate that Muslim learners are still indoctrinated in the ancient ideology of a triumphant Muslim empire, a viewpoint that maintains that all non-Muslims are wrong; the goal is to bring Islam's light to the world. Moreover, some historical conflicts such as those between Muslims and Crusaders in the Middle Ages are portrayed in Islamic countries as a conflict between the morally superior Islamic World and the morally inferior West which has lasted from the Middle Ages and into the present (Determann, 2008).

The events of September 11, 2001 opened a wide debate over the curricula and textbooks that were used in Muslim countries in general and Arab countries in particular. The United States put an unprecedented amount of pressure on Muslim governments to reform their educational curricula. According to Washington, the curricula and the textbooks in the Islamic world are responsible for encouraging a combination of intolerance, ignorance, anti-Semitic, anti-American and anti-Western views (Sayegh, 2004). Some Muslim governments responded to this pressure by cutting down the Islamic and Arabic studies that are provided for schoolchildren. The state of Qatar has adapted a new initiative in which Qatari students learn more English and undertake less Islamic studies (Glasser, 2003). All Gulf monarchies, including Oman which is the focus of the present study, were forced to revise their curricula and schools textbooks. Oman, for example, was among the Gulf Cooperation Council countries which made a "promise" to revise their textbooks to remove "inflammatory

passages" against other religious groups, mainly Jews and Christians (Rugh, 2002; Cavanaugh, 2004; Leirvik, 2004). However, the problem of prejudice against others will not be solved by deleting the inflammatory passages from school textbooks; pupils should, nevertheless, be educated about other cultures in different and less partisan ways (Cavanaugh, 2004).

According to Al-Mamari (2002) Omani civic education textbooks do not introduce other cultures to students. In a similar vein, Al-Zidjali (2002) reported that the most commonly represented values in the Omani civic education textbooks are patriotism, appreciation of the Government and its role in the revival of the Omani community, the importance of the geographical location of the Sultanate, love of one's family, obedience to one's parents and authorities, preserving the environment and respecting the law, regulations and the regime. These findings are not surprising in light of the fact that the objective of the Omani educational system is to focus on sharpening the Omani Arab Islamic identity, as will be discussed later in this chapter.

In order to examine the effectiveness of the Omani educational system in preparing Omanis for multicultural life in the twenty-first century, a preliminary exploratory study was conducted by the researcher in November 2004. The participants of the study were selected randomly from pupils in grade ten in the secondary schools in Suwaiq, Oman. Analyzing the responses of the 20 pupils to the questionnaire shows a decrease in the overall mean score (less than 2.8) in 10th grade pupils' knowledge about other cultures, tolerance towards other cultures, and the school curriculum dealing with other cultures. Therefore, the current study focuses on developing an intervention through which 10th grade pupils are provided with knowledge about other religions and Western culture. The intervention, or programme, is entitled: "Our Brothers and Sisters in Humanity".

The name of the programme was chosen to reflect the Islamic view about ethnicity, as the target students for this programme are Muslim pupils in a Muslim country. In many Islamic societies, religion plays an important role in forming people's thoughts and attitudes. The Quran declares that in the beginning, humanity was a single community because all human beings came from one couple, a male and a female (Ataman, 2003). The Quran states: "O mankind! We created you from a single (pair) of a male and a female, and made you into nations and tribes, that you may know each other. Verily the

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most honoured of you in the sight of God (Allah) is the most righteous of you. And God has full knowledge and is well acquainted (with all things)" (The Quran; 49: 13). According to the Quran, the hierarchy between human beings is not based on gender, race, language, religion or wealth. Therefore nobody has superiority over another. Only righteousness creates the hierarchy between human beings in the sight of God, and if there is superiority, it is ethical superiority (Ataman, 2003; Bouhdiba, 1996). This notion is emphasized in two articles from the United Nations (1948), concerning the universal declaration of human rights:

> "All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights. They are endowed with reason and conscience and should act towards one another in a spirit of brotherhood." (Article 1)

> "Everyone is entitled to all the rights and freedoms set forth in this Declaration, without distinction of any kind, such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status. Furthermore, no distinction shall be made on the basis of the political, jurisdictional or international status of the country or territory to which a person belongs, whether it be independent, trust, non-self-governing or under any other limitation of sovereignty." (Article 2).

In the context of the present study the term "Our Brothers and Sisters in Humanity" can be defined as the accumulation of educational experiences which are based on dialogue, cooperative learning, drama, role playing, group discussion, art, debate, problem-solving and other teaching and learning activities. These have been designed by the researcher and implemented by pupils under the supervision of the teacher to introduce Islamic and Western cultural values, beliefs, patterns of thinking and lifestyles to 10th grade pupils in order to enhance their level of cultural tolerance. More details on the focus and aims of the current study are provided in the subsequent section.

1.2   The Focus and the Aims of the Study

The present study pursues a number of aims. These are:

1. To investigate the level of cultural tolerance amongst young female Omani citizens in the first year of secondary schooling, when they are aged 16.

2. To develop a programme that examines cultural tolerance among 10th grade pupils in Oman.

3. To examine the impact of the programme on pupils' attitudes towards ethnic and cultural groups from the West.

4. To use a quasi-experimental design to ascertain the effectiveness of the designed programme.

5. To make recommendations for policy and practice.

1.3   Context of the Study

This section aims to contextualize the research project by presenting a brief overview of the Sultanate of Oman. It also offers an overview of the political system, its relations with the West and its education system.

1.3.1   Geographical Location

Oman lies at the extreme southeast corner of the Arabian Peninsula, covering an area of 309,500 square kilometres. It is bordered on the southwest by the Republic of Yemen, by the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia in the west and by the United Arab Emirates in the north. Its coastline extends for over 1,000 miles from the Strait of Hormuz in the north to the border with Yemen. The topographical features of Oman include valleys, deserts and mountains. Coastal plains represent about 3% of the total land area, mountain ranges occupy another 15%, and the remaining 82% of the country is mainly sand and gravel desert (Clements, 1980; Ministry of Information, 2007)

The population of Oman was estimated by the Omani Ministry of National Economy in 2007 to be 2,743,000 of which 1,923,000 are Omani and 820,000 are expatriates. The 2003 census shows that Omani women and men represented 48% and 52% respectively of the total population. Oman also has a large number of young people; 40.6 % of the population are aged under 15, while those over the age of 64 constitute only 3.2%, with a high birth rate increase of 3.2 % (Ministry of National Economy, 2003, 2008; Al-Hamadi *et al.,* 2007).

1.3.2   The Educational System

Education has undergone rapid and significant changes since 1970 when Sultan Qaboos ruled Oman. Prior to 1970 there were only three formal schools in Oman, with a total enrolment of 909 students. All these schools were in Muscat and enrolment was merely for male students who were often personally chosen by the previous Sultan (Skeet,

1985). Due to the absence of formal education in Oman, education took the form of Kuttab or Quranic schools. In the Kuttab boys and girls were gathered to learn the Quran, and to study the Arabic language and basic mathematics. The Kuttab usually took place in mosques, houses and under the shade of trees. The tasks of teaching in such traditional schools were often carried out by one teacher who was in charge of everything from teaching to selecting texts. The teacher was often chosen by the students' parents, who would pay a small fee to this teacher to help him or her with life expenses (Skeet, 1985). When Sultan Qaboos deposed his father, Sultan Saeed Bin Taimor, in a bloodless coup on 23 July 1970, Oman entered a new era in many ways. The new Sultan paid much more attention to education and it became a basic right for all male and female youngsters, both Omanis and expatriates, aged between six and eighteen years. In 2006 there were 1,259 government schools with a total enrolment of 626,474 students. There were also 44,055 teachers working in these schools (Ministry of National Economy, 2008).

The educational development in Oman has undergone two phases. The first phase is known as the general education phase. The focus of this phase was on the quantitative provision of schools so that children of school age could benefit from some kind of modern education. The general educational system was on a 6-3-3 pattern (six years of elementary education, three years for preparatory education and three years of secondary education). In 1998, Oman embarked on an ambitious initiative to replace the General Educational system with a new Basic Education system. The Sultanate of Oman was motivated to embrace this initiative by many factors such as the consciousness of the need to prepare Omani pupils to meet the challenges of globalization and to attain the objective of the democratization process, which was announced by Sultan Qaboos in his 1990 National Day speech (Rassekh, 2004; Ministry of Education, 2004).
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The changes in the curriculum have been one of the most important aspects of the new reform. Two issues came under particular attention: the content of the curriculum, and the teaching methods. A new Basic Education curriculum was developed by the Ministry of Education. The aim of this curriculum is to provide students with a learning experience that remains firmly rooted in Islamic principles and Omani cultural identity. In addition, new subject areas have been developed and the curricular content taught

within existing subject areas has been rewritten to include real-life contexts and introduce opportunities for experiential learning (Ministry of Education, 2004).

The educational system in Oman aims to enhance an individual's intellectual, emotional, spiritual and moral development, to nurture the capabilities of individuals and groups, and to develop the spirit of cooperation; to modernize the Omani society by teaching the required technical skills and the proper intellectual approaches to face the challenges of a changing world where technology and new inventions are widely spreading in all aspects of life; to achieve social and economic progress, to increase the national income and to improve the living standards of the Omanis; to achieve national unity, solidarity and independence through respect for the society's achievements and cultural heritage; and to revive the Arabic Islamic heritage (Ministry of Education, 2004) .

As can be seen from the educational reform and the educational system, the focus in these aims is on embracing Arabic and Islamic culture, maintaining the identity and sovereignty of the nation state and improving the quality of its human resources in an attempt to win a competitive advantage in the new open markets (Selwyn and Brown, 2000). With respect to globalization, such a focus seems not to be surprising. However, it can hardly be expected that most countries do not acknowledge the cultural implications of the globalization phenomena. Tomlinson (2003: 214) argues that, "globalization is affecting the education and economic placement of minorities world-wide. Policy-makers around the world have assigned education a major role in improving the competitiveness of national economies in the global market and encouraging individuals to develop their human capital, without the acknowledgement of social and racial disadvantages".

The aims of the Omani educational system raise an important question regarding the capacity it has to prepare a world citizen who can understand, sympathise with and help others who have a different background in terms of language, religion and beliefs in a world affected by globalization (Selwyn and Brown, 2000). It also raises a question about the extent of the ability of these aims to embrace the convention on the rights of the child and the right to educational integration which was ratified by the Sultanate in 1996. Article 29 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child states that state parties agree that the education of the child shall be directed to: (a) The development of the

child's personality, talents and mental and physical abilities to its fullest potential; (b) The development of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, and for the principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations; (c) The development of respect for the child's parents, his or her own cultural identity, language and values, for the national values of the country in which the child is living, the country from which he or she may originate, and for civilizations different from his or her own; (d) The preparation of the child for responsible life in a free society, in the spirit of understanding, peace, tolerance, equality of sexes, and friendship among all peoples, ethnic, national and religious groups and persons of indigenous origin; (e) The development of respect for the natural environment (United Nations,1989).

1.3.3 Ethnic and Religious Diversity

Sultan Qaboos announced a new constitution in Oman, widely known as the Basic Law of the State. Article 1 in this constitution states that "the Sultanate of Oman is an independent, Arab, Islamic, fully sovereign state with Muscat as its capital" (Siegfried, 2000; Ministry of Information, 2002). However, the societal and cultural texture of the Omani society does not reflect the idea of cultural homogeneity. In addition to hundreds of Arab tribes who speak Arabic and practise Ibadi[1] Islam, there are many minority groups in Oman. These minorities differ significantly from the majority in terms of language and/or religion and non-participation in the Arab tribal system. The minority groups in Oman include Blauchi, Zaidjalizes, Lawatyyia, Bahrani and Persian (Siegfried, 2000; Valeri, 2007).

The Baluchis came originally from Baluchistan, which lies along the Makran coast of the Gulf of Oman and the Arabian Sea. Nowadays Baluchis are concentrated along Batinh coast, and in Muscat and Matruh. The Baluchis speak Baluchi and practise Sunni Islam. Although the exact number of minority and religious groups was not released in

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[1]The Muslim world consists of many denominations, minorities and sects. The majority sects are Shias and Sunnis. The main division between the two groups lies in their view about leadership. Shias believe in the doctrine of the Imamate. They deem that leaders of the Muslim community should be descendants of the Prophet Muhammad, specifically his cousin and son-in-law, Ali ibn Abi Taleb. In contrast, Sunnis believe Muslims should choose their leaders based on their own attributes and they do not imply that it should be a descendant of Ali or Prophet Muhammad (Brancati, 2004). In addition to these two there is the Ibadi sect. This sect is not common in the Islamic world and it is only found in Oman, Zanzibar and some areas of North Africa. The Ibadis are the majority in Oman (Hoffman, 2004).
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the censuses that were carried out in Oman in 1993 and 2003, Peterson estimated the number of Baluchis in Oman to be 245,000, or around 12% of the Omani population. The Baluchi minority is represented in the Omani government: Sultan Qaboos has nominated several ministers from the Baluchi minorities. However, the Baluchis have been subjected to discrimination because of their lower social economic status and because of their lack of proficiency in the Arabic language. Zadjalis are another small minority group in Oman who originate from Baluchistan and Sind (Peterson, 2004a). The Zidjals in Oman speak their own language. The exact number of them is not known, but Zidjals often mingle with Baluchi; therefore many other Omanis believe that they are Baluchi (Peterson, 2004a).

Another minority group in Oman are the Zanzibaris. Zanzibari is a term used to describe an Omani with an East African background. Zanzibari are often the descendants of Omanis who went to Africa in the time when the coast of East Africa was controlled by the Omani rulers. They speak Swahili. The number of this minority group rose significantly during the 1960s and 1970s as a result of the end of the Omani presence in Zanzibar by black nationalists and the changes in political leadership in 1970. In 1970 Sultan Qaboos ruled Oman and the Zanzibari were welcomed to participate in the early development of Oman. They succeeded in holding administrative positions in many government institutions. However, of late they have been held back because they lack proficiency in Arabic (Peterson, 2004a; Valeri, 2007).

In addition, in Oman today, there are many descendents of black African slaves who were imported to Oman to serve in households, and as bodyguards, or in order to be sold to surrounding countries. Many Omani people today have a dark skin and African characteristics. According to Peterson (2004a) black Africans are still subject to social inequality. For example, intermarriage between this group and other groups in the society is unacceptable according to social traditions.

In addition, to the Sunni and Ibadi Muslims there are three Shia Muslim groups. The first of these groups is the Lawatiyya. This group originally came from India.The number of Lawatiyyas is not known precisely. An early estimation indicated that there were between 5,000 and 10,000. Most Lawatiyyas live today in a place called Sur-al-Lawatiyya, in Matrah but some live in al Batina towns such as Saham, Barka, Al

Masana and Al Khabura. Despite the role the Lawatiyyas play in Omani economics, they are still considered by the majority as foreigners. The second Shia community in Oman is al Bahrani. Unlike the Lawatiyya, al Bahranis are considered to be Arabs. This minority group is, however, very small. The last Shia community in Oman are the Persians. The existence of Persians in Oman can be traced back to the pre-Islamic Persian occupation of Oman. However, it should be emphasized that some Persians came to Oman as merchants and chose to settle. Traditionally, Persians in Oman are known as Ajam and they are concentrated in Muscat and on the Al Batinh coast (Peterson, 2004a).

Omani society is not only multi-ethnic, it is also multi-religious. One of the largest religious minority communities in Oman is the Hindus who immigrated to Oman from Sind and Gujarat in India. In the late ninetieth century the number of Hindus in Oman fell significantly due to their temple being desecrated and their shops and stores ransacked as a result of the Siege of Muscat in 1895. However, their numbers started to grow after the 1970s. For instance, there were 2000 in 1970 and 9000 by the mid-1990s. The number of Hindus now exceeds 145,000, and they account for 5.9% of the total population. The Christian community in Oman has also grown significantly from 900 in 1970 to 124,127 in the mid-2000s. It is predicted that in 2025 Omani society will be composed of 84.8% Muslims, 6.5% Hindus, 5.9% Christians, 1% Buddhists, and 0.8% Sikhs (Barrett *et al.,* 2001)

Although the minority ethnic and religious groups in Oman are small in their total size, they challenge the Omani majority's Arabic Islamic culture. The existence of these groups raises a question about the intolerance that they may face in their search for more recognition for their cultural and religious practices.

1.3.4   The Political System

The constitutional law of the Sultanate of Oman, which is known as the Basic Law of the State, states that the government in Oman is a hereditary Sultanate in which succession passes to the male descendant of Sayyid Turki bin Said bin Sultan (Owtram, 2004). However, Sultan Qaboos who has ruled Oman since 1970 has gradually tried to establish public political participation. Qaboos made the first step towards public

political participation in 1981 when he formed the State Consultative Council. The membership of the SCC was extended from 45 members in 1981 to 55 members in 1984, from whom 18 members represent the government, 25 represent the Omani districts and 12 represent the private sector. None of the members was female. All SCC's members were chosen from the leading Omani family by Sultan Qaboos personally. The sultan paid attention to the need to balance the tribal representation in the Council when he appointed members of the SCC. Due to the failure of SCC as an advisory body for the Government, and the fact that the procedure used to nominate its members was impractical, the political leadership decided to replace it with the Oman Consultative Council (Alhaj, 2000; Rabi, 2002; Peterson, 2004b, Jones and Ridout, 2005, Cecil, 2006).

Sultan Qaboos announced the establishment of the Oman Consultative Council in 1990. It was proposed that all 59 districts in Oman be represented in the OCC and that the members should be chosen without any interference from the Government. At its formation in 1991, only chosen citizens from the 59 districts were allowed to elect 3 candidates from whom the Government could appoint one member to represent the district. In 1994, the membership of the Council was extended to include 80 members. The districts with less than 30,000 people were allowed to elect two people, from whom the Government will appoint one, and the districts with 30,000 or more were allowed to elect four, from whom only two would be chosen to represent the districts in the OCC. In this formation women were allowed to stand for the election and two women were appointed as members in the OCC. In 2000 the number of the electorate extended to 115,000, of which 30 % were women. Women across the country were allowed to stand for the election and vote to choose their representative. In the 2003 elections, all Omani citizens over 20 were allowed to elect their representative. The 2003 elections were the first elections in Oman held under adult suffrage. This adult suffrage was granted in the last formation of the OCC which took place in 2006. Although some commentators believe that the OCC is a strong indication of democratic process in Oman, others believe that it seems to touch the surface of democracy as its role is limited to some social and economic matters and it remains far from being a legalisation process (Alhaj, 2000; Rabi, 2002; Peterson, 2004b; Jones and Ridout, 2005; Cecil, 2006).

The crucial question is: can a democratic system coexist with deep-rooted authoritarian elements? Several studies have revealed that the development of democratic political institutions depends on a political culture which includes generalized support for democratic political forms and embracing specific democratic values, such as respect for political competition and tolerance of diverse political ideas (Sullivan and Transue, 1999; Tessler, 2002). It is almost certain that Omani people, just like other Muslims and Arabs as well as the people of the developing world, do not have such a culture. According to Chaffee *et al.* (1997: 313) political education scholars in the developing world should direct their efforts towards "practical interventions to inculcate normative values and skills that are taken for granted where democratic intuitions are considered less fragile".

1.4 Oman and the West

The relations between the Sultanate of Oman and the countries of the West can be traced back to the early sixteenth century. It is beyond the scope of this study to offer a detailed description about Oman-Western relations. Therefore, the following section focuses on the milestones in relations with the United Kingdom, France and the United States. These countries have been found to be actively engaged with Oman in the past and today. In 1506 Alfonse de Albuquerque left Lisbon with the aim of establishing Portuguese control over the Indian Ocean area. The following year he invaded Oman and established Portuguese control in a brutal fashion. Historians indicate that he started his invasion by burning the fishing fleet of Rash al-Hadd. Later he destroyed Muscat and Qalhat, and Quryat. The Portuguese presence in Oman ended after 150 years during the reign of Sultan bin Saif. That was the first impression that the Europeans left on Muscat and its people. However, the demise of Portuguese influence did not mean the end of Western activity in Oman, as it was also of interest to the Dutch, British and Americans (Kechichian, 1995).

1.4.1 Omani-British Relations

In 1798 the Sultanate of Oman and the United Kingdom signed the first Treaty of Friendship. In 1822 London persuaded Muscat to sign two important treaties to ban the slave trade in the Sultan's domination. London persuaded Muscat to sign an accord

which banned the slave trade with Christian nations. This agreement was widened in 1845 to prohibit the slave trade with Muslim countries. Another keystone treaty in Omani-British relations was the 1951 agreement. This agreement focused on improving commercial relations and granted both sides most favoured nation status (Kechichian, 1995; Owtram, 2004)

When Sultan Qaboos came into power in 1970, he was entirely aware that he needed British military aid to defeat the Dhufar rebellion- a revolution which began in the south of Oman in 1963 by radical Marxists and ended in 1975 (Ladwig III,2008). Therefore he aspired to foster the Omani-British military relationship. In the early years of his rule British firms were greatly favoured by lucrative Government contacts. Some Omani people opposed giving London this largesse. Throughout the 1980s Britain encouraged Oman to modernize its military infrastructure and enhance its cooperation with Western powers. In November 1980, Muscat signed an agreement with British Admiral of Fleet Sir Terence Lewin for the refuelling of Royal Navy ships at Mina Qaboos. During the same year British officers were transferred to serve with Omani forces. In 1981, Prime Minster Margaret Thatcher and Sultan Qaboos agreed to appoint General Sir Timothy Creasey, the former Commander of British Land Forces, as Chief of Staff of the Omani Armed Forces for a two-year period. Little attention was paid to Omani public opinion and according to a senior British advisor, "When you have a family of children you don't consult with them until they have grown up a bit". Under Sultan Qaboos' programme of Omanization, these key positions are today held by Omanis (Kechichian, 1995; Owtram, 2004).

Military relations between Oman and the United Kingdom have become stronger since the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait. According to the "White Paper on Defence Estimates for 1991" Muscat extended unconditional and unlimited assistance to Operation Granby (the UK part of Desert Storm) by making its airfields available to British aircraft (Kechichian, 1995; Owtram, 2004).

1.4.2   Omani-French Relations

The Omani-French relations date back to the 17th century, with Oman being the first Arab country to establish diplomatic relations with Paris in the 1890s. At the beginning

the Omani-French relations were intended to increase commercial contacts and to enable Paris to strengthen a fledgling presence in the Indian Ocean. Muscat became a favourite stop for ships plying between India and Europe. In 1798 Napoleon Bonaparte aimed to form an anti-British alliance with Sultan bin Ahmed. However, this alliance was aborted as soon as London heard about it. The Omani-French relationship was renewed by Sultan Said who launched multi-pronged diplomatic initiatives with Britain, the US and France. Because the French renewed their presence in Madagascar and Comores, the Sultan adopted far more free policies towards the French. In 1846 the Sultan signed a treaty of amity and commerce with France which was ratified. In 1970 His Majesty Qaboos worked to engage Paris in a more active role in the Sultanate. Not only was he in search of closer diplomatic associations, but more importantly the Omani ruler hoped for better French investments, particularly in the oil exploration sector, and he signed a series of agreements. In 1989 a military cooperation agreement was signed between Oman and the French following the Sultan's visit to Paris (Kechichian, 1995)

1.4.3   Omani-US Relations

The Omani-US relations date back to the late 1700s. Sayyid Sa'id played a major role in launching a commercial relationship with the US. On 21st September 1833 the United States and Oman agreed the Treaty of Amity and Commerce; it was the first accord between the United States and any of the Arab Gulf countries. On 30th April 1840 Sayyid Sa'id's ambassador, Ahmed bin Nu'man, delivered goods and gifts for the President Martin Buren. Nu'man was the first Arab diplomat accredited to the United States, and he received a warm welcome in Washington. However, the growth of the British control through the Indian Ocean region brought US-Omani relations to their lowest level. The warm relations between the two countries were renewed in 1973 when the US opened an Embassy in Muscat and the American Ambassador presented his credentials to Sultan Qaboos. In the same year an Omani embassy opened in Washington and Sayyid Faysal bin Ali Al-Bu Sa'id became the Omani ambassador in the US capital (Kechichian, 1995).

In 1973 the US expressed an interest in benefiting from facilities in Musriah for its military forces. Washington asked London for landing rights in Musriah because Britain had the upper hand in Oman at that time. Both Britain and Oman agreed. In 1975 Sultan

Qaboos signed an agreement with Washington. Relations with US reached a new peak in June 1980 when Oman signed an agreement with the US in which the US were granted access to Omani facilities at Salalah, Thumrayat, Masirh Island, Muthrah, Seeb and Khassab. At that time, it was the first and the only agreement of its kind between the US and an Arab country (Kechichian, 1995).

After the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait Oman participated in the Operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm by deploying troops to Saudi Arabia. It also granted access to the US to its air and seaport facilities. According to Kechichian, (1995) the West in general, and the United States in particular, could not have achieved their success in the liberation of Kuwait had they not been allowed to stockpile military resources beforehand in Oman.

1.4.4   Omani-Western Relations since 2001

The September 11th 2001 attacks on the World Trade Center and Pentagon affected not only the United States but also the Gulf States including Oman. According to Sayegh (2004) this tragedy became a force that motivated change within the Gulf States. Oman, the focus of the present study, continued active military cooperation with Western countries, particularly the US and UK. In October 2001, just a month after the attacks, the military Operation Swift Sword 11 was carried out in Oman between the Omani and British Military forces. The Operation involved the largest taskforce of the British army since the Falkland War (Owtram, 2004).

Furthermore, when George W. Bush declared the "War on Terror", the Omani facilities were used extensively in Operation Enduring Freedom, which was aimed at exiling the Taliban regime despite the Omani pupil protests against this. Pipes (2002) noted that Omani people who are considered to be far from religiously radical protested against the US after hostilities began in Afghanistan. He pointed out that the slogan "America is the enemy of God" was raised by them during their protest against the US and its allies. Similarly, Rabi (2005:548) noted that the Omani press suggested in "December 2001 that the American shelling of Afghanistan coincided with the Israeli shelling of the Palestinian lands', as if it was part of a unified programme that both countries had agreed on". Correspondingly, when the Bush administration decided to invade Iraq, Oman continued to oppose any military action that might be taken to unseat Saddam

Hussein. The Omani public were in line with the government in opposing the US War in Iraq, which generated anti-western feeling among many Omani people (Lule, 2004). To conclude, the relations between Oman and the West have a historical focus on the establishment of military and commercial relations. It is plainly power projection in which Western countries have had the upper hand. These relations are also determined by communicating with a political elite and ignorance of, or the ignoring of, public opinion. This has raised an important question about the level of tolerance towards Westerners and their culture, hence the need for the present study.

1.5 Significance of the Study

In recent years much has been said about relationships between Muslims and non-Muslims, particularly Westerners. However, few empirical studies attempt to address the issue from a Muslim perspective. Esposito and Mogahed (2007) find the vast majority of Muslims silent in regard to their relations with the Western communities. They argue that extremists and experts are the only Muslims that succeed in dictating and popularizing their perceptions on relations between Islam and the West. Therefore, in their recent book en-titled *Who Speaks for Islam? What a Billion of Muslims Really Think* (2007), Esposito and Mogahed paid attention to studying in-depth the perceptions of one billion Muslims who were interviewed by Gallup research teams between 2001 and 2007. These Muslims were neither extremists nor experts who expressed themselves concerning the relations with the West, Western democracy and general Western values and beliefs. My study addresses the same general issues as Esposito and Mogahed (2007) and focuses on this relative gap in the literature concerning Muslims' perceptions of and relations with non-Muslims, particularly Westerners. It differs significantly from Esposito and Mogahed (2007) in two ways. First, it allows a marginalized or underrepresented group, Muslim females, to reveal their attitudes towards non-Muslims, Western people and Western culture. Second, the sample of study is not just of females but of adolescent females, and the study addresses the gap in the literature concerning the way Muslim youths perceive others who are different in terms of religion and culture. This study also provides an insight into the factors affecting Muslim adolescents' tolerance toward others.

According to Levine (1999), tolerance is merely a Western value applied in the Western countries more than anywhere else. Similarly, Rawls (1999) notes that this concept is

closely related to liberal traditions, through which civil and political liberties are guaranteed to individuals. Therefore, until now, the focus of tolerance and teaching tolerance has been primarily based on Western-liberal models. However, by examining tolerance towards other religions, Westerners and Western culture among 10th grade Omani pupils, this study sheds light on the potential of practising tolerance in non-liberal and non-democratic states.

According to Wells *et al.* (1998: 343) "few educational researchers or theorists have attempted to make connections between the economic, political and cultural dimensions of globalization and the policies and practices of education". In agreement with Wells *et al.*, Waks (2003) indicates that the field of educational change focuses on schools and school systems as units of analysis overcoming driving forces of change at the institutional level. By tackling 10th grade Omani pupils' tolerance both before and after participating in an intervention that aims to enhance their tolerance towards non-Muslims, Westerners and Western culture, this study attempts to establish a connection between education and world politics. It tries to examine the capacity of education to address international conflicts between groups far from each other according to geographical criteria, but which converge with each other according to globalization criteria.

As far as I am aware this study is the first study in Oman that aims to evaluate the potential impact of an educational programme on Omani pupils' tolerance towards religions and cultures different from their own. It capitalizes on the unique time frame of the transition from the old educational system to the new system in Oman. Instead of more evaluative studies, particularly of social studies and history curricula, which are often viewed as responsible for preparing Omani citizens to function in the twenty-first century, the present study sets the evaluation in a context in which the role of the educational system in encountering multiculturalism and globalization phenomena is evaluated against an approach which introduces 10th grade pupils to different religions and to Western cultures.

Previous studies that focus on the effects of education on tolerance were found to be correlational studies that aimed to establish relationships between education and tolerance by comparing the level of tolerance of people and their level of education.

However, few causal studies have been conducted to determine the causal relationship between education and tolerance. Vogt (1997) indicated that quasi-experimental and experimental research to compare different curricula motivates the movement of tolerance and education. Therefore this study aims to address the gap in the literature in relation to the use of a causal study to investigate the effects of education on tolerance.

With respect to the complexity and the multidimensionality of the concept of tolerance (as discussed in Chapter 2) and the difficulties of measuring it (Gibson & Bingham, 1982; Godwin *et al.*, 2001; Hurwitz & Mondak, 2002), this study differs from previous studies in two ways. First, this study lends support to the use of both qualitative and quantitative methods to measure tolerance. Secondly, it adopts the multidimensional view of tolerance in which tolerance consists of three parts: belief, affect and intention (discussed in Chapter 3). Examining the differences between the experimental and control groups in these three components might be useful in providing those who are concerned about pupils' cognitive and emotional development with guidelines that may be helpful in developing their cognitive and emotional skills. It may also be useful for those who are skeptical about the aims of the programme to shed light on religious and cultural differences to see the effect of the programme and to understand the intentions at its heart.

Furthermore, this study entails developing an intervention or an educational programme. Therefore, if this programme demonstrates its effectiveness in increasing pupils' tolerance, it will offer an example of pedagogical methods and content that may increase tolerance. In brief, this study will present a model for designing and implementing a social studies curriculum in particular, as well as other types of curricula in general.

1.6   Definitions of Terms

1.6.1   Tolerance

In this study tolerance is perceived as an attitude that is revealed when one dislikes, disapproves, or rejects an object (something, someone) but chooses to put up with and endure what he/she dislikes or disapproves of or rejects. In the literature on this concept, two terms can be found: toleration and tolerance. Some scholars such as King (1976), Lukes (1997), Oberdiek (2001), Galeotti (2001) and Fiala (2003) distinguish between

tolerance and toleration, using tolerance for interpersonal attitudes or as a virtue, and toleration as the description of tolerant acts for social and political principles. Other researchers such as Heyd (1996) and Gray (2003) do not differentiate between the two terms. In the present study tolerance and toleration are used interchangeably.

1.6.2 Western Culture

In the context of the present study Western culture is the way of life of most of the people in most parts of Europe and lands of significant European settlement, primarily North America, but also Canada, Australia and New Zealand. This is also the culture of the people originating from these countries who are living in Muslim majority countries. This culture is developed on the basis of classical legacies such as Greek philosophy, Roman law, Latin and Christianity. It is characterized by liberal democracy, free markets, individualism and a consumer culture (Huntington, 1996a; World Economic Forum, 2008).

1.6.3 Muslims

In the context of the present study Muslims are the adherents of Islam who live in the predominantly Muslim countries and in transitional Muslims communities, including those who have inhabited Western countries.

1.7 Organization of Thesis

The study is divided into seven chapters. Chapter 1 introduces the research context and research environment in which the research took place. Chapter 2 considers the conceptual and theoretical framework of this project by engaging in a critique of relevant literature and theories. In particular, the discussion reflects upon social identity, activity theory and the clash of civilization theory. Chapter 3 contemplates the methodology and the research design. Chapters 4, 5, and 6 present an analysis of data collected through questionnaires administered to and interviews conducted with 10th grade pupils before and after the intervention to assess their tolerance toward religions, Western cultural values and beliefs, and Westerners. Chapter 7 draws the conclusion from the study. The data obtained are summarised and possible suggestions according to the results of the questionnaire and semi-structured interview are put forward. This chapter also provides suggestions for further studies.

2   Chapter Two: Literature Review

2.1   Introduction

This research study examines the effect of an intervention programme on the 10th grade Omani girls' cultural tolerance toward other religions and Western culture is explored. Accordingly, this literature review deals with the area of research. It begins with an exploration of the concept of tolerance, its history and types, and its place in Islam. Later, relations between Islam and the West are discussed. The potential sources of intolerance between Muslims and Westerners are then presented. A theoretical framework of group relations, such as the clash of civilizations and social identity theories, is also discussed. This chapter also presents ways to increase tolerance, such as: inter-group contact, superordinate goal and education. Finally, this chapter ends by reviewing previous research that entails using a programme to enhance tolerance.

2.2   Concept of Tolerance

Tolerance is a puzzling concept, open to several interpretations and explanations. However, three different tendencies can be identified when defining tolerance. First, tolerance can be defined as endurance and forbearance. Stetson and Conti (2005:140) define tolerance as "a policy of patient forbearances in the presence of something which is disliked or disapproved of". Similarly Verkuyten and Slooter (2007) refer to it as an enduring acceptance of practices and beliefs which one disapproves of and rejects. The second set of definitions regards tolerance as an attitude that allows freedom of expression, peaceful coexistence and the concession of liberty to those who dissent with regard to religion, race, caste or custom (Kamen, 1967; Prasad, 1996; Oktem, 1997 Galeotti, 2001; Pasamonik, 2004). The third group of definitions associates tolerance with the affirmation and appreciation of differences. For example, UNESCO (1995) defined tolerance as full acceptance, respect, affirmation and appreciation of diversity in religion, ethnic opinion and ways of life.

The three kinds of definitions differ from each other in specific details. However, they share common principles in regards to the concept of tolerance. The first principle is

that tolerance entails disagreement, and personal rejection of opinions, practices, groups and individuals that are nevertheless accepted. The second principle is that tolerance implies a relationship between two parties: those who tolerate and those who are tolerated. This is in line with Oberdiek's (2001) argument in which he stresses that tolerance entails two different poles: the subjects and the objects. The subjects of tolerance are those who tolerate, whereas the objects are the tolerated. The subjects and the objects of tolerance, according to Oberdiek (2001), can comprise individuals, groups, institutions or agencies which have the power to react and do something. He stresses that not all groups are eligible to be subjects of tolerance since some groups may lack the ability to act as a powerful group in determining whether they should act tolerantly or not. Yet tolerance, according to Oberdiek (2001), suits many groups, individuals and agencies, who are marked by deep differences from those who are in power. A question which may be raised here is: what tendencies should be acknowledged most readily when defining tolerance? Several factors should be considered when answering this question.

The first factor is that the definition that conceptualizes tolerance as an affirmation rejects the ideas of objection and disapproval, which are considered the main thrust of tolerance in other definitions. Therefore the definition offered by UNESCO in 1995 seems to be flawed, as without the presence of objection and disapproval one cannot claim to exercise tolerance. The second factor, the tendency which associates tolerance with liberty, seems to be inappropriate in a political context in which liberalism and democracy have not yet existed. The third factor is that a majority of scholars consider tolerance as an attitude.

Haddock and Maio (2008) define attitude as an overall evaluation of an attitude object. Recently, a considerable amount of literature regarding attitudes focuses on attitude structure. According to Chaiken and Stangor (1987) attitude research is encountering a new movement in which a great emphasis is given to attitude structure. Chaiken and Stangor (1987) highlight the ongoing discussion about whether an attitude is "unidimensional" or "multidimensional". They indicate that the unidimensional view considers attitude as an effective orientation towards objects, whereas the multidimensional view is built on the idea that an attitude has three distinguishable components. One is the cognitive part, which refers to the notion an individual holds

regarding an attitude object. Second, the affective or emotional part refers to the feelings an individual has towards the attitude object. The third component is the intention, which refers to the possible action a person might take when encountering the attitude object (Fraser *et al.*, 2004; Yu *et al.*, 2003). Haddock and Maio (2008) believe that the multidimensional or multi-component model is one of the most influential models.

With regard to the political context in which the study is undertaken, the researcher views tolerance as consistent with the famous formulation of tolerance encapsulated in a quotation attributed to the eighteenth-century philosopher Voltaire: "I disapprove of what you say, but I will defend to death your right to say it" (Stetson and Conti , 2005:50).   Based on the literature that is reviewed in this section, tolerance is conceptualized by the researcher as follows (see Figure2-1):
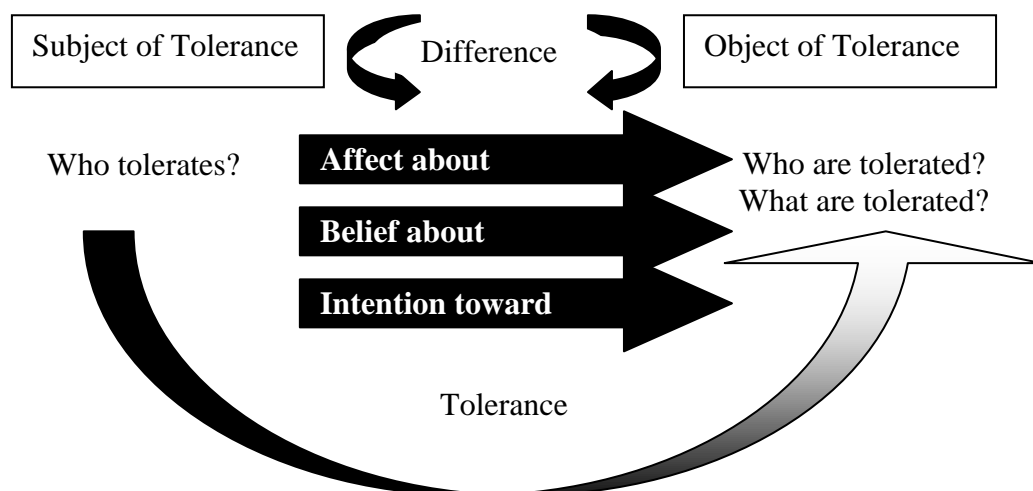
Figure 2-1: Conceptualization of tolerance

As can be seen, tolerance in this study is viewed as an attitude which implies endurance and forbearance of someone or something about which one disapproves or which one dislikes. This attitude is an overall evaluation of feelings or emotions, beliefs and thoughts associated with an attitude object, and ameliorated by restraint or an overarching ideology of acceptance.

2.3   History of Tolerance

Tolerance is a multidimensional concept with many implications for political, philosophical and religious spheres. Therefore, writing about its history is not an easy task. The current attempt to record the history of this concept focuses on the imperative landmarks that contribute deeply to the improvement of the concept, based on the literature that was reviewed by the researcher.

The first significant indication of the concept of tolerance in a major written work was recorded in the thirteenth century, when Thomas Aquinas (1227-1274) wrote his book *Summa Theological*. Aquinas did not invent the term as it was already used by many classical writers. However, he used the concept of tolerance in the same way that it is still used in everyday discourse: to endure, forbear, put up with and allow something to exist. Oberdiek (2001) points out that Aquinas made an indication of the things which should be tolerated by the Church, and of the things that should not be tolerated. Apart from that, tolerance, according to Oberdiek, (2001) did not influence the philosophical and theological doctrine of Aquinas. In other words, Aquinas did not add anything to the concept nor can he be considered to have developed a doctrine regarding the concept of tolerance.

However, the emergence of tolerance as an important virtue coincided with the religions reformation movement in Europe, and began some time in the sixteenth or seventeenth century. Toleration was seen as a necessary application as a reaction to holy war and intolerance, which prevailed in Europe in the Middle Ages as a result of the alliances between Church and states and the frequent efforts from the ecclesiastical authorities to eradicate religious heterodoxy (Kamen, 1967). Therefore, the early advocates of toleration conceived religious toleration, as it is related to religious freedom, and they perceived it as a prerequisite to free Europe from intolerance and prejudice (Zagorin, 2003).

One of the early advocates of tolerance in Europe was John Locke (1632-1704). For many scholars of tolerance Locke is "the leading champion of toleration in the history of British" (Stetson and Conti, 2005: 50). "The Letter Concerning Toleration" which was written by Locke is an influential work on toleration. Locke wrote it while he was

in Holland in 1685 (Nelson, 2002), the same year in which the Edict of Nantes was revoked. The Edict of Nantes was a regulation which was issued in France in 1658 in order to form a relationship between the Catholic State and the Protestants. When the regulation was revoked in an attempt to establish a religious unity in France, the Protestants faced cruel religious persecution and many of them left France to seek asylum. Therefore, the critique of violence and the claim for religious freedom represents an important focus in Locke's thought (Mori, 1997).

For Locke (1963), no one has the authority to compel another to adhere to his or her religion, and toleration must be provided to those who have a different religion because no one knows the true faith and the right path to heaven. In addition, Locke argued for separation between State and Church, and he demonstrated that the civil magistrates must protect civil interests such as life, liberty, health and outward things (Locke, 1963). Although Locke is an important advocate of toleration, he excluded Catholics and atheists from his claim for toleration, and this failure to embrace universal toleration can be viewed as problematic (Lorenzo, 2003).

Another important theorist who dealt with the problem of toleration in Europe was the French philosopher Voltaire. Much of the literature on Voltaire depicts him as a transitional figure in developing the toleration formula in Europe. One of the most important works of Voltaire on the issue of toleration is his essay "The Treatise on Toleration", written in 1763. In that essay, we can find a serious attempt to crystallize a new concept of toleration. He asked for a universal toleration not only from Christians towards those with other faiths, but towards brothers, Turks, Chinamen, Jews and the Siamese. He referred to intolerance as a law of the jungle, which varies from the natural law and human rights (Harvey, 2000). Although the works of Locke and Voltaire and many other advocates of tolerance such as John Toland and Matthew Tindal in England, Kant and Gottland in Germany, and Montesquieu and Rousseau in France (Zagorin, 2003: 293) during the Enlightenment brought to light the importance of toleration as a virtue, much of these works sought to throw light on religious intolerance. The concept of tolerance has also shaped liberalism in the hands of other scholars such as John Stuart Mill (1806-1873).

Unlike the early works on tolerance, which sought to debunk religious intolerance, Mill's work extends the meaning of intolerance to include non-legal practices such as social pressure, ostracism and stigma. In his early work on toleration, Mill paid attention to the characteristics and the circumstances that call for tolerance. He indicated that the emergence of representative government is crucial in suppressing the injustices of a tyrannical elite. However, this emergence creates a situation in which the majority might become the tyrants. The notion of the tyranny of the majority influenced Mill's conception of toleration and led him to widen the scope of toleration. For him toleration was a potential political palliative in any arena of human life in which the majority might intimidate. Mill identifies two agents of majority tyranny: law and social mores. To respond to both of them Mill reconceptualises the relationship between an individual and society. In his conceptualization of this relationship Mill gives credibility to tolerance. He indicates that a society has to tolerate individual acts, beliefs and conducts as long as they are not harmful and do not negatively affect the society. Mill suggested four areas in which the individuals' liberties must be protected. These are: the liberty of conscience, which includes the liberty of thought and feeling; absolute freedom of opinion and sentiment on all subjects; liberty of tastes and pursuits with regard to framing the plan of our lives to suit our characteristics; and liberty of combination among individuals, meaning the freedom to unite for any purpose not involving harm to others (Mill, 1991; Stetson and Conti, 2005; Mckinnon, 2006).

Modern liberalism is based on the precept that there should be equal rights for everybody, so toleration becomes a right for each individual in liberal societies (Rawls, 1999). Moreover, toleration in modern liberalism attempts to be non–judgemental; the acts of individuals are tolerated regardless of their moral worth. To sum up, the concept of tolerance in Europe began as a project of peaceful coexistence among different communities of Christians. Then it shifted to also become a secular right in modern liberalism.

2.4 Types of Tolerance

Widespread attention has been focused on the concept of tolerance; however, a great deal of this attention reveals a various society's treatment of political minorities and the willingness of groups and individuals to extend civil liberties to unfavourable groups. In

other words, most literature on tolerance focuses on political tolerance, which is defined as a willingness to extend basic rights and civil liberties to persons and groups whose viewpoints differ from one's own (Avery, 2001: 1).

In his work on education and tolerance Vogt (1997) adds to political tolerance another two domains, which are social and moral tolerance. Social tolerance refers to a full recognition and acceptance of the identity and uniqueness of differences that are seen as not reducible to invisibility by their bearers (Persell *et al*, 2001: 208). For Vogt (1997: 17) these differences are related to the characteristics people have at birth, such as skin colour, or as a result of early socialization, such as language. However, moral tolerance refers to acceptance of private acts which may have public consequences, such as tolerating homosexuality (Vogt, 1997).

In addition to political, moral and social tolerance, contemporary research, particularly in the field of economic and management, has shed light on another type of tolerance. This has been called cultural tolerance. Gasser and Tan (1999) refer to cultural tolerance as the attitude of an individual toward the customs and social norms of a culture perceived as foreign. The focus on cultural tolerance has been brought to light by what might be called a deep pluralism in contemporary life. The world today is characterized by a multifaceted diversity and heterogeneity of cultures, beliefs, practices and commitments. We therefore have to ask ourselves what can be done to prepare citizens for life in the multicultural global village and how they might be taught to deal with diversity in this 'village'. How can we find the way to peace among differences? For Weidenfeld (2002: 97), the crucial condition for achieving this goal is a successful communication process at the base of which lies tolerance. Tolerance provides a guideline that enables people to better assess their own actions. Competence in tolerance thus constitutes a prime prerequisite for a non-violent settlement of conflicts.

Taking this discussion further will lead us to ask what kind of tolerance can achieve this goal. Is it political, or moral, or social tolerance? These types of tolerance have the potential to endorse peace, democracy and justice in and between nations and states. However, when culture becomes the fuel for many conflicts, we have to give more emphasis to a new kind of tolerance with the core notion of it dealing with the concept of cultures, defined as "the ways and manners people use to see, perceive, represent,

interpret, and assign value and meaning to the reality they live or experience" (de Melendez *et al*, 1997). Religion is fundamental in all accounts of culture (Bowker, 2000); therefore, religious toleration is a very important dimension of cultural tolerance.

The question which may be raised here is: should we tolerate all cultural practices and beliefs? In other words are there limits for cultural tolerance? Stetson and Conti (2005) stress that tolerance should not be extended to every person in every circumstance. Similarly, it should not be extended to every type of cultural conduct and all beliefs. Moral intuition should be applied to determine things or people who should be the object of tolerance. The duty of tolerance then does not take the form 'you must tolerate'; rather, it takes the form 'tolerate what ought to be tolerated'. Tolerance is not a mechanical duty but a duty involving judgment. Therefore, customs, beliefs and individuals who harm others should not be tolerated. Unlike Stetson and Conti (2005), Kymlicka, (1995) argues for the unlimited tolerance of minority groups' rights and conducts. He stresses that failure to acknowledge the rights of minority groups reflects a limitation of liberalism and tolerance. However, not all cultural conduct should be tolerated, as no one should tolerate evil or harm. For example, under one interpretation, wearing an Islamic headscarf or a Jewish skullcap can be considered as things that should be objects of tolerance because these religious symbols do not do any harm to society and its members. Yet covering the face as a cultural habit should be excluded from tolerance as it may pose a threat to the society and its individuals. Furthermore, not only must the cultural conducts which harm the society not be tolerated, but also the cultural conducts that affect the members of the cultural group. For example, female genital mutilation as a cultural conduct of some groups should not be tolerated as it harms individuals or human beings within that cultural group.

2.5   Tolerance in Islam

Morally offensive events in Muslim societies, such as the fatwa against Salman Rushdie the author of *The Satanic Verses*, the stoning and imprisonment of rape victims in Pakistan and Nigeria, the degradation of women by the Taliban, the destruction of the Buddha statues in Afghanistan, the excommunication of writers in Egypt (Abou El Fadl, 2002a), the trafficking offences against domestic workers and women in Oman, Qatar, Algeria, Iran, Kuwait, Sudan, Syria, and Sudan (Department of State, 2008), and the

terrorist attacks on civilians, have became symbols of what can be perceived as a draconian tradition that reflects little if any mercy towards human beings. These incidents have also greatly harmed attempts to portray Islam as a religion of peace and tolerance, and have caused non-Muslims to question the compatibility between Islam and tolerance.

A number of scholars have argued that Islam and tolerance are mutually inclusive (Abou El Fadl, 2002b), whereas others emphasize some areas of incompatibility of Islam and tolerance. They suggest that Islam is a hindrance to tolerance. Religious liberalization, an individual's right to renounce Islam and the rights of non-Muslims in Islamic societies are often cited in order to support the claim for the Islamic encumbrance of tolerance. The advocates of this group believe that Islam obliterates religious freedom by applying the penalty of death for apostasy. Similarly, the rights of non-Muslims in Islamic societies epitomise the lack of tolerance endemic to Islam. Islamic law categorizes citizens of an Islamic state into three religious groups: Muslims, People of the Book (Jews and Christians), and non-believers. Jews and Christians are obliged to Islamic sovereignty and they have to pay a poll tax. They are not permitted to participate in the public affairs of the Islamic state, to hold any position of authority, to proselytize or preach their faith, to establish places of worship which may outshine Islamic mosques in size and magnificence, and to marry Muslim women. Non-believers, those who do not believe one of the Holy Scriptures, have no rights under Islamic law. They are to be killed on sight unless they are granted temporary asylum or safe conduct (An-Na'im , 1987; Kamali, 2002; Baderin, 2003).

Those who oppose this assessment argue that the Quran and Hadith (narrative reports of a saying, precept, or action of the Prophet Muhammad) provide foundations for tolerance within Islam. They argue that the facts stated as evidence of the Islamic flouting of tolerance mirror a misconception of the Quran's verses and Prophet Muhammad's teaching. They indicate that religious liberation is guaranteed in Islam. The Quran declares that "there is no compulsion in religion" and of the Quranic text which was addressed to Prophet Muhammad it states: "had thy Lord willed, everyone on earth would have believed. Do you then force people to become believers?" They draw attention to the Quran verses which restrict religious freedom and note that they are often taken from their historical and textual context. Abou El FadI (2002b: 13-14)

states that: "The puritans construct their exclusionary and intolerant theology by reading Quranic verses in isolation, as if the meaning of the verses were transparent-as if moral ideas and historical context were irrelevant to the interpretation". Similarly, they indicate that the Prophet's words that seem to validate the penalty of death for apostasy suffered from a weak transmission[2]. Kamali (1997) indicates that the death penalty was not used to punish anyone during the Prophet Muhammad's life. Tyler (2008) draws attention to the Hadith, which exhibits how tolerance is embedded in Islam and how tolerant was the Prophet Muhammad.

With regard to the rights of non-Muslims in Islamic societies, the advocates of the compatibility of Islam and tolerance believe that the position of non-Muslims in Islamic societies is often exaggerated. They point out that Jews and Christians are considered to be the nearest people to Muslims. Both are given the honorary title of People of the Book; they are fellow believers in the one God and share beliefs in the same prophets. The three religions also share a general moral code (Hathout, 1995; Paterson, 2004; Peters, 2004). Similarly, Mayer (1995: 127-128) stresses that Islam has tolerated religious minorities. She maintains:

> Despite incidents of discrimination and mistreatment of non-Muslims, it is fair to say that the Muslim world, when judged by standards of the day, generally showed far greater tolerance and humanity in its treatment of religious minorities than did the Christian West. In particular, the treatment of Jewish minority in Islamic societies stands out as fair and enlightened when compared with the dismal record of Christian European persecution of Jews over the centuries.

2.6   Relations between Islam and the West

In international relations, few issues have generated as much debate as that of Islam-West relations. Since the collapse of communism in the late 1980s, relations between Islam and the West have become a substance of continuing international apprehension, one which has generated interest among scholars as well as politicians in both Western and Islamic circles. In 1958 President Eisenhower informed his staff that Arab people

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[2] Prophet Muhammad's words are widely known as Hadiths. Those Hadiths constitute the second source of Islamic legal law in Islam Therefore a great deal of attention has been paid to validate them. The process of validation involves validating the text and individuals involved in passing these texts on to the compiler (Günther, 2005).

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had a campaign of hatred against the US and thus the West (Chomsky, 2003). The Western preoccupation with finding an answer to this assertion was renewed with the September 11 attacks in 2001, the Bali nightclub bombings in 2002, and the London bombings on July 7, 2005: in short, with each terrorist attack that involves Muslims.

Recent research studies that focus on the relations between Islam and the West show now at one of their most critical stages. For example, a Gallup Poll of the Islamic world in 2002 shows that Muslims do not think that people in the United States and the West respect Arabs or Islamic culture or religion. Muslims believe that Westerners do not show concern about Muslims and do not attempt to improve communications with Muslims. The majority of Muslims surveyed state that they disrespect Westerners for what they believe and denounce as their undisciplined and immoral lifestyles. The lifestyles and cultural values which are negatively associated with the Western people include vulgar or immoral activities, such as libertine attitudes toward sex, alcohol consumption, vulgarity and nudity in films and music, and inappropriate dress and/or hairstyles (Newport, 2002, Gallup Poll, 2002). In addition, the vast majority of Muslims believe that the West threatens Islam and that their country may be threatened by the U.S.A someday (Wike and Grim, 2007)

Prejudice, as a negative orientation towards members of particular groups (Augoustinos & Reynolds, 2001), and stereotypes, a belief about social groups in terms of the traits or characteristics that they are supposed to share (Baron *et al*., 2006: 213), are one of the main features of West-Islamic relations. The question which may be raised here is: Where does prejudice come from, and why does it persist? Few if any empirical studies try to answer this question; however, perspectives that have been developed to answer the formation of prejudices and stereotypes in general may help.

Allport (1954) stressed that prejudice is a complex phenomenon. He therefore emphasised the need for multilevel and multifaceted models to understand it. In his book, The Nature of Prejudice, he identified six approaches to study the cause of prejudice. These approaches are the historical approach, the socio-cultural approach, the situational approach, the phenomenological approach and the stimulus or earned-reputation approach. Baron *et al.* (2006) see prejudice as a result of threats to self-esteem. They draw attention to the belief that there is a need to establish a positive

social self identity. Therefore, people tend to engage in prejudice towards the out-group in order to maintain self identity. They believe that competition for resources can feed prejudice. They also stress the importance of social categorization in prejudice formation, and indicate the tendency to divide the social world into separate categories: our in-group (us) and various out-groups (them) can be an important factor in forming prejudice.

Myers (2008) indicates that there are three sources of prejudice: social, motivational and cognitive. By social sources he means the prejudice that is formed on the basis of social status and differences, and the perceived need of people to maintain those differences. It also includes the prejudice formed as a result of a socialization process through social agents such as families, schools and friends. Myers (2008) believes that social institutions such as schools, governments and the media can play important roles in spreading prejudice through overt policies such as segregation or by passively reinforcing the status quo. In motivational sources of prejudice, Myers (2008) lists frustration as an important factor in feeding prejudice toward out-groups. He also believes that an in-group's desire to view one group as superior may operate as a motivator for prejudice. Furthermore, Myers (2008) notes that prejudice may occur as a product of normal thinking processes and categorization or organizing the world by clustering objects into groups can result in strong feelings of prejudice.

2.6.1 Sources of Prejudice

As the present study aims to design an intervention to enhance Omani pupils' cultural tolerance mainly towards non-Muslims, Western Culture and Westerners, an attempt will be made to emphasize the reasons that underpin Muslim prejudice towards Western culture in the light of the literature highlighted by Allport (1954), Baron *et al.* (2006) and Myers (2008).

2.6.1.1 The Historical Approach

We cannot understand the background to the prejudice between Islam and the West without examining the history. However, we have to be aware that the notion of the West was not employed in political discourse until the end of World War Two. Similarly, the notion of "Europe" and "being European" was not used in political discourse before the seventeenth century (Rich, 1999: 435). Therefore, the early conflict

between the two parties comes in the form of conflict between the two religions, Islam and Christianity, represented at that time by the Eastern Roman Empire in Byzantium in Anatolia (now Turkey). After the Prophet Muhammad passed away in AD 632, Muslims challenged the Eastern Roman Empire and they succeeded in occupying Syria and Egypt. They started moving westward through North Africa and reached the Atlantic in Morocco. During the time of the Umayyad dynasty AH 83-130 (AD 702-748), a force of Arabs and Berbers crossed into Spain and occupied it and remained there until 1492 when the kingdom of Aragon and Castile ended the Muslims' presence in the Iberian Peninsula (Watt, 1996).

Another crucial occasion in the historical clash between Islam and the Christianity was the Crusades, in which Christians invaded then-Muslim lands in a series of campaigns between 1095 under the declaration of Pope Urban II, with the intention of removing Muslim rule from the Holy Land. Although the crusaders' success in establishing Latin enclaves in the region distressed the Muslims, they failed to entrench Christian power there and Muslim forces, led by the Kurd Salah al-Din al-Ayyubi, routed the crusaders from Jerusalem (Akhavi, 2003; Jensen, 2003).

