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Behind the Veil:
Moral Reasoning about Gender Equality and Women's Rights amongst Iranians

By
Neika Masroori

A dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction of the
requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy
in
Education
in the
Graduate Division
of the
University of California, Berkeley

Committee in charge:
Professor Elliot Turiel, Chair
Professor Erin Murphy-Graham
Professor Mahesh Srinivasan

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Abstract

Behind the Veil: Moral Reasoning about Gender Equality and Women's Rights