The clash between Muslims and the West did not end with the Crusades. A new battle was ignited when Ottoman Turks started their fight against the Eastern Roman Empire and conquered the Balkans in the fourteenth century. In addition, Constantinople, the capital of the Eastern Roman Empire, was captured by the Ottoman Turks in 1453; in 1529 and 1683 they besieged Vienna (Simons, 2003; Watt, 1996). However, European imperial expansion in the Muslim world, which took advantage of the collapse of the Ottoman Empire, is highly significant concerning many of the notions that Muslims hold about the West in recent times. Most of the Muslim world yielded to Western colonial rule for periods of between fifty and two hundred years (Chapman, 1998).

Few would deny the heavy-handedness of historical events determining the relationships between Islam and the West. This presence of history is elevated by the collective culture that regulates Islamic societies and shifts the focus from the future-oriented attitudes to past-oriented cultural and historical ones (Sagy *et al*., 2001). Asali (2002:34) describes the Arab collective society as having "a strong sense of history and

… pride in their role in it, so they feel a deep indignity in the chasm that separates their present from their past".

2.6.1.2 The Socio-cultural Approach

This approach advocates that prejudice and stereotypes result from factors embedded in the socio-cultural milieu to which individuals belong. Mackie *et al*, (1996:60) have argued that to "participate in a culture means, at least in part, learning and accepting what the culture believes about one's own and other groups". Differences in social and cultural factors underpin prejudice and stereotypes. However, this review of literature will focus on the main social and cultural divisions between Muslims and Westerners.

2.6.1.2.1 Religion and its Roles

Religion is often considered as central in determining group identity and in developing a positive self as it often involves claims to truth which lead to prejudice, stereotypes and the dogmatic thinking of others who are different in terms of religious belief (Seul, 1999; Boehle, 2002; Rock, 2004; Hunsberger and Jackson, 2005; Verkuyten, 2007). For instance, Verkuyten (2007) investigated religious and national identity among Turkish-Dutch Sunni Muslims in the Netherlands. The study's findings show a negative association between Muslim and Dutch identification; however they also indicated that a total Muslim identification does not necessarily mean low Dutch identification. The study shows that Turkish-Dutch Muslims rate Christians, Hindus, Jews and non-believers quite low. The mean scores for the Christians and Hindus were around the neutral whereas the mean scores for Jews and non-believers were clearly negative. Dutch national identification was found to be positively associated with out-group feelings towards religious groups in the Netherlands. High national Turkish Muslim identifiers had a positive mean score towards Christians, a neutral score towards Hindus, and extremely negative scores towards Jews and non-believers.

In Islamic countries, religion is the most salient component of identity for two reasons. Lewis (1998) argues that that the decisive determination of identity in the Middle East and in the Islamic world is not nationality, nor decent, but religion. He maintains that "in the world-view of Muslims…religion was the determinant of identity, the focus of loyalty and, not less important the source of authority" (p.20). Lewis (1998) further indicates that the effect of religion forming identity exceeds the effect of nationality. He

maintains that "Cairene Muslims may identify themselves with other Muslims as far away as Bangladesh and Indonesia more than they do with Coptic next-door neighbours-unquestionably Egyptian by origin, Arab by language and culture but Christian "(Lewis, 1998:76).

Western societies differ from Islamic societies not only in religion but also in the role religion has in society. The gradual development of modern secular society in the West has led to the separation of religion from the state (or politics). Religion has transformed to become a matter of personal preference for each individual. Western democracy focuses on individual freedom and rights and protects individuals from coercion by the State. However, Muslims do not share such an understanding that religion is only a personal belief and that actions can be separate from beliefs. On the contrary, they are closely associated with laws and regulations governing individuals and society at large (Esposito, 2000; Tamimi, 2000; Li, 2002; Gülalp, 2003).

2.6.1.2.2 Gender Equality

Inglehart and Norris (2003) indicate that the real divide between Islam and the West lies in their perceptions and positions in regard to gender equality. The discussion on gender equality and women's rights in Islamic societies is not new; rather, it is a subject of ongoing discussion in which two broad sets of opinions can be identified. The first is that women have no right outside the Islamic boundaries. The advocate of this opinion often emphasises Islamic protection of women's dignity. They often point out that Islamic law considers a man and woman to be equal in dignity, reward and accountability for personal conduct and property rights, morality and religion (Kamali , 2002, Esposito, 1998). The supporter of this opinion criticizes women's liberalization in Western societies. They view this liberalization as being responsible for exploiting female bodies in advertisements, high class prostitution, and the legacy of mini-skirts and tight trousers. They see Islamic models as being superior and successful in creating a community of chastity and decency (Mazrui , 2006).

The second opinion is that Islamic law fails to maintain women's rights. The supporters of this opinion usually focus on civil and political rights guaranteed to woman by the Islamic law. They often claim that the civil rights guaranteed to women by Islamic law, particularly those pertaining to marriage and divorce, seem to suffocate the dignity of

women and make them slaves for males (Esposito, 1998; Sonbol, 2002). They argue that leading religious schools in the Islamic world do not recognize women's eligibility to conclude their own marriage contract and they require the consent of women's guardians to validate a marriage contract. In the best cases women choose to marry who they want, but if he is not equal with her family's economic and social status, or the family considers him to be not "Kif", "Equal", the guardian has the right to revoke the contract. With regard to divorce, they point out that the husband still has the upper hand having the right to repudiate his wife unilaterally whenever he wants. Polygamy is considered by holders of this opinion as a violation to women's rights in Islamic societies (Kamali, 2002, Barakat, 1993). Similarly, women's political rights are suppressed. Religious scholars view a woman as being unsuitable for a public office such as the head of a state, prime minister, judge or governor. Women are denied from being Caliph or Prime Minister as both positions according to religious scholars constitute military leadership, which women are not entitled to. This argument is often considered by some scholars as a simplification of a limited case and this biased view depends on selective reading on some Islamic sources. Some Muslim writers such as Mazrui (2006) consider Muslim societies to be far ahead of the West in terms of female empowerment. He validates his argument by indicating that Pakistan, Bangladesh, Turkey and Indonesia all have a majority Muslim population and have had women prime ministers.

Women's position in the Islamic era is far better from their situation in the pre-Islamic period. Islam maintains women's religious and moral equality with men before God. Women also enjoy economic rights (Esposito, 1998; Sonbol, 2002). However, disempowerment of women in Muslim societies can be demonstrated on the basis of two factors. Firstly, the Quran is not a law book. It does, however, offer principles and guidelines that were integrated into Islamic law through selection and interpretation. The interpretation of the Quran is a task of male scholars. Consequently it is not an unexpected interpretation that the Quran is used to maintain male superiority. Secondly, Islam has reformed the tribal system but it has not replaced it. Therefore, Muslim societies continue to be patriarchal societies in which the hierarchy of power is controlled and dominated by males (Joseph, 1996). In such a patriarchal society in which male scholars are often the interpreters of the Quran and the generators of law, it is not surprising that women are considered as distractions that might hinder males in

doing their social and religious duties. Therefore, they must be veiled and covered to protect the males from distractions (Esposito, 1998; Riphenburg, 1998; Sonbol, 2002; Mernissi, 2003). Scholars such as Maumoon (1999) draw attention to another factor, which is that women can have aspirations to gain certain benefits from the patriarchal system in which responsibilities are shifted to men. Werbner (2007) believes that the opposition to gender equality in Islamic societies constitutes an important part of the movement against Western colonialism which is viewed by some Muslims as an attempt to secularize and liberate women.

To conclude, it is important to state that Islam has forbidden female infanticide, which was customary in pre-Islamic times. However, Islamic societies continue to kill adult females for honour (Araji and Carson, 2001). For example, the honour killing rate in Jordon constitutes between 20 and 30% of the total murders in Jordan, and 70% in the West Bank and Gaza. Similarly between 25 and 35 honour crimes were reported in Lebanon in 2001 (Warrick, 2005). This crime is widespread in Egypt, Syria, and Yemen and other Muslims countries (Douki *et al.*, 2003; Warrick, 2005). In addition, women in Muslim societies are discriminated against, mistreated, and denied their fundamental rights. Their rights in education are suppressed, the veil imposed on them, and their roles are often limited to maternity and housewifery (Ramadan, 2001).

2.6.1.2.3 <u>Democracy</u>

Some scholars suggest that another deep divide between the Islamic and the Western societies lies in Islamic attitudes toward democracy. A wide range of opinions can be found on the relationships between Islam and democracy. Firstly, there are some scholars who view Islam as compatible with democracy. Hofmann (2004) views Islam and democracy as compatible. He claims that in order for Muslim countries to construct a strong democracy, considerable attention must be given to establishing civil institutions and spreading a civil culture among the Muslim public. Others, such as Esposito (1996), argue that those who maintain democracy and Islam are not compatible make two faulty assumptions: they assume that democracy can only be implemented in one form, and that there is only one expression of Islam.

Secondly, some scholars see Islam as hostile towards and incompatible with democracy. Among those who argue against the compatibility of Islam and democracy is Huntington (1996b). Huntington believes that Islam as a religion is inherently an obstacle to democracy. He qualifies his assertion by noting that Islam denies the possibility of separation between religion and the State. It seems erroneous to suggest that Islam as a religion underpins the failure of the Islamic countries to establish stable, modern democracy because religion and "religious injunctions are nothing but our understanding of them; they are what we make them to be" (Bayat, 2007: 5). However, as Huntington (1996b) argues the Islamic conceptualization of the relations between religion and the state does seem to be problematic and pose a challenge to democracy.

The relationship between Islam and the state is best conceptualized by Lewis (1987: xvi-xvii) who states that:

> The true and sole sovereign in the Muslim view was God, from whose mandate the Prophet derived his authority and whose will, made known by revelation, was the sole source of law. The *umma (nation)* thus expressed from its inception the fusion of politics and religion characteristic of the later Islamic states. . . . In the Islamic world, therefore, there could be no conflict between Pope and Emperor, for the powers which these two represented were one and the same.

Literally, democracy means the rule of people. Taking into account that the basic rule in Islam is submission to God or recognition of God's sovereignty, the Islamic discourse on democracy is often captured in debating the rule of God. This debate results in the democracy gap between Islamic countries and other countries in the world. A non-Islamic country is nearly three times more likely to be democratic than an Islamic counterpart. García-Rivero and Kotzé (2007: 614) refer to the democracy "crisis" in the Islamic world, stating that: "While countries all over the world began to democratize during the so-called 'third wave of democracy', the route to democracy seems to have deviated extensively in the region under study".

Theology, doctrine, and historical precedent have been often the focus of debates about the compatibility of democracy and Islam (Tessler, 2002). However, less attention has been paid to Muslim people's perspectives about democracy. Evidence from studies that focus on the ordinary Muslims' attitudes towards democracy show that Muslims

regularly value democracy and believe that it would suit their societies (Tessler, 2002, Inglehart and Norris, 2003; Esposito and Mogahed, 2007).

2.6.1.2.4 <u>Sexual Liberation</u>

One of the deepest divides between Islamic and Western societies concerns the attitudes towards gender equality and sexual liberation. The concept of sexual liberalization is probably difficult to understand by Muslims as the notion of the sinfulness of sex is imbued in their beliefs since their childhood (Patai, 2002). Concepts such as decency and modesty are the embodiment of the Muslim value system and regulate many aspects of daily life. It determines their code of dress, for example, as it is believed that men and women should not wear tight or transparent clothes which draw attention to their sexual traits. A Muslim woman is required to cover all her body except her face in public. Modesty forms Muslim attitudes towards sex. For Muslims the use of photographic books, films and videos in which sexual behaviour or pictures are portrayed, looking intently at people of the opposite sex, and watching people kissing on TV or on the street are against this principle of modesty (Halstead, 1997; Maumoon, 1999).

Unlike Western societies in which pre-martial sex, extra-marital and same-sex relations are viewed as acceptable conduct, Islamic societies only permit sexual relations which take place in the family frame between husband and wife. A sexual revolution according to Christensen and Gregg (1970) swept the US in the 1950s and 1960s and caused a wave of change in sexual culture in that country. Of course, the change was not confined to the US and it flourished in other Western societies. However, it should be emphasized that sexual divergence between Islamic and Western societies has widened recently as a result of the technological revolution and social progress that has taken place in Western societies.

Interestingly, some authors indicate a convergence between Islamic and Western family values until the two world wars. Premarital sex was considered forbidden and socially intolerable behaviour in the West until after the Second World War. Today premarital sex is widely accepted in the West. Similarly, homosexual acts were a crime in most of the Western world in the first half of the twentieth century. Nowadays, homosexual acts

have become legal in America and throughout Western Europe (Mazrui, 1997; 2006). Scholars such as Inglehart and Norris (2003) believe that the real cultural fault line between Western and Islamic societies is over "eros not demos": it is sex rather than democracy which separates Islamic and Western societies.

2.6.1.3 The Situational Approach

If we overlook the historical background and the cultural approach we are left with a situational approach or current forces, as Allport (1954) has indicated. The current force plays a substantial role in causing mutual prejudice between the two different cultures (MacKuen and Brown, 1987; Burbank, 1997; Blake, 2001). There are at least five factors in the situational approach, which might explain the prejudice between Muslims and the West. The first is the deep socio-economic development gap between Europe and the neighbouring regions of North Africa and the Near East. On the basis of a theory of identity, there is a tendency to upgrade or value more highly other countries similar to one's own or with higher levels of development, and to undervalue those countries with significantly lower levels of development. From the viewpoint of Arab-Islamic countries, the corresponding process concerning Europe—a region doubtless higher in its level of development—may have contradictory trends (Haller, 2003). Furthermore, Muslims believe that the West dominates the economy in the Muslim world and that the West has established a new war against the Muslim economies by the creation of a safe market (Chapman, 1998).

Secondly, the attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon on September 11 2001 by Al Qaida, the apotheosis of one ideological Islamic fundamentalist group, have left their mark on relations between Muslims and the West. For example, Western governments have sometimes interpreted these events from the angle of a clash between two civilizations. Tony Blair, the British Prime Minister, called it "a war against civilization." The Italian Prime Minister, Silvio Berlusconi, asserted that Western civilization was superior to Islam and asked his fellow Europeans to conquer, and occidentalise this backward world "1400 years behind" (Mufti, 2001). The war against terror, which was launched by George W. Bush's administration, can therefore be viewed as a new crusade against Islam by the West. Undoubtedly, the September 11, 2001 and July 7, 2005 attacks caused a backlash of discrimination and violence

affecting not only Arabs and Americans but also other ethnic groups, which had certain characteristics, which led the opposing sides to mistakenly believe they were taking actions against one another (Ulrich, 2003).

The third factor is the United States' war on Iraq, which started on March 19, 2003, and which has contributed significantly to materializing a new layer of hostile feeling against the West in Arab States and throughout the Muslim world (Lule, 2004). Public opinion in Arab and other Muslim countries is highly opposed to the war. Most Arabs and Muslims see the war not as being aimed at freeing the Iraqi people but as targeting Muslims and Arabs. Most have perceived American designs on Middle Eastern oil, or a collaborative effort with Israel's Ariel Sharon to reshape the Middle East (Telhami, 2003; Dunn, 2003). In addition, the abuse and humiliation of Iraqi prisoners by the occupying authorities inflamed not only the feelings of prejudice but hatred against the West (Whitaker *et al*., 2004).

The fourth factor is the Danish Cartoon Crisis. In September 2005 a large Danish liberal–right newspaper, Jyllands Posten, published 12 cartoons in which Prophet Mohammed were depicted satirically. As a result Muslims all over the world protested against these cartoons and engaged in boycott of Danish goods. The protest against these cartoons reached its peak in late January/early February 2006 (Sturges, 2006; Olesen, 2007). The public in Oman engaged in a boycott of Danish goods.

Finally, the on-going Arab–Israel conflict dated back to 1948 (Schulze, 1999) and the role of Western colonialism in the growth of the Jewish state in Palestine in the middle of the twentieth century have contributed to the poor relations between Muslims and the West. Nowadays, many Muslims believe that America and Israel are two sides of the same coin. In their view, America closes its eyes to atrocities committed by Israel against Palestinians and the West holds double standards in its judgments of Arab and Muslim Countries (Chapman, 1998; Taheri, 2002; Hoveyda, 2004).

2.6.1.4 Psychodynamic Approach

The psychodynamic approach assumes that prejudice and stereotypes are formed as a result of people's efforts to construct, preserve and protect specific self-images, and to evade the aversive feelings that could result from threats to self-esteem (Newman *et al*,

2005). The concept of self-esteem is one of the most important in "self-industry" (Cigman, 2004: 41). The relationship between self-esteem and discrimination has been investigated in many studies. The findings that have emerged consistently from these studies are that evaluations of an out-group are related to the evaluation of the self. This finding is supported by two types of studies: firstly, those that associate high levels of prejudice with low self-esteem; and secondly, those that show that individuals with low self-esteem tend to be prejudiced towards the members of the out-group (Crocker and Luhtanen, 1990; Verkuyten, 1996).

Hogg and Abrams (1990) have advanced two informal corollaries from Turner and Tajfel's exposition of the importance of self-esteem. These corollaries are known as the "self-esteem hypothesis". The first corollary states that "successful inter-group discrimination enhances social identity and thus elevates self-esteem. Self-esteem is a "dependent variable, a product of specific forms of inter-group behaviour" (Hogg & Abrams, 1990: 33). The second corollary states that "depressed or threatened self-esteem promotes inter-group discrimination because of a need for self-esteem. Self-esteem is an independent variable, a motivating force for specific forms of inter-group behaviour (Hogg & Abrams, 1990: 33).

Smurda *et al* (2006) tested the effect of a threatened social identity on implicit self-esteem and inter-group attributions. The self-esteem hypothesis corollaries are measured before and after participants provide inter-group attributions for identity-threatening events. The findings of the study support the hypothesis that identifiers experiencing a high threat to their group status will show a high amount of in-group bias or favouritism behaviour. It is found also that strong group identification is associated with in-group-favouring attributions in both high-and low-threat conditions. Measuring the implicit self-esteem on two different occasions shows a positive relationship between self-esteem in both high-and low-threat conditions. In high-threat conditions, this relationship is interceded by in-group-favouritism. The findings of the study suggest that participants with high-group identification had lower implicit self-esteem in a high-threat condition than in a low-threat condition.

Self-esteem is not only affected by group status and identification - it is also affected by socio-economic status (SES). Twenge and Campbell (2002) conducted a meta-analysis

study using 446 studies to investigate the relationship between self-esteem and SES. The findings suggest that there is a positive relationship between the two variables. The effect of SES on self-esteem is reported to be insignificant during childhood. However, the study shows that this effect is increased considerably during early adulthood and middle age. Then it drops for senior adults or adults over 60. The findings reveal that women's self-esteem is affected by SES more than men's self-esteem.

2.6.1.5 Phenomenological Approach

In order to understand this approach it is essential to conceptualize the meaning of phenomenology. Phenomenology refers to "description of things as one experiences them, or of one's experiences of things" The aim of phenomenology is to reveal the "essences" of experiences or appearances and to describe their underlying "reason" (Cope, 2005). Consequently, the phenomenological approach to prejudice and stereotypes focuses on prejudice that is formed or created as a result of individuals' experiences with out-group individuals. Therefore, it is alleged that participants' experiences of non-Muslims, Westerners and Western culture may be affected by their experiences with these categories.

2.6.1.6 Earned Reputation Approach

This approach views prejudice and stereotype as the result of an earned reputation of the out-groups. Allport (1954) indicated that the ideas gratuitously thrust upon a group may frame individuals' prejudice. As discussed earlier in this chapter, non-Muslims, Westerners and Western cultures seem to have bad reputations among Muslims. For example, a study conducted by Pew Research Centre (2006) shows that Muslims surveyed in Jordan, Turkey, Egypt and Nigeria associate negative traits with Westerners. They described Westerners as greedy, arrogant, immoral, selfish and violent.

2.7 Group Relations Theory

Group relations theories may be useful in studying Omani girls' tolerance toward non-Muslims, Western culture and Westerners. One of the important group relations theories is the social identity theory. Another theory concerning international relations which

focuses particularly on the relations between Westerners and non-Westerners is the clash of civilization theory.

2.7.1 Social Identity Theory

The interest in the concept of identity has grown noticeably in the humanities and social sciences in the last few decades. This growth may be explained in light of an identity crisis in the contemporary world in which individuals around the globe are keen to protect their identity. One of the important articulations on identity is the social identity theory. The social identity theory is a social-psychological theory which has focused in its classic version on large-scale inter-group relations and the analysis of prejudice, discrimination, social conflict and social change. The origin of this theory lies in the early work of the British psychologist Henri Tajfel on the perceptual accentuation effect of categorizations, cognitive aspects of prejudice, effects of minimal inter-group relations, and social group comparison and inter-group relations (Turner *et al*, 1987; Rubin and Hewstone, 1998; Aberson *et al.*, 2000; Huddy, 2001; Yuki, 2003; Cameron *et al*., 2005, Smurda *et al*., 2006).

In 1971 Tajfel and his colleagues conducted a study on secondary school boys in Bristol, England. The participants were exposed to a series of dotted slides and asked to estimate the number of dots on each. Although dots on the slides could not be counted as they were presented in rapid fire succession, the subjects were told that some of them overestimated the number of dots whereas some of them underestimated the number. At the second stage the participants were divided into two groups: the over-estimators and the under-estimators. Being aware who was in their group the participants were asked to allocate points to each other which could be cashed in for money. The findings showed that participants allocated more points to members of their group, which reflected a strong tendency to discriminate in favour of in-groups rather than out-groups. Individual's favourism for an in-group, which had been shown in this study, has become central to Tajefel's work and subsequently to the focus of social identity theory, which has been developed and formulated in collaboration with John Turner and others at the University of Bristol (Tajfel, 1978; Turner *et al.*, 1987).

Initial research studies, on which this theory is formulated, use what is known as the minimal group paradigm. Tajfel and his colleagues got rid of all characteristics which

are normally linked with groups such as face-to-face interaction between members, conflicts of interest and previous hostility between groups, when he formed the groups for an experiment. Group membership was completely anonymous, the groups were synthetic (created on the basis of trivial criteria), and the participants had no prior record of hostility. Discrimination was not expected; however, surprisingly, favouritism behaviour occurred in favour of in-groups. Tajfel and his colleagues explain these findings in the light of categorization and social comparison processes (Tajfel, 1978).

In the literature on identity one can distinguish between two types of identities. These are social identity and personal identity. Personal identity refers to categorizing the personal self as unique and distinguishable in its traits from other (in-group) persons, whereas social identity refers to social categorization of the self and others who share similarities, particularly value systems, as distinct from others. The concept of social identity is central to social identity theory (SIT). Several definitions can be found for the concept of social identity. Deschamps and Devos (1998) refer to it as the feeling of similarity to some others, and different from personal identity which refers to the feeling of difference in relation to all others. However, this concept is best defined by Tajfel (1981: 255), who refers to it as "that aspect of individuals' self concept which derives from their knowledge of their membership in a social group (or groups) together with values and emotional significance attached to that membership". The theory assumes that individuals define themselves in terms of their group membership and strive to maintain a positive identity and to enhance their self-esteem through association with a positively valued group or through comparison with the out-group.

Related to SIT is a set of assumptions and hypotheses which have been developed by Turner *et al.* (1987) and have come to be widely known as a self-categorization theory. The potential significance of the process of categorization in social identity function has been expressed by Tajfel (1978), who emphasizes its importance in occurrences of inter-group behaviour. Tajfel (1978) indicates that the categorization process has two different aspects. The deductive aspect refers to the process in which the person is assigned some attribute on the basis of his/her membership in a social category. The induction aspect refers to the identification of a person as a member of a certain category (Turner, 1982; Turner *et al.*, 1987).

It is important to emphasize that the first branch of SIT theory developed by Tajfel and Turner has concentrated on the impact of cognitive contrast and assimilation on perception and social categorization theory, whereas the second branch of SIT developed by Turner *et al*. (1987) focuses on the nature of inter-group relations to group status, its legitimacy and stability (Hogg and Abrams , 1990). However, in both parts motivation seems to be an important element in framing groups' behaviours and attitudes. Five variables are identified by Okes *et al.* (1994) to be related to the degree of inter-group discrimination. These are the degree to which the subject identified with the relevant group, the salience of the relevant social categorization in the setting, the importance and the relevance of the comparative dimensions to in-group identity, the degree to which the groups were comparable on that dimension and the group's relative status, and the character of the perceived group status difference between groups. Rubin and Hewstone (1998) add another variable which is self-esteem. The role of self-esteem in discrimination and prejudice is discussed later.

2.7.1.1 SIT and Responses to Social identity's Threats

One of the major achievements of the SIT has been to offer explanations of the diverse responses of members of dominant and subordinate groups to threats to identity. The need for positive distinctiveness, which is the core idea on which SIT is based, leads to the assumption on one hand that members of inferior groups show most in-group bias because of their need to maintain positive identity, and on the other hand it assumes that members of a high-status group have no identity problems. Therefore, they do not need to manifest much evidence for inter-group differentiation (Brown, 2000a). However, taking into account the complexity of social group dynamics these assumptions seem to be oversimplified. Tajfel (1978) avoids such oversimplification by specifying the condition under which in-group bias will be expected.

Tajfel (1978) suggests several strategies to reconstruct positive social identities. He indicates that individuals will tend to remain in their own group and seek membership in other groups if these groups contribute to maintain a positive self-distinction. He suggests that an individual may leave his/her own groups unless a disassociation with the group is impossible for some illegitimate reasons or if this disassociation conflicts with an important value related to his/her self image. Tajfel (1978) further indicates that

when leaving the group becomes impossible individuals tend to change their interpretation of the group so that undesirable traits or qualities are justified or made acceptable through interpretation, or to accept the situation and engage in social action to change it.

Tajfel's strategies of response to threatened social identity are not at all new, as an extensive part of it can be traced back to Hirschman (1970). He identifies two strategies to identity threats. These are: the exit and the voice. Hirschman (1970) defines the exit as the option of shifting from one firm to another as it relates to the decline within the economy. He suggests voice, defined as "any attempt at all to change, rather to escape from, an objectionable state of affairs, whether through individual or collective petition to the management directly in charge, through the appeal of a higher authority with the intention of forcing a change in management, or through various actions and protests, including those that are meant to mobilize public opinion" (p.30), as an option to deal within the decline in the state. However, both strategies may be used to face deterioration in both economic and political contexts.

Identity strategy management or responses to threatened social identity have been central to a huge body of research. In agreement with the SIT, Ellemers *et al.* (1997) examine how group members define the social reality in which they find themselves. Ellemers and his colleagues (1997) demonstrate that members of a lower-status group are more motivated to display in-group-favouring biases than members of a higher-status group. They point out that lower-status groups use various delicate strategies to enhance their social identity without violating consensual definitions of social reality such as claiming superiority on more ambiguous dimensions, in order to balance social reality with group identity.

Similarly, Boldry and Gaertner (2006) examined status power in inter-group perceptions. They suggest that only members of a high status group acknowledge the status difference on negative status traits and perceive the negative traits as descriptive and possessed by a greater percentage of the out-group than in-group members. The study shows that both low-and high-status groups' members perceive their own groups more favourably on irrelevant dimensions or traits that are not related to power or status dimensions. Similarly, Reichl (1997) demonstrated that low-status groups' members

engage in greater in-group favouritism when the measure is unrelated to the status dimension. In contrast, members of high-status groups demonstrate greater in-group favouritism when the measure is related to status dimension than they do when the measure is unrelated to status dimensions.

Furthermore, Karasawa *et al.* (2004) examined the reactions of low-status group members to a threat to their social identity. The study shows that members of low status groups acknowledged their inferior situation and sought a positive social identity by engaging in selectivity of a comparative dimension and by stressing the homogeneity of their group. The participants assigned to a low-status group in the study conducted by Karasawa *et al.* (2004) recognized the disadvantage of their position in resource accessibility, and criticized the in-group. However, when they were asked to judge their in-group on morality traits which had no direct relevance to the status difference, they showed in-group favouritism. Furthermore, the low-status group members judged the in-group members to be more homogeneous in morality.

Another response to social identity threats is ethnocentrism. The term ethnocentrism was first coined by Sumner in 1960. He defines it as "this view of things in which one's own group is at the centre of everything and all others are scaled and rated with reference to it …each group nourishes its own pride and vanity, boasts itself superior, exalts it own divinities, and looks with contempt on outsiders" (p. 27-28). LeVine and Campbell (1972: 1) view ethnocentrism as "an attitude or outlook in which values derived from one's own cultural background are applied to other cultural contexts where different values are operative". Cunningham *et al*. (2004) define ethnocentrism as a trend to develop and preserve negative evaluation and antagonism towards a group other than one's own. LeVine and Campbell (1972) distinguish between two forms of ethnocentrism. Firstly, they identify a naïve form of ethnocentrism in which an individual unreflectively considers his own culture's values as an objective reality and automatically uses them as the context within which he judges less familiar objects and events. Often such individuals do not have enough awareness about the existence of other views. Secondly, they note a complex or multiple form of ethnocentrism in which an individual takes account of multiple points of view but regards those of other cultures as incorrect, inferior or immoral.

Ethnocentrism is a universal syndrome of discriminatory attitudes and behaviours which is attributed to group behaviour (Hammond and Axelrod, 2006). It has many facets. This syndrome reveals itself in a set of attitudes and behaviour towards the in-group and the out-group (Grant, 1992). LeVine and Campbell (1972) list 23 facets of it, some of which were originally outlined by Sumner (1960). The facets of attitudes and behaviour of this syndrome toward the in-group include: perceiving the themselves as moral and superior; seeing the in-group's standards as universal and interracially true; perceiving in-group customs as original; perceiving the in-group as strong; sanctioning against in-group theft and murder; forming cooperative relations with in-group members; showing obedience to in-group authorities; displaying a willingness to remain an in-group member; and the willingness to fight and die for the in-group. The facets of attitudes and behaviour of this syndrome toward the out-group include: seeing the out-group as contemptible, immoral, inferior and weak; sanctions for out-group theft or murder or the absence of sanctions against out-group theft and murder; displaying disobedience towards out-group authorities; a lack of conversation with the out-group; the absence of willingness to fight for the out-group; perceived virtue in killing out-group members in warfare; use of the out-group as a bad example in training children; blaming the out-group for in-group troubles; and fear of the out-group (LeVine and Campbell,1972: 12) .

Ethnocentrism as a response to threatened social identity is discussed by Grant and Brown (1995). Their study illustrates that collective relative deprivation (CRD) and perceived threats to social identity result in a group being more likely to engage in collective social protest actions. They suggest that collective protest actions are a response to the affective component of CRD, such as feelings of dissatisfaction and injustice. Grant and Brown state that deprived groups are more ethnocentric than non-deprived groups, and suggest the deprived groups express their ethnocentric behaviour in two ways. One of these is expressing dislike for the out-group by the expression of spontaneous and negative comments in group discussion. The study demonstrates that anger and the perceived threat of the out group both elevate the rating of out-group dislike. The other form of ethnocentrism consists of in-group/out-group differentiation inline with both the attitude and the stereotyping dimensions.

2.7.1.2 Critiques of SIT

Despite the huge amount of evidence which generally supports SIT, some central arguments of SIT have been criticised (Brown, 2000b). Dobbs and Crano (2001) attribute this mixed result to the use of the minimal group paradigm in SIT research. They believe some elements of real group interaction, especially those which lessen out-group discrimination, are excluded or overlooked in the minimal group paradigm. For example, Diehl (1990) reached a conclusion that participants tend to be fairer with out-group members whom they believe treat them fairly. Other critics of SIT have focused on the concept of identity. Jackson and Smith (1999) argue that the concept of identity which is central to SIT is unclear. They draw attention to the fact that it has been conceptualized differently by different researchers. From their perspective, divisions in conceptual and operational definitions of identity offer a sufficient explanation for the inconsistent findings regarding inter-group bias, self-esteem and other variables related to SIT. However, these criticisms do not change the fact that this theory is powerful in explaining inter-group relations.

2.7.2 Clash of Civilization Theory

One of the most frequently cited theories concerning relations between Islam and the West is Huntington's (1993, 1996b) "clash of civilization" thesis. In this remarkable theory Huntington theorizes about the post-Cold War world. He indicates that this world is multi-polar and multi-civilizational. He argues that "civilization identities are reshaping the patterns and cohesion, disintegration and conflict in the post-Cold War era" (p.20) and that nations perform and behave according to civilizational identities. Huntington (1996) identifies seven or possibly eight major civilizations in the world. These are the Sinic, Japanese, Hindu, Orthodox, Islamic, Western, Latin American and possibly African. The criteria applied by Huntington (1996b) in specifying these civilizations are cultural elements, particularly religious beliefs.

Central to Huntington's (1993, 1996b) argument is his prediction of a shift in the nature of world conflicts. Huntington views post-Cold War conflicts as being inter-civilizational. He indicates that inter-civilizational conflicts will occur at two levels. The first of these is the micro-level, in which conflicts ignite between neighbouring states of different civilizations or within states between groups of different civilizations or

religions. He assumes that micro level fault line conflicts will be very bloody between Muslims and non-Muslims. The other is the macro-level, in which Western civilization clashes with all others, but especially with Muslims.

Huntington's (1993, 1996b) "clash of civilization" thesis, according to Chiozza (2002), "has sent intellectual shock waves through the international affairs and academic and policy communities". According to the editor of *Foreign Affairs* Huntington's article generated "more discussion in three years than any other article they had published since the 1940s" (p.711). Many scholars argue with Huntington's thesis. For example, Roeder (2003) analyzed 1,036 ethno-political dyads (linking 130 governments and 631 ethnic groups) from 1980 to 1999. The results provide empirical support for the clash of civilization thesis, particularly the likelihood of inter-civilizational conflicts escalating in the 1990s as a result of civilizational differences. The findings show that the role played by the civilizational fault line in the escalation of conflicts is more significant than the role played by the socioeconomic context or sectarian differences within a civilization, and ethno-linguistic differences.

However, the clash of civilization theory has been criticized by many researchers. Mellon (2001) expresses reservations about the approach applied by Huntington in identifying the precise boundaries of civilizations. Mellon notes that the fact that Huntington's theory tends to assume the homogeneity of the follower within each civilization seems to be a highly debatable issue, especially within the Islamic civilization which is represented by Huntington as a homolitic and homogenous civilization with all Muslims having the same views. Russett *et al*. (2000) views Huntington's list of civilizations as being capricious and the significance that he attributes to the civilizations after the Cold War as being very speculative and lacking a solid base. The criteria used by Huntington to categorize nation states into civilizations have also been criticised, with other researchers pointing out that these criteria are often unclear and ambiguous. They argue against Huntington's claims in which he views civilizational identities as being more influential than national identities in igniting conflicts in the post-Cold War era.

Furthermore, several studies fail to find empirical support for Huntington's clash of civilization thesis. Chiozza (2002) provides an empirical test of Huntington's theory,

and central to his test is Huntington's argument that states belonging to different civilizations will lead to engagement in international disputes. The findings show that civilizational status has no effect on international conflicts. Contrary to Huntington's assumption, the result illustrates that the civilizational status of states and dyads seems to reduce international conflicts. Another empirical examination of Huntington theory that fails to find support has been carried out by Tusicisny (2004), who concludes that inter-civilizational conflicts represent a small fraction of total armed conflicts in the post-Cold War era.

Another study that refutes the claims made in Huntigton's thesis is Fox's (2004) study. Fox uses a State Failure dataset to examine the extent to which religious conflicts have increased since World War II, whether religious conflicts have become more prevalent than other types of conflict, and whether conflicts involving specific religions in particular have become more common. The results show that both religious and non-religious conflicts have risen since 1945, though religious conflicts have increased slightly less. The results suggest that religious conflicts are more powerful than non-religious conflicts. Regarding the conflicts within specific religions, the results illustrate that conflicts occurring between Christian groups are higher than those occurring between Muslims groups. By focusing his analysis on the post-Cold War era between 1990 and 1996, Fox (2004) reaches the same conclusion regarding the engagement of Christian groups in religious conflicts.

Smiliarly, Russett *et al.* (2000) examines Huntington's clash of civilization assumptions, particularly those concerning the involvement of states of different civilizations in militarized interstate conflicts. They focus on all conflicts occurring between pairs of states for which data is available between 1950 and 1992. The findings show that traditional realists such as contiguity, alliance, power, liberal influences of joint democracy and interdependence provide explanations for interstate conflicts. The findings reveal that states from different civilizations are not likely to be engaged in conflict more than states from the same civilizations. This contradicts Huntington's thesis, which assumes that clashes of civilizations will replace Cold War ideology. The findings show that interstate conflict across civilizational boundaries became less common as the cold war diminished.

Despite all these criticisms, Huntington's clash of civilization thesis is one of the most persuasive theories in the field. The nature of conflicts in the world today and the nature of relations between the Islamic world and the Western world as discussed earlier give support to Huntington's articulation of the clash between cultures or religions, particularly his speculative claim that the Western world will come into greater conflict with the Islamic world.

2.8 Activity Theory as a Method of Change

As stated in Chapter 1 the present study aims to enhance 10th grade female pupils' cultural tolerance. In other words it aims to bring change to 10th grade pupils' cultural tolerance by altering some component of the educational context. Therefore activity theory seems to be a suitable framework for this study for two reasons. Firstly, activity theory is one of the most important theoretical frameworks that has had an increasing impact in the field of teaching and learning. It is found to be useful in introducing change to a social context. Roth and Lee (2007: 188) state that: "This theory is of immense interest to us because it has shown to be fruitful for both analyzing data recorded in real classrooms and designing change when trouble and contradictions become evident in these cultural settings". Secondly, this theory prevails over contradictions between micro and macro, mental and material, quantitative and qualitative, observation and intervention (Engeström, 2000).

2.8.1 The Development of Activity Theory

The origin of the activity theory is rooted in the works of Kant and Hegel, who emphasised the importance of the historical development of ideas and saw humans as active and constructive agents. However, the theoretical and methodological core of the activity is found to be influenced by Marx's materialist view, which conceptualizes activity and consciousness as dynamically interrelated (Jonassen and Rohrer-Murphy, 1999; Engeström and Miettinen, 1999; Holzman, 2006). The philosophical perspectives of Kant, Hegel and Marx provide the foundation for the contemporary Soviet cultural-historical psychology of Vygotsky, Leont'ev and Luria (Kuutti, 1996), on which the activity theory is based. The activity theory is not a methodology; rather it is a "philosophical framework for studying different forms of human praxis as

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developmental processes, both individual and social levels interlinked at the same time"
(Jonassen and Rohrer-Murphy, 1999: 62).

Three generations of research have now gone into the evolvement of activity theory. The first generation focused on Vygotsky's work with children's psychological development. Vygotsky (1978) views the psychological development of children as a process in which two types of development occur: the elementary development which has a biological nature, and the high level psychological functions that originate in the specific socio-cultural context. Vygotsky (1978) asserts that children's cognitive development results from the interweaving relations between the two levels of development. He draws attention to the importance of socio-cultural agents such as parents, teachers, friends and classmates in the occurrence of child development, stressing that meaning is socially constructed and develops from the interactions between children and their surrounding social environment (Vygotsky, 1978).

Vygotsky's assertion on development as an active internalisation of the problem-solving process and a mutual interaction between children and their social environment has shed light on the concept of scaffolding, which is defined as "a framework provided by adult or more knowledgeable peers within which a child may develop a greater understanding of mental or physical activity". Linked to the idea of scaffolding is the notion of the zone of proximal development (ZPD), defined by Vygotsky as "the distance between the actual development levels as determined by independent problem-solving and the level of potential development as determined through problem-solving under adult guidance or in collaboration with more capable peers" (1978: 86). The notion of ZPD is particularly important in educational settings as it highlights the importance of providing children with activities or tools that act as stimuli to development and fall within their own ZPD. These tools and cultural signs are often known as mediation. The notion of mediation is considered to be one of the most stimulating ideas of Vygotsky's, and it is found to connect and unify the three generations of activity theory. The mediation idea is best represented by Vygotsky's famous triangular model in which the direct connection between a stimulus (S) and responses (R) is surpassed by a complex mediated act (Vygotsky, 1978). Building on the idea of Vygotsky's mediation act, the first generation of activity theory is represented as a triangle linking the subject and object through a wide range of mediation means:
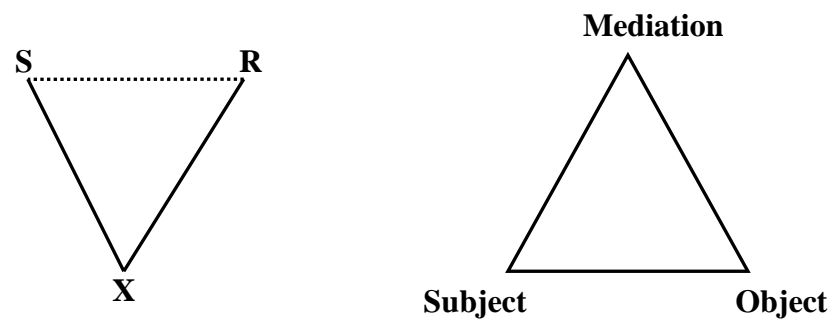
Figure 2-2: Vygotsky's mediation triangle (Engeström, 2001: 134)

The second generation of activity theory research centred on Leont'ev's (1978) theory of activity. Leont'ev's theory is similar to Vygotsky's in its focus on consciousness and the development of higher mental functions. He believes that the formation of human activity is a production of the social and cultural context to which the individual belongs. He argues that society constitutes an external environment which an individual must adopt in order to survive. He points out that this environment carries the goal and motives of individual activities. Unlike Vygotsky who considers goal-directed and mediated processes as primary units of the analysis of psychological development, Leont'ev considers activity as a whole as the core unit of analysis of such development. According to Leont'ev (1978), human activity emerges as a response to human need. Therefore, objectivity and motivation are considered to be important characteristics of practical human activity. For Leont've there is no objectless or non-motivated activity. Leont'ev indicates that practical activity has a hierarchical nature and that it constitutes three elements: the activity, action and operation. He distinguishes between action and operation indicating that the former is related to goals and latter to conditions. Leont'ev distinguishes between individual action and collective activity. His notion about activity is best represented by the mediation triangular represented in Figure2-3. However it should be emphasized that Leont'ev does not expand graphically upon Vygotsky's triangular mediation models.

Engeström refines and formalizes what has been ignored or marginalized in Vygotsky's and Leont'ev's articulations on activity theory. He takes the triangular mediation model created by Vygotsky and develops it in the light of Leont'ev's conception of the activity system which emphasizes the collective nature of activity. As a result, activity theory is

elaborated and the triangular mediation model is improved as new components are added to it (see Figure 2-3). These components are rules, community and division of labour (Engeström, 1999a, 1999b, 2001).
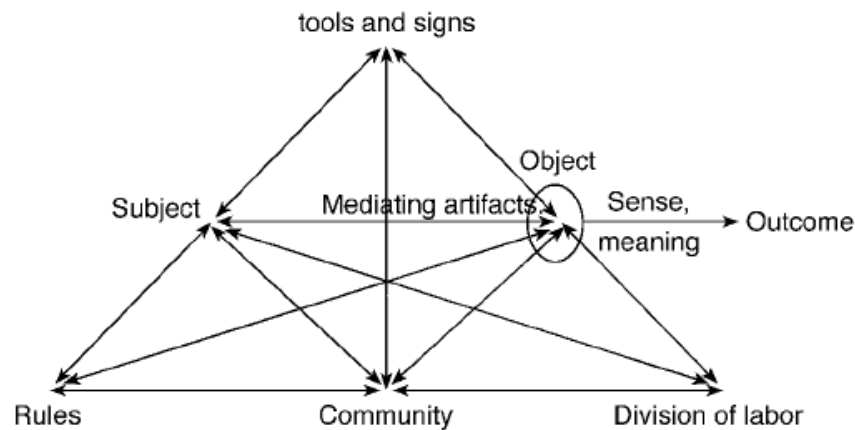
Figure 2-3: The structure of human activity system (Engeström, 2001: 135)

The third generation of activity theory research has emerged in response to the activity theory being incorporated at the international level where it has been challenged by different traditions and perspectives. Therefore, it has been suggested that the third generation of activity theory should be directed towards developing conceptual tools that aim to enable individuals and the community to establish a dialogue and understand diverse perspectives and networks of interacting activity systems. Engeström (2001) symbolizes the third generation of the activity theory as shown in Figure2-4.
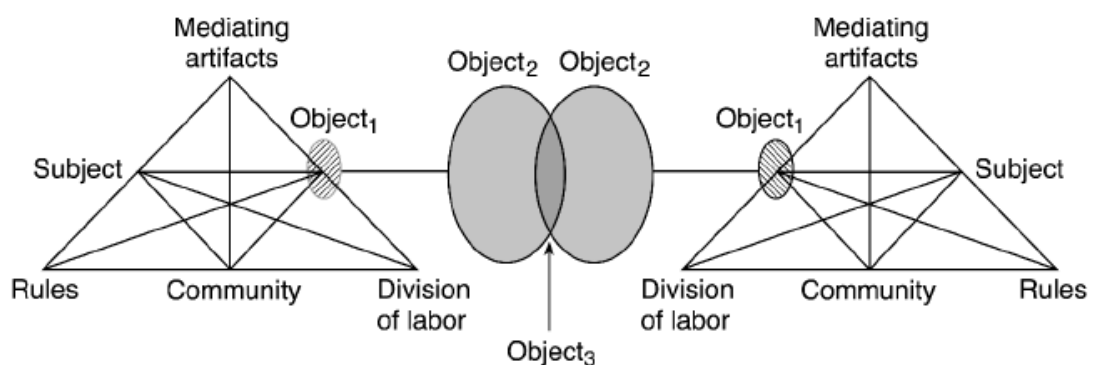
Figure 2-4: The third generation of activity theory (Engeström, 2001: 135)

In this model the activity theory can be summarised in the light of five principles. The first principle is the existence of a collective, artefact-mediated and object-oriented activity system which interacts with another activity system. The activity system as a

whole is considered to be the main unit of activity analysis. The activity systems reproduce themselves by generating actions and operations. The second principle is the multi-voiced nature of activity systems. The activity system is considered as a community of multiple perspectives, traditions and interests which stem from a division of labour. The third principle is historicity. An activity system is formed and transforms over a period of time. Problems that occur within the activity can be understood by reflecting on the history of the system. The fourth principle concerns contradictions within the activity systems as sources of change and development (Engeström, 2001).

Contradictions historically build up structural tensions within and between activity systems. Although contradictions may exist as a result of changes taking place over time within the activity system, they are often exaggerated when adapting to a new element from outside. However, contradictions can be seen as both disturbances and conflicts, and innovative events to change the activity (Engeström, 2001:135-137). Engeström (1987, cited in Turner *et al.*, 1999) classifies four levels of contradiction which may occur within or between activity systems: a primary level, which refers to those contradictions occurring within the single element of the activity system; a secondary level, which refers to those contradictions occurring between different components of the activity system; a tertiary level, defined as those contradictions stemming from interaction between the activity system and a culturally more advanced object; and the quaternary contradictions, which refers to those occurring between two activity systems. The fifth principle focuses on the possibility of expansive transformations in activity systems through collaborative and deliberate collective change efforts from the members of the activity system (Engeström, 2001: 135-137).

2.8.2   Critiques of Activity Theory

Activity theory has long been criticized and even denied by several philosophical and psychological schools because of a lack of clarity concerning core notions of the theory. Davydov (1999) counts eight unsolved problems related to activity theory. Five of these problems seem closely associated with one of the main concepts of the theory. The first problem is related to the notion of transformation. Davydov (1999) observes that transformation is used within the activity theory as a synonym for change. However, he believes that not all changes are transformations. He maintains that many changes accomplished by human agents in natural and social reality do not meet the requirement

of the notion of transformation, which is understood by Davydov (1999) as "changing an object internally, making evident its essence and altering it". The second problem is related to the differences between collective and individual activity. Davydov (1999) argues that little attention has been paid to the differences between these two types of activities, which have again raised a degree of uncertainty regarding the conditions on which collective activity is operated. The third problem has to do with the structure and the components of the activity. Davydov (1999) insists that there are difficulties in defining the general structure of the activity and much research should be done on this concept. The fourth problem concerns the categorization of activities. Davydov (1999) states that this problem is complicated by a variety of meanings attached to the term activity in different languages. *Deyatel'nos* in Russian is seen as exactly equivalent to the word *activity* in English in all of its nuances. The fifth problem concerns the understanding of the concept of communication. Davydov (1999) believes that the interrelation between the notion of the activity and the notion of interaction is not fully understood. He points out that some scholars believe that the role of activity has been exaggerated in social life and a considerable role can be attributed to the notion of communication.

Witte and Haas (2005) give credit to the conceptualization of activities and activity systems as offered by Leont've and Engeström. Despite their beliefs regarding the theoretical and philosophical merit of the conceptualization, they think that it raises several practical limitations. They state that activity theory does not help them to decide on the focus, start or end of their study. Furthermore, they point out that the focus of the research, and its temporal and spatial boundaries, must be decided depending on consideration outside the activity theory. They also draw attention to the fact that using the activity theory, or the activity system as a unit of analysis, limits the researcher's ability to explain the activity in the light of something other than the activity itself.

Despite these criticisms, which have some foundation in the theory structure, recent years have witnessed a wave of educational research in which activity theory is applied (Russell and Schneiderheinze, 2005; Leadbetter, 2005). Activity theory, according to Nardi (1996), offers "orienting concepts and perspectives" and it is "a powerful and clarifying descriptive tool rather than a strongly predictive theory" (Nardi, 1996: 7). Kuutti (1996) describes AT as "a philosophical and cross-disciplinary framework for

studying different forms of human practices as development processes, with both individual and social levels interlinked at the same time" (p.25).

2.8.3 The Activity System in this Study

Activity theory is often used as a mode of change in educational settings. In this study the activity system is the educational system in Oman. This activity system is a collective, systematic formation that has a complex mediation system producing events, actions and operations over a lengthy period of time. The system in this study is best represented as follows:

Instrument: Ministry's textbooks,

Subject
Ministry of Education

Object
Pupils

Rules
Ministry Policy
Time available,

Community
Teachers,
Pupils,
Administrators
and Parents

Division of Labour
Ministry of Education,
School's Principal
Teachers,
and Pupils
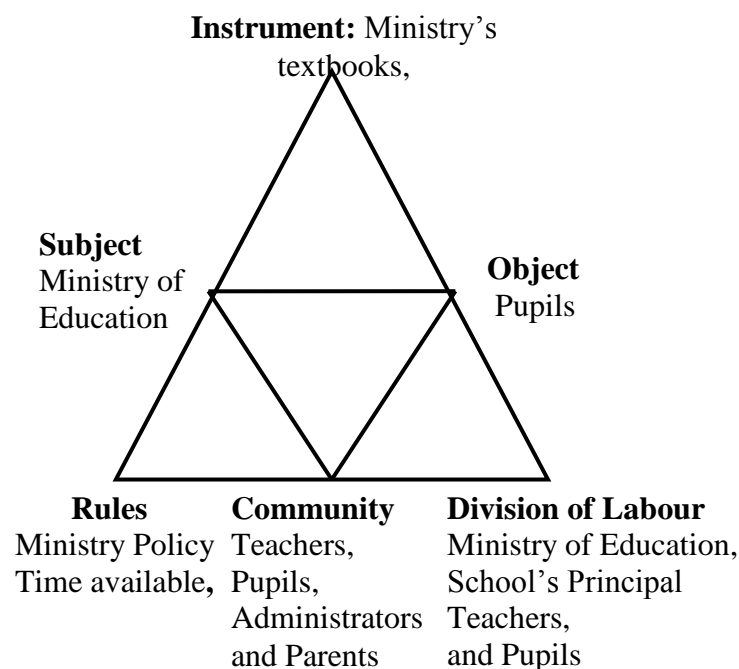
Figure 2-5: Omani educational activity system

As shown in Figure2-5 and discussed earlier, the activity system in this study, the traditional educational system in Oman, consists of many components. The first component is the subject. This refers to an individual or group of actors, engaged in the activity and performing in accordance with conscious goals and tasks embedded in the goals (Jonassen and Robrer-Murphy, 1999: 63; Bedny and Karwowski, 2004). The subject, according to Lantolf and Appel (1994), has accumulated historical and social experiences. The subject in the educational activity system is the Ministry of Education in Oman. The second component is the object, defined as the object that has been adapted by the subject in light of the goal of the activity. The object can be mental or physical and is often a target of the subject's act (Lantolf and Appel, 1994). Pupils are

the object of the education provided by the Omani educational system. Tools are the third element. They refer to an artefact, sign, mediation or instrument. The tools are the core of any activity system. They are created by people under historical and cultural influences and they often carry the historical and the cultural characteristic elements of the context (Lantolf and Appel, 1994). They operate as mediators that stand between the object and the subject, and aid with problem-solving. Vygotsky (1978:55) states that "the tool's function is to serve as a conductor of human influence on the object of the activity; it is externally oriented; it must lead to changes in objects. It is a means by which human external activity is aimed at mastering and triumphing over nature". School texts books are the main tools used in the educational system in Oman. The fourth component is the community. The community is a collection of individuals or organisations who share a set of social meanings. The community in the educational system in Oman comprises teacher, principal, parents and pupils. The fifth element is the division of labour, which points to the distribution of power and authority, tasks, and responsibilities among the participants in an activity system (Witte and Haas, 2005: 138). The labour in the educational system in Oman consists of the Ministry of Education, schools, principals, teachers and pupils. The rules are the sixth component which often functions as guides to regulate work procedures and interaction among community participants (Witte and Haas, 2005). Jonassen and Rohrer-Murphy (1999) consider them as criteria on which socially-accepted actions and activities are determined within the activity system. The rules which guide the action in this activity system are the policies of the Ministry of Education. The seventh element of the activity system is the outcome, referred to as an outcome of the transformation of the object (Bedny and Karwowski, 2004).

Taking into account that the traditional educational system in Oman does not educate the learners about other cultures and religions, the following figure illustrates the researcher's attempt to bring about a change to the traditional educational system. However, it should be emphasized that it is proposed that such a change is introduced at the level of 10th grade pupils.
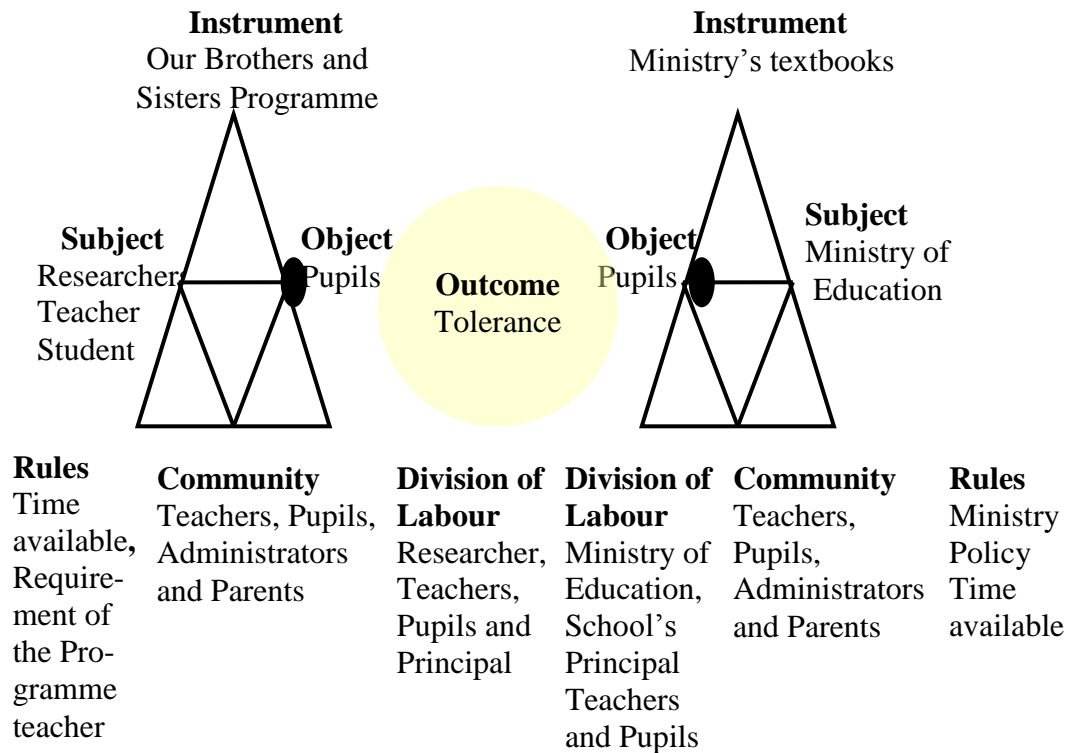
Figure 2-6 : Traditional educational system and the new activity introduced by the researcher as interconnected activity systems (Based on Engeström, 1998)

As shown, the researcher attempts to bring about changes in the educational activity system by transforming some components. She introduces a new activity system for grade ten pupils, and introduces a new artefact in order to achieve the desirable goal. The desirable goal is the enhancement of cultural tolerance among tenth-grade pupils in Oman.

2.9   Enhancing Tolerance

There are many ways to enhance tolerance. Some of the ways are presented in the following section.

2.9.1   Contact Hypothesis

An important benchmark in efforts to improve groups' relations is contact hypothesis. In its simplest form a contact hypothesis, as formulated by Allport (1954), states that interracial contact between members of negatively stereotyped social groups reduces prejudice. Allport (1954) lists a wide variety of contacts. The most important types are:

casual, acquaintance, residential, occupational, and goodwill contacts. Casual contact occurs when the members of different social groups live in the same place. However, this contact does not essentially reduce prejudice. Acquaintance contact is viewed by Allport as effective in reducing prejudice. He indicates that intercultural education proceeds on the assumption that both knowledge about and acquaintance with the out-group lessens hostility towards it. He identifies straight academic teaching in the schools which is based on the anthropological facts and psychological reasons about different races and groups as a way to convey knowledge about people and thus to reduce prejudice. The residential contact, which implies integrated housing, is considered by Allport (1954) as an efficient method in breaking the barriers of communication between social groups. Moreover, occupational contact, according to Allport (1954), should be empowered by involving members of groups in working on the same tasks to achieve specific goals. Lastly, there is goodwill contact. Allport (1954) demonstrates that prejudice can be reduced by engaging people from different social groups in contact that is governed by achieving common goals.

Allport's (1954) contact hypothesis has received support from many research studies (e.g Desforges *et al.*, 1997; Ihlanfeldt and Scafidi 2002; Dovidio *et al.*, 2003; Schiappa *et al.*, 2005). Yet contact by itself is not enough to eliminate prejudice, as certain conditions should be satisfied before contact can be effective in prejudice reduction. Allport (1954) identifies a number of conditions which have been added to and refined by subsequent commentators (Brown, 1995). The first condition is that there should be a framework of social and institutional support for contact. This means that those in authority, such as school principals and their staff, politicians implementing new legalization and judges mentoring its administration, can be effective forces in establishing influential contact and thus reducing prejudice. The second condition for effective contact is that it should be of adequate occurrence, length and proximity to allow the progress of meaningful relations between the groups concerned. The third condition is that contact should take place between equal-status participants because many prejudiced stereotypes of out-groups embrace beliefs about their inferior ability to achieve at various tasks. Therefore, successful contact takes place between members of an equal-status so the stereotypes are likely to be weakened. The fourth condition is cooperation between the members of the groups concerned. Cooperation is identified by Allport (1954) as crucial in prejudice reduction. The underlying principle for this

follows from superordinate goals or realistic group theory (Brown, 1995). The fifth condition is that contact should be achieved through friendly, informal interactions with multiple members of the groups so the individuals will learn that their beliefs about the out-group are mistaken. The sixth condition is that contact is likely to be influential if it is guided with social norms that promote and support equality between groups (Aronson *et al.*, 2007). Contact may be effective in determining tolerance and the relations of the participants of this study with non-Muslims, Westerners and Western Culture.

2.9.2   Superordinate Goals

In 1954, Sherif and his colleagues conducted a social psychology experiment about the creation and reduction of inter-group bias and conflict. This study took place in Robbers Cave Park in Oklahoma where 22 boys attended a summer camp for three weeks. These boys were assigned randomly to two groups. Later these groups named themselves Eagles and Rattlers. After allowing time for group formation, Sherif and his colleagues engaged the two groups in competitive athletic activities. Gradually these two groups entered into conflict. Later, Sherif and his colleagues arranged inter-group contact under neutral, non-competitive conditions. However, this did not resolve the hostility between the two groups. Only after Sherif and his colleagues introduced commonly shared goals did the hostility between the two groups come to be solved (Gaertner *et al.*, 2000; Fine, 2004). Sherif (1958: 349-350) defines superordinate goals as "goals which are compelling and highly appealing to members of two or more groups in conflict but which cannot be attained by the resources and energies of the groups separately".

The effectiveness of superordinate goals has received considerable empirical support (e.g Hunger and Stern, 1976; Brown and Abrams, 1986; Gaertner *et al.*, 2000). Hogg and Vaughan (2008) indicate that opposition to a shared threat from a common enemy can be one effective superordinate goal. They further draw attention to the fact that superordinate goals improve inter-group relations in all cases except situations in which groups that previously competed with one another fail to achieve the goals. They indicate that the failure to achieve the goals worsens group relations. Superordinate goals may be found to be important in determining the ways in which the participants of the present study perceive non-Muslims, Westerners and Western culture.

2.9.3   Education and Tolerance

The relationship between education and tolerance is explored by a large number of studies many of which give strong evidence that there is a positive relationship between the two variables (Colesante and Biggs, 1999; Virgil, 2000; Rodden, 2001; Sebre and Gundare, 2003). However, research on the process that will be implemented by educationalists to enhance tolerance is still of central attention for many researchers.

2.9.3.1 Multicultural Education

2.9.3.1.1   <u>The Historical Development of Multicultural Education</u>

 Multicultural education has developed gradually through an evolutionary process in multicultural societies. Banks (1994, 1999, 2004b) identifies five phases through which multicultural education has been developed in the United States. The first phase concerns mono-ethnic courses which were inspired by the black civil rights movements in the mid-1960s. Banks believes that this movement pressurised the schools and the educational institutions to react to the African American's demands, needs and aspirations. The second phase involves multiethnic studies courses which targeted the needs of other ethnic groups in the United States. Ethnic groups aspirations for effective inclusion of their histories and culture in school curricula underpinned the emergence of scholarly, global and conceptual ethnic studies courses. The third phase regards multiethnic education, which occurred as a result of a wide consensus among educators involved in minority education that the multi-ethnic courses, regardless of their conceptualization, were unable to reform the educational institutions in a way that empowered ethnic groups and brought about equality in the educational context. Therefore, these educators directed much of their efforts to launch a broad reform in which the target of reform was not merely a course: instead, schools and institutions as a whole were targeted for reform. The fourth phase concerns multicultural education in which the interests of the educators broaden to include the problems of other cultural groups such as women, religious groups and regional groups. The final phase is an institutional process. The focus of this phase is the development of multicultural education as a slow process which requires support from boards of education, administrators and teachers.

Similarly, the waves of immigrants from the Caribbean, Asia, and those from other existing or former British colonies to Britain in the post-War era have challenged the educational system in Britain. The spread of xenophobia and racism in Britain and the research findings which demonstrate the failure of the British educational system in meeting minority children's needs transform the educational policy to "racial explicitness" after a long period of being racial inexplicitness (Tomlinson,1997, 1998; Figueroa, 2004). The development of multicultural education in Britain can be divided into three phases. These are: the pre-1980 phase, the 1980s phase and the post-1980s phase. In the pre-1980 phase the educational policy and practice was racially blinded. In other words, little attention was paid to meeting the needs and aspirations of immigrant students. In the 1980s more attention was paid to accommodating the needs of minority students. One of the significant events in this phase was the report released by the Rampton-Swan committee in 1985. Generally, this report argued for a culturally pluralistic society in which all children understand mainstream culture values and appreciate cultural differences. However, this phase ended with a backward step for multicultural education. This step was the Educational Reform Act lunched in 1988. This act focused on market forces and competitions between schools and paid little attention to multicultural education. In the post-1980s phase two stages can be identified. The first stage occupied the early 1990s. In it multicultural education continued to be marginalized. The other stage is associated with Labour coming to power in the UK after 18 years of Conservative rule. The Labour Party won the elections on a policy which considered education as the main concern. The Labour government launched a number of initiatives that targeted the needs of all students, such as the Literacy Hour in primary school, the Numeracy Strategy and regional development (Leicester, 1989; Tomlinson, 1997; Figueroa, 2004).

2.9.3.1.2 <u>Goals of Multicultural Education</u>

Multicultural education is the celebration of different aspects of the home cultures, such as the religion and food of black pupils (Patel, 1994). Banks (1994) identifies two major goals of multicultural education. The first aim is to achieve educational equality between students from diverse racial, ethnic and social-class groups through reforming schools and educational institutions. The other goal is to reform the schools and educational institutions to achieve gender equality in terms of educational access and mobility. Banks (1999) also indicates that other goals of multicultural education are to

help learners to gain greater-self understanding by viewing themselves from the perspectives of other cultures, to provide learners with cultural and ethnic alternatives, to offer all learners the skills, attitudes and knowledge needed to function within their ethnic culture, mainstream culture and across other ethnic cultures, and to reduce the pain of discrimination.

2.9.3.1.3 Dimensions of Multicultural Education

Banks (1994, 2008) specifies four dimensions of multicultural education. The first dimension is content integration. The basis of this dimension is integrating the content from various cultures by teachers to illustrate key concepts, principles, generalizations and theories in their subject area or discipline. The second is the knowledge construction process. This dimension consists of methods, activities and questions used to facilitate the learner's understanding of the impact of cultural assumptions, frames of reference, perspectives and biases on the construction of knowledge. The third is prejudice reduction. This dimension describes the strategies that can be used to eliminate learners' prejudiced attitudes and to help them to develop more democratic attitudes and values. The fourth is equity pedagogy. This dimension indicates the modification of pedagogy by the teachers to facilitate the academic achievement of students from diverse racial, cultural, ethnic and gender groups. The last dimension concerns empowering school culture and social structure. This dimension involves restructuring the culture and the organization of the school so that students from diverse racial, ethnic and gender groups experience equality.

2.9.3.1.4 Multicultural Education and Tolerance

Several studies have taken a preliminary look at the effects of multicultural education courses on tolerance and prejudice reduction. Hill and Augoustinos (2001) report on the effect of the Cross Cultural Awareness programme on prejudice reduction. The Cross Cultural Awareness programme is an anti-racist education course that adopts a workshop format and is used in training by the Court Administration Authority in South Australia and by several Australian governmental agencies. The aim of the programme is to reduce prejudice towards aboriginal Australians who are considered as an indigenous group which constitutes 2% of the Australian population. The programme was taught three days a week as part of a staff training programme. The researchers

applied a quasi-experimental pre-post design in evaluating the programme's effects on prejudice reduction. Differences in participants' knowledge and attitudes concerning Aboriginal Australians were evaluated immediately after completing the programme, and again three months afterwards. The direct measure reports that the Cross Cultural Awareness programme was effective in expanding participants' knowledge about Aboriginal Australians and reducing their prejudice towards them. The long-term evaluation which took place after three months shows that there was still a significant difference in subjects' knowledge about Aborigines but no significant improvement in the levels of prejudice and stereotyping. High prejudice participants alone experienced a significant, long-term decrease in old-fashioned prejudice.

Henderson-King and Kaleta (2000) examine the differences in inter-group tolerance between students who study a general education course and those who study a specific course in which social diversity is central to its content. Two groups of undergraduate students were sampled from the University of Michigan. The first group included all the students who registered to study for Race and Ethnicity (RAE) courses. The second group consisted of the general undergraduate population who were not enrolled to take that course during the specific period of time in which the study was conducted. A questionnaire was addressed to the students prior to the study of the RAE course and after studying it. The study showed that students who took part in RAE became more tolerant toward others. It also showed that the other students became less tolerant towards others over a semester. In addition to multicultural education, citizenship education is also reported to be effective in enhancing tolerance and inter-group relations.

2.9.3.2 Citizenship Education

Citizenship education has recently been introduced by governments in many different countries. However the concept of citizenship education remains contested in many of these countries (Davies and Issitt, 2005). Osler and Starkey (1996) define education for citizenship as education that emphasizes the personal development of the learners, and social and political development of the society at local, national and international levels. On the personal level, citizenship education is about integrating into society and overcoming the cultural barriers to equality such as challenging racism and sexism. On

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the societal level, it is about creating a social order that ensures security without the need for subjugation.

2.9.3.2.1 Development of Citizenship Education

Citizenship has been an educational aim in England since the nineteenth century. However, it took almost a century for citizenship education to become a part of school curricula in England. In 1998 an Advisory Group on Education for Citizenship and the Teaching of Democracy in Schools chaired by Sir Bernard Crick carried out an in-depth policy review of citizenship education in Britain. This group submitted a report to the Qualification and Curriculum Authority (QCA). This report has come to be widely known as the Crick report. It recommended that citizenship education be a statutory subject and separately taught, rather than a cross-subject theme in secondary schools, and a part of the non-statutory framework within Personal, Social and Health Education in primary schools from September 2002 (Osler, 2000; Faulk, 2006; Osler and Starkey , 2006; Kiwan, 2007a).

The Crick report conceptualizes citizenship education on the basis of Marshall's concept of citizenship (Kiwan, 2007b). Therefore it is stressed in the report that citizenship education should aim at educating students about their civil, political and social responsibilities and duties. Consequently, the central theme of the Crick report, the idea of active citizenship, focuses on these responsibilities (Kiwan, 2007b). However, the Crick report is criticized for not acknowledging the role of minorities in shaping the concept of Britishness and British society's values and rules. Therefore, a report on Diversity and Citizenship by Keith Ajegbo in 2007 suggested that shared values in British society should be the focus of citizenship education in Britain (Tomlinson, 2008). In her recent book, Tomlinson (2008) indicates that in a new revamp of the national curriculum to be put into practice from September 2008, teachers would be allowed to decide the Citizenship course design.

2.9.3.2.2 Goals of Citizenship Education

In his attempts to specify the aims and goals of citizenship education, Kerr (2003) distinguishes between three strands within citizenship education. The first strand is education about citizenship in which the focus is on helping learners to acquire knowledge and develop an understanding of national history and the structures and

processes of government and political life. The second strand is education through citizenship. The major aim of this strand is to help students to become active learners who acquire knowledge through an active participation in their school and local community. The third strand is education for citizenship. This strand includes the other two strands and aims at providing students with the knowledge needed to prepare them to be active and responsible citizens.

Banks (2004b) claims that the important goals of citizenship education are to help learners to obtain knowledge, attitudes and skills needed to make them active agents in transforming their nation state to be democratic and just. Citizenship education should be focused on helping the learner to understand that each human being has the right to practise their cultural differences and these cultural differences should be recognized and respected as elements of these human beings' lives (Gutmann, 2004). It also should be directed towards helping the students to maintain their cultural attachment and identification and should allow the pupils to choose freely to endorse other cultures and identities. Citizenship education should help students to balance their cultural, national and global identifications (Banks, 2004b).

Building on the seminal work of Marshall on citizenship in the 1950s, in which citizenship is divided into civil, political and social elements, it could be argued that citizenship education should be directed towards helping learners to develop their civil, political and social responsibilities and duties. Through citizenship education students should acquire the knowledge, attitudes and skills necessary to value and practise their civic liberties, such as freedom of speech, thought and faith, the right to own property and the right to justice. Similarly, citizenship education should enable students to acquire the knowledge and the skills needed to participate in the political process as members of a political party or electors. Furthermore, citizenship education should aim to prepare learners to live their lives as civilized active beings according to the standards and norms of their societies (Marshall and Bottomore, 1992; Potter, 2002).

2.9.3.2.3   Citizenship Education and Tolerance

 Empirical research studies give support to the effectiveness of citizenship education in developing tolerance. Brady's (1994) study demonstrates that students in classes using all or part of the Centre for Civic Education's "We the People" curriculum are more

tolerant than students following other curricula. The findings of Brady's (1994) study are supported by Finkel (2000), who examines the effects of adult civic education programmes in the Dominican Republic and South Africa on individuals' political tolerance. These programmes were designed and implemented by the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID). The findings illustrate that civic education programmes have a direct effect on individuals' levels of tolerance in both countries. Differences in tolerance between the civic education participants and non-participants was associated positively with the frequent exposure to training that utilized more active, participatory teaching methodologies. Further, the study shows that the effect of civic education on tolerance is associated positively with variables such individuals' cognitive skills, prior political awareness, and values and personal dispositions such as political efficacy and openness to compromise. In general the study found proof that tolerance can be taught through civic education in newly-democratizing societies but the effect of such programmes is conditional and varies depending on certain conditions for certain kinds of individuals.

Similarly, Liou (2003) examined the effect of the "Project Citizen" programme on the civic skills and attitudes of Taiwanese middle school students. Project Citizen is a civic education programme which was originally developed by the Centre for Civic Education in 1992 in the United States. Later it was used internationally in more than thirty countries. The programme is student-centred and it is taught using cooperative learning strategies. The research applied a non-random, pre-test/post-test comparison group, and quasi-experimental design. The findings illustrate that there is a significant difference between the students who study the "Project Citizen" programme and those who study traditional citizenship skills or the "Three Principles of the People in civic skills, political interest, and commitment to rights and responsibilities of citizenship in favour of the Project Citizen group." Analysis of qualitative interviews with teachers showed that all of them responded positively to "Project Citizen" and "showed interest in implementing it again in their classes".

2.9.3.3 Intervention Approach and Tolerance

The relationship between education and tolerance has been explored in many studies, which indicate that there is a positive relationship between the two variables (Colesante and Biggs, 1999; Virgil, 2000; Rodden, 2001; Sebre and Gundare, 2003). Several

research studies have taken a preliminary look at the effects of different types of interventions on cultural tolerance. These interventions are directed mainly towards enhancing tolerance. One of the most important studies which discusses how to improve tolerance by developing a new curriculum was undertaken by Avery *et al.* (1993, cited in Avery, 2002). This study aims at investigating the impact of a four-week curriculum unit, entitled Tolerance for Diversity of Beliefs, on levels of political tolerance among ninth graders. Avery and her colleagues (1993, cited in Avery, 2002) designed the unit to reflect the research on political tolerance, pedagogy and developmental psychology. The curriculum included many case studies of civil liberty issues. The case studies included historical and contemporary situations at the national and international levels. Avery and her colleagues evaluated the effectiveness of the curriculum using post-tests and pre-tests. The findings of the study show that the curriculum was effective in enhancing political tolerance. The findings of Avery *et al.* (1993, cited in Avery, 2002) were supported by Mileski's (1998) study which reveal changes in the students' attitudes towards those different from themselves after their participation in a "teaching tolerance "programme.

Patel (2000) observed the change in cultural tolerance of grade ten social studies students, after they explored their own cultural heritage via construction of web pages based on their culture, experiences and stories in relation to Canadian history. The participants in this study were 37 students who were enrolled in a small coeducational boarding school in western Canada. The participants were divided into two groups or classes. One class, which contained 18 students, took part in the Cultural Discovery Project (CDP), as a part of their curriculum, and the other class acted as a control group (CG) that used the standard grade 10 social studies curricula. Both groups completed Social Distance Questionnaires (SDQ) which were administered prior to and on completion of the CDP and peer-evaluation. Five students from the CDP group were non-randomly selected to conduct pre- and post-SDQ semi-structured interviews. Analysis quantitative data indicated that a significant improvement in cultural tolerance took place for the CDP group, while the CG's pre- and post-SDQ scores revealed that no significant change in tolerance levels occurred. On the other hand the qualitative data revealed that CDP was a worthwhile and effective tool for improving cultural tolerance. Although this study exposed some interesting findings, some weaknesses also emerged. First, the small number of participants limited the range of the findings. Second, the

small number of participants in the semi-structured interviews and in the CDP group raised the issue of the reliability of interpretations drawn from the data.

Stephens (2002) conducted a study that aimed assess the effectiveness of a training programme in increasing teacher education candidates' levels of cultural tolerance. Participants in this study included 129 senior-level teacher education candidates attending the University of Mississippi. The researcher used the Solomon four-group design. The treatment that was used to assess the candidates' levels of cultural tolerance was a multi-faceted programme for cultural awareness and cultural diversity. The length of the programme, which was developed by the researcher, was five sessions of 90 minutes each. Different teachers taught the control and treatment groups. Information regarding the candidates' levels of cultural tolerance was obtained through pre-test and post-test data using the Pluralism and Diversity Attitude Assessment. The results of the research suggest that the cultural tolerance and diversity programme did not significantly improve the teachers' overall attitudes towards diversity compared to those who did not participate in the programme. However, the overall attitudes towards diversity of the treatment group changed significantly over the course of the study, while the overall attitudes of the control group remained the same. However, the short length of the study raises a question about the nature of information and training that was offered to the subjects. Additionally, using different instructors to present the programme hindered the researcher's ability to control extraneous variables.

Sebre and Gundare (2003) examined the effect of a Complex Instruction (CI) based unit on the Holocaust on prejudiced thinking, ethnic intolerance and civic responsibility among high school students in grades 10-12 in Latvia. The CI unit was developed by one of the researchers in collaboration with two other colleagues for use within the educational system in Latvia. Subjects of the study were chosen on the basis of whether their History teachers responded to a newspaper advertisement. The teachers were trained to teach the unit through a series of seminars about social studies teaching reform. The experimental control group design was applied by the researchers to assess the efficiency of the unit. 99 students took part in the CI group and 97 took part in the control group, the group educated using more standard methods. The students completed a questionnaire before beginning the CI course and several months later after finishing the CI course. The control group was assessed using the same procedure. The

result showed a significant decrease in prejudice among those who studied the CI unit. However, the study showed that there were no differences in the mean scores for ethnic intolerance and civic responsibility between the control and the experimental or CI group.

Nagda *et al.* (2004) examined the effect of a Cultural Diversity and Justice course on students' motivation for inter-group learning, and their confidence in taking actions (reducing prejudice and promoting diversity). This course had two components: enlightenment, which comprised educating pupils about others using lectures and readings, and the encounter, which involved educating students about other groups using inter-group dialogues. Pre-test surveys were administered the first day of class while the post-test surveys were distributed on the last day of the course. The measures were repeated both pre-test and post-test. Demographic questions were included only in the pre-test survey. Questions assessing students' engagement in the enlightenment and encounter interventions were included only in the post-test. The course was found to have a significant impact on increasing students motivation for inter-group learning, their evaluation of the importance of prejudice reduction and promoting diversity, and their confidence in reducing prejudice and promoting diversity. These results were consistent for both white and non-white students. The two components of the course, enlightenment and encounter, were both found to be effective in reducing prejudice and promoting diversity except for students confidence in reducing prejudice. The researcher explained this in light of the "ceiling effect", resulting from the fact that the study's participants consisted of undergraduates who had taken other courses exposing them to social work values of being self-aware, non-judgmental and respectful in their treatment of others.

Previous studies by Patel (2000), Stephens (2002), Sebre and Gundare (2003), and Nagda *et al.* (2004) focused on the concept of cultural tolerance and attempt to record the changes in its level as a result of using several interventions. However, none of these studies attempted to identify an intervention which has specific aims, content, methods of teaching and methods of evaluation, so there is a great deal of difficulty in replicating these studies. In addition some other previous studies have points of weakness related to the size of their sample, the instructor and the programme duration. Moreover, these previous studies were all conducted in liberal states. Therefore the present study builds

upon the findings of these studies and aims to enhance their findings through the use of well portrayed intervention. Unlike previous studies the present study conducted in non-liberal states.

2.10 Summary

This chapter has critically analysed the relevant literature on inter-group relations and tolerance in general, while keeping the focus on Muslim-Western relations. It is evident from the literature that there is no agreement among scholars on the meaning of tolerance. However, there is almost a total consensus that tolerance occurs where there are deep and divisive differences. The tolerant may dislike or disapprove of certain actions or attitudes as a result of their awareness about others, yet have the ability to act tolerantly toward them. The nature of the object of tolerance determines its type. Tolerance is political if the objects which are tolerated relate to the political rights of minority groups; social, when it concerns tolerating people with characteristics that were formed at birth or early in their socialization; moral, when it focuses on morally debatable acts; and cultural when it entails tolerating other religions and ways of life. This chapter also brought to light the relationships between Muslims and Westerners, and the deep division between the Muslim and Western worlds. It has examined the potential sources of prejudice between the two groups. Then it shed light on the methods that can be used to counter these prejudices. It concluded that previous research gives ample support to the use of education to enhance tolerance.

3 Chapter three: Methodology

3.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses methodological issues, firstly addressing the philosophical assumption of the research. Then the rationale for adopting the quasi-experimental design is explained. The research instruments, which include semi-structured interviews, and the survey questionnaire, are then discussed. Next, issues related to the validity and reliability of the research design, the survey questionnaire, the semi-structured interviews and the interview transcripts are addressed. The sample of the study is then described and the equivalence between the experimental and the control group examined using the Man-Witney test. Finally, the approach to data analysis is presented.

3.2 Research Questions

This study investigated the level of cultural tolerance amongst young Omani citizens. It examined the effectiveness of the "Our Brothers and Sisters in Humanity" programme on grade ten girls' cultural tolerance. This programme was devised for the specific purpose of this research. The study looks at the impact the program had on the pupils' cultural tolerance towards other religions, Western culture and Westerners. Specifically, as a result of literature critiqued in the previous chapter, this study was designed to address the following primary research questions:

1. Are there any differences in the level of tolerance toward religions between the experimental group which studies the "O.B.S.H" programme and the control group which studies the usual school curricula?

2. Are there any differences in the level of tolerance toward Western cultural values and customs between the experimental group which studies the "O.B.S.H" programme and the control group which studies the usual school curricula?

3. Are there any differences in the level of tolerance toward Westerners between the experimental group which studies the "O.B.S.H" programme and the control group which studies the usual school curricula?

3.3 Null Hypotheses

Hypothesis 1: There is no statistically significant difference in the gain score of tolerance toward other religions between the experimental group and the control group.

Hypothesis 2: There is no statistically significant difference in the gain score of tolerance toward Western culture between the experimental group and the control group.

Hypothesis 3: There is no statistically significant difference in the gain score of tolerance toward Westerners between the experimental group and the control group.

3.4 The Philosophical Assumptions of the Research

Philosophy is a discipline concerned with the nature of reality and the ways to make it knowable. This concern often lies beneath and moulds other disciplines (Williams and May, 1996). Both ontology, which is referred to as the "study of being" (Blaikie, 1993:6), and epistemology defined as "the claims of assumptions made about the ways in which it is possible to gain knowledge of reality whatever it is understood to be" (Blaikie, 1993:.6-7), are an important outcome of philosophy and they are found to influence properties used within the research to investigate the nature of knowledge and how it might be known (Williams and May, 1996). In research there are different paradigms (Bryman, 2006) or worldviews (Creswell and Clark, 2007). The two main paradigms are: positivism and interpretivism.

The ontological position of positivism entails that there is only one reality and it is formed independently from human perception (Sale *et al.,* 2002). The epistemological position of the positivist paradigm entails that knowledge is gained through a sensory experience by applying experimental design or comparative analysis. Moreover, generalization of knowledge is a requirement within positivism. Therefore the epistemological stance that is adopted by it must fulfil this requirement. The epistemological tradition within positivism must be indistinguishable from scientific law and empirical regulations (Blaikie, 1993; Corbetta, 2003).

The ontological assumptions of interpretivism entail social reality as it is made up of social interactions in which social actors negotiate the meaning of actions and situations included in those interactions. Hence, social reality may be attributed to different interpretations depending on how the different individuals interpret the conditions in which they find themselves. The epistemological assumptions of interpretivism are based on the view that knowledge is a product of everyday concepts and meaning. According to these assumptions the researcher must be actively engaged in the social world in order to comprehend the socially constructed meaning and then to construct it in social scientific language (Blaikie, 1993; Corbetta, 2003).

The differences in ontological and epistemological assumptions between positivism and interpretivism lead the proponents of both paradigms to argue against a coexistence and combination of quantitative and quantitative methods. In this regard three major schools of thought can be identified. These are the purists, the situationalists and the pragmatists. The purists assume that under no circumstances should quantitative and quantitative methods be combined. This radical situation is often explained by the purists in the light of the deep distinction between the worldviews in which these two methods are embedded. The situaltionalists, unlike the purists, value both methods and believe that research questions drive research methods. However, situationalists, like purists, advocate a mono-method study and believe that quantitative and qualitative methods are complementary. In contrast, pragmatists view the distinctions between the two methods as being artificial. They believe that both methods have strengths and weaknesses. Therefore the researcher should use the strength of both methods in order to be able to provide an holistic understanding about the social phenomena (Johnson and Onwuegbuzie, 2004; Onwuegbuzie and Leech, 2005)

Pragmatism has recently received significant attention by the advocates of mixed methods research. Theorists such as Teddlie and Tashakkori (2003), Johnson and Onwuegbuzie (2004), Onwuegbuzie and Leech (2005), and Creswell and Clark (2007) associate mixed methods research with pragmatism. Creswell and Clark (2007:27), for example, suggest that mixed methods is best linked to pragmatism philosophy. They argue that "as a general philosophical position for mixed methods research, then, pragmatism seems best to us". Given the recent emphasis on the suitability of pragmatism for mixed methods research and the ontological and epistemological

position of this philosophy, the research frame in the present study was determined in light of the pragmatism philosophy.

3.5   Research Design

Bryman (2004) indicates that the research design provides a framework for collecting and analysing data. He further explains that the decision to adopt a particular research design is determined on the basis of the research aims.

3.5.1   Experimental Design and Education

Experimental design is credited as the most effective method for testing causal propositions (Cook and Campbell, 1979). The key feature of this design is "taking deliberate actions followed by systematic observations" (Shadish *et al*., 2002:2) under a high degree of control. The early use of this design was associated with what Berliner (2002) described as hard science by which he meant physics, chemistry, geology and other sciences in which physical control of conditions seem to be achieved easily. Gersten *et al*. (2000) indicate that the experimental design is the most influential method available for assessing an intervention's effectiveness. According to Feuer *et al*. (2002:8), experimental design is "still the single best methodological route to ferreting out systematic relations between actions and outcomes".

In the experimental approach there are three types of experimental design. These are the pre-experimental design, the true experimental design and the quasi-experimental design. A pre-experimental design refers to those designs which do not have a control group and/or have comparison groups that are formed non-randomly. The true experimental design permits a researcher to test a hypothesis in an environment that allows a high degree of control of nuisance variables which may affect the dependent variable. The quasi-experimental design involves the use of intact groups of participants in an experiment, rather than assigning participants randomly to experimental conditions (Gersten *et al*, 2000; Grimshaw *et al*, 2000)

The true experimental design is considered to be the strongest social research technique for testing causal relationships (Neuman, 2000). Classically, the true experimental design comprises five components. These are the independent variable, the dependent variable, the control group, the experimental group and the random assignment. The

treatment or independent variable, refers to the modification that is applied by the researcher; the dependent variable or the outcome refers to the physical conditions, social behaviours, attitudes, or beliefs of subjects that change in response to the treatment; the pre-test refers to the measurement of the dependent variable prior to the introduction of the treatment; and the post-test refers to the measurement of the dependent variable after the treatment. There are two separate groups involved: the experimental group that receives the treatment; and the control group that does not receive any kind of treatment. Random assignment of participants ensures that each subject has an equal possibility of being in either group (De Vaus, 2001; Neuman, 2000; Singleton & Straits, 1999).

This design has gone through massive changes in its language, elements and methods since the scientific revolution in the 17th century. It is not merely used in hard science but has found a place in all kind of sciences including the social sciences (Cook and Campbell, 1979). Experimentation and randomized control trails have been used in the field of social sciences, including education, prior to their application in the field of health care. The use of these methods in social sciences reached its peak between the 1960s and early 1980s as a growing number of American evaluators began to use them as an assessment model for public policy. During the last 20 years, however, the methodological procedures applied in education and social science research have witnessed a wave of changes in which positivist traditions focusing on true experiment designs and randomized control trails have lost their position in favour of the interpretive traditions focusing on interviews and content analysis. The latest are viewed by researchers as being effective methods in providing a holistic understanding of complex and interactive processes in the social world (Slavin, 2002; Feuer *et al*, 2002; McDonald *et al.*, 2006).

In the late 1960s Campbell wrote an article entitled "Reform as Experimentation" in which he states "The United States and other modern nations should be ready for an experimental approach to social reform, an approach in which we try out new program designed to cure specific social problems, in which we learn whether or not these programs are effective… our readiness for this stage is indicated by the inclusion of specific provision for program evaluation" (Campbell, 1969:409). Campbell's (1969) articulation on reforms as experimentation seems to be consistent with the current

situation in Oman and in many other Arab countries today. However, because classes in school-based research are formed at the start of the year, experimentation seems to be difficult to conduct. Therefore quasi-experiment seems to be the most suitable option in school-based research (Grimshaw *et al*, 2000).

3.5.2 Quasi-experimental Design

Since the present study is taking place in schools, the quasi-experimental design will be used. According to Campbell and Stanley (1963:34), quasi-experimental design lacks the full control over "the when and to whom of exposures and the ability to randomize exposures" (34). Christensen (1997:349) viewed the quasi-experimental design as one that does not meet the requirements necessary for controlling the influence of extraneous variables". Bernard (2000:117) refers to it as the design in which "participants are not assigned randomly to control and experimental groups".

Undoubtedly, the quasi-experimental design lacks the complete control over extraneous variables. However, this design has one clear advantage over the experimental design: it is studied in traditional education situations (Muijs, 2004). Muijs (2004) highlights the same point that was made four decades ago by Campbell and Stanley (1963:2) who stated that an experiment is:

> "the… only means for settling disputes regarding educational practices, as the only way of verifying educational improvement, and as the only way of establishing a cumulative tradition in which improvement can be introduced without the danger of a faddish discard of old wisdom in favour of inferior novelties."

Although there are a large number of quasi-experimental designs (Campbell and Stanley, 1963) the non-equivalent control-group design was applied in the present study. This design involves two intact groups. These are the experimental group and the control group. After that, a pre-test is administered to both groups. Then the experimental group receives a treatment while the control group receives no treatment or intervention. Finally, at the end of the treatment, a post-test is administered to both experimental and control groups which in this design are often known as comparison groups.

This design is considered to be the most prevalent and useful experimental design for use in educational settings. The existence of the pre-test and the comparison group

permits the experimenter to impose more control over the experimental settings. The pre-test enables the researcher to test subjects on important variables. It also allows the researcher to identify the existence of ceiling effects and take them into consideration when assessing the intervention's effectiveness. The pre-test provides the researcher with the information needed to find out the initial position of the subjects on the independent variable and provide an assertion that the participants are initially comparable on a relevant variable. Furthermore, it provides the researcher with strong evidence about the impact of the intervention in producing a change in the participants (Campbell and Stanley, 1963).

It should be emphasized that the existence of a control group in this design is essential for reducing the potential threats to internal validity. The absence of a control group will make this design similar to the pre-experimental design which is called the one-group pre-test/post-test design. Campbell and Stanley (1963:7) considered this design as a "bad example" to illustrate several of the confounded extraneous variables that can jeopardize internal validity". Potential problems with this design are threats to external and internal validity.

3.5.2.1 Internal Validity of the Quasi-Experimental Design

Internal validity, which refers to the ability to eliminate alternative explanations of dependent variable so that the researcher will be able to say that the treatment is the true causal factor producing change in the dependent variable, is threatened by many factors. Among these factors is history, which refers to all events that occurred during the time of the study that might cause change in a dependent variable. Other factors are maturation, which refers to all types of biological and psychological or social processes that produce changes in the individuals or units studied with the passage of time; experimental mortality, which refers to dropout problems that prevent the researcher from completing the study; instrumentation, which refers to changes in measuring instruments between the pre-and post–test. Testing, which refers to the possible reactivity of measurement is a major problem in social science research, as the effect of being pre-tested might sensitize individuals and improve their scores on the post-test. Statistical regression, which refers to "the mathematical tendency for an extreme measurement of any variable to be followed by a second measurement that is closer to

the mean" (Reaves, 1992:196), and interaction with selection, which means that many factors threaten the internal validity can interact with selection. The most common factors cited are selection-history and selection-maturation. Selection–history interaction poses a threat when the control group and the experimental group are selected from different settings (Campbell & Stanley, 1963; Neuman, 2000; De Vaus, 2001).

Possible threats to internal validity are the interaction between selection, maturation and history. As the duration of the program was only 10 weeks, and because the experimental and the control group were selected from the same age group, there were no problems with the interaction between selection and maturation. Selecting the experimental and control group from the same geographical area reduced the problem of selection and history. The researcher responded to statistical regression by comparing pre-test scores for the experimental and the control group using analysis of variance (ANOVA) with an alpha set at .05.

3.5.2.2 External Validity of the Experimental Design

On the other hand, external validity, which means "the ability to generalise experimental findings to events and settings outside the experiment itself" (Neuman, 2000:239) is threatened by many factors such as the reactive effect of pre-testing, unrepresentativeness and artificiality. A reactive effect of pre-testing occurs when pre-testing changes the behaviour or attitudes of the participants so that they become exposed to the effect of the intervention. As a result, the findings of the study possibly happen as an artificial effect of an experimental situation and not as a result of the treatment. Unrepresentativeness threatens the external validity when experimental participants differ significantly from real world people .The consequence of this factor can be minimised by selecting a random representative sample. Artificiality is widely reported as a threat to external validity. It is sometimes called the Hawthorne Effect. Artificiality threatens external validity when the subjects react differently in the experimental situation because they know they are in a study. Demand characteristics are another factor that can lead to an artificial experiment. Participants may know the purpose of the experiment and this can change their behaviour or attitude to what they

think is being demanded of them (Campbell & Stanley, 1963; Neuman, 2000; De Vaus, 2001).

Possible threats to external validity in the present research design were: interaction of testing and treatment, and interaction between selection and treatment. The threat of the interaction of testing was alleviated by using a dependent measurement for which the goals were not openly obvious to participants and by using triangulation to enhance the validity of the data. The threat to validity by the interaction between selection and treatment was reduced by matching the experimental and control group demographically and by selecting both groups from the same geographical area (Neuman, 2000; De Vaus, 2001).

Whilst a considerable consensus can be found among researchers on the contribution the quasi experiment makes in examining the causal relations between cause and effect, theorists such as Onwuegbuzie and Leech (2004) advise researchers to combine qualitative and quantitative methods when assessing the effectiveness of a programme or intervention. The suggestion to combine mixed methods was put into action in this study as explained in subsequent section.

3.6   Research Method

Bryman (2004) defines research method as a technique for collecting data (Bryman, 2004). In research studies researchers can collect quantitative or qualitative data or both. Thus both quantitative and qualitative methods of data collection can be adopted.

3.6.1   Quantitative Research Methods

Quantitative research methods involve a systematic collection, organization and interpretation of numerical data. They are based on a positivism paradigm which assumes that there is a single reality, separated from the feelings and beliefs of individuals. Such research aims at establishing relationships and exploring the causes of change in measured social facts. It entails a set of procedures and steps which leave little space for modification of the research instrument and questions. The role of the researcher in this research approach is limited as researchers often separate themselves from the study to eliminate bias. The researchers who employ this approach are often

concerned about generalization. Therefore this approach often involves the use of a large sample (McMillan and Schumacher, 1993; Creswell, 2005). The results of this research are presented in the form of descriptive or complex statistics such as tests of significance, correlation and regression analysis. This approach is often employed to form a general trend with regard to the investigated phenomena and to develop a theory that can be tested by gathering qualitative data (Creswell, 2003). Some researchers, such as Gorard (2001), believe that this method should be a set point from which researchers should start their investigations before proceeding further. Despite the precision and control that is offered by quantitative research, it has often been criticized for devaluing human individuality and thoughts and their ability to interpret their experiences (Burns, 2000).

3.6.2   Qualitative Research Methods

Quantitative research methods involve a systematic collection, organization and interpretation of textual data. They are based on the interpretivism paradigm which assumes that there are multiple realities that are socially constructed through individual and collective definition of the situation. Such research seeks to establish an understanding of the investigated phenomena from the perspective of the participants. This method is flexible with regard to data collection and the research questions as they can be modified through the research process (McMillan and Schumacher, 1993; Creswell, 2005).   Such a research approach emphasizes the need for a skilled experienced researcher. Given the fact that this method is time-consuming, the research often focuses on a small number of individuals or organizations. Therefore the notion of generalization may not be as relevant as it would be in the case of quantitative research which normally involves larger samples. This method is important in developing in-depth understanding of a social phenomenon. However, it has received several criticisms. Firstly, it can be too impressionistic and subjective. Secondly, it does not offer much space for replication. Thirdly, it has limited opportunities for generalization (Bryman, 2004).

3.6.3   Mixed Method Approach

 A mixed method approach was adopted in order to collect the data in this present study. This approach refers to the "the class of research where the researcher mixes or combines quantitative and qualitative research techniques, methods, approaches,

concepts or language into a single study (Johnson and Onwuegbuzie, 2004: 17). There are five purposes for conducting this type of research. First, there is triangulation (refers to the use of two or more methods of data collection in the study of some human behaviour in order to determine the accuracy of information and check its validity); second, expansion (seeks to extend the breadth and range of research by using different research methods); third, initiation (aims to discover paradoxes and contradictions that lead to reframing of research questions); fourth, complementarity (seeks to elaborate, demonstrate, enhance and clarify research results from one method with result from another); and finally, development (intends to use findings from one method to help inform the other method) (Greene *et al*., 1989).

In the present study the use of the mixed method approach is guided by triangulation and the complementarity of the research findings. It also allows the researcher to check the consistency of the findings (Cheek *et al., 2004*, Brannen, 2005). Moreover, the cultural tolerance phenomenon which is under investigation in this study is complex. Scholars such as Gibson & Bingham (1982) point to difficulties in measuring the concept of tolerance using scales and questionnaires. Also, Hurwitz & Mondak (2002) indicated that the findings about tolerance are sensitive to both the measures and the measurement strategy employed. Similarly, Godwin *et al*. (2001) note "There maybe a huge gap between paper-and-pencil measures of tolerance and the actual behaviour required of democratic citizens."

In addition, educational settings are often described as complex. This complexity stems from the power contexts in education and the fact that human beings with their multifarious and changing systems of social interaction are a major component in this setting (Berliner, 2002). Therefore, adopting a mixed methods approach helps the researcher to obtain an holistic understanding of the program effectiveness by gaining advantages from the strengths that qualitative and quantitative methods have and by minimizing their common weaknesses (Onwuegbuzie and Leech, 2004). According to Greene (2005:211), "A mixed method approach to educational inquiry not only provides but actually creates spaces for a full engagement with the challenges of understanding teaching and learning as a complex processes."

Nastasi *et al*. (2007) point out that mixed method designs are appropriate for intervention research. They argue for a process of programme development in which qualitative and quantitative are methodologies recursively recurring within the process. They suggest employing qualitative methods to guide programme development, and quantitative to assess intervention effectiveness. They developed what they called a heuristic model in which multi-year research and program development are represented as an iterative research-intervention process. This model begins with collecting qualitative data to identify the cultural variables related to the context, and quantitative data are gathered afterwards to determine the effectiveness of the programme.

Undoubtedly, the iterative mixed methods approach used in the heuristic model has some merits. For instance, it allows for systematic modification of intervention to meet the context's cultural characterization, and permits drawing of valid conclusions about intervention effectiveness based on the subsequence of qualitative and quantitative methods (Nastasi *et al, .*2007). It should be emphasized that this model is not without pitfalls. Its cyclic nature and the fact that it was originally developed for use in multi-year research makes it seem difficult to implement by the individual researcher who is often controlled by time constraints and limited sources. In this study, applying a mixed-method approach throughout the study seemed difficult given the time and resources available. Therefore a mixed-method approach was taken to assess the effectiveness of the programme through the use of a questionnaire and semi-structured interviews.

3.7   Research Instruments

3.7.1   The Intervention

As mentioned earlier, studies have provided converging evidence about the nature of effective educational intervention for reducing prejudice. However, it should be emphasized that most of these educational interventions have been implemented in democratic societies, whereas this study took place in Oman which is considered to be a non-pluralistic society and non-democratic state. As a result one can find extensive educational materials and interventions that aim to raise awareness about other religions and cultures, reduce prejudice, and enhance tolerance and understanding in these

societies. Given that the context of the present study, Oman, is non-pluralistic and non-democratic, it seems illogical to implement the interventions developed in multicultural societies to a mono-cultural society. Fawcett *et al.* (1994) argue that intervention researchers should base their studies on combinations of and a comprehensive understanding of applied sciences, individuals, and context. Therefore it was decided to design a new intervention that met the needs of the Omani context.

3.7.1.1 Designing the Intervention

The design of the intervention went through many phases. These phases were developed in the light of models of intervention research developed by Rothman and Thomas (1994).

3.7.1.1.1 Phase 1: Identifying the Topics Included in the Intervention

Topics included in the intervention were identified in the light of the literature review related to the topics that seem to provide conflict with Muslim beliefs and values. In addition, personal contacts and informal interviews were used by the researcher to identify issues among the target population which might provoke intolerance. Participants were asked to indicate which religions, types of conduct, values and opinions were most likely to conflict with their attitudes and behaviours as Muslims. Consequently, the 10th grade girls in the experimental group were taught about the world's major religions. These include Hinduism, Buddhism, Sikhism, Christianity, Judaism and Islam. It was also decided to provide the girls with information about some cultural and social customs of people in the West. These customs include dress codes, food and drink, democracy, sexual liberation, freedom of expression, religious freedom, individuality and secularization. Some information on family issues in the Western and the Islamic culture was provided to the pupils. It was also decided to introduce some challenges and problems that face Muslims and Westerners with the aims that the pupils acquire these problems as superordinate goals which would not be achieved unless individuals, regardless of their faith, cooperate to achieve them.

3.7.1.1.2 Phase 2: Setting the Goals and Aims of the Interventions

In this phase the intervention goals were specified by the researcher. These goals described the desirable outcomes of the intervention. The importance of a specification

of the goals for an intervention has long been stressed by researchers such as Tyler (1949), Krathwohl *et al*. (1964) and Mager (1990). Tyler (1949) considered the goals as a starting point in developing educational programs. He argues that "if an educational programme is to be planned and if efforts for continued improvement are to be made, it is necessary to have some conception of the goals that are being aimed at. These educational objectives become the criteria by which materials are selected, content is outlined and instructional procedures are developed. In this study, after setting them, the researcher had the goals validated by a six-member panel jury. The jury members were 2 instructors from the Education College in Oman and 4 social studies teachers who have had experience of teaching grade ten pupils for at least four years. The jury members were asked by the researcher to judge the clarity of the aims, their appropriateness for the pupils' ages and their suitability for the Omani context. Some jury members recommended changes which the researcher accepted and implemented.

3.7.1.1.3 Phase 3: Using the Existing Information Sources

As mentioned earlier in the literature review, problems resulting from the absence of tolerance such as intolerance and prejudice do not merely confine themselves to one discipline. Given the nature of tolerance this phase of the intervention involved an attempt to link a review of education literature, mainly on multicultural education, citizenship education, and international education, with the implications of the psychological theories of Allport (1954), and Sherif (1958) about prejudice reduction and conflict resolution. In the light of a linkage of these various fields, the researcher determined the interventions' aims and outlined the content of the interventions. In addition, the existing interventions were studied and analysed to identify methods and contextual traits that might be significant for the effectiveness of the interventions.

3.7.1.1.4 Phase 4: Developing a Means of Intervention

In this phase, a booklet was developed as a delivery mode for the intervention's content to grade ten pupils. The researcher's decision to use a booklet as a means to convey the content of the intervention was influenced by several reasons. Firstly, subject curricula in Oman, according to Plummer (2005), are based on yearly textbooks which indicate that the nature of the curricula adopted in Oman is textbook-driven" (Ornstein, 1994). The Omani educational system is driven by the use of textbooks in the teaching and learning process. Secondly, portraying others, including non-Muslims, in Middle

Eastern school textbooks including Oman (Rugh, 2002; Cavanaugh, 2004; Leirvik, 2004) means that their cultures and religions should be represented in these textbooks positively. Thirdly, teachers responsible for implementing the intervention are not exposed to intercultural education as a part of their teacher training programs in Oman (Al-Kalbani, 2001). Therefore it was felt that structuring the intervention's content in a textbook would be helpful for these teachers to compensate for training shortcomings (Williams, 1983) regarding presenting multicultural content. Given the amount of literature that judges the appropriateness of interventions with respect to its suitability for the social context and the community needs, an appropriately developed textbook seems to be compatible with the Omani teachers' and pupils' needs and conditions.

The first draft of the booklet was developed after reviewing the relevant literature and similar study interventions in other countries. The booklet was developed in light of criteria suggested by researchers such as Williams (1983), Sheldon (1988) and Ravitch (2004). These suggestions include factors such as the accuracy of information; the presentation of major events and facts concerning issues presented in the text; the use of variety in instructional activities; the use of interactive tasks; the avoidance of cultural bias; the avoidance of using offensive images of gender, race, social class and religions; the use of clear and easy vocabulary; the support of democratic institutions, human rights, and the rule of law; the use of a mixture of graphics and text on each page; quality of the print and the artwork; and the use of a font size that ensures the legibility of the content for the general reader which is specified as font size 12 according to the Royal National Institute for the Blind (Paul *et al*., 2004).

Because the use of diagrams and illustrations in the textbook are considered to promote pupils' understanding and enhance their interest in the topics included in the text, considerable attention was given to obtaining and including suitable illustrations, such as photos and maps. Although some photos used were owned by the researcher, organizations including the CNN, the BBC, Al-Jazeera, the World Bank, UNICEF, the University of Texas at Austin, the Oman Consultative Council, Al-Watan and Al-Nadabi's website were asked for permission to use photos and maps available on their websites. The University of Texas at Austin, Al-Nadabi's, and the Oman Consultative Council provided significant support by granting this permission. The researcher herself

devised all the activities and wrote the stories included in the booklet by reviewing a wide variety of sources.

3.7.1.1.5 <u>Phase 5: Validating the Intervention</u>

In this phase the social validity measurement was adopted to validate the means used to convey the intervention's content to the pupils. Social validity "refers to the social importance and acceptability of treatment goals, procedures, and outcomes" (Foster and Mash, 1999:308). It was introduced to the field of applied behaviour by Wolf (1978) as a result of what he described as an ignorance of consumers perceptions and opinions concerning behaviour-analytic interventions to which they are exposed. Wolf (1978) recommended evaluating behaviour-analytical programmes on three levels. These are: the social significance of the intervention's goals; the social appropriateness of the intervention's procedures; and the social importance of the intervention's effects. Although some theorists such as Barrett (1987) believe that social validity is a detraction from the scientific nature of research practice, others such as Wolf (1978) and Winett *et al.* (1991) view it as an important component in enhancing the likelihood of dissemination and adoption of the intervention. Schwartz and Baer (1991) indicate that applying social validity to assess the intervention enables experimenters to predict rejection of their program before that happens so they can reflect and modify it.

Given the flexibility of social validity assessment and its advantages in enabling the researcher to anticipate any rejection of the intervention and its means, assessment was applied in this phase to find out the appropriateness of the textbook for Omani society. Three grade ten pupils who were assumed to be direct consumers of the intervention, three teachers and two curriculum development experts also considered as indirect consumers of the intervention were chosen to give social validation of the means of the intervention. Both the direct and indirect consumers of the intervention were asked to rate their satisfaction with the goals, information, photos and activities that were included in the textbook on a five-point Likert scale. Analysis of this questionnaire indicated that there was an overall satisfaction with the proposed content of the textbook. However, as stated earlier some suggestions and the necessary amendments were made. These amendments included changing some photos and deleting some activities. The booklet in its final draft is presented in Appendix 1.

3.7.2   Questionnaire

In this study a questionnaire was administered as the main method of data collection. The decision to employ a questionnaire was based on the merits of this particular method. It is well documented that the questionnaire is the most influential means of social description (Singleton and Straits, 1999; Schuman and Kalton, 1985). It provides extensive and detailed information about a wide range of phenomena within a social milieu. This includes providing useful information about "social categories, past experiences, attitudes, beliefs, values, behavior intention and sensitive questions" (Schuman and Kalton, 1985:643). The questionnaire offers an effective way to gather information from a variety of respondents in a reasonable time (Palys, 1997; Somekh and Lewin, 2005). Moreover, it also maintains anonymity and confidentiality of respondents. In addition, including standardized questions and predetermined responses in the questionnaire minimizes measurement bias and facilitates the analysis process (Gillham, 2000; Bryman, 2004).

Generally speaking, no method of data collection is perfect. Thus the questionnaire has weaknesses. Firstly, it has often a negative association with exploratory research. Questions concerning "why" are difficult to be answered when employing the questionnaire. Second, the questionnaire can be vulnerable to reactivity and the subjects may give socially desirable responses (Singleton and Straits, 1999). Third, errors are more likely to occur when using a questionnaire as misunderstandings of questions cannot be corrected (Bryman, 2004). Fourth, it is often difficult to have control over the order and the context of answering the questions. As a consequence of this, responses may be dissociated from a respondents' position. This particularly happens when respondents consult other people when responding to the questions (Gillham, 2000).

In this study the questionnaire was used to evaluate Omani pupils' level of cultural tolerance. As stated earlier the term cultural tolerance used in this study, expresses the attitude towards an individual or society perceived as foreign in terms of religion, culture and habits. These are the values and social customs of culture which are perceived as different and conflicting with the Omani pupils' culture. Attitude is a central concept in social psychology and in many other fields. In its simplest form attitude can be defined as an evaluation of people, objects or ideas (Aronson *et al*.,

2007). Eagly and Chaiken (1993:1) view attitude as "a psychological tendency that is expressed by evaluating a particular entity with some degree of favor or disfavor". For Albarracin *et al.* (2005) attitudes are evaluative tendencies which are inferred from and have influence on beliefs, affect and intention as discussed in the literature review.

3.7.2.1 Constructing the Questionnaire

The questionnaire formulated for this study was constructed in the light of Gasser and Tan's (1999) Cultural Tolerance Scale. This scale is a statistically validated and reliable measurement for assessing American international assignees' cultural tolerance towards cultural norms that are perceived as foreign. It consists of 48 separate scenarios with a total of 288 Likert-type items. It aims to assess the three attitudinal components: the cognitive, the affective and the behavioural. The existence of such a measure may be viewed as an opportunity to use a reliable measure to assess Omani pupils' cultural tolerance. It should, however, be emphasized that significant differences in the context and characteristic of the target sample between the Gasser and Tan's study and the current study made the adoption or modification of their scale in the present study unreliable. Therefore this scale was used only as a guideline to construct the questionnaire applied in this study.

The design of the questionnaire for the present study involved several steps. First, the researcher determined the format of the questionnaire. In this case the questionnaire was formatted using vignettes. Vignettes are short descriptions of a person and a social situation on which the respondents build their judgment or responses. More precisely, vignettes are hypothetical situations which stimulate real life experiences. These hypothetical situations are often presented to participants using a written account. However, video, cartoons and a wide variety of other materials were used as well. This technique has been used to study extensive topics in a wide range of disciplines (Barter and Renold, 2000). It has been applied in both qualitative and quantitative research particularly in those undertaken to investigate sensitive issues. Such sensitive issues include racial integration in neighbourhood areas and abusive and violent behaviour. It is also argued that vignettes are useful to triumph over cross-cultural communication problems and to examine the moral codes of young people.

The use of vignettes in this study can be attributed to several reasons. First, vignettes help to address problems regarding attitude measurement. Finch (1987) stated that vignettes help to develop concentrated questions that allow for avoiding simplification of attitudes which is often found in survey format attitude measurement. Second, vignettes are useful in desensitizing and depersonalizing responses to sensitive topics. Asking participants to respond to hypothetical situations encountered by people different from themselves is found to be effective in lessening any sensitivity which the participants might feel when responding to topics considered as sensitive. Third, vignettes make responding to questionnaires an interesting and enjoyable process. This is because vignettes are based on the approach of telling a story. Fourth, this approach does not require the researcher to have participants who are knowledgeable about the issue under investigation as it offers subjects the information needed to come to a judgment on that particular issue (Hughes and Huby, 2002).

The advantages associated with vignettes do not mean that this technique is without limitations. Studies that have employed vignettes and those that have focused on their applications and functions have indicated a number of pitfalls in their use. One of these pitfalls is validity. According to Wilks (2004) using vignettes often raises questions about the extent to which the phenomenon under investigation is represented in the vignettes. However, the problem of validity poses a fundamental challenge not only when using vignettes but whenever there is an attempt to establish or apply a research instrument to elicit data from participants. Therefore researchers should be aware of the validity problem and should take the necessary steps to ensure the validity of the research instrument. In this regard, Wilks (2004) suggests asking professionals to check the validity of the vignettes which are to be applied by the researcher. Moreover, the inconsistency between the responses to specific vignettes and the actual behaviour of the subjects is another pitfall. Hughes and Huby (2002) recommend matching the character of the vignettes with the subject group. The researcher followed the suggestions above in the present study.

After determining the format of the questionnaire, the researcher specified the attitude objects by reviewing the literature and analyzing the nature of the concept of cultural tolerance. A few studies have examined the attitude towards Western culture and Westerners in countries where Muslims are the majority ethnic group (Ouis, 2002). The

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present study adapted and rephrased some items from previous measurements that were used by scholars such as Akrami *et al*. (2000) and Haque (2001) to assess attitudes toward minorities in general and Muslims in particular in a Western context in order to compile the questionnaire items. In addition to making use of the literature, some attitude objects were determined following the researcher's discussion with a number of pupils through informal discussions.

At this stage, the researcher started to write the scenarios. While writing these the researcher obtained examples from Cushner and Brislin (1996) and Lewis (2006) who wrote a wide variety of scenarios describing specific norms and principles in an inter-cultural situation. The scenarios in the present study consisted of one paragraph conversations. Through these conversations the tolerance objects were clarified, explained and described. Then, attitudes toward the objects were assessed using three Likert-scale items. The pupils were asked to place their responses on a five-point scale of strongly agree, agree, do not know, disagree, and strongly disagree. Each one of these items was proposed to measure one attitude component.

The first draft of the questionnaire consisted of 28 scenarios representing 28 notions, principles and social customs. These 28 principles were assessed using 84 Likert-scale items. In addition to the items that measured pupils' cultural tolerance, the measurement included some classification or demographic questions. Through this section the pupils were asked to provide information about their age, family income, father's and mother's occupations and educational level, and the number of family members in order to assess their social and economic level. This part also contained some questions about usage of the internet, watching TV and travelling to Western countries. These questioned were included because media and contact with out-groups have been found to play an important role in forming tolerance.

3.7.2.2 Translating the Questionnaire

The first language of the respondents of the present study is Arabic. Therefore the questionnaire was translated from English into Arabic by the researcher who is a native speaker of Arabic. Then the researcher asked a bilingual colleague, who is also a native

speaker of Arabic, to translate it back into English. It was found that the back translation was almost identical to the original questionnaire (Wilkinson and Birmingham, 2003).

3.7.2.3 Piloting the Questionnaire

After revising the questionnaire in the light of experts' suggestions, the questionnaire was piloted to find out any problems in its structure questions and vocabulary. During the pilot study, the questionnaire was administered to 12 pupils from grade 10 in a secondary school in Al-Khabora. This school was different from those in which the main study was to be conducted. The researcher met the participants and gave them instructions about completing the questionnaire. Then she asked them to fill the questionnaire in the time and context that suited them. The participants were also asked to indicate any problems, such as ambiguity of the questions. They were asked to report any difficulties that arose when responding to the questionnaire and encouraged to comment on and ask questions about each item.

As a result of piloting, some alterations were made. Firstly, the wording of four statements was amended. Secondly, one scenario was deleted. This was a scenario which represented dating customs within the Western culture. Six pupils refused to respond to a statement that focused on presenting premarital sex in the Western culture. They explained that their culture and religion were against this customs and they could not respond to it. Some of them suggested using one scenario instead of two to represent sexual freedom within the Western culture. They suggested using more conservative language when representing this aspect of Western culture.

Secondly, the method of administering the questionnaire was changed to group administration and the respondents were asked to complete it in the presence of the researcher and their teachers. It was found that the former method, in which the participants were allowed to complete the questionnaire in the context and the time that suited them, seemed to threaten the accuracy of the responses. When the participants where asked if they needed help in completing the questionnaire all of them said that they felt a need at different points of the questionnaire. Moreover, seven pupils reported that they discussed the questionnaire's scenarios and items with their fathers and older siblings. Some pupils reported that on some points they were forced to modify

their responses to reflect their fathers' and siblings' opinions and perspectives. Taking into the account the effects the social context might have on the pupils' responses, it was decided to use group administration of self-administered questionnaire. Researchers such as Dillman (2000) and Oppenheim (2000) point that a group administration of self-administered allows the researcher to have control on the context in which the questionnaire is filled in and to offer the participants the help they need to complete the questionnaire.

Thirdly, the questions focusing on the socio-economic background of the participants were separated from the main questionnaire which aims to measure pupils' cultural tolerance. They were provided to the participants before completing the main questionnaire. Pupils informed the researcher that they would be more open and honest if the socio-economical background of the participants was removed as many of them felt that it was easy to trace their identity by comparing the information they provided in the socio-economic background to the questionnaire with their school record. As this had implications for the anonymity of the participants, this information was kept separate from the main questionnaire.

During the pilot stage, the researcher observed the time needed to complete the questionnaire. It was found that it took between 35 and 40 minutes. Therefore, the participations were asked if they had become bored or tired. Four pupils reported that they had felt tired while completing the questionnaire. In contrast, the other six pupils reported that they had felt very excited. They pointed out that the scenarios were interesting and lessened any tiredness as they helped to clarify the meaning of many concepts within the questionnaire.

In the literature there is a widespread view that the length of the questionnaire affects negatively the response rate. Some theorists indicate that the questionnaire should not take more than about twenty minutes to complete (Wilkinson and Birmingham, 2003). Reviewing the available studies indicates that there is no consistent evidence on the effect of questionnaire length on response rate. Some evidence supports the claim that shortening the questionnaire improves the response rate whereas other evidence shows that a long questionnaire does not necessarily have the lowest response rate.

Researchers such as Lund and Gram (1998) suggest that the benefits of a lengthy questionnaire outweigh any disadvantages concerning a lower response rate.

Consequently, the researcher decided to examine the length of the questionnaire with regard to the response rate. The literature recommends splitting the questionnaire in half to test the effect of length on response (Herzog and Bachman, 1981). Accordingly, after revising the questionnaire in light of the pilot study, the questionnaire was split into half and administered on two different days to 6 pupils from the school in which the first pilot had been conducted. No significant differences were found between the pupils who responded to whole questionnaire and those who responded to half of it on one day and the other half the next day. As a result, the researcher decided to ask the pupils in the main study to respond to the full questionnaire on the same day.

3.7.2.4 Validity and Reliability in the Questionnaire

To validate the questionnaire, face validity technique was applied. This technique is based on seeking a consensus that each item in the scale represents the concept of cultural tolerance (Bryman, 2004). Therefore, the initial draft of the instrument was presented to a panel of 5 professors from Sultan Qaboos University. These professors were asked to comment on the content and linguistic suitability of the items in measuring culture tolerance. They made many suggestions. They suggested deleting some scenarios such as those representing the principle of individualism in the Western culture. Four of them stated that the concept of the individual could not be presented simply through one single scenario highlighting a weakness in a social relationship as individualism affects nearly all aspects of Western culture. They suggested also rewriting some statements which, in their view, were worded using prejudiced language. The questionnaire in its final form is presented in Appendix 2.

In general, reliability is the "capacity of measurement to produce consistent results" (Sarantakos, 2005 p.88). There are many procedures to test reliability in quantitative research such as test–retest; alternate forms; split half; Cronbach's alpha; Kuder–Richardson and inter-rater (Forman and Nyatanga, 2001). In this study the reliability of the questionnaire was established using the test-retest technique. Bird *et al.* (2003:408) define the test-retest reliability as "the correlation between the scores obtained by the same individuals on the same test, separated by a period of time".

Some researchers do not recommend the use of the test-retest method to establish the reliability of the measurement due to its limitations. De Vaus (2002: 52) believes that test-test reliability "is a poor one". Oppenheim (2000) points to some deficiencies in the test-retest method. He indicates that practice effects, resulting from responding to the measurement on two different occasions, affect the responses making it difficult to claim that the same test was administered under the same conditions. He also thinks that administrating the measurement twice may face a high degree of resistance from the participants.

Despite these criticisms, the test-retest method for reliability measurement is still in use by researchers who are concerned about the stability of measurement scores over time. Researchers such as Weng (2004) and Burton (2000) believe that the test-retest reliability is a suitable method for examining the stability and reproducibility of participants' responses. The test-retest method was applied in the present study because the researcher was of the view that the stability of the measurement over time was an important aspect of establishing questionnaire reliability due to the nature of the study, which involved administering the same questionnaire on two different occasions, the pre-test and post-test.

A total of 56 pupils volunteered to participate in the questionnaire's reliability assessment. This measurement was performed in a school different from the schools in which the main study was conducted. The participants were aged 14-17 ($M = 15.56$ years, SD =0.66).The questionnaire was administered to the pupils by the researcher. Three weeks after its first administration the questionnaire was administered again to the same participants. An interval of 2-4 weeks time is commonly used when establishing the reliability of measurements (De Vaus, 2002; Bird *et al.,* 2003). The data obtained in the reliability assessment in the present study   was subjected to Pearson's correlation technique. The calculation of the Pearson correlation coefficient was: r: 92. This coefficient was considered the index of "test-retest" reliability. The obtained index was judged to be sufficiently high, thus indicating an adequate reliability level.

In addition to the test-retest technique, internal consistency of the questionnaire was assessed. Internal consistency aims to examine the correlations between different items

of the questionnaire and the sub-scales that constitute it. In order words, it indicates the homogeneity of the questionnaire items (Bryman, 2004). The internal consistency of the questionnaire used in this study was calculated using Cronbach's alpha as shown in Table 3-1.

Table 3-1: Questionnaire inter-consistency reliability statistic

	Number of Items	Cronbach's alpha
Total cultural tolerance questionnaire	69	.831
Total affect	23	.574
Total belief	23	.668
Total intention	23	.851
Sub-scales		
Tolerance toward religions	15	.825
Affect	5	.661
Belief	5	.686
Intention	5	.772
Tolerance toward Western Culture	42	.677
Affect	14	.784
Belief	14	.653
Intention	14	.756
Tolerance toward Westerners	12	.696
Affect	4	.732
Belief	4	.717
Intention	4	.660

Table 3-1 shows the Cronbach alpha for the questionnaire as a whole was .83. For the subscales, the coefficient ranged from .57 to .82. It should be emphasized that the reliability of .57 is considered relatively low. However, researchers such as Youngman (1979) and Aron and Aron (1999) indicate that coefficient values as low as 0.6 are acceptable when studying group rather than individual differences. Furthermore, McMillan and Schumacher (1993: 231) argue that "studies of groups can tolerate a lower reliability, sometimes as low as 0.50 in exploratory research".

3.7.3   The Interview

In recent years, the interview has taken a prominent place in investigating a wide variety of phenomena. Abell *et al*. (2006) indicate that the interview is used in almost 90% of social scientific research. Thus, an "interview society" which is mentioned by Silverman (2001) seems to be a reality. The basis of this society is conversations which

contribute deeply in reshaping the knowledge and experiences in that society (Fontana and Frey, 2003). However, conversations as means of knowledge go beyond the spontaneous conversation in daily life. They tend to be "conversations in which a researcher gently guides a conversational partner in an extended discussion" (Rubin and Rubin, 2005: 4); or they can be described as a "verbal exchange of information between two or more people for the principal purpose of one gathering information from the other(s)" (Pole and Lampard, 2002:126)

There are many types of interview. One of the common criteria in distinguishing interviews is their structure. Interviews vary in their composition from the structured standardized interview to the unstructured interview. In this study, semi-structured interviews were used. Unlike the structured standardized interview, in which a respondent is requested to answer pre-set questions using a set of response categories that are designed in advance, the semi-structured interview allows the researcher to probe far from the predetermined questions and enter into a dialogue with the interviewee. However, the use of an interview schedule in a semi-structured interview helps to provide space for greater comparability over that of the unstructured interview (Berg, 2001).

There are several reasons for conducting semi-structured interviews. Burns (2000) argues that the semi-structured interview allows sufficient flexibility to participants to shape the flow of information. He states that the semi-structured interview enables the researcher to build a rapport during the time which is spent with the participants during the interview. Burns (2000) adds that the semi-structured interview can generate more valid responses from the interviewee as it eliminates any misunderstanding of the interviewer's questions or of the interviewee's responses by allowing the interviewer and the interviewee to seek clarification and elaboration of the question asked and the answer given. Kvale (2006) maintains that the qualitative interview allows people to express their feelings and experiences freely using their own words. Miller and Glassner (1997:100) consider the interview as a means of transmitting participants' points of view, while conceding these views the "culturally honoured status of reality".

Despite the advantages of this research method, criticism of the interview has long been attributed to interviewees who may deceive the researcher and do not tell the truth or are

selective in expressing their attitude or experiences (Mason, 2002). Holstein and Gubrium (2004) describe the interview conversation as a potential cause of bias, error, misunderstanding and misdirection. However, they stress that these threats to interview validity can be avoided if the interviewer asks the questions properly and tries to create a favourable interview environment.

3.7.3.1 Devising the Interview Schedule

Prior to the interview stage, a semi-structured interview schedule was devised. The use of an interview schedule in this study helped the researcher to focus on the interview topic which reflected positively on her ability to conduct a systematic and comprehensive comparison between information which is elicited from different participants. Using the interview schedule also allowed the researcher to make an effective use of the interview time (Patton, 1990; Drever, 1995).

The interview schedule was divided into three parts: respondents' attitudes towards other religions; respondents' attitudes towards certain norms, life styles and social customs which constitute the Western culture; and respondents' attitudes towards people from the West. Open-ended questions were used to assess pupils' attitudes. These types of question have long been considered useful as they provide the participants with opportunities to express themselves freely (Oppenheim, 2000). For Fink (1995: 32) these types of question are "useful in getting unanticipated answers and for describing the world as the respondent really sees it rather than how the researcher does". Peterson (2000:.33) views them as a way to get "insightful information" from the respondents.

The questions were formulated in the light of the theoretical conceptions of tolerance and subsequent analysis of the relationship between Muslims and Westerners presented previously in the literature review and informal conversations with the participants The interview schedule consisted of main questions which focussed on the substance the of research problem. These questions were included in the interview schedule with the intention of enabling the participants to relate their experiences and feelings with the topics of this study. The core questions also guaranteed that all aspects of the study were explored. Follow-up questions and probes were created during the course of the interviews as required (Kvale, 1996; Rubin and Rubin, 2005).

3.7.3.2 Piloting the Interview Schedule

The interview schedule was piloted in the same school in which the questionnaire was piloted using three pupils from 10th grade who volunteered to be interviewed. The pilot study phase of the interview was carried out with the aim of checking the interview questions in a realistic setting, examining the intelligibility of the questions, obtaining information from the participants regarding the ways in which they interpreted and reacted to interview questions, identifying anyone reluctant about answering any questions, and developing a coding system for data analysis (Drever, 1995; Cohen *et al*., 2000; Oppenheim, 2000; Wilkinson and Birmingham, 2003)

As a result of the pilot study, some changes were necessary in the interview schedule. Firstly, it was necessary to clarify the meaning of other religions when asking because participants tended to give unexpected responses when they were asked to point out the similarities between their religion and other religions. Two interviewees stated that they interpreted the question as if it was inquiring about the similarities between their religious sect and other Islamic sects. Although this topic may be interesting, it was not the focus of the present study. Therefore some questions were changed to reflect that the focus was other religions not other Islamic sects. The final version of the interview schedule is presented in Appendix 3.

Secondly, although all participants volunteered to be interviewed and the researcher gained parental consent in order for them to participate in the study, it was found that they resisted answering the question about their attitude towards premarital sex in Western culture. One of the respondents even asked the researcher to gain permission from her father in order to answer that particular question. Respondents classified the question as sensitive because it dealt with sex, a taboo subject in the Omani social and cultural context. This was predictable behaviour as the researcher's own experience and the literature suggests that individuals in Oman, as in other Islamic countries, are imbued with a strong sense of the immorality of sex (Patai, 2002; Hasnain, 2005). Discussing any topic where the word sex is mentioned is considered to be taboo in Omani society. However, the researcher repeated the assurance of confidentiality and anonymity of the information provided during the course of all interviews. In addition, the informants were asked if they wished to change the place of the interview (the

interviews took place in the Assistant Head-teacher's office which was allocated to the researcher). Unsurprisingly, participants did request change of location and were allowed to choose a new location by themselves. The researcher also tried to build a good relationship with the respondents by asking them at the beginning of the interview about their study and if there was anything they wanted to talk about. Conducting the interview in a place where the interviewees felt safer and listening to their worries and concerns regarding their studies and other facets of life seemed to generate a good relationship between the researcher and the interviewees and lessen the resistance to respond to questions classified by the participants as sensitive (Alder and Alder, 2001).

3.7.3.3 Interviews' Reliability and Validity

Whereas reliability and validity have long been associated with the quantitative research and positivist traditions, it is universally acknowledged that validity and reliability are central to qualitative research and interpretative traditions too (Winter, 2000; Golafshani, 2003) However, the concept of validity and reliability has been redefined to meet the nature of qualitative research. In this regard, a new vocabulary has been developed to reflect the idea of reliability and validity in qualitative research. Among these terms are "truth value, credibility, trustworthiness, authenticity, goodness", and "verification" (Whittemore *et al.*, 2001:527; Anfara *et al.*, 2002). The term "trustworthiness" suggested by Lincoln and Guba (1985) to reflect notions of validity and reliability is applied widely to express the notions of validity and reliability in qualitative research. Therefore trustworthiness was used in this study to point to the notions of validity and reliability of the qualitative aspect of the study. Trustworthiness, according to Lincoln and Guba (1985), is the ability of an inquirer to convince the target audience and him/herself that conclusions drawn from the inquiry have rigor and worth. They indicate that the idea of trustworthiness can be met through a focus on achieving credibility, transferability, dependability and conformability.

Within qualitative inquiry several methods are identified to reach credibility, transferability, dependability and conformability. These procedures can be achieved according to Creswell and Miller (2000), at three levels: researchers, participants and people external to the research project, such as readers and reviewers. At the level of the researcher, trustworthiness can be checked firstly through triangulation. This refers to

testing trustworthiness by using multiple and different sources of information; secondly, through disconfirming evidence which refers to a quest for negative evidence; thirdly, researcher reflexivity which refers to a full disclosure of the researcher's beliefs at the early stages of the study which aims to allow the audiences to understand his/ her own position.

Participant trustworthiness can be established firstly by member checking in which the study's participants are asked to comment on the raw data in the form of transcription; secondly, by prolonged engagement in the field in which the researcher is required to stay in the field for a long time in order to develop an holistic understanding about the phenomena under investigation; and thirdly, by collaboration which refers to engaging the participants as co-researchers. This includes taking their opinion into account when forming the research questions and involving them in the process of data collection (Creswell and Miller, 2000).

At the level of external forces, trustworthiness is checked firstly through the audit trail in which individuals considered to be external to the project, such as auditors and readers, are asked to review the research documentation and give opinions about the process and the products of the research. Secondly, trustworthiness can be established by providing a rich and detailed description of the setting, the participants and the themes which are involved and used in the investigation as such a description allows the reader to develop a confidence judgment concerning the applicability of the findings to other contexts and settings. Thirdly, trustworthiness can be examined by peer debriefing in which an expert in research and the phenomena under investigation, is asked to review and judge the research. The reviewer often challenges the research assumptions and raises focal queries about the researcher's methods of interpretations (Creswell and Miller, 2000).

In this study, trustworthiness was established by using triangulation, detailed description of data and reflexivity. Other procedures were excluded either because they were more time consuming, such as a prolonged engagement in the field, or because it was difficult for the researcher to find individuals available or suitable to perform such procedures.

3.8 The Sample

The population of the study consisted of female pupils in grade ten in secondary schools in Suwaiq. Based on the Omani educational system, 10th grade pupils are about 16 years old. The inspiration to choose this population was drawn from Ryder's (1965) notion that stresses the importance of young people cohorts in social change**.** Ryder (1965:854) defined a cohort as "the aggregate of individuals (within some population definition) who experienced the same event within the same time interval". He stressed that young people are strong and effective agents of social change. He believes that they can effectively participate in driving change within society though they are not influential at the level of occupation and family's reproduction. For him young people can permit change and change themselves although they cannot transform their social milieus.

In choosing this group of respondents the researcher aimed to permit this group to give their views on issues considered for a long to be merely for adults (Eder and Fingerson, 2001). Given the fact that the collectivism culture is evident in Arab societies including the Omani society (Barakat, 1993), the position of children and young people in these societies seem to be problematic. Collectivism is a melting pot in which individuals' characteristics and voices are denied in favour of the group they belong to (Barakat, 1993; Sagy *et al*., 2001). Therefore, it seems worthwhile to allow young people to give their interpretations of issues of importance in their life in a global world taking into account that these young people are active agents (Irwin and Johnson, 2005) and can play significant roles in changing and permitting changes in the light of the fact of demographic metabolism or the cycle of death and birth (Ryder, 1965)

Another point which was considered was that the participants who chose to participate in the study should be able to develop an autonomous moral judgment. The age group selected needed to be appropriate for this purpose (see below). Piaget was one of the pioneers who brought "moral development" to light. He stressed that children's moral judgment is built on their cognitive development. Piaget emphasized two broad stages of moral thinking. These are: the stage of "heteronomous morality" where children comply strictly with rules and base judgments about moral issues on consequences rather than the intention of the actors; and the stage of "autonomous morality" which

develops around the age of seven. According to Piaget, in autonomous morality, the judgments that are made by children are based on intention more than consequences (Piaget, 1954; Malim and Birch, 1998; Carpendale, 2000). Similarly Kohlberg classified this age group as having a high degree of independence and maturation, although Kohlberg pointed out that this stage develops in late adolescence (Kohlberg, 1984; Lovell, 1997; Malim and Birch, 1998; Myers, 1998, Carpendale, 2000).

Despite criticisms that have been directed to Piaget and Kohlberg theories, these theories still dominate the study of moral development. According to Minnameier (2001), the criticism which has accompanied Kohlberg's theory of moral development is due to its strong appeal and the lack of a better alternative. He stressed that Kohlberg's theory is still "alive and well" despite all the criticism (p.317). The researcher agrees with Minnameier's (2001), view regarding Kohlberg's theory. Therefore it was used as a guide to choose the research sample in the present study. According to Piaget's and Kohlberg's theories about moral development, individuals who are around the same age as the 10th grade pupils in Oman , i.e 16, are likely to develop an autonomous choice regarding their moral judgment.

3.8.1   Questionnaire and Quasi-Experimental Sample

The target population for the questionnaire was chosen using the 'probability sampling technique' involving random selection. According to Neuman (2000) and May (2001) this method is likely to yield a sample that is a good representation of the population under investigation. There are a variety of probability sample designs, such as simple random, systematic, clusters and strata sampling. Cluster sampling was used in this study. Neuman (2000: 209) defines a cluster as "a unit that contains final sampling elements but can be treated temporarily as a sampling element itself". According to Neuman (2000), in cluster sampling, the researcher first randomly selects clusters. Then he/she randomly draws elements from within the selected cluster. In other words, cluster sampling uses two sampling units. These are the primary sampling unit, which is a cluster itself, and the secondary sampling unit, which is the sub-unit within the primary sampling unit.

Cluster sampling has been used in educational research as an alternative to simple random sampling in order to reduce research costs for a given sample size. In his article on the future of the randomization in social science Boruch (1994) heralded a shift in the use of the randomization process in social science research. He indicated that this process will be widely applied at the level of institutions rather than the level of individual. In 2004, Boruch and his colleagues reviewed the value of the interventions that are deployed in many places or what they called in their article place-randomised trails. They pointed out that using institutions and organizations as a unit for the randomization strengthens the statistical power of the measurement, provides convincing proof for changes in policy, and helps to maintain the ethics, law and cultural ground which are often difficult to be reserved when individuals are the unit of allocation. However, some theorists, such as Sapsford (1999), do not believe that cluster sampling is a random sampling method. Sapsford (1999:58) indicates that cluster sampling may result in choosing samples in which homogeneity is exaggerated as "there is a strong tendency that the people living close to each other or going to the same place have similar attitudes and behaviours".

Sapsford (1999) claim about the non-randomized nature of cluster sampling seems to be weak given the fact that this type of sampling allows each unit within the population to have an equal and independent chance of selection, which is central to randomization theory. However, it should be admitted that this type of sampling has some pitfalls which limit the ability of the researcher to draw a conclusion about the target population. Different suggestions have been made to overcome these pitfalls. On the one hand, researchers such as Fraenkel and Wallen (2005) suggest using multi-stage sampling in which the researcher randomly draws clusters in the first stage then randomly draws individuals in the second stage. On the other hand, researchers such as Sapsford (1999) advocate the use of more clusters. In school-based research, it seems that it is difficult to assign individuals to a program or control group but possible to assign clusters such as schools or classes. Bloom *et al.* (1999) point out that when it is impossible to randomly assign individuals to a program or control group it may be possible to assign whole groups or clusters. Therefore the use of more than one cluster seems to be the most suitable option when dealing with cluster-sampling limitations.

For the questionnaire and the quasi-experimental study, the researcher obtained a complete list of female secondary schools in Al-Suwaiq. Each school was given an identification letter by the researcher. These letters were included in a list that was presented to one of the researcher's colleagues. This colleague was asked to choose four letters randomly from the list. The letter selected indicates the schools that the study was conducted in.

Table 3-2: The distributions of study sample

Experimental group				Comparison group			
School A		School B		School C		School G	
Class 1	Class 2	Class 3	Class 4	Class 5	Class 6	Class 7	Class 8
30	30	30	30	33	33	30	30
60		60		66		60	
120				126			

Table 3-2 shows that four schools were chosen to participate in the study. Two of these schools were allocated to the intervention condition and the other schools to the control condition. In the second stage, two classes were randomly selected from each school. In total eight classes were chosen to participate in the study. The total number of the pupils in the control group was 126 whereas the number of pupils in the experimental group was 120.

3.8.1.1 Profile of Study Sample

Unlike the true experimental group in which randomization and matching are applied to assure the comparability of the control and experimental group, in this quasi-experimental study the comparability of the two groups was checked in light of their equivalence. Age, parental educational level, family income, exposure to the media and internet constituted the information which was obtained from the participants in the experimental and the control group in order to examine their equivalence. Cross-tabulation and Mann-Whitney test were applied to check the differences between the two groups on the previous nominal variables. For this reason, the researcher found it necessary to include the following tables in this chapter rather than the findings chapter.

3.8.1.1.1 Participants' Age

To examine the age differences between the experimental and the control group, independent samples t-test was conducted and the results are summarised in Table 3-3. There were no statistically significant differences in age between the experimental and the control groups in age, with average age of 15.4080 for the control group and 15.4310 for the experimental group.

Table 3-3: Mean scores differences between control and experimental groups in age

Group	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
Control	125	15.4080	.70820	-.249	239	.803
Experimental	116	15.4310	.72501			

3.8.1.1.2 Participants' Religion

Table 3-4 shows the participants in both the experimental and the control groups reported that they are Muslims.

Table 3-4: The distribution of experiment and control groups by religion

			Group		Total
			Control	Experimental	
Religion	Muslim	Count	125	116	241
		% within group	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
Total		Count	125	116	241
		% within group	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

3.8.1.1.3 Participants' Family Income

Table 3-5 shows the cross-tabulation made for family income between the experimental and the control groups. It was found that more than two-thirds of the control group participants came from household with low income. Table 3-5 shows that 76.5% of control group's subjects belong to families with a monthly income of no more than 300 Omani Rails or 400 GBP. Similarly, the experimental group subjects were found to fit into the same level of income, with 75% of the participants reporting that their family receives a monthly income of no more than 300 Omani Rails or 400 GBP.

Table 3-5: The distribution of experimental and control groups by family income

| | | | Group | | Total |
			Control	Experimental	
Family income	0-120 Omani Rails	Count	55	47	102
		% within group	46.2%	42.0%	44.2%
	121-300 Omani Rails	Count	36	37	73
		% within group	30.3%	33.0%	31.6%
	301-500 Omani Rails	Count	18	20	38
		% within group	15.1%	17.9%	16.5%
	501-700 Omani Rails	Count	8	6	14
		% within group	6.7%	5.4%	6.1%
	> 700 Omani Rails	Count	2	2	4
		% within group	1.7%	1.8%	1.7%
Total		Count	119	112	231
		% within group	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

To examine whether the experimental and the control groups stem from families whose income distribution is comparable, the Mann-Whitney U was used. With a value of the Mann-Whitney U = 6420.500 and an Asymptote significance (2 tailed) 0.609, there was no difference between the experimental and the control group in family income.

3.8.1.1.4 Parental Levels of Educations

Cross-tabulation for the education levels of fathers between the experimental and the control groups is summarised in Table 3-6. More than one-fifth of fathers of both the experimental and the control groups were illiterate. On the other hand, only 6.5 % of the control group fathers had degrees or postgraduate qualifications. For the experimental group the percentage of fathers with high qualifications is only 3.5%. With a value of 6769.000 of the Mann-Whitney U, and Asymptote significance (2 tailed) .555 there is no difference between the experimental and the control group in the fathers' levels of education.

Table 3-6: The distribution of experimental and control groups fathers by levels of education

			control group	experimental group	Total
			group		
Fathers Education	Illiterate	Count	27	26	53
		% within group	22.0%	22.6%	22.3%
	Primary	Count	40	33	73
		% within group	32.5%	28.7%	30.7%
	Preparatory	Count	25	16	41
		% within group	20.3%	13.9%	17.2%
	Secondary	Count	23	36	59
		% within group	18.7%	31.3%	24.8%
	Degree	Count	8	4	12
		% within group	6.5%	3.5%	5.0%
Total		Count	123	115	238
		% within group	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Similarly, cross-tabulation was used for maternal levels of education between the experimental and the control groups. Table 3-7 shows, almost half of the participants' mothers in the control group were illiterate whereas more than half of the experimental groups' mothers were illiterate. By contrast, only 1.6% of the control group mothers and .9% of the experimental groups' mother had a degree and postgraduate qualifications.

Table 3-7: The distribution of experimental and control groups mothers' levels of education

			Group		Total
			Control	Experimental	
Mothers	Illiterate	Count	57	62	119
		% within group	46.0%	53.9%	49.8%
	Primary	Count	38	37	75
		% within group	30.6%	32.2%	31.4%
	Preparatory	Count	11	7	18
		% within group	8.9%	6.1%	7.5%
	Secondary	Count	16	8	24
		% within group	12.9%	7.0%	10.0%
	Degree	Count	2	1	3
		% within group	1.6%	.9%	1.3%
Total		Count	124	115	239
		% within group	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Using Mann-Whitney U to examine the differences in the distribution of maternal levels of education between the experimental and the control groups shows that there were no statistically significant differences between the two groups with Mann-Whitney U = , 6317.500 and an Asymptote significance (2 tailed) .098

3.8.1.1.5 Participants' Exposure to Audio-Visual Content

Exposure to TV

As TV and the internet are considered to be a key socialization process, the equivalence between the experimental and the control group is tested on this variable. Table 3-8 below shows the outright majority of both the control group and the experimental group reported that they watch TV.

Table 3-8: The distribution of the experimental and control groups by exposure to TV

			Group		Total
			Control	Experimental	
Exposure to TV	Yes	Count	124	113	237
		% within group	99.2%	98.3%	98.8%
	No	Count	1	2	3
		% within group	.8%	1.7%	1.3%
Total		Count	125	115	240
		% within group	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

With a value of = 7120.000 and an Asymptote significance (2 tailed) of .514, the Mann-Whitney U shows that there is no difference between the experimental and the control group in their exposure to TV.

Related to the watching of TV is the length of exposure to it. Statistical analysis of a distribution in length of watching TV between the experimental and the control groups is displayed in Table 3-9. The majority of the control and experimental groups reported that they watch TV for 1-2 hours. Only 3.2% of the control and 5.2% of the experimental group watch TV for more than 6 hours. However, using Mann-Whitney U shows that there were no statistically significant differences between the control and experimental groups in the length of watching TV, with a Mann-Whitney U of 6767.000 and Asymptote significance (2 tailed) of .303

Table 3-9: The distribution of the experimental and control groups by length of exposure to TV

			Group		Total
			Control	Experimental	
Time spent watching TV	1-2 hours	Count	81	66	147
		% within group	64.8%	56.9%	61.0%
	3-4 hours	Count	29	38	67
		% within group	23.2%	32.8%	27.8%
	5-6hours	Count	11	6	17
		% within group	8.8%	5.2%	7.1%
	> 6 hours	Count	4	6	10
		% within group	3.2%	5.2%	4.1%
Total		Count	125	116	241
		% within group	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

3.8.1.1.6 Accessibility to the Internet

The accessibility of the Internet for participants in both the experimental and the control group is summarized in Table 3-10. The outright majority of the participants in both the experimental and the control group reported that they had no access to the internet. 71.2% of the control group and 67.8% of the experimental group reported no access to internet.

Table 3-10: The distribution of experimental and control group accessibility to Internet

			Group		Total
			Control	Experimental	
Access to Internet	Yes	Count	36	37	73
		% within group	28.8%	32.2%	30.4%
	No	Count	89	78	167
		% within group	71.2%	67.8%	69.6%
Total		Count	125	115	240
		% within group	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

No statistically significant differences were found between the two groups on the distribution of the accessibility to the Internet, with Mann-Whitney U = 6945.000 and Asymptote significance (2 tailed) of .571.

<u>Participants' Direct Exposure to Western Culture</u>

When the participants in both the experimental and the control group were asked if they had travelled to the West, the outright majority of the subjects stated that they had not been to the West. Table 3-11 shows that only .8 % of the control group and 1.7 % of the experimental group had had the opportunity to visit a Western country.

Table 3-11: The distribution of experimental and control to travel abroad

			Group		Total
			Control	Experimental	
Travel	yes	Count	1	2	3
		% within group	.8%	1.7%	1.2%
	no	Count	124	114	238
		% within group	99.2%	98.3%	98.8%
Total		Count	125	116	241
		% within group	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Mann-Whitney U was used to check the significance of distribution in the direct exposure to western culture through travelling to western countries between the experimental and control groups. It shows that there were no statistically significant differences between the experimental and control groups in direct exposure to western culture through travelling to Western countries. Mann-Whitney U test significant (2 tailed) = .519

3.8.2   The Interview Sample

Out of 482 pupils who gave their consent to participate in the study and completed the questionnaire only six initially agreed to be interviewed. The literature shows that participants' willingness to reveal their views to others is affected by many factors such as maturity, sex (Benney *et al.* 1956) and the social context in which they are raised (Alder and Alder, 2001).

The participants' refusal to be interviewed could be due to various reasons. Firstly, there is the nature of certain items in the questionnaire, such those focusing on allowing the adherents of other religions to have places of worships in Oman; attitudes towards drinking alcohol; selling pork; and dating customs within the western culture. These

may have sensitized the participants towards the study and the researcher. Five participants withdrew from the study and the researcher faced a situation in which many questions were raised by the students and teachers about her identity and religious beliefs.

Secondly, in view of the fact that the subjects in this study are female, gender seems to have affected their enthusiasm to be interviewed. According to Reinharz and Chase (2001) some women still have no confidence and think that they are incapable of disclosing their views. They also remark that women are devalued as intellectuals and their voices are considered to be erotic in some societies. This argument on the situation of women is mirrored in Oman and other Arab countries. The United Nations Development Program (2005: 92) reports that "Nowhere in the Arab world, women enjoy equality with men…women are subject to discrimination both in the law and practice, and as a result they tend not to participate extensively in the public sphere".

Thirdly, the social context seems to play an important role in forming the respondents' attitude towards interviews. In Oman, as elsewhere in the Arab world, expressing opinions and beliefs is governed by a restricted set of rules which are created by civil, religious and governmental authorities. With a history of freedom violation in the Arab world, it is difficult for individuals to express their opinions and beliefs to others (United Nations Development Program, 2005). The researcher was able to solve this problem as explained later and 37 pupils volunteered to take part in the interviews.

With respect to the scope of the present study, the time and the resources available, it was difficult to interview 37 pupils. According to Wengraf (2001:5), "semi structure interviews are high-preparation, high-risk, high-gain, and high-analysis operations". Therefore only 16 pupils were selected to take part in the interviews from whom 8 were chosen from the experimental group and 8 from the control group. This number of pupils was determined by using a selective sampling technique which is, according to Schatzman and Strauss (1973: 38-39), "a practical necessity and theoretically mandatory; it is shaped by the time the researcher has available to him/her, by his framework, by his/her starting and developing interests, and by any restrictions placed upon his observation by his/her host".

Although there is no agreement on the number of interviewees which is needed to conduct a research study, there is a consensus that the selected participants have to reflect a wide variety of views about the issues under investigation. In addition, it is also recommended to choose knowledgeable and experienced interviewees (Kvale, 1996; Coyne, 1997; Rubin and Rubin, 2005; Guest *et al.*, 2006). These criteria were considered when selecting the interviewees in the present study. The 37 pupils who volunteered to be interviewed were asked to write two short essays. In these essays they were asked to argue for or against allowing adherents of other religions to have places of worship in Oman, and argue for or against allowing Westerners to live in their neighbourhood area. After anonymising these essays, the researcher asked two teachers to judge them on the basis of the knowledge which they thought the pupils had of the subject they were writing about. The teachers' evaluation was reviewed by the researcher who chose 16 pupils whom she believed reflected a wide variety of notions and attitudes in terms of religion and culture.

3.9 Ethical Issues

Ethical considerations are one of the main concerns which have long been asserted when conducting social science research. These are considered as they frame a structure and plan of any research studies in general and experimental studies in particular. This is due to the nature of experimental research which is often described as intrusive research. The British Educational Research Association (BERA) and the American Educational Research Association (AERA) ethical guidelines were followed (BERA, 2004; AERA, 2005). Neuman (2000) suggests researchers who plan to conduct this kind of research should be careful if they place subjects in physical danger or in an embarrassing or anxious situation. Other theorists, such as De Vaus (2001), note that the practical and ethical matters in this kind of design mean that they often cannot be used. The researcher in the present study, however, believes that the practical and ethical issues do not amount to logical and rational reasons to stop conducting this kind of research because of its significant contribution in improving human knowledge in scientific fields. Furthermore, giving due attention to ethical issues when planning experimental research can take care of any ethical problem.

It is well documented that there have been a substantial differences in approach taken in different countries to the regulation of social science research ethics. However, most ethical guidelines identify several ethical principles to be protected when carrying out a research investigation. These principles are:

- Autonomy: the right a participant has to agree or refuse to take part in a research investigation.

- Beneficence: the researcher's duty to set positive goals which intend to improve the community.

- Non-malfeasance: the researcher's duty to avoid any harm to research subjects.

- Justice: the right of the research participants to be treated fairly.

- Rules: the researcher's obligation to follow specific guidelines that determine acceptable actions by the researcher when dealing with the participants.

- Privacy: respecting the limited access to participants' thoughts and feelings.

- Confidentiality: the right the participants have to control access to data they disclose about themselves to the researcher.

- Fidelity: the researcher's duty to keep the promises he/she makes when conducting the research, especially those related to the information gathered.

- Veracity: the researcher's obligation to provide the participants with accurate information about the nature of the study when she/he starts to enrol them to participate in the study (Kent, 2000a).

Informed consent is often viewed as an important protection for ethical principles. It is used to provide the potential participants with a full understanding of the aims and the process of the research project so they can freely agree to be part of it (Kent, 2000b). In the present study the details of the project were sent to both the pupils and their parents. They were informed about the identity of the researcher, the duration of the study, their right to refuse to participate and their right to withdraw from the study at any point. They were also informed that their response to questions in the questionnaire and the interview would be anonymous and confidential. They were informed about the way in which they were selected to participate in the study, the discomfort that they might feel as a result of participating in the study and its likely benefits. With the consent form an outline of the project was attached. Taking into account that pupils may recognize a teacher's request as a requirement to participate in the study (Israel and Hay, 2006), the

consent form in this study was distributed by the researcher and the participants were asked to return the forms in sealed envelopes to their Social Studies teacher. The researcher, thus, gained access to the sample in an ethical manner and no one was forced to take part in the research.

Although informed consent was given great emphasis in this study, the participants were not given a full explanation about the purpose of the study. The participants were informed that the aim of the study was to investigate their attitudes towards other cultures and religions. They were also notified that the aims of the program were to enhance their knowledge about other cultures and religions. The concept of "cultural tolerance" was not mentioned to the research participants as a focus of this study. The decision to avoid mentioning the term "cultural tolerance" to the participants was based on several reasons. Firstly, issues such as tolerance, racism and bullying are considered to be extremely sensitive and can cause individuals to modify their behaviour as no one likes to be viewed as intolerant, racist or a bully. According to Cohen *et al.* (2000:66) "A study of racial prejudice, for example, accurately labelled as such, would certainly affect the behaviour of the subjects taking part". Secondly, the subjects learn using a teacher-centred approach where the teacher is the authority and learner is the follower who tries to please him/her without discussions (Al-Issa, 2005). Therefore, if the participants of this study were informed about the real aim of this study, they would have said what they thought the researcher wanted them to say. Thirdly, the war against terrorism that was ignited by the USA and its alliance post September 11, 2001, has affected the Muslim world and has generated hatred for the West among some Muslims. Pipes (2002) notes that Omani people who are considered to be far from being religiously radical and hardly heard from, protested against the U.S.A after U.S.A hostilities began in Afghanistan. He pointed out that a slogan of "America is the enemy of God" was raised by them during their protest against the U.S.A and its allies. With respect to the American war on Iraq, it seems that the anti-western feeling among Muslims includes the Omani people. Therefore, it seems difficult to claim tolerance towards things which are viewed as intolerable in the wider social context.

In addition, the subjects were not provided with full details about the research design. They were made aware about the methods used to choose their group to participate in the study. However, they were not provided with any information about whether their

group was a control or an experimental group. This was done for legitimate methodological reasons. According to De Vaus (2001), being part of a control group may lead the participants to feel badly and drop out from the group identified as the control. This may create a situation in which the control group differs significantly from the experimental group. In contrast, being part of the experimental group can make the participants feel special and lead them to think that they are in competition with the control group so they start to become more involved in the aspects that are under investigations (De Vaus, 2001).

The absence of a full explanation about the research aims and design may be considered by some theorists as deception. Deception has long been a topic of emotive debate between two camps of researchers. The first camp is the advocate of absolute truth. It stresses that researchers must be absolutely honest with the participants and must provide them with all details about the research study. The second camp is the supporter of partial truth who endorses that the researcher can withhold some information from the participants. This camp views truth as a relative concept so it permits deception. However, it should be emphasized that the advocates of these camps stress respecting the participants' dignity and avoiding harming them (Scheyvens and Storey, 2003).

Social science researchers, particularly psychologists, accept the use of deception which is defined by Adair *et al.* (1985: 62) as "the provision of information that actively misled subjects regarding some aspect of the study" if there is a specific methodological purpose (Clarke, 1999; Neuman, 2000). The use of deception is allowed by professional associations in educational research such as the American Educational Research Association which stresses that "honesty should characterize the relationship between researchers and participants and appropriate institutional representatives. Deception is discouraged; it should be used only when clearly necessary for scientific studies, and should then be minimized. After the study, the researcher should explain to the participants and institutional representatives the reasons for the deception" (AERA, 2005). The British Educational Research Association takes a similar view. In its revised ethical guidelines for educational research, it states that "researchers must therefore avoid deception or subterfuge unless their research designs specifically require it to ensure that the appropriate data is collected or that the welfare of the researchers is not put in jeopardy (BERA, 2004:6).

Though the use of deception is permitted in social science research, the researcher did not mislead the participants by telling lies. The participants were informed that the aim of the program was to enhance their knowledge about different religions and cultures. This was not wrong information as the program's aims were to widen pupils' knowledge about other cultures and religions. Furthermore, educating pupils about other cultures and religions by providing knowledge about them is viewed as a means to enhance cultural tolerance.

Adair *et al*. (1985:63) argue that "The simple failure to disclose the true purpose of the study was not counted as deception. The subject had to be actively misled, either about the study's purpose or task, or provided with false information about others or about their own or others' behaviours". Kent (2000a) believes that full disclosure about the study is unhelpful. He asserts that too detailed a description about the nature of the study may cause the result to be invalid. Even Baumrind (1985), who is one of the theorists who raises strong objections against the use of deception in research studies, acknowledges that "full disclosure of everything that could possibly affect a given subject's decision to participate is not possible, and therefore cannot be ethically required. Provided that participants agree to the postponement of full disclosure of the purposes of the research, absence of full disclosure does not constitute intentional deception"(Baumrind, 1985:165). Moreover, the participants in the present study were informed at its beginning when the researcher was gaining the informed consent from them that the data collected from them would be used in studying a phenomenon which may not be disclosed to them directly (Pittenger, 2002)

3.10 The Main Study

3.10.1 Pre–intervention Questionnaire Administration

The questionnaire was administered at the beginning of the study using the group administration technique. The researcher arranged with the principal to administer the questionnaire to a group of 30 pupils on each occasion. The questionnaire was administered during the self-learning lesson in the school library. The head teacher in each school appointed a teacher to help the researcher in administering the questionnaire. This method of questionnaire administration is reported to be useful in ensuring a high response rate. It is also found to be practical in enhancing the validity of

findings by allowing the researcher to have more control over the method used to complete the questionnaire (Oppenheim, 2000).

3.10.2 Pre-intervention Interview

As stated earlier out of 482 pupils who gave their consent to participate in the study and filled the questionnaire, only six agreed to be interviewed. A "trust crisis with the pupils and their parents"[3] threatened the field study and challenged the researcher. Building trust with the pupils, the parents and with the community seemed to be the only way to continue with the study and increase the quality of data (Arksey and Knight, 1999). Rubin and Rubin (2005) note that trust is enhanced if the target people believe that the researcher shares a common background with them. The control and the experimental schools' administrators cooperated with the researcher and arranged for her to be interviewed on the school radio[4] . The researcher was interviewed by one of the schools' pupils who acted as a presenter. During the interview the researcher was able to speak about her social, institutional, cultural and religious background and experiences. The audience, who were the school pupils, were allowed to ask questions of the researcher. This interview improved access and helped to build a rapport between the researcher and the pupils.

In addition, the researcher visited the schools in which the study was carried out to meet with the participants. During the visit pupils raised questions about the benefits of the study, the nature of the questions and whether they would be difficult. The number of interviewees involved in the study was the main concern of the respondents as many of them believed that it would be easy to identify them if only a small number of interviewees were involved. The researcher repeated the assurance of confidentiality and anonymity of the participants and the information provided during the interview (Drever, 1995). She gave comprehensive explanations about the use of the information and the benefits of the study. The researcher assured the participants that their answers to the interview questions would not affect their marks. She confirmed that a sufficient number of interviewees were included in the study so that the researcher could

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[3] This term was used by one of the head teachers who attempted to analyze the situation the researcher encountered with pupils and their parents after receiving calls from some parents asking about the identity and beliefs of the researcher.

[4] This is a local broadcasting radio which is organized by school pupils under supervision of a school teacher. This radio broadcasts its programme early in the morning of a school day.

undertake the procedures necessary to maintain anonymity. After the meeting, 37 pupils agreed to be interviewed from whom the researcher chose 16 pupils as explained earlier. The researcher rang the other interviewees and expressed her gratitude for their willingness to be interviewed.

The semi-structured interviews were conducted with 8 pupils from the experimental group and 8 pupils from the control group. The interviewees were given the right to choose the location and time for their interview. At the beginning of the interviews the participants were briefed about the aims of the interview and the rights they had during it. The use of the information provided during the interviews was fully discussed with the respondents as many of them feared that what they said might be reported to their teachers or parents. In addition, the interviewees were asked for permission to tape-record the interviews. 14 interviewees allowed the researcher to tape record interviews with them. Two respondents hesitated to give their permission on the basis that men may hear their voices. The researcher assured them that no one would listen to the tape and that it would be transcribed by her. As a result the two participants also allowed the researcher to use a tape-recorder. Interviewees' non-verbal gestures and traits were noted by the researcher who spent some time after the interviews to making notes in her research diary (Stroh, 2000).

Building a relationship of trust with the participants is a continuous process. Therefore much attention was paid to build trust and establish a rapport with the interviewees during the course of the interviews. Arksey and Knight (1999:101) define rapport as "the degree of understanding, trust and respect between the interviewer and the interviewee" which suggests some ways to foster trust and establish a rapport. Among these they indicated that listening, making eye contact, saying encouraging things, responding to emotional reactions in a sensitive manner, giving information about research findings and being friendly with the participants are crucial to the success of interviews. They also suggest writing letters of appreciation to the interviewees as a way to foster trust. The researcher took these suggestions into account when dealing with the participants during the interviews and a thank you letter was sent to them through their Social Studies teacher immediately after the interviews.

During the pre-test interview the sequence of interview questions was altered and new questions were generated to reflect the participants' experiences. This idea is suggested by Rubin and Rubin (2005:34) who state that "responsive interviewers recognize that each conversational partner has a distinct set of experiences, a different construction of the meaning of those experiences, and a different area of expertise. As such, researchers create new questions for each interviewee because they need to tap this distinctive knowledge". The pre-intervention interviews lasted 30-47 minutes.

3.10.3 Training the Teachers for Implementing the Intervention

After accessing the schools, the researcher looked for teachers who would be willing to teach the programme. The head-teachers in both experimental schools held a meeting with their staff in the presence of the researcher. The researcher was invited by the head teachers to talk about her project and ask for volunteers. Three teachers volunteered to take part from one of the experimental schools whereas two teachers volunteered in the other school. Interestingly, three of these teachers had been taught by the researcher when they were in high school. They introduced themselves to the researcher and showed enthusiasm to teach the program. The teachers varied in background; three of them were science teachers and two were social studies teachers. None of them had much experience of teaching. They had just been recruited to teach in their schools. None of them had been exposed to multicultural education. As the literature associates the ability of pupils to balance their cultural identification with the capability of their teachers to maintain a balance of cultural identifications (Banks, 2001), it was necessary to train the teachers who volunteered to teach the program.

Thus four workshops were held before the intervention was implemented. During the workshops the aims of the intervention were explained and its content was introduced. The benefits of the program to the pupils and their own teaching were highlighted. The intervention plan was discussed in detail. The teachers were also trained to implement some instructional activities such as role-playing and the use of cooperative learning. While the program was in progress the researcher held two weekly meetings with the teachers. During these meeting, some sources that were relevant to the information and included in the content were presented by the researcher or by one of the teachers who had volunteered to do this under the supervision of the researcher. In addition, these

meetings were used to discuss the difficulties that might face the teachers while preparing and presenting their lessons and alternative solutions for these problems were discussed and agreed on.

3.10.4 Implementing the Intervention in the Classroom

The program provided a wide variety of instructional activities based on dialogue, cooperative learning, role-playing, group discussion, debate and problem-solving. The implementation of these activities was supervised by the teachers who volunteered to take part in the program. Implementation of the program in the four classes lasted for approximately 10 weeks. It was presented to the participants in Arabic.

3.10.5 Post-intervention Questionnaire Administration

When the intervention ended, the questionnaire that had been used at the beginning of the study was administered again using the group administration technique. The teachers who had been appointed by the head teacher helped to administer the questionnaire to the same sample as the pre-test questionnaire.

3.10.6 Post-intervention Interviews

In order to evaluate the impact the program had had on the pupils' cultural tolerance, the researcher conducted another interview with the pupils whom she had interviewed at the beginning of the study. Unlike the pre-intervention interview, the post-intervention interviews seemed to be straightforward. The 16 pupils were very cooperative and willing to be interviewed. During the post-intervention interview, the participants seemed to have more trust in the researcher. She was given, for instance, freedom to choose the time and the location of the interviews.

Interestingly, although all interviewees agreed to the tape-recording of their interviews during the pre-test interview, one participant informed the researcher that she had been willing to record the interview but her father had asked her not to do so because he believed that the interview covered sensitive topics and he feared that the tape would be evidence against his daughter and, ipso facto, against him. This particular interview was not recorded. Notes were taken during the interview session and the interview was written up afterwards.

3.11 Data Analysis

3.11.1 Analysis of Quantitative Data

The quantitative data obtained through the questionnaire was analyzed using the Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS). After entering the data into the SPSS software, mixed ANOVA was run to check whether the means of the control and experimental groups were significantly different from one another. Muijs (2004) indicates that ANOVA is a method that enables a comparison of the mean scores of continuous variables between numbers of groups. It tests the null hypothesis that several group means are equal in the population. It compares the variance of the group means (called between-groups sum of squares) with the variance of values within the groups (called the within–groups sum of squares).

Furthermore, the t-test was used to check the difference between the two groups in the gain scores. The t-test is often viewed as the most appropriate test to check significance. According to Miller *et al,* (2002) and Muijs (2004) a number of assumptions must be met when using this test. These are: a dependent variable must be an interval or a ratio, two groups must be compared; and the sample must be selected randomly. This study met these entire requirements as the dependent was interval, the groups compared were two, the control and the experimental groups. Some researchers may have some reservation in admitting that a random sampling technique was used in this study. For those theorists, it is necessary to assert that the mixed ANOVA is quite robust to violation of this assumption if the sample is large enough.

Differences that might occur between the experimental and the control group in tolerance toward non-Muslims, western culture and westerners were judged using statistical significance and effect size (Eta-squared). While statistical significant measures rule out a probability that the observed differences occur by chance, the effect size offers some indication of practical meaningfulness (Stout and Ruble, 1995; Kotrlik and Williams, 2003). It has been suggested that for ANOVA, an effect size of 0.1 represents a small effect size; 0.25, a medium effect; and 0.4, a large effect (Cohen, 1988). Cohen (1988) also suggests that for a t-test, an effect size of 0.2 represents a small effect size; 0.5 medium; and 0.8, a large effect. Although quantitative data were analyzed using SPSS, the researcher calculated the Eta-squared manually. This is

because SPSS does not calculate the Eta-squared. Instead it calculates partial Eta-squared. Therefore it has become a common mistake that some researchers report partial Eta-squared when they intend to report Eta-squared (Levine and Hullett, 2002; Pierce *et al*., 2004). The researcher decided to use Eta squared because it has a clear value index. In the present study, Eta-squared for ANOVA is calculated using the following formula:

Eta squared= Sum of squares between groups/ Total sum of squares

The Eta-squared for t-test was calculated using the following formula:

Eta squared = Difference between sample means/Pooled standard deviation

(Levine and Hullett, 2002; Pierce *et al*., 2004)

3.11.2 Analysis of the Qualitative Data

The qualitative data gathered through interviews were made available in textual form by transcribing the tapes which were recorded during the interviews. The transcription was done by the researcher who applied a denaturalism style of transcription. Oliver *at el.* (2005:1273) refer to this form of transcription "as a mode in which idiosyncratic elements of speech (e.g., stutters, pauses, non-verbal, involuntary vocalizations) are removed". A decision regarding the use of this kind of transcription was made on the basis that this form of transcription helps to produce a complete and trustworthy transcription of meanings and perspectives pooled during the interviews (Cameron, 2001). Using this form of transcription provided the researcher with a reasonably detailed and lengthy text with in-depth information about the pupils' levels of cultural tolerance (McLellan *at el*., 2003). However it should be emphasized that pauses and emotional reactions were included in the transcriptions where they were found to influence the interpretation and the clarity of the speech. Rubin and Rubin (2005) state that the level of detail in the transcription reflects the level of analysis the researcher wants to do. Arksey and Knight (1999) argue that the naturalism mode of transcription, in which "every utterance is transcribed in as much detail as possible" (Oliver *at el.*, 2005:1273), is most suitable in linguistic and discourse analysis research. As the purpose of the present study was not to investigate an area of linguistics or to carry out discourse analysis, the researcher chose to apply the denaturalism mode of transcription.

Qualitative researchers, especially those who are inexperienced, are criticized because they do not pay much attention to the transcribing practices and the quality of transcription (Kvale, 1996, McLellan *at el.,* 2003). In this research the quality of

transcription is established using several techniques. Firstly, the researcher constructed a transcription protocol in which the level of detail needed in the transcription was determined. Then an English teacher who is a native speaker of Arabic was asked to transcribe a randomly selected dialogue from the 3 interviews conducted in Arabic and translate them into English using the transcription protocol. The same selective dialogues were transcribed and translated immediately to English by the researcher. The similarity between the transcription prepared by the teacher and the transcription prepared by the researcher was checked using the compare and merge feature in Microsoft Word. It was found that there was less than 34% percent agreement between the documents. As a result the transcription protocol was modified and it was decided to transcribe all the interviews into Arabic then translate them into English. The transcription and the translations were done for selective dialogues from the interviews by the English teacher and the researcher. The compare and merge feature in Microsoft Word process was again used to check the agreement between the two transcriptions. It was found that the agreement was about 87% percent (Kvale, 1996). Due to the time constrain this technique was applied to check the validity of the transcriptions in a few randomly selective passages.

Secondly, the quality of data was checked using a spot-checking method. MacLean *et al.* (2004:115) refer to the spot-checking method as "taking a subset of the transcripts (for example, selecting 12 out of 36 interviews) and listening to the entire taped interviews of those transcripts while checking the transcripts". Although MacLean *et al.* (2004) state that is important to check at least one-third of transcripts, the researcher of the present study spot-checked six transcriptions. Due to the time constraint she checked three transcripts from the pre-test and the same number from the post-test interviews.

After checking the quality of the transcription, the interview data was analyzed. Dey (1993: 31) defines qualitative data analysis as "a process of resolving data into its constituent components, to reveal its characteristic elements and structure". Miles and Huberman (1994) define data analysis as a process which consists of three linked activities. These are data reduction, data display and drawing conclusions. Thus data analysis in this study aimed to break the interview data into manageable units, discovering a pattern between those units and linking them with the theoretical framework of the study (Ryan and Bernard, 2003).

In this study interview data was analysed using a template analysis or thematic coding. The core element of this method is the production of a list of codes which is used to identify themes within the textual data (King, 1998). The generation of codes is an important procedure in a wide number of analytical strategies of qualitative data (Attride-Stirling, 2001). However it should be emphasised that the ways which are used to develop codes and themes differ significantly from one analytical approach to another. Given the fact that the researcher in this study is a novice at qualitative data analysis and is concerned about the phenomenological view of pupils' tolerance, the template analysis was chosen over other analytical strategies of qualitative data. This is because the template analysis does not direct the analysis in a loose inductive way as is the case in grounded theory, but tightens the analysis in a deductive way as is the case in content analysis. It occupies the middle-ground position between these two extreme alternatives (King, 1998).

It could be said that the process of data analysis began initially during the process of data collection as many codes and themes were developed while the researcher was listening to the interviewees (Miles and Huberman, 1994). However, after the data collection process ended a comprehensive and focused data analysis process was launched. This process involved several linked steps.

3.11.2.1 Critical Reading of the Interviews Transcriptions

In this step all interview transcriptions were read to find out the meanings intrinsic in them. This step is essential to create initial codes. Codes, which are defined as "tags or labels for assigning units of meaning to the descriptive or inferential information compiled during the study" are considered important in analysing any text"(Miles and Huberman, 1994)

3.11.2.2 Developing Codes Frameworks

In this step a coding framework was developed by the researcher. This framework consisted of many codes. Some of these were created prior to the field work by reviewing the conceptual framework, research questions, hypotheses and any other aspects related to phenomena under investigation. Other codes were generated using inductive coding techniques which were originally developed for use in the grounded theory approach of Glaser and Strauss (1967). In the former the codes were generated

during the process of data collection and by examining the interview transcripts (Boyatzis, 1998).

3.11.2.3 Coding the Data

In this step the interview transcripts were examined by the researcher statement by statement, idea by idea and sometimes word by word, to find meaningful text segments. These segments were indexed using the codes in the code framework which was developed in the second step. However, it should be emphasized that while coding the text segments new codes were added to the framework. The coding process was facilitated by using NVivo software. NVivo was chosen because it is considered to be a user-friendly software. Ozkan (2004) points out that NVivo helps in doing sophisticated data-coding and cross-case analysis, and the researcher can save time and explore the relationships within the data more easily. Basit (2003) points out that there is a considerable flexibility in coding with NVivo as the researchers can decode as easily as they can encode. They can even remove codes from the node listing quite simply

3.11.2.4 Identifying Themes

The core element of this step is the generation of themes. DeSantis and Ugarriza (2000) define a theme as "an abstract that brings meaning and identity to a recurrent experience and its variant manifestations". In this step the researcher worked to sort the identifiable codes generated into themes. It was done by combining codes and finding links between themes. Generally it could be said that the themes which were created in this step fall into one of three types of themes which are mentioned by Attride-Stirling (2001). These are the basic theme, the organizing theme, and the global theme. The basic theme is the lowest theme that has to be read in conjunction with other basic themes in order to go beyond its immediate meaning. It is often viewed as a support of central notion and contributes fundamentally in forming the meaning of a super-ordinate theme. The organizing theme is a middle-order theme that sorts out the basic themes into bunches of similar topics. These bunches summarize the main conjecture of a group of basic themes, so they become more explanatory and informative of the data. Organizing themes also function to enhance the meaning of broader themes that are devised from a juxtaposition of organization themes. Global themes are super-ordinate themes that cover the primary descriptions in the data as a whole. They cluster collections of

organizing themes which make the texture of any argument, or position or assertion about the phenomenon under investigation (DeSantis and Ugarriza, 2000).

3.11.2.5 Displaying the Data

Ryan and Bernard (2003) view data display as an important part of qualitative data analysis. Miles and Huberman (1994:11) define the display of data as "an organized, compressed assembly of information that permits conclusion-drawing and action". There are many methods of displaying data such as matrixes, tables, networks and charts (Miles and Huberman, 1994; Dey 1993).   Data display in this study was performed with the aid of the NVivo software. NVivo has a wide variety of options to display data. Among these options is the "Node Coding Report" which focuses on a single node or theme used while coding and clusters the cross-cases extracts relating to that particular code (Basit, 2003). This option was particularly helpful to the researcher in theorizing and interpreting the data.

3.11.2.6 Drawing conclusion

In this step, the key findings emerging from the data were related together and traced back to the research questions and the theoretical framework of the study.

3.12 Summary

This chapter has discussed the methodological issues involved in the study. The study is based on pragmatism which deals with the divide between a positivist and an interpretivist worldview to achieve an in-depth understanding of the effect of the intervention on grade 10th Omani girls' cultural tolerance. The mixed-method design enables the researcher to obtain a general understanding of the level of cultural tolerance among the participants and helps to uncover more complex issues affecting 10th grade Omani girls' cultural tolerance. The thesis employs a questionnaire and semi-structured interview as a research tool. The questionnaire was administered to 241 pupils of whom 125 constitute the control group and 116 constitute the experimental group. The questionnaire was administered pre- and post-intervention. A total of 32 interviews were conducted pre- and post-intervention with 16 participants of whom 8 were from the control group and 8 from the experimental group. The interviews were tape-recorded, transcribed and translated from Arabic to English.   The methods that

were used to establish the reliability and the validity of the research instruments were determined on the basis of the time and resources available to the researcher.

4 Chapter Four Findings: Pupils' Religious Tolerance

4.1 Introduction

The main thrust of this chapter is to answer the first research question: "Are there any differences in the level of tolerance toward other religions between the experimental group which studies "Our brothers and sisters in humanity" and the control group which studies the usual school curricula? Central to this chapter is the analysis of the results of the pre-and post-intervention tests to detect any differences in 10th grade pupils' cultural tolerance which may be attributed to the intervention. It should be remembered that tolerance in this study is considered to be a multi-dimensional attitude that consists of affect, belief and intention components. The mean score was computed from a 5-point Likert scale. 5 stands for strongly agree, 4 for agree, 3 for neutral, 2 for disagree and 1 for strongly disagree. Items with negative wording or those which reflect intolerance were adjusted. Therefore, a mean score above 3 can be considered as positive. The data from the pre- and post-intervention rounds, and from the control group and experimental groups, were compared using A 2 (round of administration: pre- and post-intervention administration round) x 2 (groups: experimental and control) mixed-model ANOVA. Statistical significance was inferred at a two-tailed P-value of less than 0.05. Statistical analyses were calculated using SPSS release 14 for Windows.

The second part of the chapter includes a qualitative examination of the research question by means of semi-structured interviews with 16 Omani girls – 8 from the experimental group and 8 from the control group – who were interviewed twice (prior to, and following, the intervention). The qualitative examination of the research questions was based upon an interview schedule (see Appendix 3). The interview data in the pre- and post-intervention rounds were analysed using NVivo 7. The data from each round were presented separately in order to develop an accurate picture of 10th grade pupils' tolerance toward religion in pre-and post-intervention stages. For the purpose of referencing and to protect participants' identities, codes were invented to identify participants in each group. The experimental group were given the names of fruits and the control group the names of vegetables.

4.2 Quantitative study

To examine the differences between the experimental and the control group in tolerance toward religion in pre- and post-intervention rounds, mixed ANOVA was used. Table 4-1 shows these results.

Table 4-1: Mean rating showing significant differences and interaction for affect, belief, and intention sub-scales on tolerance toward scale

	Group	Mean Score		Sig.		
		Pre-intervention Round	Post-intervention Round	P Round	P Groups	Inter-action
Affect	Control	2.29	2.33			
	Experimental	2.33	3.75	***	***	***
	Total	2.31	3.01			
Belief	Control	2.60	2.60			
	Experimental	2.71	3.39	***	***	***
	Total	2.65	2.98			
Intention	Control	2.36	2.40			
	Experimental	2.35	3.30	***	***	***
	Total	2.36	2.83			

* p<.05   ** p<.01   *** p<.001

4.2.1 Affect Scale

Difference between Administration Rounds

It can be seen that the main effects of the rounds of administration were statistically significant with F (1, 239) = 165.811; p<.001. Similarly, the effect size was large (eta squared= 0.69). The mean rating showed that participants' affect concerning other religions shifted from the negative direction (M=2.31) of the scale in the pre-intervention round to the neutral point in the post-intervention round (M= 3.01).

Group Differences

Table shows that there were statistically significant differences between the experimental group which studied the intervention programme and the control group which studied the usual school's programme, with F (1, 239) = 51.241 p<.001; however, the effect size was small (eta squared= 0.21). As displayed in Table 4-1, in the pre-intervention round both groups scored low in the affect sub-scale, with a mean score of 2.29 for the control group and 2.33 for the experimental group, whereas in the

post-intervention round the experimental group tended to be more positive and scored highly with a mean score of 3.75.

Round by Group Interaction

Table4-1 shows a statistically significant interaction between round of administration and group, with F (1, 239) =57.124 p<.001. The effect size was large with Eta squared= .62. Figure 4-1 shows that there was a dramatic increase in affect toward other religions for the experimental group from the pre-intervention to post-intervention rounds. Although the control group scored slightly higher in post-intervention rounds, similar patterns of low scoring in affect toward other religions continued to persist in both rounds for this group.

Figure 4-1: Tolerance toward other religions scale: interaction between round and group on affect sub-scale
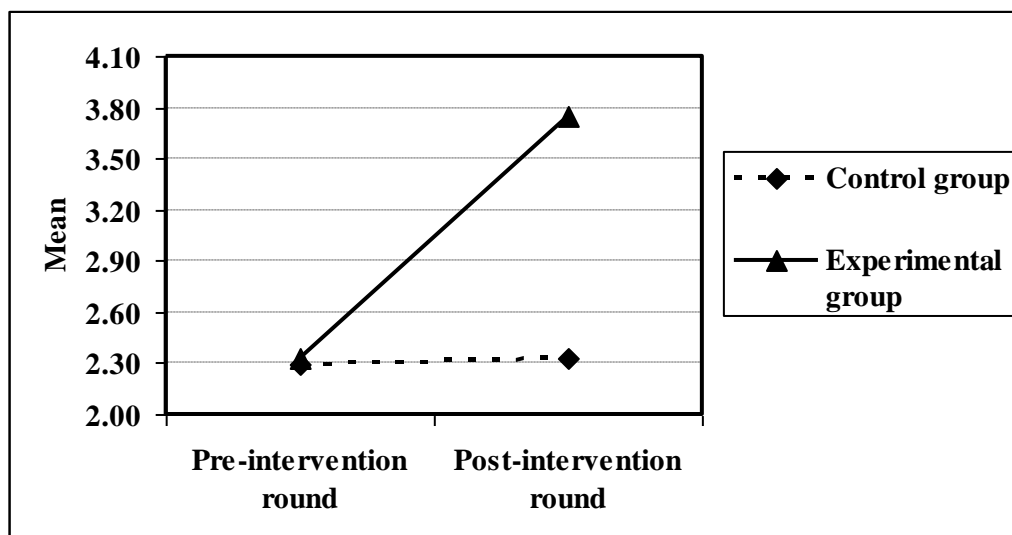
4.2.2 Belief Scale

Difference between Administration Rounds

Mixed method ANOVA reveals statistically significant differences in the main effects of round of administration with F (1, 239) = 34.061 p<.001 for the belief subscale of tolerance toward the religion scale. Despite reaching statistical significance, the actual difference in mean scores between the two rounds was quite small. The effect size, calculated using eta squared, was .14. The total mean rating for the two rounds rises significantly from the negative direction of the scale with a mean score of 2.65 in the

pre-intervention round to the mid-point of the sub-scale, with a mean score of 2.98 in the post-intervention round.

Group Differences

A highly significant main effect of group was also obtained for this sub-scale, with $F(1, 239) = 21.91$ $p<.001$. However, the effect size was negligible with eta squared of .09. As revealed in Table 4-1 in the pre-intervention round, the experimental and the control groups scored fairly low in the belief subscale with the experimental group scoring 2.71 and the control group scoring 2.60. By contrast, in the post-intervention round, whilst the experimental group scored high in this subscale with a mean score of 3.39, the control group obtained a similarly low mean score to the one that it had achieved in the post-intervention round.

Round by Group Interaction

The interaction between round of administration and treatment in the belief sub-scale shows statistically significant differences with $F(1, 239) = 148.7$ $p<.001$. The effect size was small with Eta $=.14$. Figure 4-2 shows that the mean score of the experimental group in belief about religion sub-scale rose significantly from 2.71 in the pre-intervention round to 3.39 in the post-intervention round. This reflects a high level of positive belief about other religions. However, there was a constant levelling off in the mean score of the control group belief about other religions, with a mean score of 2.60 in both the pre-intervention and post-intervention administration rounds.

Figure 4-2: Tolerance toward other religions scale: interaction between round and group on the belief sub-scale
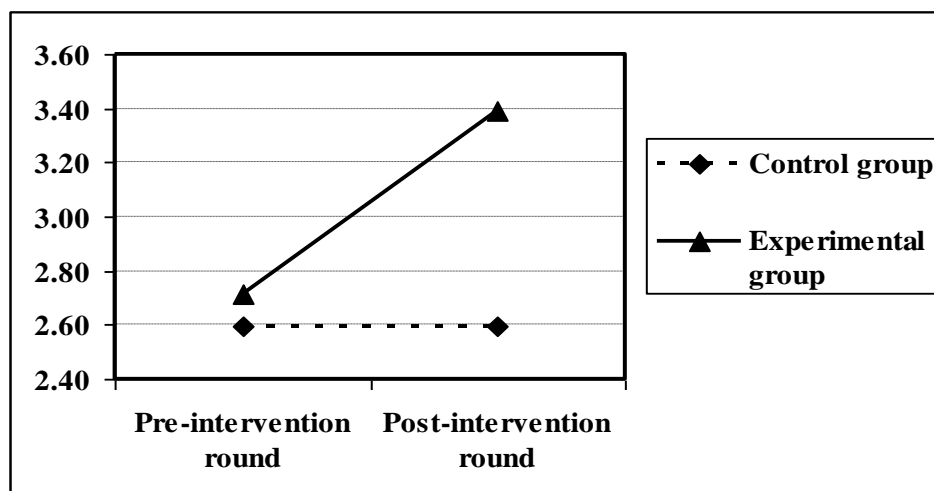
4.2.3   Intention Scale

Difference between Administration Rounds

Statistically significant differences were found between pre-intervention and post-intervention rounds of administration with $F (1, 239) = 72.14$ p<.001. The magnitude of the effect size in the means was medium (eta squared= .30). Table 4-1 shows that the post-intervention responses tended to be relatively ambivalent in intention to act tolerantly toward other religions.

Group Differences

Statistically significant differences existed between the experimental and the control group $F (1, 239) = 29.33$ p<.001. The effect size was large (eta squared= .25). Table 4-1 shows that the experimental and control groups scored low in the intention sub-scale, whereas the experimental group performed higher than the control group in the post-intervention administration round with a mean score of 3.30 compared to 2.40 for the control group.

Round by Group Interaction

A statistically significant round of administration by group interaction was found with $F (1, 239) = 62.16$ p<.001. The effect size was large with Eta squared = 26. Whilst the control group intention to act tolerantly toward other religions witnessed a negligible increase, the experimental group intention to act tolerantly increased significantly from pre-intervention to post-intervention administration, as shown in Figure 4-3.

Figure 4-3:Tolerance toward other religions scale: interaction between round and group on intention sub-scale
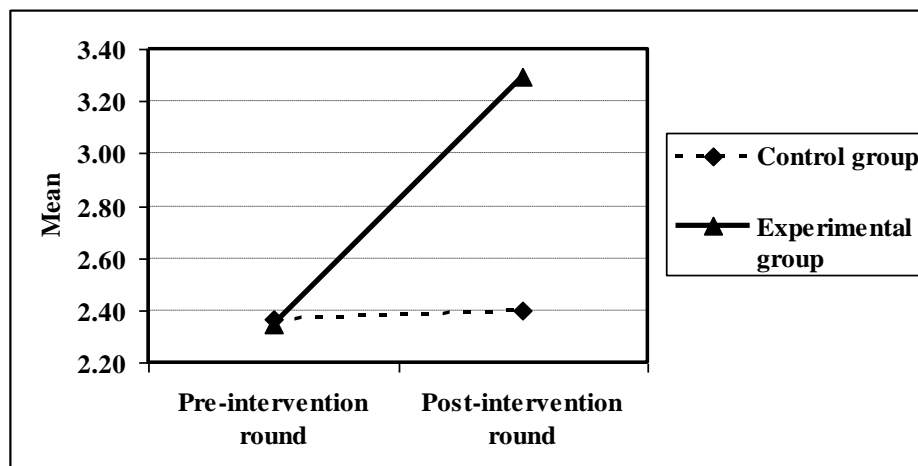
4.2.4 Overall Tolerance toward Other Religions

The participants' tolerance toward other religions was assessed and the results are displayed in Table 4-2.

Table 4-2: Mean rating showing significant differences and interaction between round and group in tolerance toward other religions

Group	Mean Score		Sig.		
	Pre-intervention Round	Post-intervention Round	P Round	P Groups	Inter-action
Control	2.42	2.44			
Experimental	2.48	3.62	***	***	***
Total	2.45	3.01			

* p<.05   ** p<.01   *** p<.001

Difference between Administration Rounds

Mixed method ANOVA reveals statistically significant differences in the main effects of round of administration with F (1, 239) = 96.87 p<.001 for tolerance toward other religions scale. The effect size was large (eta squared=.41). The total mean rating for the two rounds rose significantly from the negative direction of the scale with a mean score of 2.45 in the pre-intervention round to the mid-point of the sub-scale with a mean score of 3.01 in the post-intervention round.

Group Differences

A highly significant main effect of group was also obtained for this sub-scale, with F (1, 239) = 36.46 p<.001. However the effect size was small (eta squared= .15). As is revealed in Table 4-2, in the pre-intervention round both the experimental and control groups scored fairly low in the belief subscale, with the experimental group scoring 2.48 and the control group scoring 2.42. By contrast, in the post-intervention round whilst the experimental group scored high in this subscale with a mean score of 3.62, the control group obtained a similarly low mean score to the one it had achieved in the pre-intervention round.

Round by Group Interaction

The interaction between round of administration and the treatment in belief subscale shows statistically significant differences with F (1, 239) = 91.36 p<.001. The effect size was large with Eta squared=.40. As Figure 4-4 shows, the mean score of the experimental group in tolerance toward other religions sub-scale rose significantly over

the two administration rounds. However, there was a slight increase in the control group's tolerance toward other religions over the two administration rounds.

Figure 4-4: Interaction between round and group on tolerance toward other religions scale
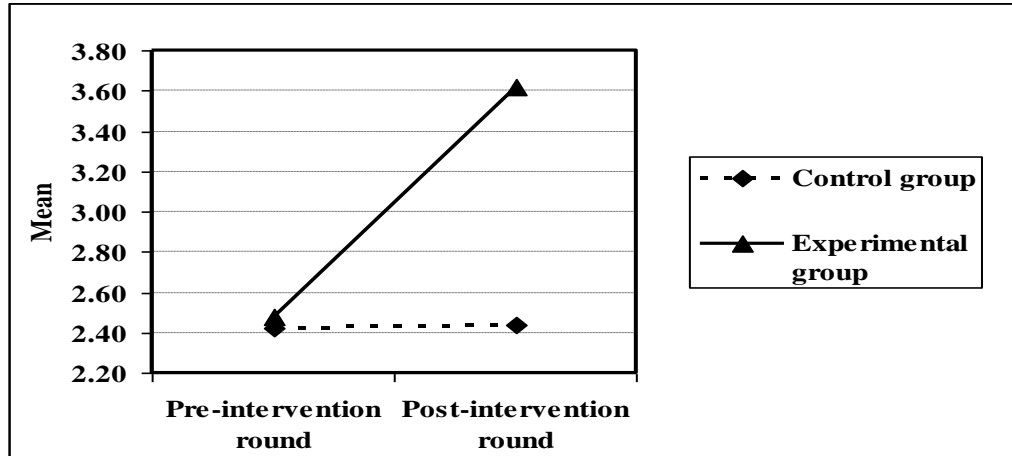
4.2.5 Gain Score in Tolerance toward Other Religions

As noted earlier, both the experimental and the control group scored higher in the post-intervention round in almost all tolerance toward other religions sub-scales and on all other sub-scales. Therefore, it seems to be important to measure the extent of changes that took place for both the experimental and the control groups. One of the intuitively appealing approaches to measure change is to calculate gain score, which is defined by Bohrnstedt (1969: 113) as "a simple difference between measures of a variable taken at two points in time, and to correlate g, with some variable, yl, which is assumed to have "caused" the change in x". The means gain scores of both the experimental and control groups were calculated and the differences between the two groups were checked using the independent sample t-test.

Table 4-3: The differences between the experimental and the control group in gain scores in tolerance toward other religions

Scales	Group	Mean	SD	S Error	t	df	Sig.	Effect size
Affect	Control	.04	.5	.04	-11.9	153.057	***	1.5
	Experimental	1.42	1.2	.11				
Belief	Control	.00	.6	.05	-5.7	164.365	***	.73
	Experimental	.68	1.2	.11				
Intention	Control	.04	.6	.05	-7.7	167.027	***	1
	Experimental	.95	1.1	.11				
Tolerance toward religion	Control	.02	.43	.04	-9.280	140.330	***	1.3
	Experimental	1.14	1.24	.12				

* p<.05   ** p<.01   *** p<.001

There are clear differences in the experimental and control group gain scores. As Table 4-3 shows, the experimental group outperformed the control group in all cultural tolerance sub-scales. In the tolerance toward other religions scale the gain score of the control group was negligible with a mean gain score of 0.04 in affect and belief subscales. Moreover, there was no noticeable gain in control group belief about other religions. By contrast, the experimental group achieved the highest gain score in this scale with a mean gain score of 1.42 in affect, 0.68 in belief and 0.95 in intention sub-scales.

In addition, the significance of differences in the gain scores in tolerance toward other religions was examined using the independent samples t-test. Table 4-3, shows that there were statistically significant differences in the mean gain scores between the experimental and the control groups in favour of the experimental group in tolerance toward religion sub-scales. As shown in Table, the effect size of the intervention was large in affect, intention and overall tolerance toward other religions, with eta squared of 1.5, 1 and 1.3 respectively. Therefore the null hypothesis, that states that there is no statistically significant difference in the gain score of tolerance towards other religions between the experimental group and the control group was rejected.

4.3   Qualitative Study

4.3.1   Respecting Other Religions

4.3.1.1 Pre-intervention Interview

The pre-intervention interview data shows that there were no differences between the experimental and the control group participants in respect of other religions. The respect for other religions was explicitly reported by most participants in the experimental and control groups. Strawberry (experimental group, hereafter EG) stated:

> "I do respect all religions. Our Prophet Mohammed, peace be upon him, urged us to respect all religions, even when we believe ours is the truest of all."

Similar views were expressed by Avocado (control group, hereafter CG), who pointed out:

> "I respect all religions. I respect every human being, whether Christian or Buddhist. But I know Prophet Mohammed PBUH is the final messenger to all people. All people should unite under one faith, Islam."

Although almost all interviewees expressed an explicit respect for other religions, participants in both experimental and control groups regarded other faiths as either mistaken or archaic. Apple (EG) stated: "those religions have undergone a lot of deviation and their followers have gone astray". Similar views were expressed by Corn (CG) who said: "Other religions are obsolete… we should invite them to join Islam, as it is the valid religion". Some participants saw other religions as causing moral corruption. Apricot (EG) stated:

> "They lie and sin because they don't believe in the existence of God. They are not afraid of the judgement day. This ultimately leads to corruption on Earth. Judaism and Christianity are contexts for social and moral decay."

Some participants believed that other religions lead to hell. Carrot (CG) stated: "How could somebody abandon the true religion to embrace another religion and be doomed to hell?" Such views seem to support an implicit contempt of other religions. This contempt was expressed explicitly by two participants from the experimental group. Apricot (EG) stated, "I despise them", and Banana stated "As a Muslim I regard them as conflicting with Islam. They are deviated. I despise them, really". It should be emphasized that participants seemed to express more contempt towards non-monotheistic religions such as Buddhism, Sikhism and Hinduism. Banana (EG) states:

> "I particularly despise Hinduism and Sikhism, because they do funny things. Their form of worship is strange. Even the way they look when performing worship is funny. Islamic worship is decent as instructed by the Prophet. I find other religions funny and I am not ready to accept them. I try to avoid their believers."

These participants expressed a belief that non-monotheistic religions were un-Godly. As Raspberry (EG) put it:

"I know Christianity has undergone deviation, but anyhow it is closer to Islam than Buddhism. Christianity is revealed by God, while Buddhism is man-made."

Despite the problematic views that were held by participants towards other religions, Christianity seems to be valued relatively highly by the participants in both the experimental and control groups. Participants in both groups believed that Christianity is the religion closest to Islam. Banana (EG) said:

"I feel that Christianity is the closest of all religions to Islam. Their traditions and values seem similar to Islam. They hold their prayers in churches while Muslims go to Mosques for prayers. Christians do charity in the same way as Muslims".

This belief about Christianity was shared by Tomato (CG), who stated:

"Christianity is the closest of all religions to Islam. Christianity preaches the same principles as revealed in Islam. It calls for truthfulness and so does Islam. I can see Christians in Oman are no different than us. They have the same manners and values that we have."

In spite of the fact that the Quran gives Jews and Christians the honorary title of the People of the Book, participants in both groups did not consider Judaism to have many similarities with Islam. One participant did mention Judaism and she made a distinction between it and Christianity, claiming that Christianity is less violent than Judaism. Leek (CG) said:

"Christianity is the closest of all religions to Islam…I don't like Judaism. I consider Christianity to be less violent than Judaism. Christianity also agrees with Islam on certain principles."

A participant from the experimental group made a distinctive comment when she criticized the way other religions are presented in school. Mango (EG) said:

"In schools we don't learn about other religions. If we do learn about them, then we do so in a way that does not allow us to know about their principles and beliefs. We need to know many things about Christianity, for example, their beliefs, their values, their worship and what Christians thinks of Islam. We can also relate to them and help them understand Islam….We are taught that Islam is the best religion and that other religions are wrong. We know

Islam is the religion of truth and peace, but we want to know about other religions. We want to know what values and principles were revealed in those religions in order to establish intellectual interaction."

4.3.1.2 Post-intervention Interview

In post-intervention interviews there were no differences between the experimental and the control group in respect of other religions. The majority of participants in both the experimental and the control groups reported that they respected other religions. The control group participants did not offer explanations of this respect, except Cauliflower (CG) and Carrot (CG). Cauliflower (CG) believed that respecting other religions is part of respecting individual rights. She said:

> "Of course, I respect other religions. I believe that every individual should have freedom of belief. People should choose the religion they like and feel satisfied with. I would be happy if I had a neighbour with a different faith."

Carrot (CG), on the other hand, claimed that respecting other religions is important to improve the image of Islam among the adherents of other religions. She stated:

> "I do respect other religions. I don't want to impose my faith or opinion on anybody. I don't despise other religions…Yet, nobody should force others to see things the way he/she sees them. As a Muslim, I think my role is to display Islam in a pleasant and nice way."

Similarly, the experimental group interviewees recounted several factors as motivating respect for other religions. Raspberry (EG) indicated that the notion of equal respect motivated her to respect other religions. She stated:

> "First, I do respect all religions regardless of any differences. If I want others to show respect to my faith, then I should also respect their values and traditions."

Banana (EG), who stated in the pre-intervention interview that she despised other religions, argued that her understanding of the similarities between her religion and other religions underpins her respect for other faiths. As she put it: "I respect all religions because I have discovered a lot of common things between my religion and other religions." For Strawberry (EG), the respect for human choice is what inspired her

to respect other faiths. She said "I do respect other religions…We should respect their choice of faith and they should also respect ours". The awareness of the advantages of diversity also motivated Cherry (EG) to respect other religions. She said:

> "My view of other religions has totally changed. I have become more tolerant and respectful of other faiths. …I feel I am interested in benefiting from their values and traditions".

Similarly, Mango (EG) argued that understanding religious difference as an important aspect of the world's diversity induced her to maintain respect for other religions. She stated:

> "Other religions such as Christianity, Buddhism, Sikhism, Judaism, et cetera do exist and we cannot change or remove them from the world. However, Muslims and followers of other religions should respect each other."

As in the pre-intervention interviews, the majority of participants in both the experimental and control groups in the post-intervention interview considered Christianity as the nearest religion to Islam. The participants rationalized their response by stating that Christianity is a monotheistic religion like Islam. In contrast to the pre-intervention interviews in which Judaism was ignored and not acknowledged as a monotheistic religion, in the post-intervention interview three participants from the experimental group placed Judaism at the same level as Christianity. These participants were Strawberry (EG), Mango (EG) and Apple. Apple (EG) said:

> "Judaism and Christianity are the closest of all religions to Islam…Both, Judaism and Christianity, were revealed by God. It is true that they have been deviated to some extent, but they still echo heavenly values. Moses and Jesus, peace be upon them, are true messengers of God and we respect them in the same way that we respect our Prophet Mohammed, peace be upon him."

4.3.2   Religious Conversion

4.3.2.1 Pre-intervention Interview

Religious conversion seemed to be an intolerable notion for almost all of the participants. Thirteen participants out of the sixteen who were interviewed regarded

changing religious affiliation from Islam to another faith as an unacceptable act. For instance, Broccoli (CG) said, "I am against conversion". Similarly, Apricot said, "I don't agree with freedom of conversion". These participants, however, welcomed religious conversion *to* Islam. Mango (EG) argued, "I think that other believers may convert to Islam but not vice-versa". A similar view was expressed by Corn from the control group who stated, "I agree that a Westerner may be allowed to convert to Islam. But I don't agree that this should apply to Muslims". A Muslim who converts to another religion is viewed by some participants in both the experimental and control groups as a blasphemer, an apostate who deserves to be killed. Banana (EG) stated:

> "I don't respect people who change their religion. Anybody changing his/her religion would be considered an apostate. We should fight them. They should be deprived from human rights. Our prophet did not grant converts any human rights. It is apostasy."

The same view was expressed by Corn (CG) who stated:

> "I don't agree that this should apply to Muslims. How could a Muslim change his religion and not become a blasphemer? I don't believe that a person would walk out of light into darkness willingly. Our prophet has led people out of darkness into light, how do we let them walk back into darkness? I am against conversion from Islam."

The intolerance toward Muslims converting was rationalized by these interviewees on the basis of their belief that Islam is the only true path and leads to heaven. Apple (EG) argued: "A convert should know that such conversion would call for God's wrath, as Islam is the truest faith." Only two participants seemed to tolerate the idea of conversion. Cucumber (CG) said:

> "I respect that everybody has the right to convert. People should be absolutely free to change their religious convictions. Many people now are stated as Muslims by birth, but they don't practise Islam. Even they don't see themselves as Muslims. I think it would be better to let people adopt the religion of their choice instead of imposing a religion on them."

A similar view was expressed by Apple, (EG) who stated:

> "Everybody should have the freedom of faith. I freely chose to be a Muslim out of inner belief, because Islam is the best of all religions. But I think everybody should be free to change their faith from Islam to Christianity or any other religion."

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4.3.2.2 Post-intervention Interview

Objection to Religious Conversion

In the post-intervention interviews, control group participants showed more opposition to religious conversion compared to those in the experimental group. Religious conversion continued to be considered by the vast majority of control group participants as an intolerable notion. Some of the control group participants believed that religious conversion threatens the religious and national identity of society. This view was expressed by Leek, Carrot, Tomato, Cauliflower and Broccoli. Broccoli said:

> "I don't agree with freedom of conversion. Conversion indicates weakness of faith and changes religion into a type of game. To accept conversion would mean destroying religion. This would destroy freedom of belief."

Leek (CG) raised an interesting point when she rationalized her intolerance towards the idea of religious conversion by claiming that religious conversion often happens to serve worldly purposes. Leek was opposed to the idea of conversion not only between religions but between Islamic sects and denominations as well. She stated:

> "Mostly people change their religion for unreasonable motives. For example, we have a neighbour in Oman who changed his sect from a Sunni to an Ibadi only to marry an Ibadi girl, because her family refused to marry her to him when he was a Sunni. I don't approve of freedom of conversion, because it happens for illogical reasons."

The intolerance of religious conversion was not just expressed by the control group. Interestingly, one of the experimental group participants, Apricot (EG), resisted the idea of religious conversion and viewed it as intolerable. This participant stated that while she was aware of the Islamic view which supported the idea of freedom of religious belief, she objected to religious conversion because Omani society and the context in which she lived do not tolerate the idea. She said:

> "Islam is not against freedom of belief. The Quran clearly states that people should not be compelled to embrace any faith. Islam grants freedom of belief, as we see in many verses of the Quran. I truly believe in freedom of belief but not in the principle that people should be permitted to change their religion. I heard some religious clerics on TV saying that a person who converts from Islam is an apostate and will go to hell. Therefore, I am in no position to accept that a Muslim may convert from Islam."

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Support for Religious Conversion

The majority of the experimental group seemed to tolerate the idea of religious conversion. Some of them perceived religious conversion as a human right. Apple (EG) stated: "I agree that any person should have the right to convert. It is a human right". Similar views were expressed by Mango (EG), Grape (EG) and Strawberry (EG). Strawberry (EG) argued that religious conversion is as a way to happiness. She stated:

> "Everybody is free to convert. A person should feel satisfied and convinced of his/her belief. This will definitely lead to individual happiness, in this life and in the hereafter. A person who is not at ease with his/her religious beliefs will live in tension."

In contrast, only one informant, Cucumber (CG) from the control group, seemed to tolerate the idea of religious conversion. She stated: "I think people should be allowed to convert, as this is a basic individual right even for Muslims. I think everybody has a right to change religion whenever they like."

4.3.3 Religious Preaching

4.3.3.1 Pre-intervention Interviews

In pre-intervention interviews, there was no agreement between the experimental and control groups with regard to the practice of religious preaching. This notion seemed to generate different views among the participants. Their responses fell under three categories. First, there were those who argued that they tolerate what could be called "conditional religious preaching". This group of participants argued that they could tolerate religious preaching that aimed to raise awareness about other religions. They stated that any religious sermons that may be directed toward Muslims and cause them to convert to other religions are intolerable. For example, Apricot (EG) stated:

> "I tend to agree with the idea that we should let them preach their faiths. We should listen to them with care. But they should not be allowed to influence people. We know that some people of weak faith may try to follow in their footsteps, yet I think we should let them preach their faiths, watching them carefully."

A similar view was expressed by Avocado (CG):

> "It is OK for people in my country to know about other religions. We should let followers of other faiths provide people with information about their religions, but we should not allow them to invite people to join their faiths,

because when we invite people to join Islam in other countries they consider this to be terrorism. How could we let them preach their faiths in our land?"

Second, there are those who do not tolerate the idea of preaching at all. They believe that Islam is the only right religion, and therefore Muslims should focus on preaching it. As Apple (EG) put it:

"No, I do not agree that followers of other faiths should be given the chance to preach their views, because Prophet Mohammed PBUH is the messenger of Islam for all people. We should preach our faith, but we must not allow followers of other faiths to preach theirs, as their religions are void and accordingly I never agree to have them talking to us about their faiths."

Similarly, Corn (CG) said:

"I don't agree with allowing followers of other religions to preach their faiths because they have wrong beliefs and if we allow them to preach they will convey these wrong beliefs to people. We should not allow it."

Some participants justified their intolerance towards the idea of religious preaching in light of the fear that preaching other religions may pose a threat to Islam and to the Muslim youth. As Strawberry (EG) put it:

"I don't agree that followers of other faiths should be allowed to preach their faiths in our countries, as this may negatively influence Muslims. Our Muslim youths nowadays are weak and may be easily influenced."

Carrot (CG) stated: "I would preach my religion and convince others to join it, but I will never allow followers of other religions to exceed the limits and try to influence me to convert".

Third, one participant, Cucumber (CG), presented an original view in regard to religious preaching. Cucumber (CG) tolerated the idea of religious preaching. She reported: "I think other believers should be allowed to talk about their faith. We like to talk about our faith. Therefore, we should not deprive others of this right". However, it should be emphasised that Cucumber (CG) believes that preaching other religions will benefit her own religion as it will allow the followers of Islam to discover the superiority of Islam.

She argued: "When others talk about their religions, this will strengthen our faith as Muslims, because we will come to know for sure that our religion is the best."

4.3.3.2 Post-intervention Interviews

Tolerance for Religious Preaching

Seven interviewees from the experimental and four interviewees from the control group expressed their tolerance for the idea of religious preaching. These participants believed that religious preaching is an important means to communicate with other faiths and to raise awareness about these religions. At the same time they drew attention to the fact that religious preaching may affect religious identity in a negative way. Therefore, efforts should be directed toward developing a policy of containment when dealing with religious preaching. Tomato (CG) stated:

> "I think we should allow followers of other faiths to preach their faiths. But we should not be influenced. We should only listen to them to know about their religions, but we should not let them influence the people who listen to them. I know this is subject to the strength of individual faith, but if we let people be influenced, they will end up converting from Islam. Therefore, we should decide who should listen and who shouldn't."

Similarly, Apricot (EG) said:

> "I agree that followers of other faiths should be allowed to preach their faith in our country. In this way we would get to know more about their beliefs and rites. Such knowledge will not affect my faith if I am a strong believer…There must be some exchange of thoughts and interaction between us as Muslims and followers of other religions."

Intolerance toward the Idea of Religious Preaching

Three participants from the control group showed intolerance towards the idea of religious preaching. These participants explained their intolerance to be based on the idea that Islam is a superior religion and that other religions are deviant and outdated. These participants also pointed to an identity dilemma perceived to be posed by other religions. Carrot (CG) stated:

> "I don't agree that followers of other religions should be allowed to preach their faiths. Everybody is subject to seduction. If there is a religion that encourages or permits adultery, drinking and other shameful acts, then such

religion will be destructive to society. All these acts are strictly forbidden in Islam. There is a possibility then that followers of other faiths may try and seduce our people by preaching such cheap liberties."

Similar views were expressed by Cauliflower (CG) and Leek (CG).

In contrast, only one experimental group interviewee, Grape, seems to view religious preaching as an intolerable notion. However, this participant acknowledged the need to establish a dialogue with the adherents of other religions. As she put it:

> "I don't encourage this idea. Everybody has his/her own belief. We should listen to them if they are facing problems in our country and try to help them out. Also, we should help them correct the wrong notions they may have about our religion. We should even talk to them about the insulting cartoons depicting Prophet Mohammed (PBUH). They should know the extent of damage they have incurred upon us. I think talking to others and communicating with them will definitely make a difference."

4.3.4 Religious Worship

4.3.4.1 Pre-intervention Interviews

In the pre-intervention interviews, freedom of religious worship seemed to be an intolerable notion among the participants in both the experimental and control groups. The participants strongly resisted the idea of opening worship places such as churches and temples in their local areas. Apple (EG) commented:

> "I don't agree that followers of other faiths should have temples and churches within Muslim countries. This is totally unacceptable to us, as Muslims. In Muslim countries such as our country it is unacceptable to see places of worship apart from the Mosque. We do not entertain their religions."

Similar views were expressed by Cucumber (CG), who stated: "I strongly disagree with opening places of worship for followers of other religions in my country". The participants rationalized their intolerance towards the idea of freedom of religious worship in several ways. First, they argued that the existence of places of worship for other religious groups in Muslim countries threatens Islam in its homeland. Participants in both groups suspect that these places of worship will be places in which proselytism and missionary activities will take place. Grape (EG) argued:

"In fact, allowing followers of other faiths to have temples and churches in our country would negatively affect Muslims. We should not allow them to do that as they would influence Muslim people around them. Satan may also work among them and urge them to go to the church or temple, and then they would convert."

Similarly, Carrot (CG) said:

"I don't agree that followers of other faiths should be allowed to open places of worship in our countries, as this will make it easy for Muslims to get attracted to such strange faiths. This will ultimately change Muslims into a minority. Also this move will lead people to ask for the reasons behind it, and children would start asking why churches are built in our countries."

Further, the participants in both groups believed that allowing the followers of other faiths to have their own places of worship contradicts Islamic teaching. They argued that being a follower of Islam requires them to preach it, as Islam is, according to them, the one true religion. In addition to Islamic teaching, which was used by some informants to rationalize intolerance toward the idea of alternative religious worship, the conduct of Prophet Mohammed presents a model to some other participants to be followed in regards to the freedom of religions. The participants believed that the Prophet did not tolerate the idea of religious freedom, so they should not tolerate such a notion either. Apricot (EG) said:

"I don't agree that they should be allowed to build places of worship in our country. How would we allow such a thing? We should oppose such blasphemers. Our obligation, as Muslims, is to try and attract them to Islam."

In the same way, Banana (EG) from the same group said:

"Our prophet who is our model was pursuing the blasphemers and fighting them. Even if there is one blasphemer on the Muslim land, the Prophet would follow him and kill him. How would we allow them to build temples in contravention to the Prophet's practice? The Prophet was taking all necessary measures to eliminate them, then how could we invite them to build places of worship in our country? This is totally unacceptable."

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Broccoli (CG) said:

> "I know in Oman there are places of worship for certain other faith believers. Nobody would listen to us even if we spoke out our views. But I am not in favour of establishing places of worship for non-Muslim believers. How do we allow them to have their own places of worship when they worship a deity other than Allah? "

Third, equal respect was another notion used to explain the intolerance toward the idea of freedom of religious worship. Avocado (CG) argued that Muslims are not allowed to build places of worship outside the Islamic countries. Interestingly, she specified the West as the place in which Muslims are banned from having their places of worship. Avocado (CG) stated:

> "I don't agree to allow followers of other faiths to have temples and churches in our countries. If you go to a Western country, you would not find mosques. Why should we allow them to worship their gods in our land when they don't allow us to build mosques on theirs? ".

This shows how little knowledge these participants have about freedom of religious practice in Western countries. It should be emphasised that there were two participants who seemed to tolerate the idea of freedom of religious worship. "Treat others the way that you want to be treated" is the rule which is used by Tomato (CG) to justify her tolerance of freedom of religious worship. She stated:

> "I think followers of other religions should be allowed to build temples and churches in our land. I think we have to put ourselves in their shoes. If it is OK for us as Muslims to have our own places of worship, why shouldn't they? It is essential that every country should have places of worship for all faiths."

Similarly, Cauliflower (CG) stated that Prophet Muhammad's tolerance of other religions and their adherents motivates her to tolerate the idea of freedom of religious worship. She stressed:

> "We should let them build temples and churches in our countries. The Prophet himself allowed that and gave everybody the freedom of worship. The earth belongs to God, and not to me. Believers should be free to practise their faiths everywhere. I encourage opening places for worship for other faiths in Oman."

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Against Non-Islamic Places of Worship

Unlike the responses in pre-intervention in which the idea of freedom of religious worship was considered as an intolerable notion by the interviewees in both experimental and control groups, the responses obtained during the post- intervention interviews showed that only four out of eight control group participants seemed not to tolerate the idea of freedom of religious worship. These participants justified their intolerance using the same justifications which they offered during the pre-intervention interviews. One of these justifications was that allowing the followers of other religions to have worship places would pose threats to their religious and cultural identity. Broccoli (CG) said:

> "I strongly object to the idea that the followers of other religions should be permitted to build places of worship in Oman. This would destroy the faith of our future generations. It would also lead to deviation and social decay."

Another justification was that allowing other religions to freely worship their gods contradicts Islamic beliefs. Leek (CG) stated:

> "I don't agree that followers of other religions should be permitted to build places of worship in our countries. How could we approve of such thing when they don't believe in Islam? Islam is the truest of all religions. I cannot tolerate the building of temples for non-Muslims in my country"

Similar views were expressed by Cucumber (CG) and Avocado (CG).

Hesitation about Freedom of Religious Worship

One participant from the control group seemed to hesitate over whether the adherents of other religions should be allowed to have places of worship in countries such as Oman in which the majority of the population is Muslim. Carrot (CG) stated: "I am both for and against allowing followers of other faiths to have places of worship in our country…I am against this notion, because I am afraid if we allowed this, then they would influence the Muslim believers and lead them to convert". The dilemma for this interviewee may be attributed to the pre-intervention interview question which sensitized the participants and motivated them to read about issues raised during their

pre-intervention interviews. Carrot (CG) further said: "I am with this opinion because I have discovered through my readings that there should be freedom of belief".

Support for freedom of religious worship

The responses obtained from the post-intervention interview show that all experimental group participants accepted the idea of allowing the adherents of other faiths to have their places of worship in their country. The majority of the experimental group participants rationalized their stance on the notion of "treat others the way you want to be treated". The participants seemed to be able to place themselves in other people's situations and empathise with them. Grape (EG) stated:

> "I have no objection that Jews, Christians and Hindus build their own places of worship in Oman. It would lead to interaction and communication. It would reflect Islam as a tolerant religion. It is also part of individual freedom. We would gain nothing by preventing the building of such places of worship. We should not place any restrictions on freedom of belief or freedom of worship, if they are practised within reasonable limits."

In contrast, only two participants from the control group seemed to tolerate the idea of freedom of worship. Cauliflower (CG) justified her view in light of the Quranic verses and Prophet Muhammad's sayings that call for freedom of belief. She said: "I agree that followers of other religions should be allowed to build places of worship in our country. If I moved to a foreign country, I would certainly need a place for worship. Our Prophet (PBUH) always said 'You keep your faith, and I will keep mine'. Allah, via the Holy Quran reiterates it".

Tomato (CG) rationalized her view based on the notion of respect:

> **"**I think followers of other faiths should be permitted to have their own places of worship in our country. Lack of placees of worship for people of other faiths is a main problem in our country, I think. When I travel abroad I would like to have a place to worship my God; otherwise, I would feel distressed."

4.4   Critical Overview of the Chapter

In this chapter, the researcher has set out to investigate the effects of the "Our Brother and Sisters in Humanity" programme on Omani pupils' tolerance of other religions. The

effects of the programme were assessed using a questionnaire and semi-structured interviews. The data which was collected at the pre-intervention stage through the questionnaire reveals that the experimental group and the control group scored low in affect, belief and intention sub-scales of tolerance toward the religions scale. Similarly, the data collected through the semi-structured interviews showed that some pupils were intolerant toward issues such as religious conversions, preaching and freedom of worship. This could be interpreted on the basis of religious belief, particularly as there is a huge body of literature that indicates that religion is a driving force in shaping the attitudes and the beliefs of its followers toward those who are different from them (e.g Huntington, 1996; Boehle, 2002 ; Rock, 2004). The perceived dissimilarities between in-group members and the out-groups were found to be influential in determining the in-group's tolerance toward the out-groups (Brown and Lopez, 2001).

This intolerance may also be attributed to the girls' literal and ahistorical understanding of some Quranic verses that seem to motivate intolerant exclusiveness toward other religions (Abou El Fadl, 2002b).   This intolerance toward other religions could also be interpreted in light of the fact that participants in both the experimental and the control group lack knowledge about other religions. Education, or the way through which participants in both experimental and control group acquired knowledge about other religions, may have affected their perceptions about other religions and induced intolerance. It is important to point out that a few girls lacked knowledge about some aspects of their own religions as they attributed some statements to the Quran and the Prophet which were not true.

In regard to the idea of respecting other religions, in the pre-intervention round the participants showed an explicit respect and an implicit contempt of other religions. Interestingly, the participants used their religious beliefs to justify their attitudes. Again this can be explained in light of the literal and ahistorical understanding of the Quranic verses. In the Quran, on one hand, it is common to find verses calling for respect for human beings regardless of gender, ethnicity and religion. The Quran states "O man! We have indeed created of you a male and female, and have made you peoples and tribes that might know one another. Surely the most gracious one among you is he who is Godfearing. Indeed God is Omniscient, Cognizant" (13:49). On the other hand, there are verses which may be interpreted as suggesting intolerance toward adherents of other

religions. The Quran for example states that "And fight them until there is no sedition and the religion is all God's" (8:39) and in other verses it states "Fight the idolaters in all as they fight you in all" (9:36). These verses, especially if understood literally, might be a cause of intolerance toward others.

Interestingly, most participants in both the experimental and the control groups consider Christianity to be the nearest religion to Islam. This is not surprising or unexpected with respect to the unique place of Christianity in Islam. The Quran states that a Christian is an ally of Muslims: "And you will find those nearer in affection to those who believe are those who say, 'We are Christians', that is because some of them are priests and monks"(3:38). The position of Christianity in Islam is closely associated with the position of Jesus. Paterson (2004) reported that Jesus is mentioned twenty-five times in the Quran. Similarly, Mary the mother of Jesus is respected in Islam. The Quran states "And when the angels said, 'O Mary, God has chosen you, and purified you, and has preferred you above all women of the world" (3:42)". Despite the fact that Judaism is also a monotheistic religion, none of the participants indicated it as a religion which is close to Islam, nor did any of them consider it to have a similarity with Islam in the pre-intervention interviews. The only occasion in which Judaism is mentioned by one of the participants is associated with violence. This might be due to the ongoing Arab-Israeli conflict which originated in 1948 when Israel announced its independence (Schulze, 1999; Chapman, 1998;Taheri, 2002;; Hoveyda, 2004). This conflict may have influenced pupils' perceptions of Judaism and Jewish people and made them perceive Judaism as synonymous with Israel.

Similarly, the participants were against extending liberties to the followers of other religions. As noted earlier, religious conversion was viewed as intolerable. This could also be influenced by the religious beliefs of the participants. As is clearly evident from the interviews, these girls view conversion from Islam to another religion as a sin which can lead to the death of the sinner (Kamali, 1997).

In the pre-intervention the participants in both the experimental and the control group considered freedom of religious worship as an intolerable notion. This could be interpreted that they viewed such freedom as a threat to their identity. Many

interviewees believed that the existence of places of worship for non-Muslims in Muslims countries threatens Islam in its homeland.

 As noted earlier at the pre-intervention stage, there was no agreement between the participants on whether they should tolerate the idea of religious preaching or not. The division over religious preaching might be attributed to participants' understanding of religious preaching. Some participants may have understood it as allowing the followers of other religions to explain their beliefs. Therefore, they welcomed such actions and considered them a means to acquire knowledge and be open to other religions. On the one hand, this suggests a willingness of these participants to be open to other religions. On the other hand, it also implies that the participants are deprived from being open to religions different from their own.

As noted earlier, analysis of the quantitative data reveals that the experimental group scored higher than the control group in affect, belief and intention sub-scales in the post-intervention questionnaire. Similarly analysis of the qualitative data shows that the experimental group display more tolerance towards religious conversions, preaching and freedom of worship compared to the control group. These results can be considered as an indication of the effectiveness of the intervention on the participants' cultural tolerance. This also means that the intervention in this study acted as a tool that helped the pupils to reach the potential levels of their zone of proximal development (Vygotsky, 1978).

Interestingly, in the post-intervention round the control group showed more tolerance compared to the pre-intervention round. This may be attributable to the pre-intervention round's effects and the influence of the researcher.

5 Chapter Five Findings: Tolerance towards Western Culture

5.1 Introduction

This chapter analyses the data collected from 10th grade pupils in the experimental and control groups, in order to obtain an insight into their tolerance towards Western customs and values. Specifically, this chapter focuses on quantitative and qualitative examination of the second research question: "are there any differences in the level of tolerance toward Western values and customs between the experimental group which studies the "Our Brothers and Sisters in Humanity" programme and the control group which studies the usual school curricula?" Like Chapter Four, this chapter is divided into three parts. The first part presents the quantitative findings based on the questionnaire (see Appendix 2). ANOVA and an independent t-test were used to establish a comparison between the experimental and the control groups. The second part presents the qualitative findings based on interviews. The final part offers a critical overview and discussion of the findings obtained from the quantitative and qualitative data.

5.2 Quantitative Study

To examine the differences between the experimental and the control group in tolerance toward Western culture in pre- and post-intervention rounds, mixed ANOVA was used. The result is displayed in Table 5-1.

Table 5-1: Mean rating showing significant differences and interaction for "affect", "belief", "intention" sub-scales and tolerance towards Western culture

Scale	Group	Mean Score		Sig.		
		Pre-intervention Round	Post-intervention Round	P Round	P Groups	Inter-action
Affect	Control	1.96	2.13			
	Experimental	1.94	2.48	***	***	***
	Total	1.95	2.30			
Belief	Control	2.25	2.41			
	Experimental	2.24	2.70	***	***	***
	Total	2.24	2.55			
Intention	Control	2.26	2.41			
	Experimental	2.20	3.05	***	***	***
	Total	2.23	2.72			
Tolerance toward western culture	Control	2.17	2.32			
	Experimental	2.14	2.74	***	***	***
	Total	2.16	2.53			

* p<.05   ** p<.01   *** p<.001

5.2.1   Affect Scale

Differences between Administration Rounds

Statistically significant main effects were found for the round of administration in participants' affect towards the values and customs of Western culture $F (1, 239) = 53.60$ p<.001, Eta squared= (.22). Table 5-1 shows that the overall mean score of participants regarding affect towards Western culture increased significantly from the pre-intervention to the post-intervention rounds. However, the participants scored below the neutral point with a total mean score of 2.30 in the post-intervention round.

Group Differences

The examination of between subjects variable, group, manifests that there were statistically significant main effects of group $F (1, 239) = 12.5$ p<.001. Despite reaching statistical significance, the actual difference in mean scores between the groups was weak with Eta squared = .05. Table 5-1 shows that the experimental group scored relatively highly in comparison to the control group in the post-intervention round.

Round by Group Interaction

Statistically significant interaction effects of round by group were found $F (1, 239) = 14.89$ p<.001. The effect of the interaction was small with the Eta squared =.1. The experimental group's mean score in affect toward Western culture considerably

increased in the post-intervention round compared to the pre-intervention round. Similarly the mean score of the control group rose as a result of the experimental condition, but this increase remained relatively lower than the increase that had been achieved by the experimental group (See Figure 5-1).

Figure 5-1: Tolerance toward Western culture scale: interaction between round and group on affect sub-scale
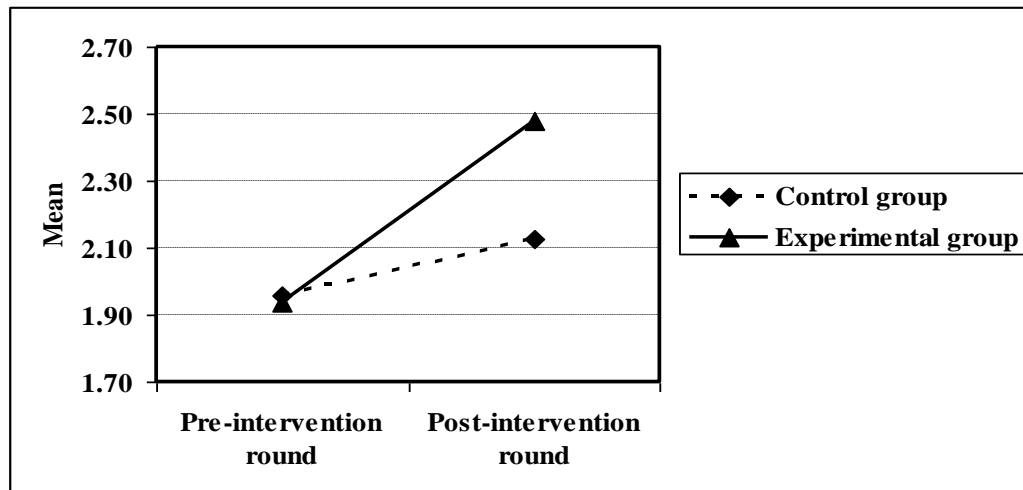
5.2.2   Belief Scale

Difference between Administration Rounds

Statistically significant differences with the main effects of the round of administration with $F (1, 239) = 35.04$ p<.001 were found in the belief subscale of the tolerance toward the Western culture scale. The Eta squared =.15 indicated a small size of effect. The overall mean score of the participants rose from 2.24 in the pre-intervention round to 2.55 in the post-intervention rounds. Despite this increase in the mean score, participants' affects about Western culture continued to score below the neutral point of the scale.

Group Differences

A highly significant main effect on the group was also obtained for the belief subscale, with $F (1, 239) = 8.16$ p<.01. The magnitude of differences was very weak with Eta squared=.03. Table 5-1 indicates that both the experimental and the control groups scored fairly low in the belief subscale, with the experimental group scoring 2.25 and the control group scoring 2.41. The experimental group, however, scored relatively higher in the post-intervention round in comparison to the control group.

Round by Group Interaction

These main effects were further explained by the statistically significant interaction effect of round by group, with F (1, 239) = 8.45 p<.001, though this was a weak effect (=.04). Examination of Figure5-2 shows that there was an increase in the belief toward Western culture over the two rounds of administration. However, this increase was remarkably higher for the experimental group compared with the control group, despite the fact that both groups scored low on this subscale (see Figure 5-2).

Figure 5-2: Tolerance toward Western culture scale: interaction between round and group on belief sub-scale
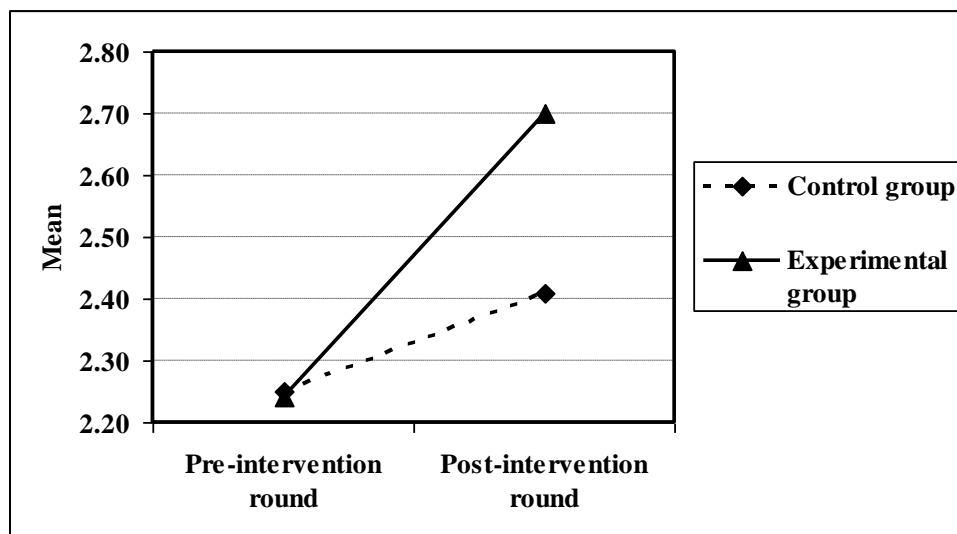
5.2.3   Intention Scale

Difference between Administration Rounds

Statistically significant differences were found between pre-intervention and post-intervention rounds of administration (F (1, 239) = 123.36 p<.001), suggesting that the participants'' intentions to act tolerantly increased significantly over the two administration rounds. The Eta squared =.52 indicated a large effect size.

Group Differences

The mixed ANOVA revealed a significant effect of group F (1, 239) = 36.57 p<.001. Despite reaching statistical significance, the actual difference in mean scores between the groups was small. The effect size, calculated using Eta squared, was .15. As Table 5-1 shows, in the pre-intervention round both the experimental and the control groups scored low in the intention subscale, whereas in the post-intervention round the

experimental group's participants tended to be ambivalent about whether they should act tolerantly toward Western cultural values and customs. The control group, however, continued to score negatively on the intention subscale with a mean score of 2.41.

Round by Group Interaction

A mixed ANOVA on the intention subscale revealed a significant round by group interaction effect, with $F (1, 239) = 60.07$ p<.001. Similarly, the effect size was large with Eta squared= .25. As Figure 5-3 shows, both the experimental and the control group manifested an increase in the intention to act tolerantly toward Western culture from pre- to the post-intervention; the extent of this increase was markedly higher for the experimental group which underwent the intervention of the "Our Brother and Sisters in Humanity" programme.

Figure 5-3: Tolerance towards Western culture scale: interaction between round and group on intention sub-scale
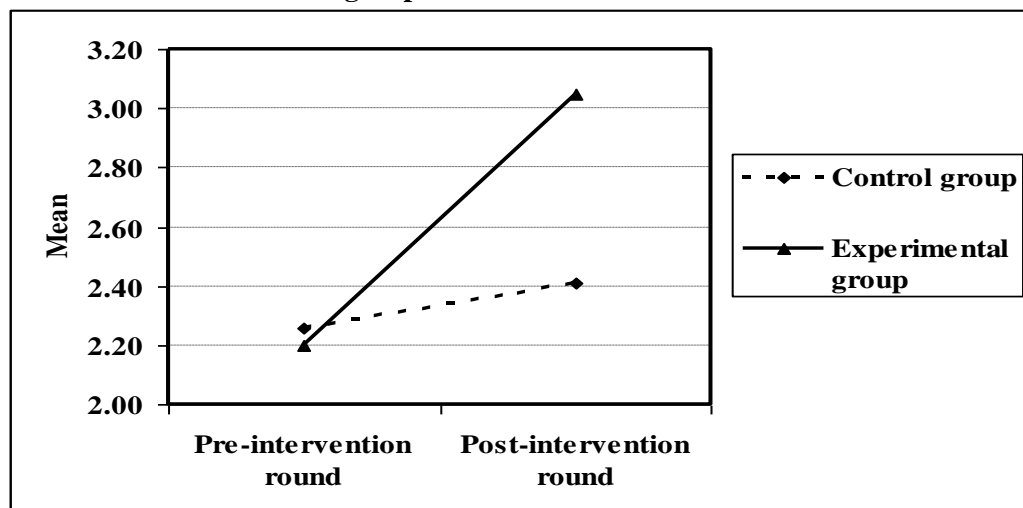
5.2.4   Overall Tolerance towards Western Culture

Difference between Administration Rounds

Statistically significant differences of the main effects of round of administration with $F (1, 239) = 106.14$ p<.001 were found in tolerance towards the Western culture scale. The Eta squared statistics (.44) indicated a large effect size. Although the subjects continued to score low in the post-intervention round, their mean score rose from 2.16 in pre-intervention round to 2.53 in the post-intervention round.

Group Differences

A highly significant main effect on the group was also obtained for tolerance toward the Western culture, with F (1, 239) = 37.56 p<.01. Despite reaching statistical significance, the actual difference in mean scores between the groups was quite small. The effect size, calculated using Eta was squared =.22. Table 5-1 shows that in pre-intervention round both groups, the experimental and the control, scored fairly low on tolerance toward Western culture scale, with the experimental group scoring 2.17 and the control group scoring 2.17. The experimental group, however, scored relatively highly in the post-intervention round in comparison to the control group.

Round by Group Interaction

These main effects were further explained by the statistically significant interaction effect of round by group, with F (1, 239) = 26.92 p<.01, though this was a small effect (Eta-squared = .16). Figure 5-4 shows that there was an increase in tolerance toward Western culture over the two rounds of administration. This increase was remarkably higher for the experimental group in comparison with the control group despite the fact that both groups scored low in this scale.

Figure 5-4: Interaction between round and group on the tolerance toward Western culture scale

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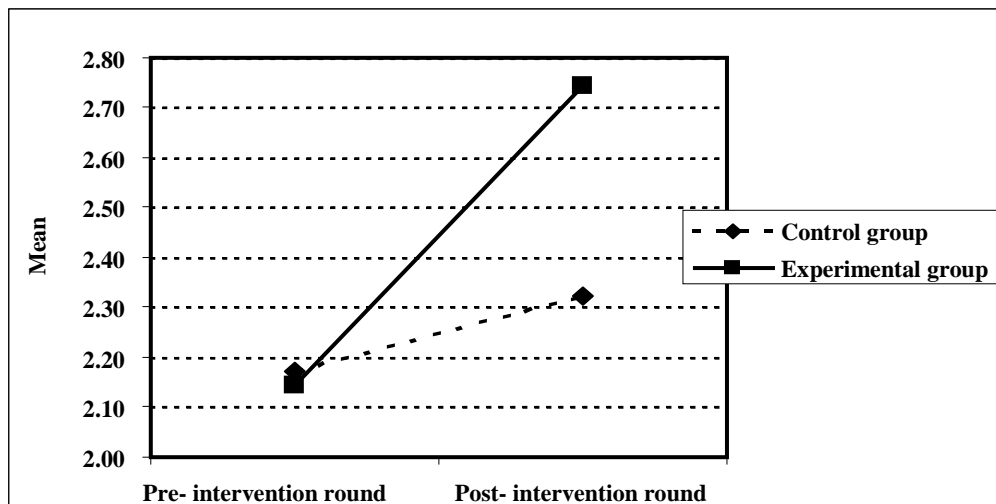
5.2.5 Gain score in Tolerance towards Western Culture

The mean gain scores of both the experimental and control groups in tolerance towards Western culture and in scale components (affect, belief and intention) were calculated, and the differences between the experimental and the control group in gain score were examined using an independent sample t-test. Table 5-2 shows these results.

Table 5-2: The differences between the experimental and the control group in gain scores in tolerance towards Westerners

Scales	Group	Mean	SD	S Error	t	df	Sig.	Effect size
Affect	Control	.17	.71	.06	-3.86	239	***	.50
	Experimental	.54	.80	.07				
Belief	Control	.16	.82	.07	-2.91	239	***	.37
	Experimental	.46	.81	.08				
Intention	Control	.15	.63	.06	-7.75	239	***	.99
	Experimental	.85	.77	.07				
Tolerance toward Western culture	Control	.15	.55	.05	-6.129	239	***	.80
	Experimental	.60	.58	.05				

    * p<.05   ** p<.01   *** p<.001

As is shown in this scale, the experimental group achieved high mean gain scores in affect, belief and intention subscales in comparison to the mean gain scores of the control group. The experimental group had a mean gain score of 0.54 in affect, 0.46 in belief and 0.85 in intention subscales, compared to 0.17 in affect, 0.16 in belief and 0.15 in the intention subscales for the control group. The experimental group also gained a mean score of .60 in comparison to .15 for the control group in terms of overall tolerance of Western culture.

Table 5-2 shows that there are statistically significant differences between the experimental group and the control group in the gain score of affect, belief and intention subscales, and in the overall tolerance toward Western culture scale, in favour of the experimental group. Therefore the null hypothesis, that states that there is no statistically significant difference in the gain score of tolerance towards Western culture between the experimental group and the control group can be rejected. Calculating the effect size for the t-test using the formula presented in Chapter 3 shows a medium effect size on the affect scale, a small effect size on the belief scale, a large effect size on the intention scale and a large effect size on tolerance towards Western culture scale.

5.2.6   Consistent Findings

As noted earlier, the experimental group outperformed the control group in all tolerance scales and subscales. However, there are some individual items in which the groups performed almost the same. These items are as follows:

5.2.6.1 Mixing between Men and Women

The participants' tolerance towards the custom of mixing between men and women was assessed and the results are displayed in Table 5-3.

Table 5-3: Mean rating showing significant differences and interaction for "affect", "belief", and "intention" sub-scales in tolerance toward the notion of mixing between men and women

	Group	Mean Score		Sig.		
		Pre intervention Round	Post Intervention Round	P Round	P Groups	Inter-action
Affect	Control	1.68	1.85			
	Experimental	1.61	2.10	***	-	-
	Total	1.65	1.97			
Belief	Control	1.78	2.01			
	Experimental	1.84	2.47	***	*	**
	Total	1.81	2.23			
Intention	Control	2.60	2.94			
	Experimental	2.69	3.26	***	-	-
	Total	2.64	3.10			

* p<.05   ** p<.01   *** p<.001

There were statistically significant main effects of round of administrations with in affect toward the notion of mixing between men and women $F (1, 239) = 12.76$; $p<.001$. No statically significant main effects were found of group $F (1, 239) = .89$; $p>.05$. Similarly there was no statistically significant interaction between group and round of administration $F (1, 239) = 3.11$; $p>.05$. As is shown in Figure 5-5, both groups scored low in the affect subscale of tolerance regarding the notion of mixing between men and women in the pre-intervention round. However in the post-intervention round, the mean score of both groups increased significantly; but little difference can be found between the experimental and the control group, with the control group scoring 1.85 and the experimental group scoring 2.10 on this sub-scale.

Figure 5-5: Tolerance regarding the notion of mixing between men and women: interaction between round and group on affect sub-scale
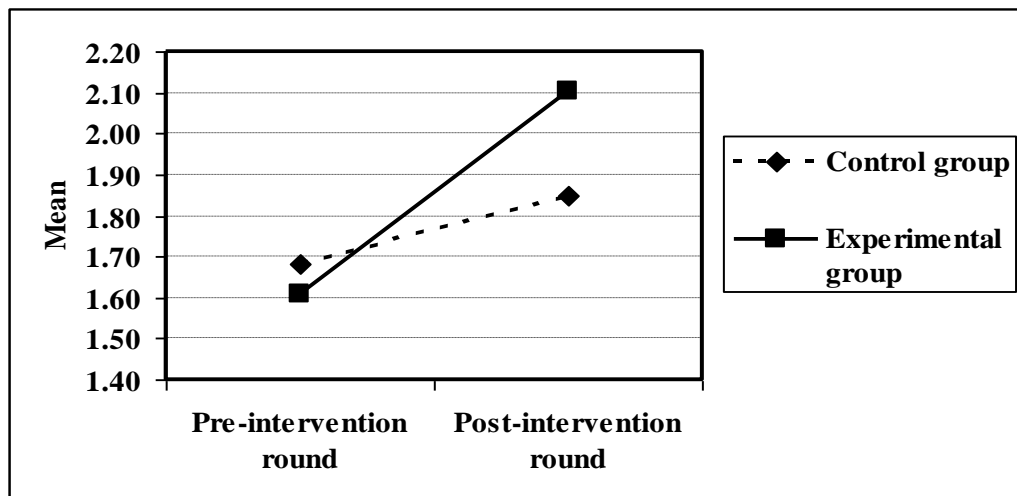
There were statistically significant main effects of round of administrations concerning belief in the notion of mixing between men and women $F(1, 239) = 11.22$; $p<.001$. Similarly there were statistically significant main effects found for the group in respect to belief about the notion of mixing between men and women $F(1, 239) = 2.32$; $p>.05$ and there were statistically significant interactions between the group and round of administration in belief about the notion of mixing between men and woman $F(1, 239) = .68$; $p<.01$. Figure 5-6 shows that the mean scores for both the experimental and control group increased over the two administration rounds; however, the increase in the experimental group's mean score was significantly higher than the increase in the control group's mean score.

Figure 5-6: Tolerance toward the notion of mixing between men and women: interaction between round and on belief sub-scale
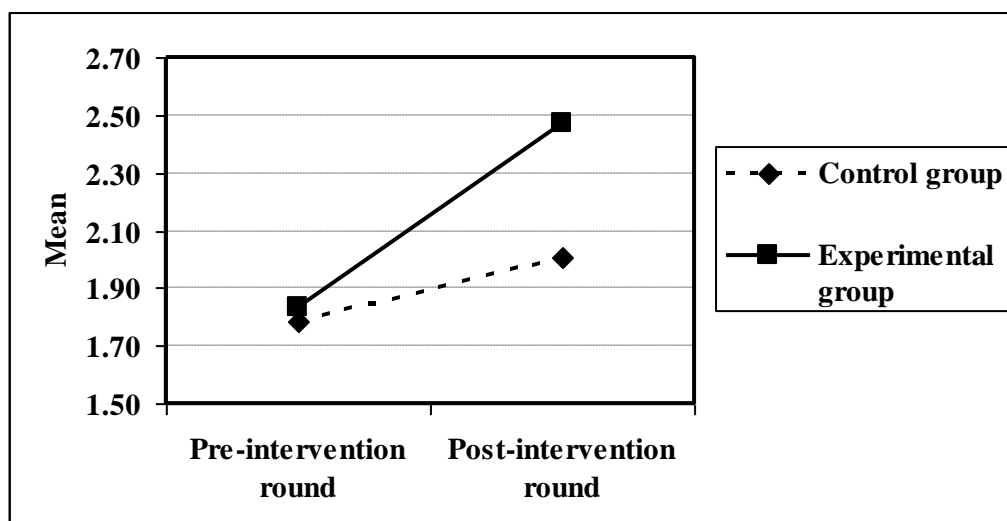
There were statistically significant main effects of the round of administrations in intention toward the notion of mixing between men and women $F(1, 239) = 18.03$; $p<.001$. No statistically significant main effects were found for the group regarding intentions of mixing between men and women $F(1, 239) = 6.55$; $p>.05$. Similarly there was no statistically significant interaction between group and round of administration $F(1, 239) = 4.16$; $p>.05$. As shown in Figure 5-7, the mean score of both groups increased significantly over the two administration rounds. However, little difference was observed between the experimental and the control groups in the intention subscale regarding the notion of mixing between men and women.

Figure 5-7:Tolerance toward the notion of mixing between men and women: interaction between round and group on intention subscale
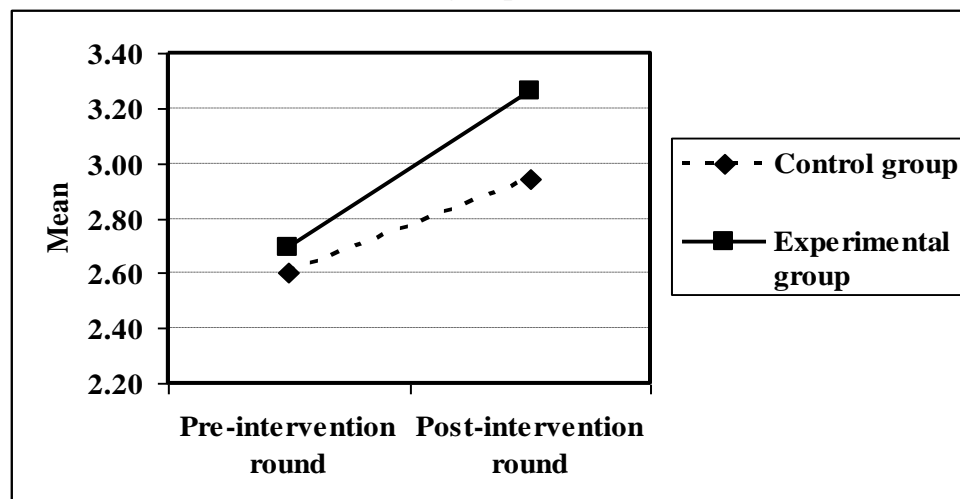
5.2.6.2 Democracy

The participants' tolerance toward the notion of democracy was assessed and the results were displayed in Table 5-4.

Table 5-4: Mean rating showing significant differences and interaction for "affect", "belief", and "intention" subscales in tolerance towards the notion of democracy

	Group	Mean Score		Sig.		
		Pre intervention Round	Post Intervention Round	P Round	P Groups	Inter-action
Affect	Control	3.27	3.05			
	Experimental	3.29	3.04	-	-	-
	Total	3.28	3.05			
Belief	Control	3.25	3.28			
	Experimental	3.28	3.73	*	*	-
	Total	3.26	3.50			
Intention	Control	3.31	3.51			
	Experimental	3.22	3.65	**	-	-
	Total	3.27	3.58			

　　* p<.05　　　** p<.01　　　*** p<.001

There were no statistically significant main effects of round of administrations in affect towards the notion of democracy (F (1, 237) = 3.13; p>.05. Moreover, no statically significant main effects were found in the group in affect toward the notion of democracy (F (1, 237) = .00; p>.05. Similarly, there were no statistically significant interactions of round by group in affect toward the notion of democracy (F (1, 237) = .01; p>.05. At the pre-intervention round both the experimental and the control group scored high in affect toward democracy, with a mean score of 3.29 for the experimental group and 3.27 for the control group. At the post-intervention round the experimental and control groups' mean scores in affect towards democracy dropped slightly to 3.04 for the experimental and 3.05 for the control group (See Figure 5-8).

Figure 5-8: Tolerance towards the notion of democracy: interaction between round and group on affect subscale
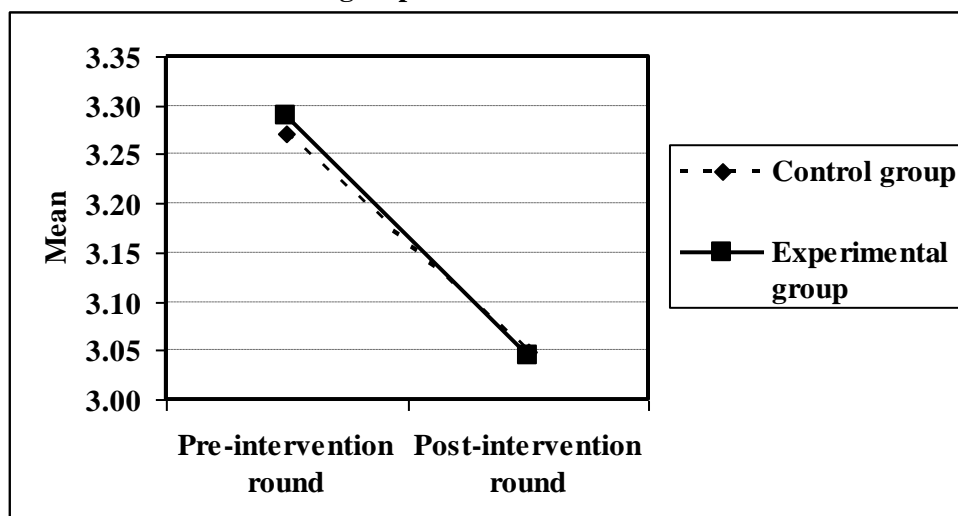
There were statistically significant main effects of round of administrations in belief about the notion of democracy (F (1, 237) = 4.12; p<.05. Similarly, statistically significant main effects were found for both groups in terms of belief in the notion of democracy (F (1, 237) = 3.85; p<.05. No statistically significant interactions of round by group were found for belief about the notion of democracy (F (1, 237) = 3.09; p>.05. At the pre-intervention round both the experimental and the control group scored in the positive direction of the scale in regard to their beliefs about democracy. At the post-intervention round the experimental group's mean score increased significantly in comparison to the mean score of the control group, which increased slightly over the two administration rounds (See Figure 5-9).

Figure 5-9: Tolerance towards the notion of democracy: interaction between round and group on belief subscale
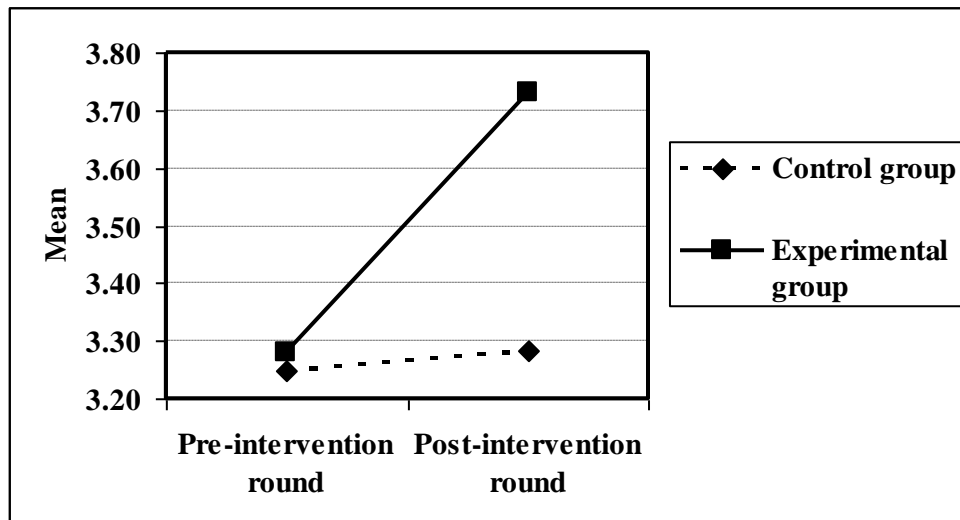
There were statistically significant main effects of round of administrations in intention toward the notion of democracy (F (1, 239) = 6.22; p<.01), whereas there were no statistically significant main effects found for groups in intention towards adopting the notion of democracy (F (1, 239) = .03; p>.05. Similarly, there were no statistically significant interactions of round by group (F (1, 239) = .79; p>.05. At the post-intervention round the mean score of both groups increased significantly. However, although the experimental group scored higher in the post-intervention round the extent of difference between the mean score of the two groups was not significant (see Figure 5-10).

Figure 5-10: Tolerance toward the notion of democracy: interaction between round and group on intention subscale
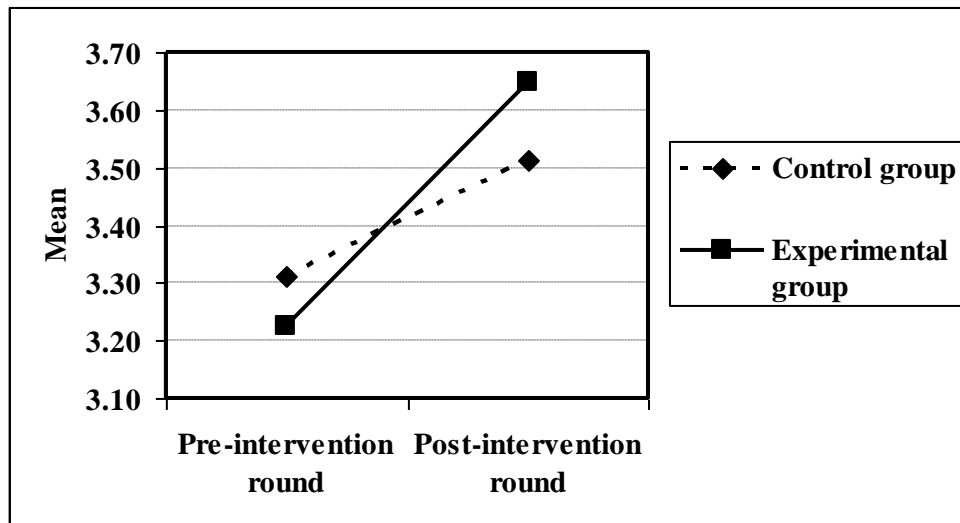
5.2.6.3 Kissing and Holding Hands in Public

The participants' tolerance of the customs of kissing and holding hands in public was assessed and the results are displayed in Table 5-5.

Table 5-5: Mean rating showing significant differences and interaction for "affect", "belief", and "intention" sub-scales in tolerance toward the notion of kissing and holding hands in public

|	Group	Mean Score		Sig.		
		Pre - intervention Round	Post-Intervention Round	P Round	P Groups	Inter-action
Affect	Control	1.53	1.74			
	Experimental	1.43	1.84	**	-	-
	Total	1.48	1.79			
Belief	Control	2.02	2.27			
	Experimental	2.15	2.44	*	-	-
	Total	2.08	2.35			
Intention	Control	3.10	3.28			
	Experimental	2.87	3.50	**	-	-
	Total	2.99	3.38			

* p<.05   ** p<.01   *** p<.001

There were statistically significant main effects of round of administrations in affect toward the notion of kissing and holding hands in public F $(1, 239) = 9.58$; p≤.01). No statically significant main effects were found of group F $((1, 239) = .00$; p>.05). Similarly, there was no statistically significant interaction between group and round of administration (F $(1, 239) = .94$; p>.05). As shown in the figure below, both groups

scored low in the affect subscale of tolerance regarding the notions of kissing and holding hands in public. The low scoring persisted over the two administrations rounds and no differences were seen in this regard (See Figure 5-11).

Figure 5-11: Tolerance of the notions of kissing and holding hands in public: interaction between round and group on affect subscale
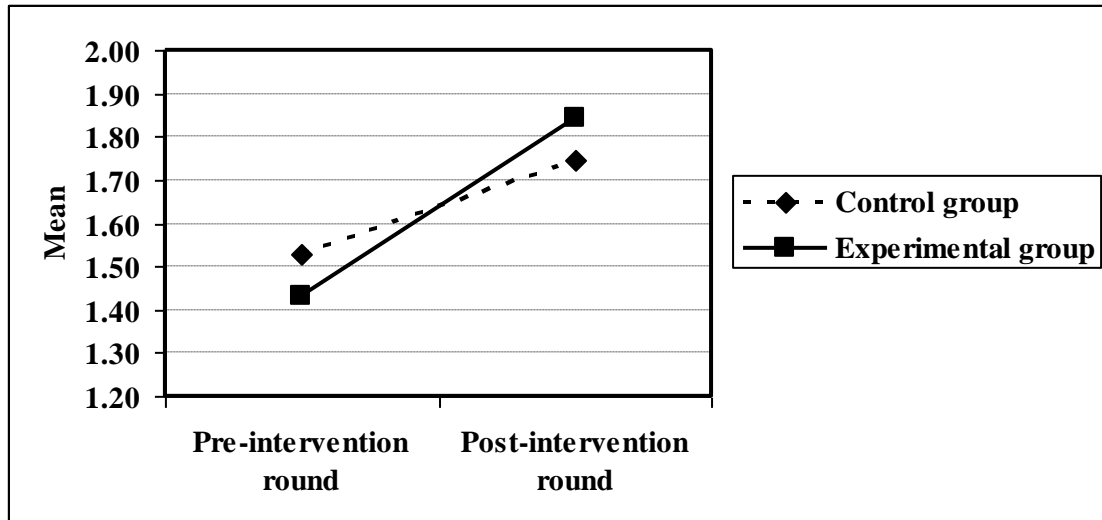
There were statistically significant main effects of round of administrations in terms of beliefs about the notions of kissing and holding hands in public ($F_{(1, 238)} = 3.81$; $p \leq .05$). No statically significant main effects were found of group $F_{(1, 238)} = .02$; $p > .05$, and there was no statistically significant interaction between group and round of administration ($F_{(1, 238)} = 1.23$; $p > .05$). At the pre-intervention round the experimental and the control group scored low in belief about the notions of kissing and holding hands. At the post-intervention round the mean score of both groups in tolerance of the notions of kissing and holding hands in public were diminutively increased (See Figure 5-12).

Figure 5-12: Tolerance of the notion of kissing and holding hands in public: interaction between round and group on belief subscale
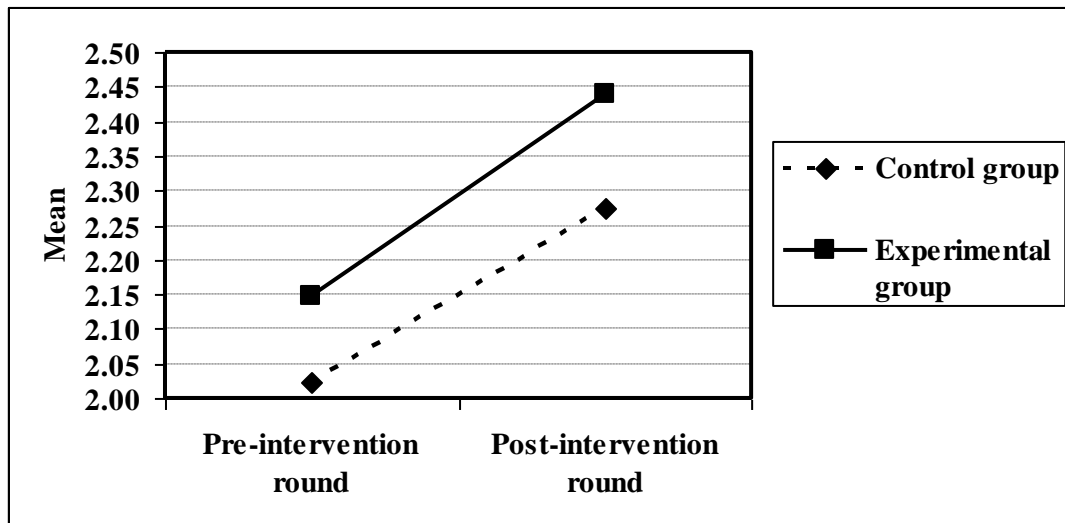
There were statistically significant main effects of round of administrations in intention toward the notion of kissing and holding hands in public (F $(1, 236)$ = 6.76; p≤.01). No statically significant main effects were found of group F $(1, 236)$ = .00; p>.05, and there was no statistically significant interaction between group and round of administration (F $(1, 236)$ = 2.09; p>.05). At the pre-intervention round there was not much difference between the experimental and control groups, with both groups scoring around the midpoint. Interestingly, both groups scored positively on the intention subscale in the post intervention findings, with a mean score of 3.50 for the experimental group and of 3.28 for the control group (See Figure 5-13).

Figure 5-13: Tolerance of the notion of kissing and holding hands in public: interaction between round and group on intention subscale
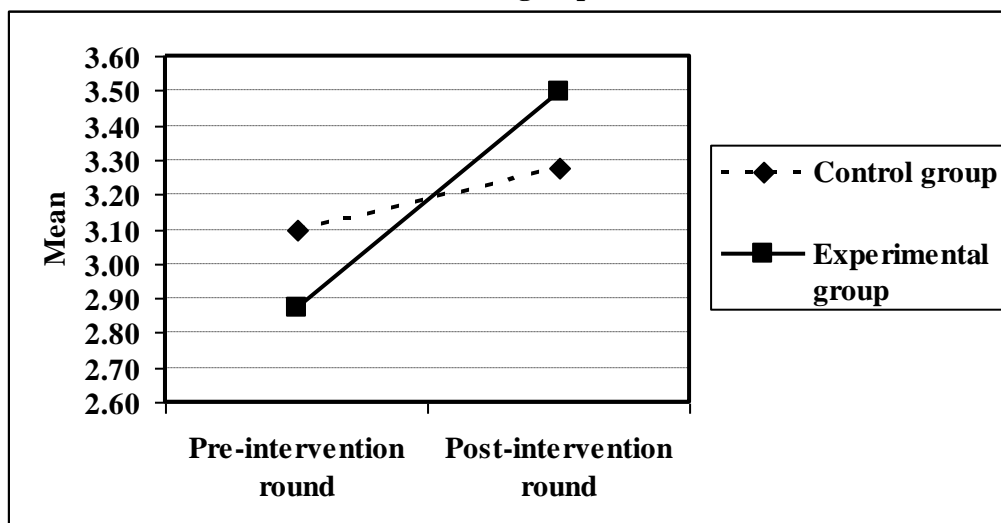
5.3 Qualitative Study

5.3.1 Conceptualizing Western culture

5.3.1.1 Pre-intervention Interview

Asking the participants to define Western culture produced wide and varied definitions of Western culture were offered. The participants in both the experimental and the control groups reported that Western culture is the culture that can be found in Western countries. The most frequently cited countries for the prevalence of Western culture by the participants were the United States of America, the United Kingdom, France, and Australia. However, it should be emphasized that all of the participants pointed to the USA and the UK as countries in which Western culture is prevalent. Both Apricot (EG) and Corn (CG) said that Western culture existed in America, Britain and western countries.

Some participants referred to Western culture as a liberal culture. Cherry (EG) stated that "Western culture is known for its freedom of belief and expression. Western culture is very much concerned with that. Nobody is compelled to believe anything. The individuals are free to live life as they wish". Avocado (control group, henceforth CG) pointed out that "Western culture means ultimate liberty from all restrictions. This culture is present in superpower countries such as Britain and America"

The majority of participants in both experimental and control groups defined Western culture as the culture that conflicts with and contradicts Islam. Strawberry (EG) argued that "Western culture is against Islamic values and culture. Certain habits and practices in the Western culture contradict Islam". Broccoli (CG) expressed a similar view.

Some interviewees believed that Western culture is the dominant culture. Apple (EG) opined that "Muslims are influenced by Western culture today. Muslims are now copying the West in contradiction to the teachings of Islam". Apricot (EG) stated "Western culture supersedes Islamic and Arabic culture". Tomato (CG) defined Western culture as "a materialistic culture".

5.3.1.2 Post-intervention Interview

In the pre-intervention interview both the experimental and the control group interviewees defined the concept of Western culture similarly, whereas in the post-intervention interview the conceptualizations of Western culture differed significantly between the two groups. The control group participants offered a wide set of definitions of Western culture. These definitions can be categorized into three major themes. Firstly, there were those who defined Western culture as a culture of complete liberty. They believed that liberty within Western culture is a form of chaos which affects the ethical and moral values within Western society. Avocado (CG) said "Western culture is very liberal and has no moral values. It contradicts Islamic values in many respects". Secondly, some participants conceptualized Western culture as a culture which clashes and contradicts with Islamic culture. Carrot (CG), for example, said "Western culture prevails in western countries. It contradicts Islamic culture". Thirdly, some participants believed that western culture is immoral and has no moral guidance because it does not acknowledge the role of religion. Cucumber (CG) reported "Western culture knows no religious bounds. It calls for absolute freedom as we now see in USA and Europe".

In contrast, all the experimental group interviewees offered one definition of Western culture. They agreed that Western culture comprises a set of values and traditions that operate in the West, and the negative language used to define Western culture by the control group was not used by the experimental group. Mango (EG) pointed out that:

> "Western culture is the moral and material product of western intellect. It includes western products, ways of thinking, habits, traditions, code of dress and many other things as we hear on the news and read in books".

5.3.2 Admiration of Western Culture

5.3.2.1 Pre-intervention Interview

When the participants were asked about the aspects of Western culture that they liked, the most frequent answer was "scientific discoveries". Science and technology were quoted by all participants as the most admired aspects of Western culture. As Tomato (CG) reported: "The most remarkable thing about Western culture is the scientific advancement and technology". Apple (EG) expressed similar views.

One out of sixteen participants mentioned freedom of belief and expression, and democracy, as aspects which she admired in Western culture. Cucumber (CG) stated

> "Western culture is marked with freedom of speech, democracy and freedom of belief. We don't have such rights in our countries. Well, in fact, these principles are applied in the Islamic world but not on a wide scale. They don't find support. A person speaking out his mind would not find support from others".

Interestingly, while the participants were reporting the aspects they liked in Western culture, they engaged in a comparison between their culture and Western culture. During this comparison, almost all participants tended to exhibit collective self-critical tendencies. They revealed negative beliefs and emotions towards their social self. Some participants believed that the Arabs and Muslims are backward in science and technology. As Corn (CG) put it:

> "Western culture is scientifically advanced. Why have they overtaken us in science? They have gone to the moon and made new discoveries. Where are the Muslims? They are asleep…Westerners are very knowledgeable, contrary to us in the Muslim countries".

Cucumber (CG) viewed her in-group as having no will to defend itself. She described her social context by saying:

> "The social environment also plays a role in the lack of freedom in Arab countries…We are very submissive. If somebody wants to influence us, they can easily do that".

In addition, some participants viewed their context as destructive of creativity. They pointed out that in this context there was no opportunity for talented and creative people to excel. Broccoli (CG) reported:

> "In the West children are trained at a very young age to read. Here, nobody cares about us. Talented people are encouraged and taken care of in the West. Here nobody care about us".

Similar views were expressed by Carrot (CG), who noted:
> "In western countries they care about children. They even care about animals. I watched a movie where a dog was asked questions and it provided

answers in certain ways. In Arab countries, children, even youths, are neglected. In the West they encourage talented children. They praise them when they paint or make an achievement. In Arab countries, they might destroy their paintings or at least tell them 'No, it is not good. You are a failure'. Westerners encourage their kids and praise them, so they become brilliant. We discourage them, except for few cultured people who have no influence over the dominant discouraging majority".

It should be emphasized that the self-criticisms displayed by some interviewees were accompanied in some cases by lamenting over a past in which Muslims in general and Arabs in particular were seen to have led the world. As Leek (CG) put it:

"Muslims were pioneers. Now things are different. It is the Westerners who are the pioneers…Arabs and Muslims could not discover a cure for any disease. Westerners have discovered lots of cures. Few Arabs and Muslims care about science and research. Western culture is a creative culture. Westerners hope they surpass the Islamic culture; and that is what really drives them".

5.3.2.2 Post-intervention Interview

Similarly, in the pre-intervention interviews the interviewees in both the experimental and control groups reported that they admire Western culture. The control group's participants continued to limit their admiration of Western culture to scientific discoveries and technological developments, whereas the experimental group tended to extend their admiration to other aspects of Western culture such as the emphasis on freedoms. They acknowledged that Western culture was far ahead of Omani culture with regard to personal, religious, and political freedom. Raspberry (EG), for example, stated that:

"I admire their personal freedom and freedom of belief. In the West a person chooses his/her faith upon personal conviction. People are free. Also they have democracy. Leaders are chosen and their terms of reference decided by the people. Religious convictions play no part in choosing the leaders or deciding their programme. Also they do separate religion from politics. Religion does not interfere in the running of state affairs".

5.3.3 Condemnation for Western Culture

5.3.3.1 Pre-intervention Interview

When the participants were asked to specify the aspects of Western culture they disliked, they expressed different views. The majority of interviewees in both the experimental and the control groups disliked what they perceived as absolute freedom, which they believed had caused chaos within Western society. Tomato (CG) argued: "I don't like their absolute liberty. In Islam we have liberty within certain limits." Grape (EG) also saw individual liberty as a destabilizing factor.

Many participants disliked the Western lifestyle, particularly the aspects related to sexual freedom, dress code and alcohol consumption. Cauliflower (CG) stated: "I hate their ugly habits…Adultery. It is prevalent greatly; alcoholic addiction; and lack of privacy". Corn (CG) expressed very strong views:

> "What I actually hate is their lifestyle and bad manners. I hate to see a man kissing a woman in public. I hate their short and tight costumes. I hate their wantonness".

Mango (EG) dislikes the family values in the West:

> "I don't like their habits. Weapons and drugs are on public sale in the west. Children start carrying weapons, smoking cigarettes and taking drugs at a very young age… There is this practice that when children reach 18, they have to leave the parents' home and live separately".

Some interviewees disliked secular trends within Western culture. Many of them believed that Western culture is opium of the religions and faiths. They believed that religion had no place within Western culture. Participants in both experimental and control groups believed that these secular trends created what most of them called moral corruption in the West. As Mango (EG) stated: "Western morals are decaying. Westerners have no manners." When she was asked to explain her answer she said: "Western thinking is deviant. Westerners have no faith. Their clothing style is strange. When they speak, you can sense that they don't have faith".

Some participants disliked the Western culture because it is different from the Muslim culture in terms of religion. Broccoli (CG) stated:

> "I don't like them being non-believers. I wish they were Muslim. I don't like their faith. I don't like their lifestyle, whether in costume or social habits. I know their bad behaviour is dictated by their religion. If they were Muslim, they would behave differently''.

Some participants disliked the ignorance about Islam in the West. They felt that the Westerners did not understand Muslims and Islam. As Carrot (CG) put it, "I hate the Westerners when they talk about Islam in an insulting manner. I hate excessive freedom of expression in the West which is used to mock religion". Cucumber (CG) stated: "I hate it when Westerners don't listen to outside views. They hate us as Arabs and don't listen to our views".

5.3.3.2 Post-intervention Interview

In pre-test interviews both the experimental and control group participants reported that they disliked the absolute freedom, lifestyles, and secular trends in the West. The same aspects were disliked by the majority of control group participants in the post-intervention interview. In addition, the outright majority of participants in this group indicated that the aspect of Western culture they least liked is that it discriminates against the Muslims and treats them unjustly. As Leek (CG) said:

> "What I don't like in Western culture is their social habits such as mixing between sexes, extramarital relations and kissing in public. I don't like these habits and cannot accept them. But what I hate most about Westerners is their unreasonable hate for Arabs and Muslims. I hate what they are doing in Iraq and Palestine. The term 'Western culture' is always linked in my mind with the atrocities they are committing in Iraq and Palestine".

Unlike the control group participants, the experimental group participants did not include Western culture's perceived bias against Muslims among the least liked aspects of Western culture. However, they continued to agree with the control group participants in considering sexual liberation and western lifestyle as the least liked features of Western culture, though it should be emphasized that they used less negative language in describing the aspects of Western culture that they liked least. Mango (EG), who used very strong language in describing the Western culture in the pre-intervention interview, said:

"It is their social habits such as drinking alcohol. I know it is a social habit linked to celebration. I also hate the vast social variance and differentiation. There are grossly rich people, and on the other hand there are people who live in sheer poverty. There are areas inaccessible for normal persons because of crime and poverty".

5.3.4 Gender Equality

5.3.4.1 Pre-Intervention Interview

Fifteen out of sixteen participants in the experimental and the control groups viewed gender equality as an Islamic principle which is inherent in Islamic teaching. Banana (EG) stated "It exists in the Prophet's practice (Sunnah). There are a lot of Hadiths promoting that. Islam freed women from slavery, and preaches equality". Cauliflower (CG) expressed the same view. She stated "Gender equality is an Islamic practice". The Western notion of gender equality was an intolerable idea for a large number of participants in both the experimental and control group. Broccoli (CG) indicated: "I don't think absolute equality as applied in the West is good". Apple (EG) argued:

"I object to gender equality. It is against Islamic teachings…I strongly refuse that our youngsters would adopt Western culture. I dislike Westerners and anybody who calls for gender equality".

Participants in both groups urged for the Islamic form of gender equality. For them, the Islamic form of equality maintains women's modesty, considers women's physical and psychological nature and protects their dignity. They viewed the Western form of gender equality as a form of absolute equality which supposes that women are equal to men without taking into account the essential differences between the two genders. Participants in both groups believed that women should not be viewed in the same light as men. They also believed that leadership and politics are male territories which women should not be allowed to pursue. Broccoli (CG) stated:

"We should be aware that there is no absolute equality. A woman cannot be a minister. As we know women undergo certain physical changes at times…I don't think women are fit to assume leading positions. In brief, I don't think absolute equality as applied in the West is good, because women undergo physiological changes. I think it is unfair for the society when women hold leading positions".

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The same view was repeated by Banana (EG). Yet she contradicted some of the views expressed by Broccoli. She stated:

> "Mixing with men or wearing indecent costumes and going out of the home is not equality. I am for gender equality as stated in Islam. Women can take up minister's posts. But Islam states that a woman cannot be a ruler. Prophet Mohammed PBUH states "Shall not achieve success whoever is led by a woman".

5.3.4.2 Post-intervention Interview

Seven of the control group participants and four of the experimental group participants continued to advocate what they named the Islamic form of gender equality, which they conceptualized as equality which preserves women's dignity and takes into consideration women's physical nature. Most of these participants believed that separating women from men and considering politics as a male affair in which women should not interfere were important to protect women. In this regard Carrot (CG) stated:

> "I don't approve of gender equality. Men are physically strong. A woman will not succeed in certain jobs. She cannot work as a mechanic. Such work will deprive women of their feminist nature. I think women are not fit to become leaders. Women are subject to certain physiological changes, such as pregnancy. Women are also known to be moody. Imagine a country run by a moody person. Women, as leaders, may pardon certain individuals who should not be pardoned, and this may lead to a lot of complications. Therefore, it is not wise to speak about gender equality. I don't think it befits women to become ministers".

As in the pre-intervention interview these participants continued to consider the Western form of gender equality, which they defined as absolute equality that violates women dignity, as an intolerable notion. Raspberry (EG) stated:

> "I support gender equality, but within the scope of Islamic principles and in a way that preserves the dignity of women. Islam does not exclude women, but rather demands that women should be decently dressed for the sake of their own protection. Islam does acknowledge gender equality".

These participants argued that it was important to render to man what is man's, and render to woman what is woman's. They explained that being a housewife is suitable for a woman. This view was echoed by Carrot (CG), Cauliflower (CG), Avocado (CG) and Mango (EG). Mango (EG) stated:

"Gender equality in its absolute Western scope does not appeal to me. In Islam there is rational equality where both women and men have definite roles. There are certain jobs that women cannot perform. Women in our countries cannot be leaders".

Avocado (CG) stated:

"When we speak about gender equality, we should state that Islam has established this principle, long ago, but within certain limits…Women are free to work, but I think childcare is the most important job for women. I think gender equality is not acceptable in Muslim community. We don't need it. It is a Western brand…I don't accept gender equality. We are committed Muslims and there are certain restrictions that prevent us from accepting gender equality. If we, as women, call for gender equality we would certainly be treading across red lines".

In contrast in the post-intervention interview three participants in the experimental group expressed a tolerant view of gender equality in its Western form. These were Apple (EG), Banana (EG) and Grape (EG). Apple (EG), who showed intolerant view in the pre-intervention interview toward the idea of gender equality, said:

"I support gender equality by Western standards. Women are equal to men in every respect. In fact Islam supports gender equality and grants women their rights. I don't see any conflict between Western values and Islam in this respect. Islam respects women's rights and grants them their rights in legacy and gives them the opportunity to work and earn a living in the same way as men".

Similarly Banana (EG), who had been intolerant to the idea of gender equality, commented:

"I support gender equality. I think women should be independent. They should stand as candidates for election. Women are pillars of society. They should have equal rights. They represent an effective half of society. I am fully in favour of gender equality and full rights for women equal to men."

5.3.5   Secularization

5.3.5.1 Pre-intervention Interview

Participants in both the experimental and the control groups shared the same perspective regarding secularization. They showed what could be called "zero tolerance" for secularization. Interviewees in both groups thought religion should dictate life and the Quran must be the main source of legalization. Banana (EG) stated:

> "I don't approve of such practice. I don't tolerate whoever commits that. We know that Islam elevates the ruling system. Segregating religion from the ruling system would mean the exclusion of an important pillar of the ruling system".

This view was echoed by Cauliflower, (CG) who stated:

> "I don't agree that religion should be segregated from the governing system. State and religion are inseparable. Prophet Mohammed PBUH did not do that. Governing systems would not succeed without religion….We all know that governing systems should be based on certain principles and values. Those principles and values should be rooted in religion. I believe that every Islamic state should apply the Quran as its constitution. I don't accept man-made laws".

5.3.5.2 Post-intervention Interview

The consensus between the participants in both the control and experimental groups during the pre-intervention interviews that secularization is an intolerable notion was not so conclusively apparent in the post-intervention interviews for members of the experimental group. However, it should be emphasized that control group participants continued to consider secularization as an intolerable notion. Cauliflower (CG) stated:

> "I don't agree that religion should be excluded from state affairs. I am totally against this. I think Islam should be the source of legislation. Islam should lead political life. Our laws should comply with Islam as revealed in the Holy Quran and the Prophet's teachings. States should be run by heavenly doctrine and not by human thought".

In contrast, there was a major disparity among experimental group participants on the idea of secularization. In this regard the responses can be categorized into three different themes.

Firstly, there were the majority of respondents who agreed with the control group participants that Islam should be the source of state legislation. From their perspective the notion of secularization was intolerable. These participants were Grape, Banana, Cherry, Apricot and Apple. Apple stated:

> "I cannot agree to the exclusion of religion from state affairs. I am totally against secularization. This principle is doomed to failure. It will only lead to the destruction of the governing system and spread of injustice. Exclusion of religion would deprive the state of the basis of governance. When there is no religious source for legislation, things will easily fall apart. To depend on religion means we have a strong and powerful state. Therefore, I don't accept that religion should be excluded".

Secondly, there were two participants who showed a conditional tolerance towards secularization. These were Mango and Strawberry. These participants stated that they tolerated the idea of secularization in the context of religious divergence and war and believed that secularization can play an important role in conflict resolution. Mango (EG) said:

> "Secularization will definitely suit Iraq and any other country where religious conflicts prevail. It depends on surrounding conditions…Where there are sectarian conflicts and religion becomes the cause of the conflict, I think the conditions are ripe for secularism to step in and fix things".

Thirdly, one participant showed a totally tolerant attitude toward secularization. Different justifications were offered by this participant to rationalize her tolerance. Raspberry (EG) believed that secularization was a suitable method to deal with religious fanaticism. She stressed that secularization paved the way towards freedom and justice in nation states. She said:

> "Religion is misused in state affairs. If a religious scholar gives an opinion, then such an opinion will apply without discussion, just because he is a religious scholar. This is sheer fanaticism. I think everything is debatable, including religious opinions (fatwas)."

5.3.6   Democracy

5.3.6.1 Pre-intervention Interview

Generally, interviewees in both the experimental and control groups showed a high level of tolerance towards the notion of democracy. Many of them saw democracy as a

desirable political system. They believed that it is the only means to choose a capable leader for a country. As Cherry (EG) stated:

> "Democracy is a good principle. Everybody has a right to choose their representative. Our governing system is hereditary. When a ruler dies, his son would take over. Though the son may sometimes be unfit, he still rules. Democracy means the choice of the masses, which must know how to choose".

A comparable view about democracy was expressed by Carrot (CG):

> "I agree with Western democracy. I wish we could apply this principle in our Arab and Islamic countries. Democracy is the way to justice and equality. An individual can freely express his/her views. Democracy defines administration systems. Democracy is properly applied in the West. We really lack true implementation of democratic principles".

However, it should be emphasised that four participants in the experimental and two participants in the control groups objected to the idea of democracy. Apple (EG), for example stated:

> "I do not know the meaning of democracy but I reject it. Democracy is a Western thing and for Western countries. Westerners should stay away from us and not interfere in our lives and encourage disputes between us. Democracy is the cause for difference among Muslim countries. Therefore, I reject it. Their democracy is like woodworm, eating at structures."

This perspective was echoed by Cucumber (CG) who said:

> "I am against democracy when it relates to the election of a governor. Democracy does not fit in with the Arab world. Here in Oman, I would not accept democracy as the succession rule has brought us prosperity and peace. Therefore, I totally reject the principle of democracy when it comes to deciding who should rule."

5.3.6.2 Post-intervention Interview

Post-intervention interviews showed that an outright majority of participants in both the experimental and control groups seemed to tolerate the idea of democracy. However, it should be emphasized that the control group's tolerance of democracy was based on notions which differed significantly from the notions of the experimental group. Some

members of the control group believed that democracy was an Islamic principle. They argued that Islam is very practical and ahead of the West with regard to democracy. For example, Carrot (CG) stated:

> "I agree with democracy. Islam is based upon democracy. Democracy was implemented during the Prophet's time as a style of living. But Muslims abandoned democracy. Muslim rulers are not applying democracy. Democracy means the people have a right to select their leaders, to have voting rights and to be employed. Democracy is freedom of choice. I personally believe that Islam has fully supported and encouraged democracy".

In contrast, the experimental group's tolerance was based on their understanding of the advantages of democracy. Some of these participants argued that they supported democracy because it meant freedom. Apricot (EG) said:

> "Democracy is a beautiful thing. It means freedom. I think we should apply democracy. In the West people elect their leaders. Why don't we have democracy here? Democracy means freedom of choice by the people. It means delegation and withdrawal of delegation in a refined and civilized way. It means the people have the right and the will to bring change through the ballot box. I don't think it is wise to reject democracy. Rather, we should encourage and support democracy."

Some participants valued it because it gave the people the right to self-determination. Strawberry (EG), who expressed an intolerant view in the pre-intervention interview, argued:

> "I think democracy should be applied in Islamic countries immediately. In this way we can achieve fairness and equality and guarantee that only the best are chosen for running the state affairs. We have studied democracy and have come to know that democracy has many benefits. Through democracy everybody can rest assured that he/she has properly expressed his/her wish and that a person who is chosen to lead the country has been elected fairly. Democracy means peace and justice in the first place".

Other participants conceptualized democracy as a means of development. Mango (EG), who also expressed an intolerant view toward democracy in the pre-intervention interview, stated:

> "Democracy makes it possible to explore the best solutions for developing the state. It highlights individual values and gives people control over their lives".

Whilst the majority of participants tolerated the idea of democracy, some participants in both experimental and control groups did not. As in the pre-intervention interview, Apple (EG) was strongly opposed to the idea of democracy because she thought that democracy led to violence and destruction. As she put it:

> "I don't ever accept democracy as a system of rule. Though we have studied in the Our brothers and Sisters in Humanity programme that democracy calls for equality and justice, I think this is not true. Democracy does not lead to equality or justice; it only leads to violence and destruction… You can read the newspapers and listen to the news on Iraq. Is there any equality or justice in Iraq? I don't think there is. All I can see is the pictures of the dead".

Similarly, Grape (EG) continued to reject democracy in the post-intervention interview claiming that it does not suit the Islamic countries and it may cause deterioration in them. She said:

> "Take democracy for example. I think it is a very normal thing and does not deserve all this fuss. I think every state should be free to choose the system of rule that suits it most. Outsourcing political systems would not succeed. Islamic principles can lead us to happiness…Do you watch TV? I do, and I am convinced that democracy leads to destruction. Sometimes my father buys the newspaper. I read it. It is a surprise that after all the destruction I see everyday on TV, some people still write about how democracy is progressing in Iraq".

Cucumber (CG), who showed an intolerant attitude towards democracy in the pre-intervention interview, suggested implementing democracy on a different level. She supported democracy when it brought new local governors but rejected it when it aimed to change the ruler and the head of state. According to her, Arab countries do not have leadership problems and the royalty should continue to operate in such countries. She stated:

> "Democracy is a good thing. I have recently read about democracy. It gives people a role in decision-making. However, I think the rule by succession as applied in Arab countries is good. We have no problem with it. This type of rule suits our community more than democracy. We enjoy security under this ruling system. I think democracy would be a necessity when rulers did not heed their people's demands. Rulers in all Arab countries listen to their

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people's demands. Therefore, there is no need for democracy. However, there is need for democracy in certain areas such as elections of local governors but not for the ruler. We have a wise ruler and we have no problem in this regard".

5.3.7 Sexual Liberation

5.3.7.1 Pre-intervention Interview

Participants in both groups viewed sexual liberation as intolerable behaviour, even if it was practised by foreigners. Strawberry (EG) said: "Such irresponsible lifestyle is dangerous for our communities. Our youth would try to imitate them and follow in their footsteps. I think their lifestyle is ugly and damaging". This view was echoed by Avocado (CG), who stated: "I hate this social habit. I would never tolerate it, even if done by foreigners. I won't tolerate it, especially in the Islamic world".

Participants in both groups considered sexual liberation as bad, sinful and dangerous. Grape (EG) stated: "This practice is very wrong. It leads to social problems. Such practices destroy communities". Broccoli (CG) said: "I am hundred percent against it. I know they don't know anything about our traditions, but this practice leads to the spread of diseases among participating parties". Similarly, Cauliflower (CG) said:

> "When it comes to such a thing [Sexual liberation], they should respect our values. Arabs and Muslims now copy the West in everything: hairdressing, costumes etc. I recently read that the expected attack from the West is not necessarily an armed one, but may take the shape of an attack on our moral values. We are now facing an ideological attack. If we tolerate such practices, then the whole world would change into a nasty West. Unfortunately, our youth copies the West in everything, but not in their scientific and technological advancement".

5.3.7.2 Post-intervention Interview

In contrast to the findings of the pre-intervention interview in which the participants in both experimental and control groups showed that they believed sexual freedom was an intolerable notion, the findings of the post intervention interview reflected a divide between both experimental and control groups with regard to sexual freedom. All control group participants continued to believe that sexual freedom was an intolerable notion and that it was sinful and a cause of diseases. Avocado (CG) stated:

> "I don't approve of premarital relations. If Westerners were allowed to do things like this in our country, they would destroy our community. Ours is a conservative Muslim society. I don't like our youngsters imitating Western styles of conduct. Premarital relations would turn us into a society devoid of values".

On the other hand, a deep disparity emerged among experimental group participants in this respect. Four out of eight of the experimental group participants expressed their intolerance towards the idea of sexual freedom. They agreed with the control group that sexual freedom posed a threat to society, affected it negatively and was sinful. Grape stated : "I hate their premarital sexual relations. It is disastrous. It leads to social decay and family disintegration". However, the other four participants showed tolerance towards the idea of sexual freedom. They rationalized their tolerance because of respect for other cultural and social practices. They also believed that sexual freedom was an important part of individual rights and for them individual rights must not be subjected to any violation unless this freedom threatened others. For example, Mango stated:

> "I am neutral in this respect. I don't think we should only reject such a practice [pre martial sex) if it happens in a Muslim country. This is a social habit. I think we should learn to respect others' choices. We should not interfere in their lives just because we don't agree with them".

5.3.8 Dress Code

5.3.8.1 Pre-intervention Interview

Participants in both groups objected to what they saw as indecent codes of dress, or to any dress that does not match Islamic traditions or teachings. Grape (EG) stated:

> "How could we allow a woman to be dressed indecently in our society? Allah ordered Muslims not to look at women. How could they not look when a naked woman with hair uncovered passes by?"

Corn (CG) said:

> "I think Westerners visiting our countries should be compelled to wear decent clothes that comply with our traditions. Our prophet Mohamed PBUH states "God's damnation shall befall both the lookers and the looked at". Short and scandalously indecent garments are not allowed in Islam. Therefore, Islamic states should prevent Westerners from wearing indecent costumes in our countries. I strongly recommend such measures".

Interestingly, the participants tended to specifically oppose women wearing indecent clothes. From their perspectives such behaviour destroys society and causes moral corruption. Strawberry (EG) reported:

> "Wearing improper clothing would negatively influence our girls, and it would also threaten our heritage and culture".

However, one interviewee from the control group, Cucumber (CG), argued that people should be free to wear what they wanted. She said:

> "I don't agree that Westerners should be compelled to wear decent clothes. Foreigners visiting our country have their own faith. I know there are people who think that we should compel them to wear decent clothing so that it does not influence our youths. I would say that the youths are already open to the Internet and satellite channels. Therefore, such a move would be silly."

5.3.8.2 *Post-intervention Interview*

In the post-intervention interviews the views of the experimental group differed significantly from those of the control group in regard to dress code. Seven of the control group participants stated that wearing short or what they described as "indecent" clothes was intolerable. As in the pre-intervention interview, these participants rationalized their intolerance by saying that short clothes negatively affect Islamic traditions and values. Some participants claimed that such clothes pose threats to their religious identity. For example, Broccoli said:

> "I think Westerners should be asked to wear decent clothing in compliance with Islamic traditions. When they visit our countries, they should respect our values. Their code of dress is indecent and contradicts our religious and social values. It is destructive. Therefore, we should not allow that because some people may try to copy them. Our society will gradually transform into a Western community. Today many girls in Oman and in other Muslim countries follow the Western dress code and fashion. We should work hard to block Western influence".

As in the pre-intervention interview Cucumber (CG) continued to express a tolerant view towards different codes of dress. She said:

> "You know, ever since the last time I met you and you asked me about the right of individuals to wear clothing to their taste, I have read a lot of stuff

about the problems facing Muslims in the West as regards their code of dress. I have reached the conclusion that what everybody wears is a personal choice. Therefore, we should not force people into certain types of dress that do not suit their cultural or religious beliefs. I strongly object to forcing Westerners into some types of clothes that comply with our Islamic traditions".

In contrast, among the experimental group participants, there was general agreement about tolerating the notion of a different dress code. The participants rationalized their tolerance in the light of several factors. Firstly, some participants believed that Muslims should treat people based on the idea of equal respect. Cherry (EG) stated:

"Dress is a personal choice. We should never force people to get dressed the way we like. If their dress is indecent we should not look at them. I don't like anybody telling me what I should wear. Therefore, I should not do the same to others. We should always put ourselves into others' shoes in order to feel what they feel. It is wrong to force others to do something they don't like to do".

Secondly, some participants argued that freedom of dress is an important aspect of individual freedom and no one should be deprived of his/her freedom under any circumstances. Grape (EG) stated:

"Everybody should be free to dress as he/she likes. I know that when Muslims go to the West nobody requires them to change their code of dress. It is true that certain Western countries impose some restrictions on dress, but I think we should respect everybody's freedom of choice. As you know everybody is affected by his / her environment. I think Westerners visiting our countries will respect our traditions".

Thirdly, some participants stressed that freedom of dress should be tolerated as it is an aspect of cultural diversity and it is important to tolerate minority rights. Apricot (EG) reported:

"I don't think it is right to force people to do anything they don't like. For Westerners, wearing shorts is part of their culture. I don't agree that we should compel them to wear costumes which we see as decent by our standards. If I go to the West I don't want anybody to interfere with my veil. Therefore, I think I should learn to accept others as they are, as long as they don't hurt me. We should understand that people's code of dress is usually linked to certain religious and cultural values. Therefore, it would be wrong to force Westerners into certain costumes when they visit our countries".

5.4   Critical Overview of the Chapter

This study supports the Gallup Poll research (2002) of 10,000 people who were surveyed in the predominantly Islamic countries of Indonesia, Iran, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Morocco, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia and Turkey with regard to their perceptions of the Western culture. These Muslims showed a disapproval of some customs and values within the Western culture. These aspects included liberal attitudes toward sex, alcohol consumption, vulgarity and nudity in films and music, inappropriate dress and hairstyles and the loss of respect for their own traditions and religion. Furthermore, the Gallup editors also stressed that Muslims believed that Western culture has a very negative impact on Muslims society's value systems.

The intolerance toward Western customs and values has developed on the basis of the deep religious commitment of Islamic belief, as discussed in Chapter 2. It can also be argued that the intolerance towards Western culture can be attributed to the way it was perceived by the participants in the present study. These participants believe that Western cultural customs and values pose threats to their collective social identity. This is clearly evident in the qualitative findings. Therefore, it is not surprising or unexpected that these participants tended to show favouritism towards their in-group and ethnocentric behaviour in relation to the out-group.

The majority of respondents in both the experimental and the control group showed intolerance toward the notion of gender equality in its Western form. This result is not surprising with respect to the fact that many scholars, such as Barakat (1993), Joseph (1996), Riphenburg (1998) and Sonbol (2002), consider Arab and Muslim societies, including that of Oman, as patriarchies in which the right of the male is prioritized and justified by religious values (Joseph, 1996). Therefore, it might be the influence of the patriarchal culture and social context which causes these participants to be intolerant towards gender equality. The intolerance toward the idea of gender equality may be understood on the basis of the way through which the participants may acquire their knowledge about the West and any aspects related to it. Muslims, according to Esposito and Mogahed (2007), acquire their impressions of the West through three dimensions. These are the Western cultural disrespect of Muslims, political domination, and actual conflict with Islam. Consequently, the idea of gender equality may be viewed by these

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participants as the way through which the West can control Muslim countries (Werbner, 2007). This intolerance towards the idea of gender equality could imply that these girls were satisfied with their position in their society and viewed the notion of gender equality as being alien to them.

Respondents in the experimental and the control group were intolerant towards the notion of secularization. This intolerance may have been developed on the basis of the role of religion in constructing Muslim identities. Lewis (1998: 20) claims that the decisive determiner of identity in the Middle East and in the Islamic world is not nationality, not background, but religion. He maintains that "in the world-view of Muslims, which they naturally ascribed to others, religion was the determent of identity, the focus of loyalty and, not less important, the source of authority". This finding asserts the importance of religion in these participants' lives. As stressed earlier in this thesis, Islam, from Muslim's perspectives, is a complete way of life (Gulalp, 2003; Turan, 2004, Esposito, 2000; Tamimi, 2000). For them, Islam is a unique system. The perception of Islam's uniqueness may cause the participants to be intolerant toward secularization as it may lead to the marginalization of Islam. Lewis (1993: 135) indicates that "if, then, we understand anything at all about what is happening in the Muslim world at the present time and what has happened in the past, there are two essential points that need to be grasped. One is the universality of religion as a factor in the lives of the Muslim peoples, and the other is its centrality''. The intolerance towards the notion of secularization may be understood on the basis of a lack of knowledge about this notion. This intolerance raises a question concerning the means through which the participants acquire their knowledge with regard to secularization, as it seems that they have learnt that it means the "death" of God in individual and societal life (Esposito, 2000).

The participants in the experimental and the control groups were found to be intolerant towards the idea of sexual liberation. Two sources of intolerance may be identified in this regard: Muslim minds are imbued with the notion of the sinfulness of sex (Patai, 2002); and the practices and conducts which govern Muslims' lives in regard to sex, such as the segregation of sexes and the veiling of women, make sex a taboo within the Islamic culture. Therefore, it is not surprising that the quantitative analysis reveals no significant differences between the experimental and the control group in the pre- and

the post- intervention rounds with regard to tolerance of customs such as kissing and holding hands, and mixing between men and women. These customs are beyond the interventional influence because they are closely related to the notion of sexual liberation, which the participants believe must not be extended to Westerners in their countries nor to their people. These findings confirm the argument of Inglehart and Norris (2003), who indicate that Muslims and Westerners are a world apart when it comes to sexual liberation. Interestingly, there was a clear distinction between the qualitative and quantitative findings in regard to the experimental and the control groups' tolerance of sexual liberation. Unlike the quantitative findings, the qualitative analysis showed a clear difference between the two groups in their toleration of sexual liberation in the post-intervention interview. The differences between the experimental and the control group which were manifest in the qualitative analysis may explain that the intervention had an impact on some pupil's tolerance; however, this impact was not large enough to reveal significant quantitative differences between the two groups. It also suggests that beliefs which are formed and shaped on the basis of religious and cultural values take time to change.

The interviewees in both the experimental and the control group were found to be intolerant towards the notion of freedom of dress. This intolerance might be understood on the basis of the Islamic requirement of dressing modestly. According to Maumoon (1999), modesty in Islamic thought is often associated with sexuality. Therefore, it is not surprising that the participants who were raised to view sex as taboo were intolerant of the freedom of dress. This intolerance could also be understood in light of their perception of a liberal dress code as a threat to their identity.

 Interestingly, when the interviewees expressed an intolerant attitude about freedom of dress they focused their responses on women's dress. This could be explained in light of the socialization process through which the respondents may have come to acquire something similar to Mernissi's (2003) implicit theory of female sexuality. Mernissi (2003) argues, female sexuality in Islamic societies is viewed as strong and active. Therefore female sexuality must be controlled to keep men from chaos and enable them to concentrate on their social duties. This intolerance to the freedom of dress may also be attributed to perceived identity threats. These respondents may see the Western code of dress as a threat to their religious identity.

Unlike any other notion or custom of the Western culture, the participants were mainly tolerant towards the idea of democracy in both the experimental and the control groups. This tolerance is consistent with other studies which investigate Muslims attitudes about democracy (e.g. Esposito and Mogahed, 2007; Tessler, 2002, 2003). This could be the result of the wide coverage of democracy by the mass media. The extensive media coverage of democracy can be claimed on the basis that democracy was announced as a main rationale behind the Bush Administration's War on Iraq (Wimmer, 2003). Moreover, the political leadership in Oman introduced a Consultative Council in December 1991, which has often been advertised as evidence of democratic processes in the Sultanate of Oman (Rabi, 2002; Peterson, 2004). Therefore, pupils' tolerance of this idea can be interpreted on the basis of their familiarity with it. Interestingly, the control and the experimental groups' affect toward the notion of democracy dropped slightly over the two administration rounds. This could be understood in light of the situation in Iraq. The United States promised to spread democracy in Iraq but instead the participants became aware of a cruel and bloody civil war, as some commentators described the situation there.

The quantitative findings show the greatest differences in the mean scores between the experimental and the control group in tolerance toward Western culture sub-scales was in the intention subscale, whereas the lowest effect size was in the belief subscale. This may be understood on the basis that individuals' beliefs are influenced by the beliefs of other people in their social context. The findings suggest that tolerance does not imply an absence of negative beliefs as much as it implies the ability to accept the right of the tolerance object to exist.

6 Chapter Six: Findings: Tolerance toward Westerners

6.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the findings of the third research inquiry: "Are there any differences in the level of tolerance toward Westerners between the experimental group which studies "Our Brothers and Sisters in Humanity" programme and the control group which studies the usual school curricula?" The chapter is divided into three major sections. The first section presents the quantitative findings based on the data elicited by the questionnaire (Appendix 2). Mixed ANOVA and independent sample t-test were applied to examine the quantitative data. The second section illustrates the qualitative research findings, and the final section presents a critical overview of the quantitative and qualitative sections.

6.2 Quantitative Study

To examine the differences between the experimental and the control group with regard to tolerance towards Westerners in pre- and post-intervention rounds, mixed ANOVA was used. The results of mixed ANOVA are displayed in Table 6-1.

Table 6-1: Mean rating showing significant differences and interaction for affect, belief, and intention sub-scales in tolerance toward westerners scale

	Group	Mean Score		Sig.		
		Pre-intervention round	Post Intervention round	P Round	P Groups	Inter-action
Affect	Control	2.56	2.65			
	Experimental	2.54	3.13	***	***	***
	Total	2.55	2.88			
Belief	Control	3.09	3.18			
	Experimental	3.13	3.64	***	***	***
	Total	3.11	3.40			
Intention	Control	2.51	2.39			
	Experimental	2.62	3.09	***	***	***
	Total	2.56	2.73			

* p<.05   ** p<.01   *** p<.001

6.2.1 Affect Scale

Difference between Administration Rounds

As can be seen from Table 6-1, the main effects of the round of administration were statistically significant with F (1, 239) = 39.73 p<.001. However, the effect size was small (Eta squared= 17). Table 6-1 shows that the participants' mean scores in the affect toward Westerners sub-scale rose significantly over the two administration rounds. However, the same pattern of results was obtained in the pre- and post-interventions rounds, with the participants performing generally low in both rounds.

Group Differences

There were statistically significant main effects of group with F (1, 239) = 11.36 p<.001. Despite reaching statistical significance, the actual difference in mean scores between the groups was quite small. The effect size, calculated using Eta squared, was .05. At the pre-intervention round both the experimental and control groups scored low in the affect toward westerners sub-scale. Yet at the post-intervention round, the control group scored on the positive direction of the scale with a mean score of 3.13 compared to 2.65 for the control group, which continue to score on the negative direction of the affect scale.

Round by Group Interaction

There was statistically significant interaction between rounds of administration and group with F (1, 239) = 21.89 p<.001. The effect size was small with Eta squared= .10. At the pre-intervention round both the experimental and the control groups manifested relatively low affect toward Westerners. However at the post-intervention round affect toward Westerners rose significantly for the experimental group, whereas the control group's mean score in affect sub-scale remained consistently low over the two rounds of administration (See Figure 6-1).

Figure 6-1: Tolerance toward Westerners scale: interaction between round and group on affect sub-scale
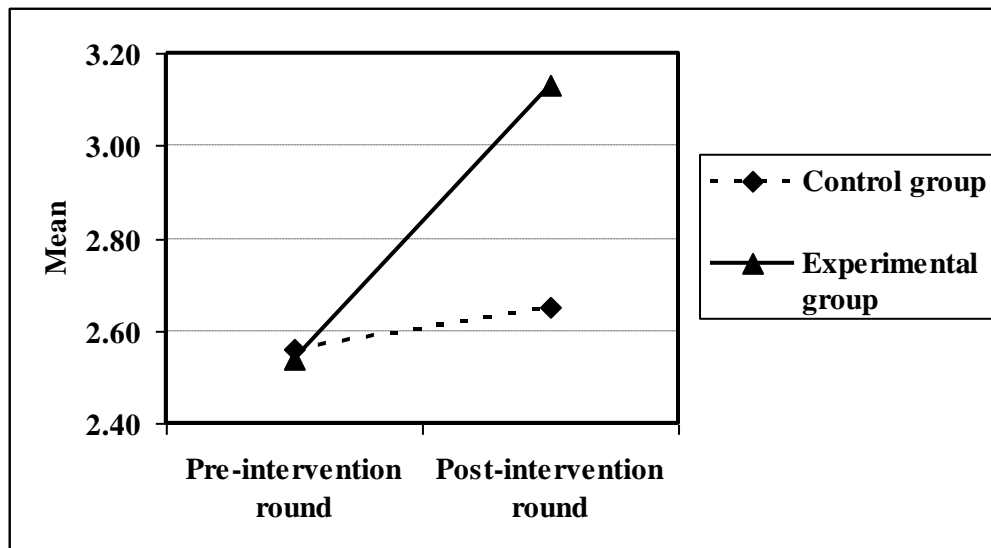
6.2.2 Belief scale

Difference between Administration Rounds

There were statistically significant main effects of round of administration on the belief about Westerners sub-scale with $F (1, 239) = 17.78$ p<.001. The effect size was negligible (Eta squared= .07). As Table 6-1 displayed, participants' belief about Westerners rose over the two periods of administration from 3.11 in the pre-intervention round to 3.40 in the post-intervention round.

Group Differences

There were statistically significant main effects of group on the belief about Westerners sub-scale with $F (1, 239) = 12.40$ p<.001. Despite reaching statistical significance, the actual difference in mean scores between the groups was insignificant. The effect size, calculated using Eta squared, was .05. Table 6-1 shows that in the pre-intervention round both groups manifested a positive belief about Westerners with both groups scoring on the positive direction of the scale (a mean score of 3.09 for the experimental group and 3.18 for the control group). At the post-intervention stage, both groups continued to score high in the belief toward Westerners sub-scale. However, the two groups differed significantly from each other with the experimental group scoring 3.64 compared to a mean score of 3.13 for the control group.

Round by Group Interaction

Statistically significant interaction of round by group in the belief sub-scale was found with $F (1, 239) = 8.75$ p<.001, though the effect size was small with Eta squared= .04. The experimental group's belief about Westerners increased markedly in the post-intervention round in comparison to the pre-intervention round. Similarly, the mean score of the control group on the belief sub-scale increased after intervention. However, the extent of this increase was markedly in favour of the experimental group (See Figure 6-2).

Figure 6-2: Tolerance toward Westerners scale: interaction between round and group on belief sub-scale
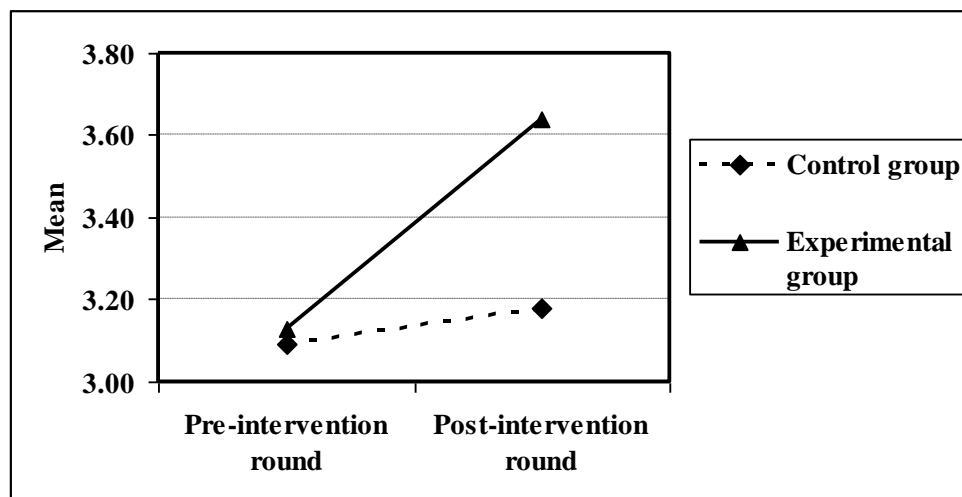
6.2.3   Intention Scale

Difference between Administration Rounds

There were statistically significant main effects of round of administration in the intention sub-scale $F (1, 239) = 8.22$ p<.001, which indicates that the participants' intention to act tolerantly toward Westerners differed significantly from the pre- to post-intervention rounds. However, the effect size was small with an Eta squared of .03. As is shown in Table 6-1, the total mean score of the subjects increased from 2.56 to 2.73.

Group Differences

There were statistically significant main effects of group with $F (1, 239) = 37.94$ p<.001. The Eta squared statistics (.16) indicate a small effect size. These effects show that although the participants in the experimental and control groups scored almost the same in the pre-intervention rounds they differed significantly in the post- intervention

round with respect to the group that they were assigned. For example, the mean score of the experimental group was 3.09 but 2.62 for the control group.

Round by Group Interaction

There was statistically significant interaction between round and group in the intention toward Westerners sub-scale with $F(1, 239) = 22.88$ $p<.001$. The effect size was small with Eta squared = .10. Figure 6-3 shows that the mean score of the experimental group in intention to act tolerantly toward Westerners rose significantly in the post-intervention round, but the control group's mean score in the same sub-scale dropped in the post-intervention round to 2.39.

Figure 6-3: Tolerance toward Westerners scale: interaction between round and group on intention sub-scale
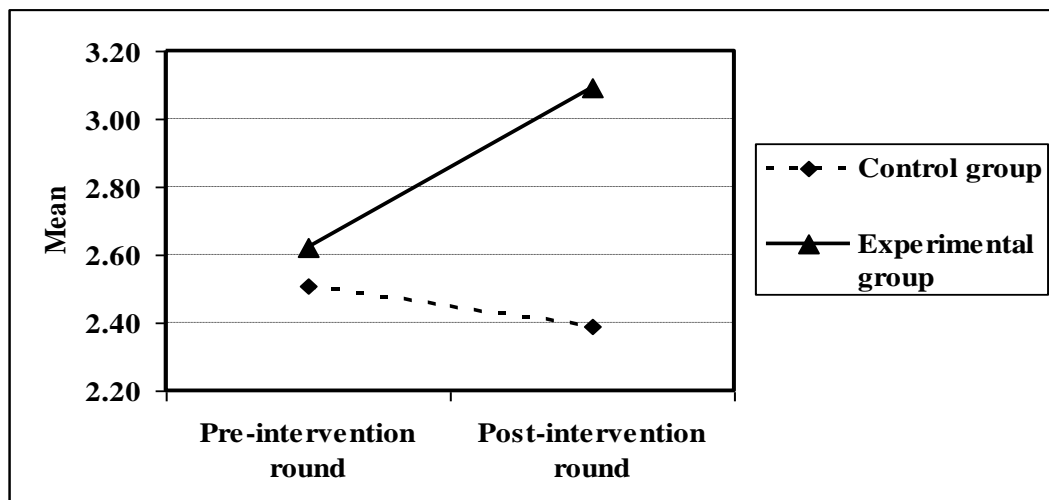
6.2.4   Overall Tolerance toward Westerners

The participants' tolerance towards Westerners was assessed and the results are displayed in 6-2.

Table 6-2: Mean rating showing significant differences and interaction tolerance towards Westerners

Group	Mean score		Sig.		
	Pre-intervention Round	Post-intervention round	P Round	P Groups	Inter-action
Control	2.72	2.79			
Experimental	2.76	3.44	***	***	***
Total	2.74	3.10			

* p<.05   ** p<.01   *** p<.001

Difference between Administration Rounds

A mixed-method ANOVA reveals statistically significant differences in the main effects of round of administration with $F (1, 239) = 84.22$ $p<.001$ in tolerance toward Westerners scale. The effect size was medium (Eta squared =.35). As is shown in Table 6-2, the total mean rating rose significantly from 2.74 to the 3.10 in the post-intervention round.

Group Differences

A highly significant main effect on the group was also obtained for this sub-scale, with $F (1, 239) = 53.70$ $p<.001$. The Eta squared statistics (.22) indicated a small effect size. As revealed in Table 6-2, in the pre-intervention round the experimental and control groups scored fairly low in the tolerance towards Westerners sub-scale with the experimental group scoring 2.72 and the control group scoring 2.76. By contrast, in the post-intervention round whilst the experimental group scored high in this scale with a mean score of 3.44, the control group continued to score low with a mean score of 2.79.

Round by Group Interaction

The interaction between round of administration and the treatment in tolerance toward Westerners' scale shows statistically significant differences of $F (1, 239) = 55.86$ $p<.001$. The effect size was small with Eta squared= .23. Figure 6-4 shows that the mean score of the experimental group in tolerance toward Westerners rose significantly from the pre-intervention round to the post-intervention rounds, which reflects a high level of tolerance toward Westerners. Yet the increase in the control group tolerance was insignificant in comparison to the extent of the increase achieved by the experimental group.

Figure 6-4: Interaction between round and group on tolerance toward Westerners scale
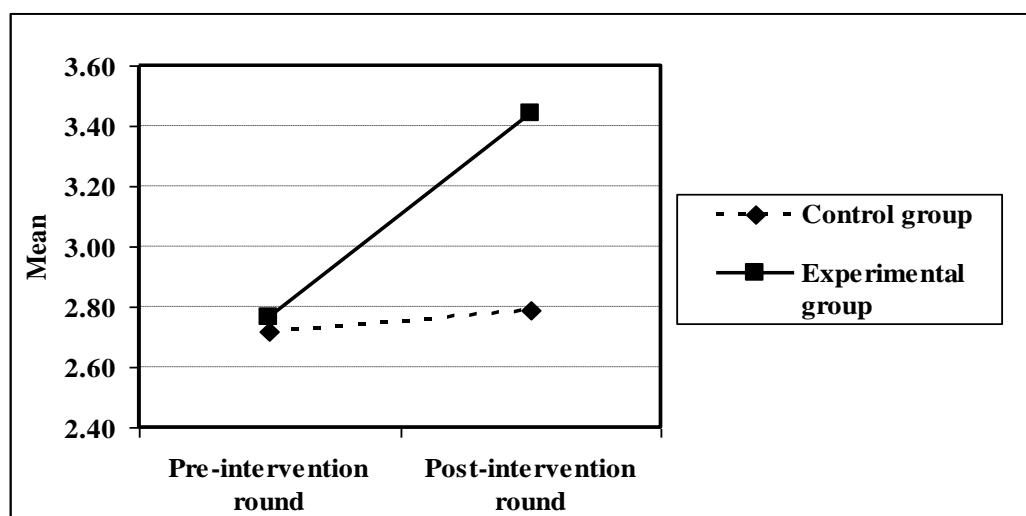
6.2.5 Gain Score in Tolerance toward Westerners

The gain score of the experimental group in tolerance toward Westerners was calculated, and the result is displayed in Table 6-3.

Table 6-3: The differences between the experimental and the control group in gain scores in tolerance toward Westerners

Scales	Group	Mean	SD	S Error	t	df	Sig.	Effect size
Affect	Control	.09	.75	.07	-4.64	222.33	***	.60
	Experimental	.59	.92	.09				
Belief	Control	.09	1.08	.10	-2.96	239	***	.40
	Experimental	.51	1.14	.11				
Intention	Control	-.12	.94	.08	-4.78	239	***	.60
	Experimental	.47	.97	.09				
Tolerance toward Westerners	Control	.07	.54	.05	-7.40	212.77	***	1
	Experimental	.68	.72	.07				

* p<.05   ** p<.01   *** p<.001

As revealed in the gain score of the experimental group, tolerance toward Westerners was considerably high in the affect, belief and intention sub-scales compared to the gain score of the control group. Table 6-3 shows that the experimental group achieved positive gain scores in all tolerance toward Westerners sub-scales. In contrast, the control group attained a negative gain score on the intention component in tolerance toward Westerners scale. Table 6-3 also shows that the experimental group outperformed the control group in overall gain score of tolerance toward Westerners. An independent sample t-test shows that there were statistically significant differences

in the mean gain scores between the experimental and the control groups in favour of the experimental group in tolerance toward Westerners. The effect size of intervention is moderate in the affect, belief and intention sub-scale, whereas it is large in the overall tolerance toward Westerners. Therefore the null hypothesis, that states that there is no statistically significant difference in the gain score of tolerance towards Westerners between the experimental group and the control group was rejected.

6.2.6   Consistent Findings

6.2.6.1 Encouraging Westerners to Visit Oman

The participants' tolerance toward the notion of accepting Westerners as tourists was assessed and the results are displayed in Table 6-4.

Table 6-4: Mean rating showing significant differences and interaction for affect, belief, and intention sub-scales in tolerance toward the notion of accepting Westerners as tourists

	Group	Mean Score		Sig.		
		Pre-intervention Round	Post Intervention Round	P Round	P Groups	Inter-action
Affect	Control	2.69	3.30			
	Experimental	2.63	3.90	***	*	*
	Total	2.66	3.59			
Belief	Control	3.56	3.50			
	Experimental	3.58	3.74	-	-	-
	Total	3.57	3.61			
Intention	Control	2.51	2.31			
	Experimental	2.57	2.08	**	-	-
	Total	2.54	2.20			

* p<.05   ** p<.01   *** p<.001

There were statistically significant main effects of round of administration on affect toward the notion of accepting Westerners as tourists with $F_{(1, 238)} = 50.74$; $p<.001$. Statistically significant main effects were found of group with $F_{(1, 238)} = 4.55$; $p<.05$. Similarly, there was statistically significant interaction between group and round of administration with $F_{(1, 238)} = 6.27$; $p<.05$. At the pre-intervention administration round, the experimental and the control group scored low in affect toward the notion of accepting Westerners as tourists. At post-intervention, the mean score of the experimental group rose significantly. Similarly, the mean score of the control group increased in post-intervention. However the extent of the increase was smaller than that achieved by the experimental group (see Figure 6-5).

Figure 6-5: Tolerance toward the notion of encouraging Westerners to visit Oman: Interaction between round and group on affect sub-scale
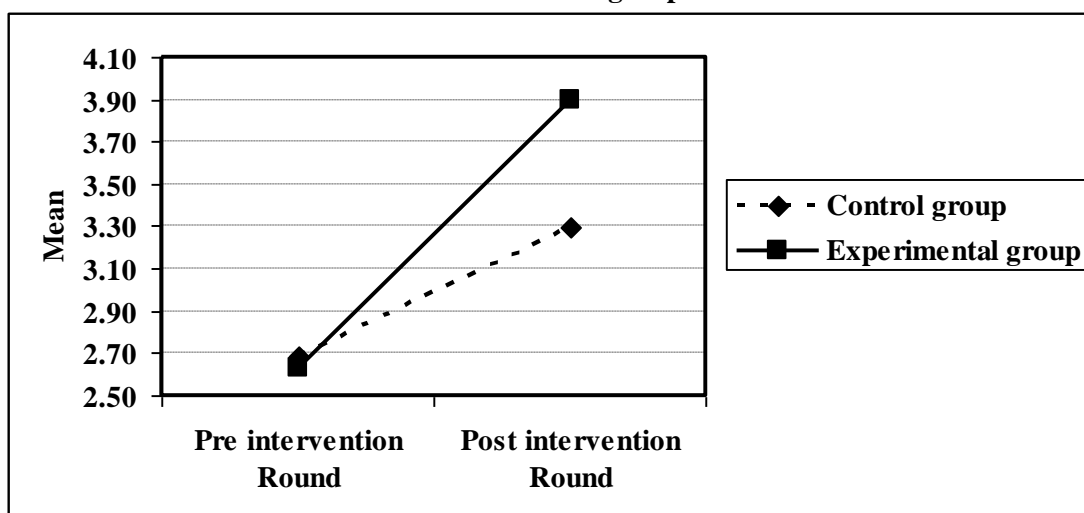
There were no statistically significant main effects of round of administration on belief about the notion of accepting Westerners as tourists with $F_{(1, 238)} = .14$; $p > .05$. There were no statistically significant main effects of group with $F_{(1, 238)} = 1.11$; $p > .05$, nor was there statistically significant interaction between group and round of administration with $F_{(1, 238)} = .81$; $p > .05$. At the pre-intervention round, the experimental and the control groups scored high in belief about the notion of accepting Westerners as tourists. At the post-intervention stage, the mean score of the experimental group rose slightly whereas the mean score of the control group dropped significantly (see Figure 6-6).

Figure 6-6: Tolerance toward the notion of encouraging Westerners to visit Oman: interaction between round and group on belief sub-scale
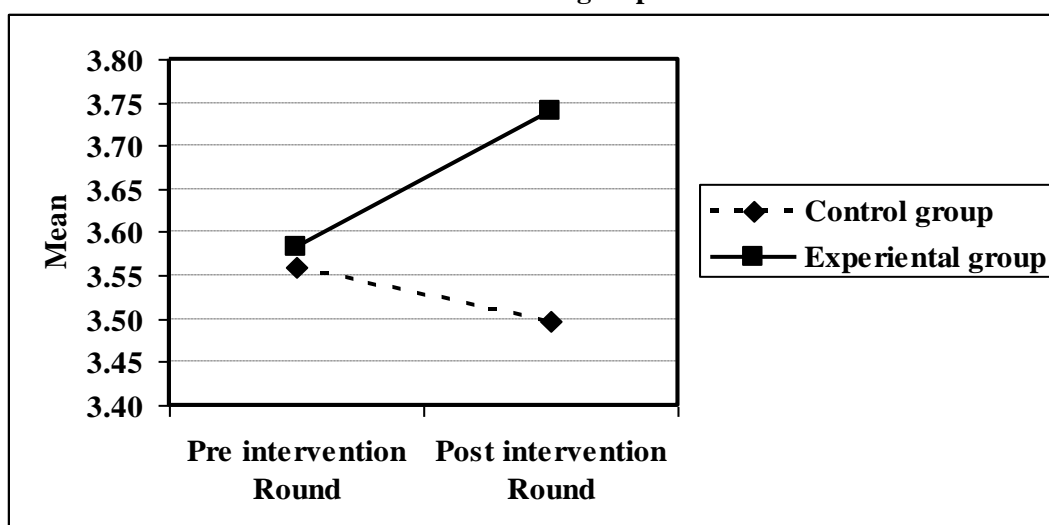
There were statistically significant main effects of round of administration in intention toward the notion of accepting Westerners as tourists, with $F_{(1, 238)} = 7.24$; $p<.01$. There were no statistically significant main effects group with $F_{(1, 238)} = .51$; $p>.05$, and no statistically significant interaction between group and round of administration with $F_{(1, 238)} = 1.29$; $p>.05$. At the pre-intervention round, the experimental and the control group scored low in intention toward the notion of accepting Westerners as tourists. At the post-intervention round, however, the mean score of both groups fell slightly with regard to their intention to accept Westerners as tourists (see Figure 6-7).

Figure 6-7: Tolerance toward the notion of encouraging Westerners to visit Oman: interaction between round and group on intention sub-scale
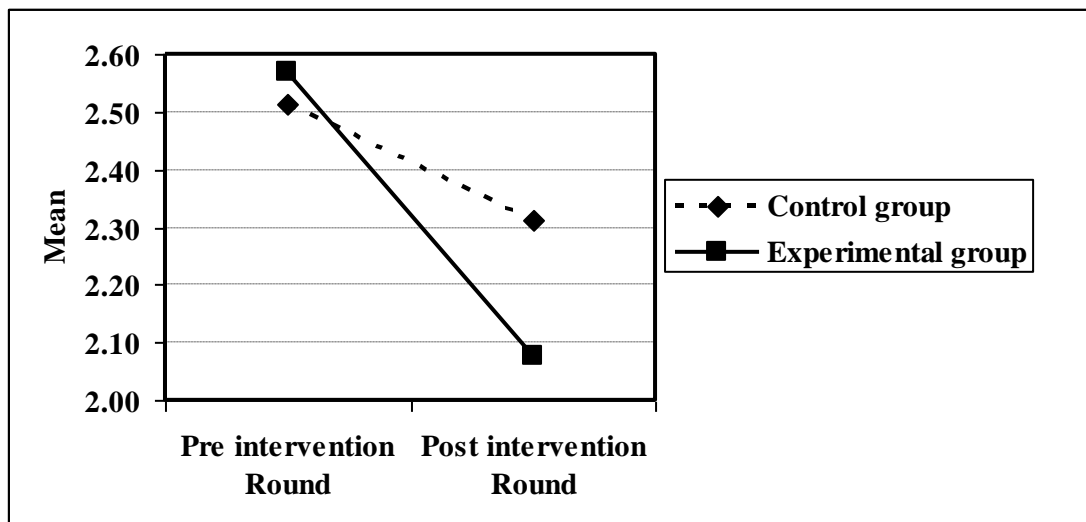
6.3 Qualitative Study

Tolerance toward Westerners among the study participants was examined qualitatively and the findings are presented in the following section.

6.3.1 Characteristic Traits of Westerners

To look in depth into the nature of the relationship between Muslims and Westerners, the participants were asked to state whether they associated three different characteristics with Westerners. The character battery includes two positive traits (generosity and honesty) and one negative (terrorism).

6.3.1.1 Honesty

6.3.1.1.1 Pre-intervention Findings

It should be emphasized that the participants' conceptualizations of the notion of honesty differ significantly from one participant to another. Therefore, Westerners' dishonesty was explained differently by different participants. Firstly, there were those participants who argued that Westerners are dishonest because they have no faith. For these participants, faith is a source of values. Carrot (CG) stated "Westerners are not honest. Arabs are honest because they have religious values". Avocado (CG) said: "Westerners do not believe in Islam, therefore they are not honest. They are too liberal". They, thus, believed that if someone did not believe in a religion, then they could not be honest.

 Secondly, some interviewees explained Westerners' dishonesty by arguing that Westerners are warmongers. These participants blamed Westerners for conflicts in Palestine, Chechnya and Afghanistan. Broccoli (CG) said:

> "Westerners are not honest. We see them attack and destroy countries. They said they were there to eliminate violence and protect people. But it is the same people that they are killing instead. They have destroyed a number of countries."

Thirdly, one informant attested the dishonesty of Westerners on the basis of what she described as the robbery and theft that takes place in the West. Apple (EG) stated:

> "No, they are not honest. Theft is very common among them. I see on TV a lot of crimes happening in their countries. They are always making plans to rob banks and kill bank managers. They kill for money. They do not work, they only live on theft. I have seen it on TV many times… I used to watch movies, but I no longer do so. I used to watch Western movies (American movies) and Arab movies. They all display Westerners as dishonest and thieves."

She thus stereotyped and generalized on the basis of few examples that she saw on the TV.

Only one out of 16 interviewees in both the experimental group and the control group attribute the trait of honesty to Westerners. Cucumber (CG) stated: "Westerners are

honest. I dealt with some Westerners and found them to be honest". However, the outright majorities of participants in both experimental and control groups pointed out that Westerners are dishonest people. This was clearly based on their lack of contact with western people.

6.3.1.1.2 Post-intervention Interview

Interestingly, none of the participants in both the experimental and the control groups associated honest traits with Westerners in the post intervention interview. The experimental participants seemed to have no opinion on whether Westerners were honest or not. However, the majority of experimental group participants acknowledge that their knowledge about Westerners does not allow them to judge them. They drew attention to the fact that they have not been in contact with Westerners in a way that enabled them to judge them with regard to this trait. Raspberry (EG) stated: "They may be honest. I don't live amongst them, unfortunately, and I don't know much of their lifestyle."

Six out of eight of control group participants associated the dishonesty trait with Westerners.   Leek (CG) supported her view using an event dated to Prophet Muhammad's era, confusing non-Muslims in the Prophet's days with western people today. She said:

> "From my reading, through history and now Westerners have not been honest. They cheated the Prophet Mohammed and they did not keep their promise. They were liars and they will remain like this always."

Broccoli's (CG) rationalization of her view was based on a situational event. She drew attention to the abolition of what she saw as Western (i.e. American) promises in Iraq. She opined: "Westerners are not honest. Westerners said they wanted to liberate Iraq and make it a safe country. But they have stolen Iraq's oil and killed its people". Carrot (CG), Avocado (CG), Tomato (CG), and Cauliflower (CG) justified their views by claiming that rationality is opposed to religion and causes Western cultures to be irreligious and immoral, making Westerners immoral and without ethical commitment. Avocado, for example, stated:

> "Westerners are not honest. Western culture is very liberal. It knows no bounds. They have no manners and no religious values. They can easily betray others. There are only a few Westerners whom I can describe as honest."

Banana (EG) agreed with the control group participants that Westerners are dishonest. She based her judgment on situational events, specifically the July 2006 war between Lebanon and Israel. In addition, this girl made a distinctive comment with respect to the association between honesty and Westerners: Banana distinguished between collective traits and individual traits, and argued that Westerners are collectively dishonest but at the individual level they may be honest. She said:

> "I am not sure. I think they are not honest…Look at what happened in Lebanon. I am very much moved by the situation there. It is pitiful to see all the bloodshed and destruction. Children killed, houses destroyed. The West has breached its agreement with Hezbollah. Their politicians are not honest. They keep no promises. On an individual level, I think they are the same as us: some are honest, some are not."

6.3.1.2 Generosity

6.3.1.2.1 Pre-intervention Interview

A minority of participants in both the experimental and control groups said that Westerners are generous. The participants rationalized their views in different ways. Some girls who stereotyped this trait of generosity based their opinions on rigid cultural and national attributes. They claimed that hospitality is associated with Muslims generally and Arabs specifically. Apricot (CG) stated:

> "They are not generous. Arabs are the only generous folks. It is written in the books. I have never read a single book that describes Westerners as generous. I have never visited any Western country, and I know nothing about their traditions, but I think they are not generous."

Some made sarcastic and bitter comments about Westerners' generosity with regard to war. For example, Avocado (CG) indicated: "They are generous in creating wars and disputes. They are generous in selling weapons, but they are stingy in providing help to the needy."

Three participants, however, argued that Westerners were generous. Banana (EG) said:

> "I feel they are nice and generous. I have not visited the West, but when I go to Muscat, the capital, I see they receive us smilingly. They are here in our country and they treat us nicely, which makes us like them in spite of our different religious beliefs."

This view was echoed by Cauliflower (CG) who said: "They are generous. My sister travelled to Australia and found them to be very generous". The same view was expressed by Broccoli (CG) who pointed out: "Westerners are generous because they have given us all these ideas and inventions. They have given the world great inventions."

6.3.1.2.2 Post-intervention Interview

When the participants were asked whether Westerners are generous or not, different views were revealed. Four participants, from whom two were from the control group and two were from the experimental group, stated that Westerners are generous. Banana (EG) said:

> "One of my colleagues recounted what her brother told her about their generosity when he went to the West for an interview. She also mentioned his impressions about France and Britain, how people helped him despite language barriers, how they invited him over to their homes. I think this proves they are generous. A friend of mine who went to study in the West also told me she was staying with a Western Muslim family and that they were very generous to her".

Television programmes as well as contact with Westerners seem to have played a role in forming these views. For example, Cucumber (CG) reported, "Before you ask me my source, it is TV and movies again."

Another participant, Apricot (EG), indicated that the intervention had caused her to change her views about Westerners. As she put it:

> "Through the programme, I became convinced that people have different beliefs in the same way as they have different languages. They are just human as we are. Among all human beings, you find the good and you find the bad. Some of the people I questioned stated that some people in the West make donations and organize charity drives to help the poor, which means they are good and generous. I think they are as good as anyone may think. It is only a different culture."

In addition, four control group participants stated that Westerners are generous only to themselves. Carrot (CG) said: "Westerners are not generous. They don't entertain their guests". In contrast only one participant from the experimental group, Grape (EG), stated:

> "No, I don't think they are. Generous people don't wage war indiscriminately. We don't want their food while they attack us. What we actually need is respect and dignified treatment. I want to tell them this: You have power and democracy, why not use them to the benefit of humanity and withdraw your armies from our territories?"

Furthermore, a majority of the experimental group participants were undecided whether Westerners are generous or not. These participants believed that they lacked the information that may help them to give an accurate judgment. Cherry, for example, said "Some are generous. I cannot generalize. I have never lived among them. It depends on who you are dealing with".

6.3.1.3 Terrorism

6.3.1.3.1 Pre-intervention interview

A consensus arose among the participants in both the experimental and the control groups that Westerners are terrorists. Different explanations were offered for this view. The majority of participants in both the experimental and control groups attributed what they named as Westerners' terrorism with them being involved in generating many wars in the Islamic world. The outright majority of participants found Westerners to be responsible for the wars in Iraq, Afghanistan and Palestine, and the Lebanon war of July 2006 which took place just 3 months before this study was carried out. Carrot (CG) stated:

> "Westerners are terrorists by nature. Look at what they did in Palestine, Lebanon, Iraq and Afghanistan. I have never seen anything like what happened in Lebanon, little children facing bombardment for two weeks. Their bodies remaining under destroyed buildings and nobody could take them out to give them a decent burial."

In the same way Strawberry (EG) reported:

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> "Westerners are terrorists. They have caused all these wars, yet they talk about peace a lot. But they do not tolerate peace. Look at Iraq and Palestine. They say that they are waging war to achieve peace, but I don't see any peace. They are just terrorists."

Some interviewees associated terrorism with Westerners as a result of the abuse of Iraqi prisoners by US military and intelligence in Iraq. Cauliflower (CG) said "They are terrorists, as they attack Muslims without mercy. Look at what happened in Abu Ghraib in Iraq. It was physical and mental torture".

6.3.1.3.2 Post-interview Interview

In contrast to the pre-intervention interviews in which participants in both the experimental and control groups reported that they believed that Westerners were terrorists, in the post-intervention interview there was a significant difference between the two groups in regard to whether terrorism should be associated with Westerners or not. It should be emphasized that none of the members of the experimental group reported in the post-intervention interviews that Westerners were terrorists. Instead, participants in both groups replaced the concept of terrorism with that of hatred, stating that one of the important traits of Westerners was that they hated Muslims as discussed further in this chapter. Raspberry (EG) stated: "I don't think Westerners are terrorists". Similar views were expressed by Apricot (EG) who said:

> "I don't see them as terrorists. Terrorists are those who kill innocent people. Even the war on Iraq and the atrocities in Palestine, which I consider as terrorism, do not enjoy full support in the West. It is all in the news. You can see and hear that many Westerners consider the war on Iraq to be a fatal mistake. They are even demonstrating to force their countries out of Iraq. But there still remains the Palestinian issue."

On the other hand, all the control group participants associated terrorism with Westerners. They explained their view in light of the wars in Iraq, Afghanistan and Palestine. Tomato (CG) said:

> "Westerners are the originators of terrorism. Terrorism is a Western trademark that they try to stick on us. I don't feel sorry for Westerners falling victim to terrorist attacks. It is they who initiated terrorism. It is their goods delivered back to them…They like to control. It is their arrogance and aggression that brought terrorism to their homeland. They have dispatched the goods (terrorism) to us and now they are getting paid for it."

6.3.1.4 Arrogance

6.3.1.4.1 Pre-intervention Interview

Interestingly, although arrogance was not included in the character battery, a consensus arose among the girls in both groups that Westerners are arrogant. Outright majorities of the respondents considered the West's attempts to impose its hegemony in a global system as strong evidence of Westerners' arrogance. As Leek (CG) put it:

> "What I know is that they are arrogant and conceited. Their international policy is an example. Westerners see themselves as masters of the world. They think they can redesign the world. But actually they are making wars everywhere and they are destroying the world. They even control the Security Council."

Similar views were expressed by Grape (EG). She argued:

> "They are arrogant and conceited too. When a problem occurs anywhere they are very quick to interfere. They send delegations to hold press conferences. They like to give orders and boast about it."

Some participants justified their view on Westerners' undue pride in light of what they believe as Westerners' prejudice towards others, particularly Muslims. They believed that Western arrogance is to be blamed for the position of Muslims in the world today. Westerners, particularly Americans, were accused for the conflict in Palestine and elsewhere in the Muslims world. Mango (EG) argued:

> "The Americans established a super power, and think they are super creatures. They look down on Africans and Asians. They think they are the best on earth."

In the same way, Cauliflower (CG) indicated:

> "Westerners want control over all Muslim and non-Muslim countries. Bush controls the world and seeks absolute rule on earth. He is helping Sharon in Palestine and also in Chechnya."

6.3.1.4.2 Post-intervention Interview

Unlike the pre-intervention interview in which most participants in the experimental and control groups stated that Westerners were arrogant, in the post-intervention interviews

only two participants agreed that Westerners were arrogant. These participants were Leek (CG) and Cherry (EG). She said:

> "Westerners are arrogant and conceited. They think they are masters of the world. The USA, for example, invaded Iraq in spite of UN protests."

On the other hand, Cherry (EG) justified her view by stating that Westerners live in rich countries and hardly pay attention to others who live in poorer countries. She indicated:

> "They are never satisfied. They live in rich countries, but they despise others... They spend most of their time shopping. They buy fancy brand consumer items in large quantities. They are not like us. We are modest."

It should be emphasized that both participants noted that they developed this idea about Westerners from the media. Leek (CG) said, "We see on TV everyday how they treat Muslims in the West. Look at Guantánamo".

6.3.1.5 Cleverness

Another trait that was attributed to Westerners, although it was not included in the character battery, is cleverness. In the pre-intervention round, two participants out of sixteen described Westerners as clever. These girls were Apricot (EG) and Banana (EG). Apricot (EG) stated:

> "Westerners are very clever and cunning. They also think carefully and deeply, not like Muslims who only care about sensual luxuries and social status. Muslims want to travel and enjoy themselves. They never care about science. They care about fashions only. The Gulf countries don't even try to protect themselves. They don't manufacture weapons. They don't know anything about weapons of mass destruction and nuclear weapons. This means that the Arabian Peninsula is sleeping with the enemy (depending on US armed forces). They depend on Westerners for protection. People in the Gulf care about luxurious living, and think about nothing else. They don't use their brains. They don't produce anything."

Banana (EG) stated:

> "They have the capability to achieve economic development in a marked way. They are more developed than Muslims. Muslims are poor and underdeveloped."

6.3.1.6 Westerners 'Hating' Muslims

The majority of participants in both the experimental and control groups gave the opinion during the post-intervention interviews that Westerners hate Muslims. Avocado (CG) stated:

> "Westerners hate Muslims. They have attacked Prophet Mohammed (PBUH), but the Muslims are in a deep coma. They didn't bother to reply. The West has ambitions in the Muslim world. They are after our wealth. They hate us because we have a lot of wealth. Muslims are also more intelligent than them. Therefore, Westerners want to destroy everything we possess."

Cauliflower (CG) stated, "They hate Muslims. They are fanatics. The ugly pictures depicting our Prophet were one example of this hatred".

The participants from the experimental group offered a different analysis from the control participants about the relationships between Westerners and Muslims. One of the participants who offered a unique analysis was Banana (EG). She indicated that there was a mutual hatred between Muslims and Westerners. From her perspective both groups hold responsibility for generating this hatred, as both groups fall into a generalization trap about each other. As she put it:

> "Westerners are divided into two groups regarding this issue. Some are very tolerant; others are aggressive and hateful. The aggressive group believes that Muslims are stupid. The tolerant group considers Muslims to possess capable minds, but they don't use them. The aggressive group hates everything about Muslims…We don't like what they are doing to us. We don't hate them, but we hate whoever hurts us. I think when we hate we generalize. This is our problem. Muslims hate the whole of Denmark because of a single caricaturist. It is illogical."

Cherry (EG) agreed with Banana (EG) with respect to the mutual hatred between Westerners and Muslims. She stated that religion is the main cause of hatred between the two groups.

6.3.2 Westerners as Friends

6.3.2.1 Pre-intervention Findings

Different responses were obtained when the participants in both the experimental and control groups were asked whether they would accept Westerners as friends. These responses are outlined and discussed below.

Welcome Friendship

The outright majority of the control group participants showed a strong tendency to accept Westerners as friends. Leek (CG) said:

> "I will befriend a Western girl if she is honest and straight. I do believe in freedom of speech and debate among religions. It is not necessary that my Western friend should be a Muslim."

Similar views were echoed by Tomato (CG), Corn (CG), Cucumber (CG), Avocado (CG) and Cauliflower (CG) from the same group; whereas only two participants from the experimental group would welcome the friendship of Westerners. These were Raspberry (EG) and Cherry (EG). Raspberry stated "I would take in a Westerner as a friend. I would not imitate her in any way". Although Cherry (EG) said she would accept Westerners as friends, she expressed a fear of such friendship. She believes:

> "Westerners can be loyal friends. Yet one should be careful with them. Our religions are different and Westerners may also turn out to be cheats at any time. I cannot fully trust a Westerner."

Conditional Friendship

Three out of eight participants from the experimental group said that they could have Westerners as friends but their friendship would be conditional on several obligations such as honesty, and Westerners being open to embracing Islam. These were Raspberry, Apricot and Grape. Grape said:

> "Yes, after I convince them to join Islam. A poet said: A person shall be judged by your companion, so you better choose good company. If I befriended a foreigner, I would be behaving according to Islamic faith. A foreigner would be of invalid faith and consequently of bad manners. I don't want to have an unbeliever as friend."

Casual Friendship

Carrot (CG) indicated that she could not accept Westerners as friends. She said:

> "I can establish a casual relationship with a Western girl, but I can never consider her as a friend. I don't like to get influenced by their ways of thinking and their values. I don't want to change my principles and behave like them."

6.3.2.2 Post-intervention Interview

When the participants in the experimental and control groups were asked whether they accepted friendship with Westerners, the majority of them said that they would welcome such friendship. However, different motivations seemed to inspire these participants to accept Westerners as friends. Some participants showed their eagerness to gain more knowledge about other cultures and religions. Broccoli (CG) said, "Westerners can be good friends. I think we should know more about each other. I understand that not all Westerners are bad". Similar views were expressed by Cherry (EG) who stated, "Friendship entails knowledge, and as I don't know much about the West I long to have a Western friend to understand the Western culture". Similar views were expressed by Broccoli (CG), Cucumber (CG) and Cauliflower (CG) from the control group and Mango (EG) and Apricot (EG) from the experimental group.

Raspberry (EG) reflected on the historical relations between Muslims and Westerners and reported that the improvement in human development is a result of mutual interaction between humans regardless of religion or race. As she put it:

> "If there hadn't been interaction between Westerners and Muslims, we wouldn't have been in this developed status. Human development requires interaction between human beings."

Furthermore, there were some girls, mainly from the control group, who argued that friendship with Westerners is impossible. Carrot (CG) believed that religion is the major barrier to accepting Westerners as friends. She stated, "I will never have a Westerner as a friend. We have different traditions. Also she would try to convert me to her religion. I can never take a believer of another faith as a friend". Grape (EG) agreed with Carrot (CG) that religion is the main obstacle in friendship between Muslims and Westerners. As she put it:

"Well, your friend is your guide. I cannot take a Westerner as a guide. There is a saying that states: "Judge people by their friends". Therefore, it is difficult, if not impossible, for me to have a Western friend who holds different values and religion."

Avocado (CG) considered Westerners as enemies and she questioned the possibility of being friends with an adversary. She said, "I told you friendship is not that easy. Westerners are our enemies. How do you have an enemy as friend?" Similar views were stated by Tomato (CG) and Apple (EG). Apple (EG) welcomed a conditional friendship with Westerners. She stated "If there is a Western individual who respects Islam and does not insult religions, maybe I would have her as a friend."

6.3.3 Westerners as Tourists

6.3.3.1 Pre-intervention Interview

When the participants in both experimental and control group were asked whether they welcomed Western tourists in their country or not, the majority of them expressed a welcoming attitude. Two main factors were evident here. The first factor is closely related to the economic position of their country. Oman, like other Gulf countries, depends for its income on petroleum revenues. Therefore, the participants in both groups believed that tourists from the West and elsewhere are important to support the governmental plan to diversify its income. Strawberry (EG) said: "This is a good idea. It would be economically good for our countries to encourage tourism". Similar views were expressed by Broccoli (CG) who stated, "I think it is OK that Westerners should visit our countries so that we may get new ideas about how to promote the tourism sector".

The second reason is that most participants view tourism as an important means of knowledge and contact between Westerners and Muslims. The participants in both groups raised concern over the lack of awareness about Islam and Muslims in the West. Banana (EG) said, "They should be encouraged to come as this would boost our economy and let them have a good idea about our country and culture. Maybe they will embrace Islam". In a similar way, Carrot (CG) said "I encourage Westerners to visit our country in order to see Muslims in action. Maybe they will accept Islam".

Two participants imposed some restrictions over Western tourists in their country. Apricot (EG) wanted to limit the number of Westerners who came to visit Oman. She said, "I agree that Westerners should visit our country but not in large numbers as we see today". A similar view was expressed by Corn (CG) who said, "I think Westerners should be encouraged to visit Oman provided that they comply with certain conditions". Mango (EG) went further, calling for a ban on Westerners coming as tourists to her country. She said, "I don't like them coming as tourists or preachers". Apricot (EG), Corn (EG) and Mango (EG) shared the understanding that Western tourists threaten cultural and social traditions in Oman. Apricot (EG) said, "Being here in such large numbers would negatively affect our traditions and values". For Corn (CG), Western tourists should "comply with certain conditions. They have to wear decent clothes". Mango (EG) said, "They should keep certain limits and respect our traditions and values. I don't want them around spreading their habits".

6.3.3.2 Post-intervention Interviews

A majority of participants in both the experimental and control groups reported that they welcomed Westerners as tourists. A wide range of factors seemed to motivate the participants to accept Western tourists. As in the pre-intervention interviews tourism and its positive effects on the national economy seemed to motivate the participants to tolerate the idea of Westerners visiting Oman. Economic benefits were reported by seven out of eight participants in the control group, and thus they welcomed Western tourists. Carrot (CG) summed up the general feeling when she said, "I think Westerners should be encouraged to visit our country as tourists. This will boost our economy".

In addition to the economic factor, two participants from the control group tended to conceptualize tourism as a means to learn about other cultures and religions. These participants believed that tourism may play an important role in educating both Westerners and Muslims about each other. Broccoli (CG), for example, reported:

> "I agree that Westerners should be encouraged to visit our countries. I think we should not judge Westerners by the deeds of their regimes… Generally, people in the West don't know anything about Islam. They only know what they are told by mass media and politicians. I want them to come to our countries to see for themselves. Maybe they will think differently afterwards and become Muslims."

Similarly, all experimental group interviewees believe in the importance of tourism as a means of knowledge about other cultures. Grape (EG) offered a comprehensive view about the importance of allowing Westerners to visit her country:

> "Yes I would encourage them and I would like them to come and visit my country, for many reasons: we can explain to them our Islamic civilization and faith in order to correct their mistaken notion about us. Second, they would realize that we do not hate them, but hate the way they conduct themselves in our countries. Third, we would economically benefit from their presence. Fourth, we would be able to work together towards creating a world free from hatred. I think having them in our country would constitute a step towards establishing good ways of communication along the way to correct mistaken notions about Muslims".

Similar views were expressed by Raspberry (EG), Cherry (EG), Apricot (EG) and Mango (EG).

Cucumber (CG) was the only participant from the control group who showed a negative attitude towards Western tourists. She expressed her dissatisfaction with Westerners coming as tourists to her country. She stated: "I don't think we need westerners to come to our countries. Actually they are now everywhere…Let them come".

6.4   Critical Overview of the chapter

The focus of this chapter is on the 10th grade Omani girls' tolerance towards Westerners. Here they confused the non-Muslims population in the Prophet's era with the Western people today. The quantitative and the qualitative data collected from the participants in the experimental and the control groups show that there are widespread stereotypical and prejudicial attitudes toward Westerners. The 10th grade girls view Westerners as immoral, irreligious, arrogant, mean, and dishonest. This is consistent with previous studies that indicate that Muslims are likely to associate negative traits with Westerners (Newport, 2002; Gallup Poll, 2002; Pew Global Attitudes Project, 2006).

Several factors could be responsible for this intolerance towards Westerners, such as the perception of Westerners and the West as threats to Islam and the Muslim identity. In this regard Wike and Girm (2007) indicate that the majority of Muslims surveyed by the

Pew Research Centre believe that the United States could threaten their country someday. The 'war against terror', which was launched by Bush's administration, may increase intolerance towards the West. The United States' war on Iraq also exacerbates hostility towards the West, as has been suggested by Lule (2004), for many Muslims believe that it is a war against Islam. The abuse and humiliation of Iraqi prisoners by the occupying authorities may have significantly contributed to generating intolerance towards the West (Whitaker *et al.*, 2004). This intolerance could also be explained on the basis that the participants in the experimental and control groups lack knowledge about Westerners. It may also be interpreted in view of the media. The media has strong effects in shaping the participants' intolerance and negative images (Myers, 2008).

Interestingly, the control group's intention to act tolerantly toward Westerners dropped slightly over the two administration rounds. The cognition of the participants may be affected by the message flow in their surrounding context (MacKuen and Brown, 1987; Burbank, 1997; Blake, 2001). The findings stem from the interviews which were conducted with the 16 participants pre- and post- the intervention. This implies a strong indication of the contextual effects in forming their understanding of Westerners and thus in determining whether tolerance of them should be favoured or rejected. Events such as the July 2006 conflict between Hezbollah and the Israelis (Kalb and Saivetz, 2007), the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, and the Danish Cartoon Crisis (Sturges, 2006; Olesen, 2007) may motivate the prejudice toward Westerners.

History has been an effective factor in forming the participants' intolerance towards Westerners. The participants in both the experimental and the control group during the pre- and post-intervention interviews emphasized some historical events to rationalize some intolerant responses. Interestingly, the historical events that were brought to light by the girls dated back to the Prophet Muhammad's era in which the concept of the West had not emerged in the same way as today. This raises the question of where these girls acquired their notions of history. That the heavy hand of history in forming the relations between Muslims and others particularly Westerners is not surprising. History has proved itself vital in determining Middle Eastern people's identification (Lewis, 1998), and the people in this region attach great importance to it (Asali, 2002). This is in line with Halliday's (1995) demonstration that history is a source of division and a cause of confrontation between the Islamic world and the Western world.

Perceiving Westerners as threats to Islamic identity and Muslim existence may explain the intolerance manifest among the participants in both the experimental and the control group in the pre-intervention round. As discussed earlier, the perceived threats from the out-group (Westerners) motivate the ethnocentric reaction in an inter-group context even though there is no conflict of interest between the two groups (Grant, 1992). This ethnocentric reaction is clearly evident in the participants' responses. Indeed, these responses reflect most of the 23 facets of ethnocentric behaviour which are reported by LeVine and Campbell (1972): considering the in-group's standard as universal, interracially true, the in-group customs as original, perceiving the in-group as strong, imposing sanctions against in-group theft and murder, and seeing the out-group as contemptible, immoral, inferior and with weak or few sanctions for out-group theft or murder (see Chapter 2).

As discussed earlier, the concept of self-esteem is closely related to intolerance and prejudice. Based on the interviewees' responses it could be argued that their intolerance towards Westerners could be partially attributed to low collective self-esteem. With respect to the low collective self-esteem revealed by those in the experimental and control groups, these participants may have engaged in discriminative and intolerant behaviour to enhance their self-esteem. This is consistent with the previous studies of Tajfel (1974), Turner (1982), Turner *et al*. (1987), Verkuyten (1996), Hogg & Abrams (1990), Verkuyten (1996), Ellemers *et al.* (1997), Karasawa *et al.*(2004) and Boldry and Gaertner (2006).

Contact seems to be important in forming the participants' attitudes towards the out-group. As noted previously, the participants in this present study have not been to any Western countries. However, their experiences or their friends' experiences with Westerners seem to determine their tolerance toward Westerners. They were tolerant when the experienced or the contact was positive and they were intolerant when the contact took a negative form (Allport, 1954; Desforges *et al*., 1997; Ihlanfeldt and Scafidi, 2002; Dovidio *et al*., 2003; Schiappa *et al*., 2005; Cope, 2005).

Nevertheless, many participants in both the experimental and the control groups were willing to accept Westerners as friends. This may be due to their lack of knowledge about Westerners; the absence of serious contact between Muslims and Westerners and

their desire to know more about them. Similarly, the majority of the girls are willing to accept Westerners as tourists. This could be interpreted on the basis of their awareness of the importance of tourism in the Omani government's efforts to diversify the nation's economy.

7 Chapter 7 Conclusion and Implications

7.1 Introduction

This final chapter draws together the threads of the study and comprises four sections. Following the presentation of a summary of this study, section three focuses on the key contributions of this study. This includes addressing the gaps in the literature by adopting a social identity theory, clash of civilization and activity theory. Section four suggests directions and recommendations for future research.

7.2 Summary of the Study

This study aimed at investigating the level of cultural tolerance amongst young Omani citizens aged 16 in the first year of secondary schooling by developing a programme that examined their cultural tolerance. The study evaluated the effectiveness of this programme on their tolerance towards other religions, Western culture and Westerners. The programme was called "Our Brothers and Sisters in Humanity". The programme aimed at providing grade ten pupils with skills and knowledge that would enable them to understand the conduct and beliefs of other religions and cultures. It aimed at enabling them to deal with differences between their culture and Western culture with an open and critical mind. The programme provided a wide variety of instructional activities based on dialogue, cooperative learning, role-playing, group discussion, debate and problem-solving. The programme was taught over ten weeks under the supervision of two teachers and the researcher.

The non-equivalent control group design was utilized in the present study. This design involves an experimental group and a control group, both of which are given a pre-test and post-test. The findings of this study revealed that the experimental group outperformed the control group in tolerance towards other religions. The gain score of the control group was negligible with a mean gain score 0.04 in the affect and intention subscales. Moreover, there was no noticeable gain in control group belief about other religions. By contrast, the experimental group achieved the higher gain scores in this scale with a mean gain score of 1.42 in affect, 0.68 in belief and 0.95 in intention sub-scales. An independent samples t-test showed that there were statistically significant differences in tolerance towards religion sub-scales in the mean gain scores between the

experimental and the control groups, in favour of the experimental group. Similarly, responses obtained from the qualitative analysis show that the experimental group gave more tolerant responses than the control group in post-intervention interviews. With regard to the idea of respecting other religions, participants showed explicit respect and implicit contempt of other religions in the pre-intervention round. Interestingly, the participants used their religious beliefs to justify their attitudes. Despite the fact Judaism is a monotheistic religion and its adherents are given the honorary title of 'People of the Book' in Islam, none of the participants indicated it as a religion which is close to Islam or considered it to have any similarity with Islam. Many of the participants in both the experimental and the control groups considered allowing the adherents of other religions to have places of worship in Oman as an intolerable notion. There was no agreement between the participants in both the experimental and the control groups on whether they tolerated the idea of non-Islamic religious preaching.

The findings of this study show that the experimental group outperformed the control groups in overall gain scores in terms of the tolerance they exhibited towards Westerners and Western culture. Similarly, the independent samples t-test revealed statistically significant differences in the mean gain scores between the experimental and the control groups in favour of the experimental group with regard to tolerance towards Westerners and Western culture. In addition, there were statistically significant differences in the mean gain scores between the experimental and the control groups in favour of the experimental group in the affect, belief and intention subscales. Similarly, responses obtained from the qualitative analysis show that the experimental group provided more tolerant responses than the control group when asked about Western culture, values and customs. In the pre-test the majority of respondents in both the experimental and the control group showed intolerance towards the notion of Western gender equality, sexual liberation, secularization and freedom of dress. Unlike any other notion or custom considered 'Western', the participants in both groups were predominantly tolerant of the idea of democracy in both the experimental and the control groups. Interestingly, their affect toward the notion of democracy dropped over the two administration rounds. This implies that the Iraq war and the U.S promises to create a democratic regime in Iraq have held a negative impact on how these 10th grade girls view democracy.

The experimental group outperformed the control group in an overall gain score of tolerance towards Westerners. Similarly, an independent samples t-test revealed statistically significant differences in the mean gain scores between the experimental and the control groups in favour of the experimental group with regard to tolerance towards Westerners. In addition, statistically significant differences are evident in the mean gain scores between the experimental and the control groups in favour of the experimental group in the affect, belief and intention subscales. Pre-intervention qualitative findings showed that the majority of pupils associated negative traits with Westerners. Westerners were viewed by the majority of the 10th grade pupils as mean, arrogant, immoral and terrorists. Interestingly, the control group's willingness to act tolerantly towards Westerners dropped slightly over the two administration rounds. Several of the participants in both the experimental and the control groups said they were willing to accept Westerners as friends. Similarly, the majority of participants were willing to accept Westerners as tourists.

Drawing upon theoretical frameworks of social identity theory, activity theory, contact hypothesis and the clash of civilization theory, this study shows that there are at least six factors affecting the 10th grade pupils' tolerance of religions different from Islam, Western culture, and Westerners. The first of these is low collective self-esteem. It is evident from the study that the participants acknowledged the inferior status of their in-group. Secondly, the 10th grade pupils recognized other religions, Western culture and Westerners as threats to their social identity. Thirdly, contextual effects were influential: the wars in Afghanistan, Iraq and the conflicts in Palestine seem to have affected pupils' tolerance levels. Fourthly, religious belief is significant: Pupils' religious commitments were found to be crucial in shaping and determining the exclusion or the inclusion of particular notions of tolerance. However, it is important that some of these beliefs were based on literal and sometimes mistaken understanding of the Quran and the Hadiths. Fifthly, history has played a significant role: historical events and memory were found to shape pupils' tolerance. Finally, contact with the out-groups was found to be effective in determining the level of these 10th grade pupils' tolerance.

7.3 Contribution of the Study

This section discusses two key contributions that this study makes: firstly by addressing the gap in the existing body of literature on tolerance in non-democratic countries; and secondly by providing implications for policy-makers in Oman and the Western world.

7.3.1 Addressing the Gap in the Literature

This study addresses the gap in the literature regarding the potential impact of education on tolerance in non-democratic and non-liberal states such as Oman in two ways: firstly, by challenging the concept of tolerance in non-liberal democratic states, and secondly by tackling the cause of intolerance towards others from the perspectives of young Omani females.

7.3.1.1 Tolerance in Non-liberal States

The findings, stemming from the pre-intervention findings, show clearly that tolerance has a limited space in the Omani young citizens' lives. With respect to the fact that tolerance is often conceptualized as a principle which operates and survives only in liberal democracies, particularly those in the West, many scholars may find the intolerance manifest among the participants in this study as a product of authoritarian government and Islam. These scholars may qualify their claim by shedding light on various incidents that have involved Muslims or taken place in Muslim societies, and argue Islam is both a religion and an authoritarian regime that excludes any argument in favour of tolerance. Those who emphasise the incompatibility of Islam and tolerance draw their argument from literal readings of sacred scripture (the Quran and Prophet Muhammad's teachings). However, the experimental group displayed greater levels of tolerance towards other religions, Western culture and Westerners, which demonstrates that the intervention had shown that ignorance is the main cause of intolerance. This also suggests that intolerance is not intrinsic to Islam or any other religion. Similarly the absence of democratic forms of government cannot restrict the existence of tolerance as tolerance constitutes a prime prerequisite for an effective democracy. Therefore, the question is not whether Islam or non-democratic forms of government are or are not compatible with tolerance, but under which conditions can tolerance work in Oman. This study shows that education is one important factor through which intolerance can be suppressed and tolerance advanced.

Similarly, the findings of the current study show that the experimental group achieved the lowest mean score in the belief component of tolerance. This implies that holding stereotyped, generalized and negative beliefs about something or someone does not mean that the person will act intolerantly towards those things. This finding suggests that less emphasis should be placed on transforming individuals' tolerance towards others as tolerance implies the ability to marginalize negative beliefs and act tolerantly toward others who are different. This means that individuals may or may not be prejudiced but should be able to suppress and control their prejudice. Therefore, teaching about tolerance should aim to promote a respect for diversity and tolerating the practise of other groups, even if these practices are different from our own.

Activity Theory and Omani Youth Tolerance

The present study and intervention process was inspired by activity theory. The increase in the experimental group's tolerance toward others religions, Western culture and Westerners compared to the opinions of the control group from the pre- to post-intervention rounds shows that the transformation in the participants' tolerance depended crucially on having taken part in the "Our Brothers and Sisters in Humanity" programme. This programme represented a mediation tool that helped the participants to construct their zone of proximal development. The difference between the experimental and the control groups in tolerance towards other religions, Western culture and Westerners revealed that tolerance is not something the learners in Omani schools can acquire on their own; rather, it is a collaborative endeavour. This endeavour involved an instrument that educated the pupils about other religions and cultures, teachers who believe in the advantages of human diversity, and learners who are able to interact actively to scaffold and transform their colleagues' zones of proximal development.

Similarly, the differences between the experimental and the control group suggest that different forms of mediation or instruments lead to different forms of knowledge, attitudes and consequently tolerance or intolerance towards others. Tolerance can be promoted through instruction about the similarities between pupils' in-groups and out-groups. It also can be promoted through teaching pupils about the challenges that face humanity in the world, such as terrorism, poverty and global warming. Using dialogue,

art, discussion and role-play as a teaching method can help to promote responsible decisions about tolerance.

The intolerance that was revealed in the pre-intervention quantitative and qualitative findings toward those who are different in religious belief and towards Westerners and Western culture helped to identify the contradictions and tensions in the systems that these pupils belong to. It should be emphasized that participants may be considered to belong to multiple activity systems. The most salient of these were the Islamic culture and of the Omani educational system. Each of these activity systems involved contradictions. The contradictions in the Islamic system are shown in Figure 7-1.
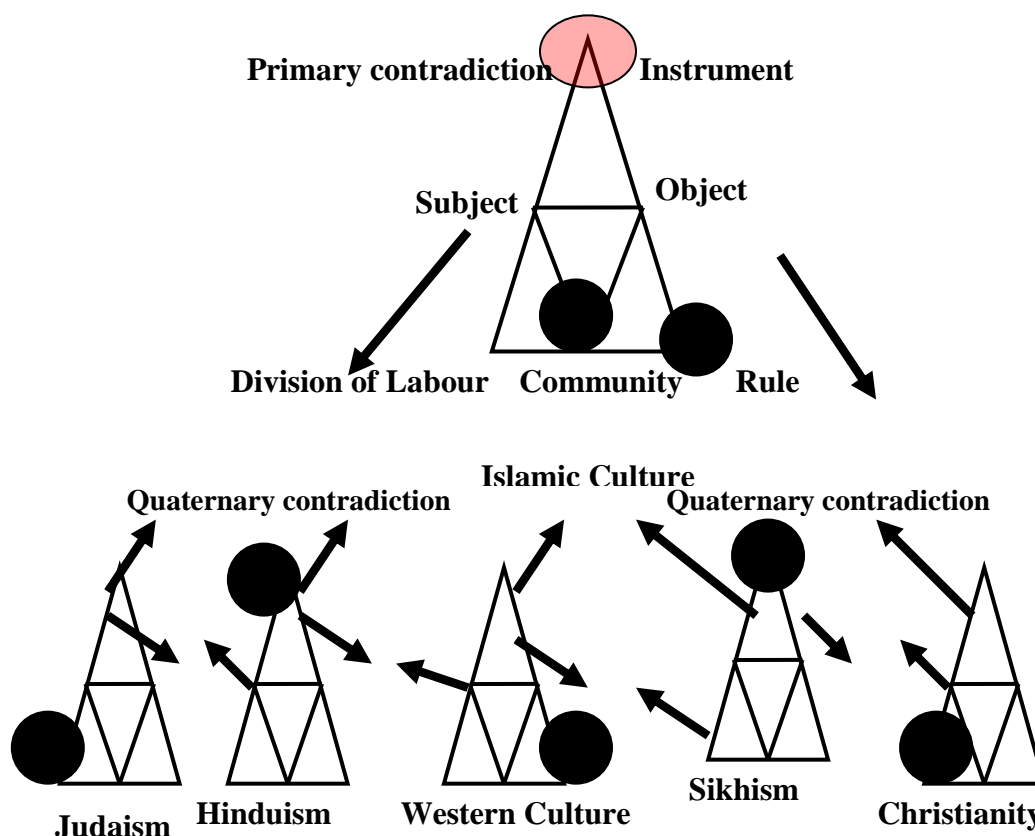
Figure 7-1: Activity system of the Islamic culture

Figure 7-1 shows that there are two types of contradictions or tensions at the level of Islamic culture. These are the primary contradictions which are found within Islamic culture and the quaternary contradictions which are found between Islamic culture and the other activity systems in the world, such as other cultures and religions. Tensions in the activity system of the Islamic culture may be identified in its community element.

The community of the Islamic culture consists of different sects. The tools within the Islamic culture, mainly the Quran and Prophet Muhammad's teachings, have different interpretations, and are often quoted to justify intolerance towards others. This urges the need for less literal interpretations of the Quran and Prophet's sayings, which can be brought about largely through education. Similarly, the findings imply quaternary contradictions or contradictions between the activity system of Islamic culture and other religions, each of which can be considered as an activity system. The findings of the study suggest that these contradictions can be solved by developing new mediation tools and transforming some components of the Islamic culture.

The findings stemming from the pre-test imply that the educational system in Oman has some primary contradictions. These contradictions occurred at the level of the outcome. The 10th grade Omani girls' intolerance mirrors the inability of the Omani educational system in preparing pupils to function in a world which changes rapidly and is increasingly secular, multicultural and multiethnic. 10th grade Omani pupils are not offered any kind of multicultural education. Therefore, no appreciation is found for other cultures and religions. This suggests the need for a transformation of the system as tolerance should be considered one of the necessary outcomes of the Omani educational system.

Social Identity Theory and Omani Young People's Tolerance

In regards to SIT, the findings of this study suggest that religion is one of the most salient components of Omani pupils' identity. This is not surprising for a number of reasons. First, the pupils in this study believe that Islam is the only true religion, a concept indoctrinated in all Muslims. Secondly, Muslims view Islam not only as a faith but a complete way of life. According to Hofstede and Hofstede (2005) Muslim countries are categorized as strong on collectivism. Accordingly, in collectivist culture the effect of religion in shaping identity is perceived to be strong. The 10th grade pupils in the study used religion to categorize and locate themselves in relation to categorizations found in their environment. They also used it to define their relation with and determine their tolerance of those who hold different religious beliefs (Suel, 1999; Hunsberger and Jackson, 2005; Verkuyten, 2007).

The findings show that religious identity suppresses other identities and causes the participants to miss other significant concerns, ideas and customs that can determine their affiliations. Some participants indicated that they dislike other religions and dislike Westerners and Western cultural values simply because they are different. Yet religious and cultural differences are part of a multiplicity of differences in the world. However, the salience of religious identity in these girls' life has transformed these differences to be the subject of stereotypes, prejudice and hate.

The pre-test findings of both the experimental and the control groups show intolerance toward those different from them in terms of religion and culture. The findings imply that the pupils acknowledged the inferiority of their in-group situation. The pupils maintained their social identity by engaging themselves in a comparative process with out-groups on ambiguous dimensions such as moral traits. The participants, for example, claimed the superiority of their group on the basis of moral values. They viewed their in-group as generous and honest.

The findings also suggest that these respondents perceived other religions, Western cultural values and customs and Westerners as threats to their social identity. This is closely associated with the media, history and religious beliefs. In this regard SIT suggests a number of strategies to deal with threats to social identity. One of these is distancing the self from the in-group. None of the interviewees was keen to distance herself from the in-group although they engaged in what could be described as a destruction self-criticism of their in-group. Instead, it is evident that most respondents maintained positive selves through engaging in ethnocentrism, and thus in intolerance towards the out-groups. Many ethnocentric facets were clearly manifested in pupils' responses. For example, many saw the out-group as contemptible, and immorality was reported by the majority of respondents. However, the findings obtained from the experimental group in the post-intervention round show that educational intervention has a potentially palliative impact on ethnocentrism, as the experimental group manifested less ethnocentrism than the control group who studied the usual educational programme in school.

Clash of Civilization and Omani Young Citizens' Tolerance

The results of this study make it clear that religious beliefs can be a hallmark of intolerance. Religion was found to be significant in shaping the participants' identity. Similarly, religious belief is used by the majority of the participants to justify their intolerance. This pattern of results was in agreement with Huntington's clash of civilizations thesis which shed light on the importance of religions in determining a civilizations' or cultures' identity. However, the result of this study was inconsistent with Huntington's argument about the incompatibility between Islam and democracy. The girls in both the experimental and the control groups tolerated the idea of democracy even before they were exposed to the intervention.

The findings of this study reveal that sexual liberation is beyond Omani pupils' tolerance. These results were in line with the research by Inglehart and Norris (2003) which conclude that the main contrast between Muslims and Western societies is over Ero or love not Demo or democracy. The post-intervention quantitative findings were consistent with the pre-intervention quantitative findings in regards to pupils' tolerance toward sexual liberation as pupils continued to consider it an intolerable notion. Yet the qualitative findings reveal that the intervention affected some pupils positively in this regard. This suggests that allowing more time for teaching and allocating more sources would probably affect the majority of pupils' tolerance.

Similarly, the Omani pupils excluded the idea of secularization from tolerance. This intolerance emphasised the importance of religion in their lives. Religious classifications were the criteria and standards that were used to determine whether individuals, customs, and values should be included or excluded from tolerance. It should be emphasized that the religious beliefs used by the pupils to label and identify people were developed on the basis of one interpretation of the Quran and Prophet Muhammad's teaching. For example, some participants did not hesitate to express their intolerance toward the notion of religious freedom, despite the fact that the Quran's verses guarantee religious freedom for individuals. Similarly, they show intolerance towards the idea of gender equality, despite the fact that they are female. This shows that social customs and society have a very heavy hand in determining what is tolerated and what is excluded from tolerance.

Moreover, the pre-intervention findings show that the intolerance manifest among the 10th grade pupils with regard to other religions, Western culture and Westerners is a product of religious belief, the media, history, lack of knowledge and politics context. However, it seems that the effects of these factors, except perhaps the effect of the political context, can be marginalized by education. The incompetence of education to marginalize the effects brought about by the political context is clearly evident in the pupils' tolerance toward the notion of democracy. Despite the fact that both groups showed tolerance towards democracy and that the experimental group had been educated about this notion, the intention to act tolerantly towards democracy dropped over the two administration rounds for the participants in both the experimental and the control group. Therefore, neither Huntington's clash of civilization thesis nor Inglehart and Norris (2003) 'erotic' thesis represent the full image of the cause of intolerance between Westerners and Muslims. The 10th grade pupils justified their intolerance towards Western culture and Westerners on the basis of the conflicts in Palestine, Afghanistan and Iraq. This supports the result of Esposito and Moghad (2007) in which they demonstrate that the clash between Muslims and the West is not over principles but politics. The question that may be raised here is: to what extent can education be effective in spreading tolerance when the politicians decide to use weapons? Would politicians like education to spread tolerance? Do they believe in the power of education? Even if the answers of these questions are no, educationalists have the responsibility to think globally and act locally to spread the culture of tolerance.

It could be concluded that today Omani youth is challenged with the opportunity to grow up in a world that is more diverse than ever, and no cultural relativist argument may be allowed to justify derogation from the basic obligation to uphold and fully protect the human rights. Therefore, they must be encouraged to embrace the skills needed to establish positive cross-cultural relations by being educated about others who are different in terms of religion and culture.

7.3.1.2 Implications

At the National Level

The findings from the pre-test suggest that citizenship education in Oman should be shifted to incorporate missions that encourage critical understanding, acceptance and

respect for human rights and liberties. This mission should focus on empowering students to work for justice, peace and tolerance at the national and international levels.

In reviewing the research on the intervention studies that aim to eliminate inter-group prejudice in the current study, it was found that most studies have been conducted in Western countries or with reference to the Western model of citizenship. With respect to political and cultural models operating in Oman and to the findings of this study suggesting that the West is perceived as a threat to the Islamic culture, the Western model of citizenship should be adopted only with caution. This does not mean the rejection of the Western models, but emphasises the need for adapting and nationalizing these models to suit the cultural and social context of the students. Therefore, the Ministry of Education in Oman, while reforming the educational system, must set a research agenda that supports indigenous research studies to improve citizenship education in Oman.

The findings of this study suggest the need for an urgent transformation in religious education aims and resources. Efforts should be made to challenge the literal interpretation of some Quranic verses. Yet neither deleting these verses from school textbooks nor focusing on English ahead of Islamic studies, as some Muslim countries did after September 11th 2001, seem to be answers to the intolerance directed towards other religions and Westerners. The answer is to educate the pupils about other cultures and shed light on the Quranic verses that assert the importance of liberty and peaceful coexistence with others who are different in terms of religion.

This study urges those who are in responsible positions with regard to teacher education programmes in Oman to reconsider the policy and aims of teacher education and help the teachers to conceptualise their roles in a multicultural world. Thus, teacher education has to meet the requirements of multiculturalism. This means that it must be directed towards equipping teachers with the knowledge and pedagogy necessary to master a repertoire of skills that will help them to develop cultural insight in the classrooms.

The findings of this study suggest the importance of contact with out-groups in enhancing inter-group tolerance. Therefore, efforts should be made to enhance cross-

cultural contact. With respect to the globalization phenomena driven by scientific and technological advances, online networks seem to be an avenue through which this contact should be achieved. The primary goals of this contact should be to enhance pupils' understanding about those who are different from themselves in terms of religion and culture and to expand their cross-cultural skills. Consequently, it is advisable that all interventions aiming to enhance tolerance have internet-based sections through which the pupils studying the programme or the intervention are involved actively in online activities (email, chat room) in order to communicate with pupils from different religions and cultures. Such communication should be achieved under teachers' supervision and should imply a partnership between schools from different parts of the world.

The literature review and the findings of this study show the importance of history in determining tolerance towards the out-group. Therefore it would be helpful to reconsider the methods and the aims of teaching history in Oman. The aims of teaching history should partly be shifted to focus on reconstructing not only national identity but also human identity. It must also consider developing the feeling of belonging not only to Oman and its people but to all people regardless of colour, religion and culture. History should also be taught as a tool for conflict mediation and violence reconciliation.

At the Western Countries Level

In order to increase the level of Omani pupils' tolerance of Western cultural values and customs and Westerners themselves, and to enhance the capacity of education in enhancing tolerance, Western countries should take a part in the efforts in paving the road for education to work.

It is important for Western countries to shift the emphasis in the Muslim countries from control to collaboration. Contact between Muslims and Westerners should be based on mutual benefit and should be increasingly multilateral. In this way Western countries can work with Muslim countries in areas in which Muslims are found to admire Westerners, such as technology. Initiatives that focus on bridging the technological gap

between Muslim and Western countries and developing the educational systems in these countries should become superordinate goals for both groups.

Furthermore, there is a need to develop a new communication strategy between the Omani public and Westerners. Based on the current study's findings, this strategy should aim at shifting the objective of contact with the Omani public from selling policies and values to raising awareness, understanding and acceptance of Western values. Western countries' imposition of values on others diminishes the acceptance of these values and policies among the public. Therefore, the Western countries should shift their policy from selling Western values to raising awareness about Western values.

Western countries should direct their efforts to collaborating with both governmental and non-governmental agents in different parts of Oman. To perform a successful contact with the Omani people and to raise awareness about Western culture, Western countries need to establish informal networks to collaborate with both sets of agents. These informal networks need to focus on all geographical locations in the Islamic countries.

As is evident in this study, the media is effective in shaping people's tolerance. Therefore, a new media strategy needs to be considered to play an important role in linking Muslims and Westerners through debate on different issues. Media coverage needs to be extended to focus not only on political dimensions, but on cultural, economic and social dimensions. In addition, because Muslims perceive Western countries as threats to their identity, Western governments should reconsider the role of the media in framing Muslims' perceptions towards the West. Therefore, attention should be paid to collaborating with the local media in different countries.

Western countries should consider producing teaching aids on Western countries and their culture for dissemination in the Muslim world.

7.4 Directions and Recommendations for Future Research

This study is by no means the end of the research journey, but is rather a stepping-stone for other valuable studies into multicultural, inter-group and citizenship education in

Oman and other countries that often claim to be mono-cultural societies. Therefore, the current study suggests new and alternative perspectives for examining the effectiveness of an educational programme that aims to enhance tolerance in Omani pupils. The following suggestions provide direction and recommendations for further research.

7.4.1 Cross-Level Examination of the Programme's Effectiveness

First of all, the current study was conducted at the level of 10th grade female pupils in Oman. Therefore it is advisable to replicate this study at different levels of schooling (e.g, primary, secondary) to examine whether results obtained from this study present a general trend in regards to the level of tolerance towards other religions and Westerners and their culture among Omani pupils. It is also necessary to replicate the current study to include male participants, as gender may be found to affect the level of tolerance, and to replicate it in different regions in Oman, as geographical location may alter levels of tolerance.

7.4.2 Employing Action Research Methodology

Student tolerance, however, provides only a partial picture of the intervention. Pupils and teachers perspectives regarding the content and the method of teaching will be needed to establish a full account of the implementations and the beneficial effects of the intervention. Therefore, there is a considerable scope for action research approaches, with researchers, teachers and pupils working to refine and evaluate the programme, with the aim of enhancing tolerance, particularly for those concerned with curriculum and pedagogy.

7.4.3 Individuals' Characteristics and Programme Effectiveness

There have been no measures pertaining to rate age, self-esteem and ethnic background on tolerance. Therefore, it would be useful to replicate this study and include a measure of the study groups' self-esteem, as self-esteem is reported by many studies as affecting the personal and collective identity. It would also be useful to consider the ethnic and religious background of the participants when assessing the effectiveness of a programme.

7.4.4 Examining Short- and Long-Term Effects of the Intervention

This study has focused on the immediate effects or short-term effects of the intervention on 10th grade pupils' tolerance. It would be useful to carry out a study to consider the long-term effects of the intervention on the levels of pupils' tolerance.

7.5 Limitations of the Study

This section sets out the parameters of the study, which should be borne in mind in any attempt to interpret and generalize its findings. The limitations of the current study are as follows.

This study was confined to female pupils, due to the fact that coeducation, for cultural reasons, is generally not allowed after 4th grade in the Omani educational system. Furthermore, social customs and religious beliefs in the geographical area where the research was conducted restricted the access of the female researcher to schools with male pupils. Thus, communication with male schools head-teachers in the early stage of this study manifested that these head teachers were intolerant towards the idea of a female researcher conducting research in their schools. The only male teacher who agreed to meet with the researcher decided not to continue when he found out the aims and the requirements for implementing the intervention.

This study was confined to secondary schools in Al-Suwaiq. There were two reasons for selecting Al-Suwaiq. The primary reason was financial. Since this research is not funded, the researcher had to bear all the cost. Consequently she was not able expand her study beyond Al-Suwaiq, the town in which she resides. The other reason was related to the centralized nature of the Omani educational system. Plummer (2005: 66) states that, "all teachers across the country are required to teach the same thing, at the same time, using the same texts. School populations are also fairly homogeneous. Only Omani children attend government schools and all Omani children are Muslim". Despite indications that Omani schools are almost the same, generalizing the findings should be done with caution. Several variations could lead to differences in tolerance between schools, for example, the location of the school in rural or urban geographical areas, social class, parental education and so forth.

This study was restricted by the fear of opinion formation. As a product of a collective culture and non-democratic political system, Omani pupils may be afraid to declare their opinions, believing that they have always to say what others expect to gain credit from. The researcher attempted to deal with this limitation by reassuring the participants that their responses would remain anonymous. Also, interviewing the participants on an individual basis was a strategy employed by the researcher to deal with this limitation.

While selection bias in the intervention appeared to be controlled, a randomized true experimental design would have further strengthened conclusions. However, both the experimental and the control groups were reasonably well matched at the beginning of the study and the differences between them were checked on several factual variables (e.g. age, socioeconomic background).

While testing effects appeared to be controlled (see Chapter 3), the findings of the study suggest some pitfalls in regard to test effects. Participants, particularly those belonging to the control group, reported that they started to read about the issues they discussed with the researcher during the pre-intervention interview and concepts they read in the questionnaire. Therefore, using the Solomon four–group design would have further strengthened inferences as this design implies two experimental groups and two control groups in which two of the groups receive a pre-test and two do not.

This study is restricted by the scarcity of research about tolerance in non-Western or non-democratic societies such as Oman. In reviewing the literature it was difficult to find relevant articles, either in Oman or in the general Muslim context. Similarly, it was difficult to find any literature concerning the use of education to address tolerance or intolerance in both Omani and Muslim contexts.

This study is also confined by content screening which was conducted by the general directorate of the curricula development in the Sultanate of Oman. Despite the fact that the researcher was in contact with the gatekeeper since before embarking on the current study, and the fact that she was granted initial access to schools, the general directorate of the curricula development considered the intervention's content to contradict the educational policy in Oman. The researcher was interviewed and asked about her

intention to teach "terrorism" to 10th grade pupils. Further, she was asked to delete some of the content, particularly that related to religious difference.

This study has been limited by pupils' reluctance to provide background information when it was accompanied with the questionnaire items. This reluctance prevented analysis of the effect of some variables on tolerance. Therefore, future research may wish to use factual questions regarding pupils' socio-economic background to examine the effect of these variables on pupils' tolerance.

This study is further confined by the measurement used to assess pupils' tolerance. Despite the high reliability when using a test-retest method of assessing reliability and the high internal consistency of some dimensions in the questionnaire, some dimensions were found to be relatively low in their internal consistency, possibly due to group variability. Therefore, it is advisable to establish the reliability of the questionnaire used in the current study if it is used in any further research.

7.6   Personal reflections of the researcher

This is my second experience with conducting research. The first time was in 1999. The focus of the first experience was the use of active learning in educating Omani 10th grade pupils about the Arab-Israeli conflict. In that project I developed an instructional unit which was submitted to be analysed and checked for any implicit message that I might have included in it. The analysis of the unit result left me with only 2/3 of the unit. I was ordered to delete many photos and activities, which were found to be in conflict with the educational philosophy in Oman. Despite these difficulties the programme was effective in enhancing pupils' knowledge about the Arab-Israeli conflict.

In 2004 I decided to come to England to study. As soon as I arrived, and in order to be more fully aware of the country's educational philosophy, I consulted the Technical Office for Studies and Development in the Ministry of Education (TOSD) and was granted initial approval for the study. Then I started to build the intervention. After that I submitted all of the research tools including the intervention in English to the TOSD in Oman. I arrived in Oman two weeks after the submission of the research tools, and learned that my intervention had been transferred to the relevant Governmental

department for the purpose of checking the content to determine its compatibility with the goals of the education system in Oman. I was asked to attend an interview. I went to the interview to find that that the intervention had been translated using electronic software. They had found the word 'terrorism' in the document; and this word had caught the attention of educationalists in the Ministry of Education. Therefore, the intervention was considered to be clashing with the country's policy in countering terrorism.

Fortunately, my interviewer understood my intention and wrote a positive report that recommended allowing research access to the schools. This report was passed to people who were in authority. Surprisingly, when I called the Department of Curricula while I was waiting to access the schools, my calls were often directed to airlines or restaurants. Later, the modified negative report was sent to the TOSD. Luckily the TOSD's manger was highly educated and she understood the aims and the focus of the study. Similarly the Minister of Education who got to know about the aims of the study through the TOSD's director supported the implementation of the intervention.

I received the permission and I accessed the schools. Despite the difficulties that I had in convincing the participants to participate, the whole process was unique and enjoyable for the participants. Throughout this study I came to have faith in education as the tool for change, and I also learned some valuable lessons. The first lesson is that change through education is difficult but not impossible, and early adopters are important. The teachers and the students were the early adopters of the change and without them this study would not have been achieved. Early adopters of change are there and we have to find them and work closely with them. The second lesson is that teaching about tolerance in non-liberal states is also not easy, but not impossible. Teaching the pupils to tolerate the differences between their in-group and out-groups leads them to question their right to be different and choose their own ways in life.

To conclude, this research provides compelling evidence that education can promote tolerance. It would be easier with the support of politicians. Even without the politicians' support, educationalists' can continue to work towards forging a better, more tolerant world through education.

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Appendix 1

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Appendix 2
Questionnaire

Dear Students,

Hello, my name is Fatma Al-Saadi. I am a doctorate student at the University of Leicester in the United Kingdom. I have worked for the Ministry of Education in the Sultanate of Oman since 1995. As a doctorate student I have to conduct a research project. My research project aims to examine the effectiveness of a school-based intervention program. The purpose of this questionnaire is to investigate your knowledge, perceptions and possible reaction in hypothetical situations which bring you closer to people whose religions and cultures are different from yours.

Your school and your class have been chosen randomly to participate in this study. Your participation is strictly voluntary and you have the right to withdraw at any stage. The information that you provide is confidential and will not be shared with any staff member from your school. This information will be used for research purposes only. **However, you should be aware that the researcher may use the information you provide to study and assess other aspects of this area of research without notifying you.** If you choose not to participate in this study, your grade or mark will not be affected in any way. However, your participation is important for me in order to improve the project I am working on.

If you choose to participate in this study, please sign the attached informed consent form and return it to your teacher. If you have any questions or concerns about your participation in this study, please feel free to contact me by phone on 26862280 or by email fha1@le.ac.uk or fatmhm@hotmail.com. Thank you very much for your cooperation

Yours sincerely,
Fatma AL Saadi
Doctoral student
School of Education
University of Leicester
United Kingdom

Your Profile:

Please tell me
    1- Your age in years:_____
    2- Your religion:_____

Please tick the box as appropriate for each question. Tick **ONE** box please:

   3- Your father's education:

☐ Illiterate ☐ Primary   ☐ Preparatory   ☐ Secondary   ☐Degree

   4- Your mother's education:

☐ Illiterate ☐ Primary   ☐ Preparatory   ☐ Secondary   ☐Degree

   5- What is the estimated income of your family per month?

☐ 120 Rails or less   ☐ 121-300 Omani Rails   ☐ 301-500 Omani Rails

☐ 501-700 Omani Rails   ☐ > 700 Omani Rails

   6- Do you watch TV?

☐ Yes   ☐ No

  If yes
   7- How many hours do you spend watching TV every day?
   ☐ 1-2 hours   ☐ 3-4 hours ☐ 5-6 hours   ☐ > 6 hours

   8- Do you have access to the internet:

☐ Yes   ☐ No

   9- Have you travel1ed outside the country?

☐ Yes   ☐ No

 If yes to which countries you have travel1ed?_____
 (please specify)

Please read the instruction carefully before you start answering:
Read the hypothetical situations carefully. Then point out how strongly you agree or disagree with the statements concerning the situations. Your responses are completely confidential. Please answer as honestly and accurately as you can. Tick **(√) the response that most closely matches your opinion for the questions**

You and other religions:
1-Ahmed had just returned and had begun looking for a job after a long period abroad studying at a British university. Upon his arrival, his friends came to greet him. They were eager to listen to his adventure in England. One day, one of his friends, Nasser, asked him about the things that attracted him to England. Ahmed replied that what attracted him to England is neither the beautiful environment nor the historical places. He stressed that the places of worship attracted him more than everything else. He added "In England I deal with people from different ethnic and religious backgrounds. I learnt that Christianity is just like Islam. In fact I learnt that "a human being can be a good person regardless of the religion he/she practises".

A human being can be a good person regardless of the religion he/she practises.

	items	Strongly agree 5	Agree 4	Neutral 3	Disagree 2	Strongly disagree 1
1	I like this opinion					
2	This opinion is right					
3	I would tell Nasser that the human being could not be a good person unless he/she practices Islam					

2-Danny Robyn is a Westerner. Mr.Robyn brought his family with him when he came to Oman to work as planning advisor in a multinational company. Although Danny and his wife were not particularly religious themselves, they believed that their children might benefit from church membership. They viewed the church as the institution that would give their children a sense of belonging and can provide them with some moral and ethical guidance. Thus, they decided to look for a nearby church for their children to attend. Mr Robyn met his neighbour Mr.Al Hamad and asked him where the nearest church was. He was surprised when Mr.Al Hamad said to him angrily that Muslim countries must not allow Christians to have churches on their land. When Mr. Robyn arrived at his office he consulted his closest colleague, Ahmed, on the issue. He was very glad when Ahmed told him "I understand your point of view. I think that the adherents of others religions must be allowed to have places of worship in Oman and in other Muslim countries"

Adherents of other religions must be allowed to have worship places in Oman

	Items	Strongly agree 5	Agree 4	Neutral 3	Disagree 2	Strongly disagree 1
4	I dislike this opinion					
5	This opinion is right					
6	I would write to the government to allow adherents of other religions to open their own worship places					

3-Rashid and Abdullah were discussing an assignment for their social studies course. The assignment focused on the differences in religious conduct between various major religions in the world. Rashid suggested that Abdullah attends a lecture where a number of well known Jewish, Hindu, Sikh, Buddhist, Christian and Muslim scholars lecture the public on their religion. Rashid added "I think it would be good opportunity to meet with these scholars. Yesterday's newspaper advertised that the lecture is free and open to the public. What do you think?" "Of course not! The adherents of other religions must be prohibited from talking about their religion in our countries", Abdullah said. "Do'nt you think that you are wrong Abdullah, that the adherents of other religion must be allowed to speak in public about their beliefs in our country" Rashid said.

The adherents of other religions must be allowed to talk about their religions in Muslim countries

	items	Strongly agree 5	Agree 4	Neutral 3	Disagree 2	Strongly disagree 1
7	I like this opinion					
8	This opinion is wrong					
9	I would attend any events organized by the adherents of other religions					

4-Sultan, a rather rowdy but popular Omani student, shared a flat in a dormitory with an Italian Christian student, Mateo, and an American Jewish student, Yossi. The three students seemed to get on quite well. One day, the three friends decided to go out and watch Mel Gibson's film "the Passion of Jesus". The film re-enacts the story of Jesus. After watching the film Sultan was very surprised when he heard his Christian friend saying "There is one true religion and Christianity is the only true religion." Sultan became more surprised when he heard his Jewish friend saying, "I agree with you that there is only one true religion. I think Judaism is the only true religion. The other religions are false". Mateo and Yossi started to argue with each other about whose religion is true. Sultan turned to them and said "We should not fight whose religion is best. I think all religions teach the same moral values"

All religions teach moral values

	items	Strongly agree 5	Agree 4	Neutral 3	Disagree 2	Strongly disagree 1
10	I like this belief					
11	I think this belief is correct					
12	If I was involved in the conversation I would tell Metao and Yossi that my religion is the best					

5-Having been treated to a wonderful time by Mr. Young's family on his visit to China, Yaser wanted to return their hospitality. He took the chance to invite them to his family house when they came to visit his country. Yaser's father attended the meeting. He was very concerned about Mr. Young's religion. He asked Mr. Young many questions about his religion. Yaser's father told Mr. Young that Islam is the only true religion in the world". Mr. Young seemed to be very embarrassed and he did not know how to reply. Yaser intervened in the conversation and said "Each religion has it own truth and we should respect all religions"

We should respect all religions

	items	Strongly agree 5	Agree 4	Neutral 3	Disagree 2	Strongly disagree 1
13	I like this opinion					
14	I think this opinion is wrong					
15	I would tell Mr. Young that I respect his religion					

You and Westerners:

6- Yesterday, Fatma and Amal watched a documentary film about "The moral values in the Western and Islamic cultures". After the film, Amal stated that the film was useful and interesting. She stressed that the film expanded her knowledge about the Western culture. She said "You know through the film I realized that people in the West believe in the same values we believe in. Westerners are honest just like Muslims" "Westerners are honest? You are joking Amal! Stop saying that. They are not honest at all". Amal felt surprised and said "Do not make an extreme judgment. Westerners are honest just like people from elsewhere"

Westerners are honest

	items	Strongly agree 5	Agree 4	Neutral 3	Disagree 2	Strongly disagree 1
16	I like this belief					
17	I think this belief is correct					
18	I would tell Fatma that she made an overgeneralization about all Westerners.					

7- Kamal went to the international airport to meet his cousin, Ali, who was coming from the United Kingdom. "How was your trip?" asked Kamal. "It was good. I had a wonderful time. I visited France, Holland, and other western countries. I met lots of people from different cultural and religious backgrounds. I am going to miss the soul of the West" Ali stated. Kamal said "You will not as two Westerners families move to stay in our neighbourhood area. The villagers are very angry. Yesterday some older people from the village's council visited the families and asked them to leave the village". "The village council should not do that. I do not find any harm in accepting people who are different in term of religions and cultures to live in our neighbourhood area" Ali replied.

I will accept Westerners in my neighbourhood area.

	items	Strongly agree 5	Agree 4	Neutral 3	Disagree 2	Strongly disagree 1
19	I like this opinion					
20	This opinion is correct					
21	I would tell Ali that Westerners should be asked to stay in places which are far from Muslim neighborhoods					

8- Magic Tree is a famous restaurant in the city centre. Magic Tree offers national dishes and is the preferred restaurant for tourists who visit the country. When Ibrahim had a promotion in his job he decided to invite his friend, Khalid, to have lunch there. At 3:30 Ibrahim met his friend in front of the Magic Tree. Khalid was surprised to see many Westerners in the restaurant. He said angrily "Why did you invite me to this restaurant? " What is the problem with the restaurant Khalid?" Ibrahim replied. "Do not you know that these Westerners sitting here are involved in killing our people in Palestine, Iraq, and Afghanistan? "Many westerners are innocent. We should encourage them to visit our country" said Ibrahim.

Westerners should be encouraged to visit Oman

	items	Strongly agree 5	Agree 4	Neutral 3	Disagree 2	Strongly disagree 1
22	This opinion makes me feel irritated					
23	This opinion is rational					
24	I would tell Khalid that I disagree with him and if he insists not to enter the restaurant I will leave him					

9-Mr.John is a Westerner. He is about 42 years old. He is the general health director in Suwaiq. His house is next to Roba's family house. Roba is in grade ten. She keeps telling stories to her classmate about her western neighbours. Roba told her friend that Mr.John's family is coming to join him. She said that Mr John told her that he had 2 daughters. She added "He said that they are in my age. I am willing to accept Mr. John's daughters as friends"

I will accept Westerners as friends

	items	Strongly agree 5	Agree 4	Neutral 3	Disagree 2	Strongly disagree 1
25	I like this idea					
26	This idea is silly					
27	I would tell Roba that Westerners could not be good friends					

You and Western culture's customs, lifestyle and values

10- Your sister is working as an English teacher in the technical college. While she is there, she has become friends with Caroline, a young beautiful western lady. One day, Caroline came to your sister and told her that she is going to get married to a very kind gentleman who is working in the biggest computer company. Caroline added that the groom is from Uganda and he is Buddhist. Your sister was surprised and told Caroline "You have to think carefully. He is different from you in terms of religion". Caroline said, "Women in the West are free to marry who they want regardless of religion and ethnicity"

Woman in the West are free to marry who they want regardless of religion and ethnicity.

	items	Strongly agree 5	Agree 4	Neutral 3	Disagree 2	Strongly disagree 1
28	This custom is good					
29	This custom is irrational					
30	I will tell Caroline that she should marry whom she likes regardless of religion					

11-Laila is a student in grade ten. Her social studies teacher asked her to write an essay about women's roles in the society. Laila used the internet to search for some resources. While she was searching she found a huge number of resources about gender equality. She was interested in gender equality. She decided to consult her teacher to change the topic. When Laila talked with her teacher about the new topic, the teacher said "Where did you get this western idea from? You should not write about it. You have to understand that each gender has a certain role". The teacher stated that gender equality, which refers to empowerment and participation of both sexes in all spheres of public and private life, is a western idea.

Equality between women and men is one of the fundamental principles that western societies try to achieve.

	items	Strongly agree 5	Agree 4	Neutral 3	Disagree 2	Strongly disagree 1
31	I like this principle					
32	This principle is unacceptable					
33	I will support the implementation of this principle					

12-At the weekend, Halima and her family decided to go to Al Swadi, a beautiful coastal city in the north of Oman. It was January and the weather was pleasant. There were lots of people there. Among them there were many western couples. It seemed that the couples were attracting the attention of the local people because they were walking, holding hands and kissing each other from time to time. Halima noticed that a number of people were looking uncomfortably at the couples. Halima's father said that Westerners should be advised not to behave in this way in public. Halima said that "kissing or holding hands is an important aspect of social life in the west"

Kissing and holding hands in public is a common custom in the west

	items	Strongly agree 5	Agree 4	Neutral 3	Disagree 2	Strongly disagree 1
34	I like this custom					
35	This custom is indecent					
36	I will support any claim to punish Westerners if they kiss each other in our country					

13- Nigel Raymond is a famous Western novelist. His latest novel which is entitled "Christianity Out" aroused wide criticism from ecclesiastic authorities in the West and religious people there. In his novel, Raymond identifies the church as a source of religious intolerance. He attacked many Christian supernatural beliefs. At the end of the novel, he clamours for a world without churches. . Ecclesiastic authorities in the Western countries tried to stop the publication of the novel by going to the courts. The Courts gave the writer and the publisher the right to publish and sell the novel. One journalist commented on this judgment that "It is in the west where freedom of expression is guaranteed to everyone".

Free expression is an important principle in western thinking

	items	Strongly agree 5	Agree 4	Neutral 3	Disagree 2	Strongly disagree 1
37	I like this principle					
38	This principle is backward					
39	I will support selling this novel and keeping it in my public library					

14-Nabil, a social studies teacher in Al Montaser School, met John, a Western English teacher who has arrived recently to Oman. They decided to have lunch together at the Star restaurant. On their way to the restaurant, Nabil stopped to buy something from a supermarket. John said that he needed to buy some stuff as well. In front of the supermarket, John encountered his friend, Carol. He introduced Carol to Nabil. After chatting for a few minutes Carol excused herself because she had to go. Her friend, Linda, was waiting for her in the car. John embraced her and gave her a long passionate kiss. Nabil turned away and walked off toward the supermarket. John looked up and called him "Hey stop I am coming". Nabil looked down and said nothing. When they got into the car John said "She is my girl friend. I am going to marry her. We have been dating for 6 months".

Dating is one of the common social customs in the western culture.

	items	Strongly agree 5	Agree 4	Neutral 3	Disagree 2	Strongly disagree 1
40	I like this custom					
41	This custom is not correct					
42	I would tell Nabil that we should respect John's right to behave according to his cultural norms which permit sex before marriage					

15-While you were shopping in a big shopping centre in the city, you saw a group of Westerner tourists. Most of them wore shorts and very light shirts. Because local people hold very conservative traditions on clothing, you noticed that most of them were looking in an unfriendly way at the Westerners. You heard them saying that local government must force these tourists to wear the clothes which suit local traditions. Later you met Maryam, your friend who studied in the West for several years. You told her about the revealing clothes the Westerners wore. Maryam told you that "Wearing revealing and short clothes is common in the West". She added "This kind of clothing is customary in the West".

Wearing revealing and short clothes is common in the West

	items	Strongly agree 5	Agree 4	Neutral 3	Disagree 2	Strongly disagree 1
43	I like this custom					
44	This custom is wrong					
45	I would tell Maryam that we should respect Westerners' right to wear what they like					

16-Aisha is 17 and is a young artist from your country. She was awarded the 2005 Young Artist Prize. The young Artist Prize is sponsored by a western organization. It is awarded annually to a young artist who shows a talent in painting and drawing. Aisha received an invitation to attend award ceremony took place in Dream Palace Hotel. Aisha was very happy. Her father and brother went with her. When they arrived at the hotel reception, they asked about the assembly hall. The receptionist told them that the ceremony was in the Star hall on the fifth floor. Aisha asked about the women's hall. The receptionist said "it is a western organization that arranged for the assembly and in western culture; there is no separation between men and women.

Mixing between men and women is common in the western culture.

	items	Strongly agree 5	Agree 4	Neutral 3	Disagree 2	Strongly disagree 1
46	I like this custom					
47	This custom is not right					
48	I would advise Aisha to leave without attending the ceremony					

17- Soon after transferring to Sohar, one of the biggest cities in the north of Oman, Mr Jack and his wife were invited to their neighbour's house. Mr. and Mrs. Jack carried two bottles of wine as gift to their neighbour. When they arrived at Mr.Ahmed house, Mr. Jack gave the bottles of wine to Ahmed. Ahmed refused to accept the wine and said angrily "Islamic law prohibits the ownership or consumption of alcohol" Mr. and Mrs. Jack felt embarrassed. When they were invited into the dinning room, to have dinner, they felt that there was a strained atmosphere. After dinner, Mr. and Mrs. Jack left quickly. Later, Ahmed asked his brother "Was it not rude of these westerners to bring wine to my house? I should have asked them to leave my house immediately when they gave me the wine," he added. His brother Omar replied "Sensible drinking of alcohol is a custom in Western countries".

Sensible drinking of alcohol is customary in Western countries

	items	Strongly agree 5	Agree 4	Neutral 3	Disagree 2	Strongly disagree 1
49	I dislike this custom					
50	This custom is unacceptable					
51	I would take the bottle of wine but explain that I could not drink it because of my religious belief					

18 -At the weekend, Maha went with her family to the capital city. She entered one of the biggest stores in the capital. Maha found an advertisement for pork meat in the store. She told her father about the advertisement. Her father said "Eating pork is sin and sickness. Our government should prohibit selling pork in the markets and stores". Maha's older brother, Abdullah, turned to his father and said "Eating pork and preparing dishes from it is common in the West".

Eating pork and preparing dishes with it is common in the West

	items	Strongly agree 5	Agree 4	Neutral 3	Disagree 2	Strongly disagree 1
52	I like this custom					
53	This custom is unhealthy					
54	I would tell Maha's father that he is wrong and the markets should continue to sell pork					

20 -Robert, a Western electronic engineer, has recently arrived in the country to work for a big computer company. His colleagues at the company invited him for a barbecue at the weekend. Robert apologised and said "I cannot make it this week. I have to go to my embassy to vote in the presidential elections". His colleague, Said, asked him "Is it important to vote?" "Yes, it is important. The elections take place in my country every four years. We have to express our opinion through the ballot box" Robert replied. He added "Democracy is a cornerstone in political and social life in the West"

Democracy as expressing opinion through ballot box is a cornerstone of Western political system.

	items	Strongly agree 5	Agree 4	Neutral 3	Disagree 2	Strongly disagree 1
55	I dislike this principle					
56	This principle is fair					
57	I would oppose the implementation of this principle					

21 -Miss Jewel is an English teacher currently working in Al Amal School. Today, she was very happy. Her colleague, Miss Khadyja asked her "You look very happy today. What is the secret Jewel?" "The secret is in TV news and today's newspaper" Jewel replied. "Unfortunately I am not interested in the news" said Miss Khadyja. "You have to congratulate me. We remain in 10 Dawning Street for another 4 years" Jewel said. She stressed "The Labour Party won the elections my dear". "I think I have to find Mrs James and congratulate her too" said Miss Khadyja. Jewel said "you do not have to because she is a Conservative and the Conservative Party lost the elections". Jewel added "Anyway in the elections there is always a winner and maybe the Conservative Party will win the following election after five years. I said maybe" "Multiparty elections allow many political parties to proclaim their ideologies and compete for political power. This is common in the West" Jewel added.

Multiparty elections allow many political parties to proclaim their ideologies and compete for political power is common in the West

	items	Strongly agree 5	Agree 4	Neutral 3	Disagree 2	Strongly disagree 1
58	I like this principle					
59	This principle is unfair					
60	I would support the implementation of this principle in my country					

21-Mr Al.Sadi works for a big company in the capital city. He invited his colleagues who had come from the West to spend Eid holiday in his parents' house in a small village located 190 Km away from the capital city. On the day of the holiday, two western families came to the small village. One of them brought their two small dogs. The dogs entered the house and stayed in the dining room. Mr. Al Sadi's mother was surprised. She called her son and said "Dogs in my house, Ahmed, I cannot accept them. You know that we cannot keep dog for religious reason. They are unclean. Do something". Mr. Al Sadi said "Mum, listen to me. My colleague did not find anyone to take care of the dog for them. In addition, keeping dogs is customary in the West.

Keeping dogs is a common custom in the West

	items	Strongly agree 5	Agree 4	Neutral 3	Disagree 2	Strongly disagree 1
61	I like this custom					
62	This custom is unhealthy					
63	I would explain to the western family that I cannot leave the dog in my house for religious reasons and I would ask them to leave					

22- Jack comes from a very religious Catholic family. At the age of 24, Jack graduated with MDiv (a master's degree in religion) from South East University. Jack was interviewed for a teaching job in a Muslim country. Although he was hesitant to work there, given what he had heard about Muslims from the media, the job paid well and he felt that he could save money and have a good experience. Jack made a very good adjustment in that Muslim country. Soon after arriving Jack realized that religion played an important role in Muslim life. One day, Jack asked his colleague, Amer, "What is the role of religion in Muslim life?" "Islam is a complete way of life. It is religion and the state" Amer replied. "What is the role of religion in the West? Asked Amer. "The West is dominated by secular trends. Secularization in the West separates society from religion. Religion has been limited to the sphere of private life. Although I have a Master degree in religion, I believe in secularism" Jack replied"

Separating society from religion and limiting religion to private life is a fundamental principle in the West.

	items	Strongly agree 5	Agree 4	Neutral 3	Disagree 2	Strongly disagree 1
64	I like this principle					
65	This principle is irrational					
66	I would try to **Strengthen** my relation with Jack although he seems to be a secular person					

24-Mohammed arrived at the capital of a western country. He tried to book a room in a cheap hotel. Because Mohammed speaks English only, he could not communicate with the receptionist. Therefore the receptionist used a hand sign to tell him to wait. The receptionist went to the hotel's restaurant. After 3 minutes, he came with another man in his fifties named Roman. Roman spoke good English. Mohammed explained to Roman what he needed. Roman asked him about his name and where he had come from. Roman said to Mohammed "You are Muslim?". He continued "I was Christian for 22 years. I am now Buddhist and I respect all religions". Mohammed was very surprised. When he returned back to his country he consulted one of his friends and told him what Roman had said to him about changing his religion. His friend said "You should not be surprised. Religious freedom is one of the most important values in the Western countries.

The freedom to change one's religion is an important value of religious freedom in Western Countries.

	items	Strongly agree 5	Agree 4	Neutral 3	Disagree 2	Strongly disagree 1
67	I like this value					
68	This value is offensive					
69	I would openly show Roman my respect to his decision regarding changing his religion					

Appendix 3

Interview Schedule for Students

Interviewee No.: _____:

Date of the interview: / / 2006.
Time of the interview: : :

Type of the interview:
☐ **Pre- intervention interview**   ☐ **Post-intervention interview**

Part One: You and other Religions

1- Would you say that you respect other religions?
2-Why do you respect/ disrespect other religions?
3-Are there any similarities between your religion and other religions?
4-If yes what are the similarities between your religion and other religions?
5- What are the closest religions to Islam?
6- Why do you think that these particular religions are similar to your religion?
7-How do you feel about allowing the adherents of other religions to have their places of worship in your local community?
8-How do you feel about allowing the adherents of other religions to speak in public about their beliefs?

Part Two: You and Western Culture

1.What do you understand by Western culture?
2.What is special about the Western culture?
3.What do you like the most about the Western culture?
4.What do you dislike the most about the Western culture?
5.Some Muslims consider that democracy is a Western way that Muslims should not accept. How do you feel about this tendency?
6.In Western countries, such as the United States and the United Kingdom, religious authority has no influence over social or political matters. How do you feel about this practice?
7.How do you feel about the Western principles that allow an individual to change his/her religion?
8.Some people think that equality between men and women is a Western notion that should not be accepted in Muslim countries. How do you feel about this?
9.What do you think about the idea of forcing Western people and people from other cultural backgrounds to dress in a way that suits the religious and social customs in Muslim countries?
10-Dating and sexual relationship before marriage is associated with the Western culture. To what extent will you tolerate a Western who practises this social custom in your country?

<u>Part Three: You and Western People</u>

1. Would you feel sympathetic towards victims of terrorism in the Western world? Why?
2. Which of these characteristics do you associate with Westerners?
2a. Do you think Westerners are honest? Why?
2b. Do you think Westerners are generous? Why?
2c. Do you think Westerners are terrorists? Why?
3. Would you accept Westerners as your friends? Why?
4. How do you feel about encouraging Western people to visit your country?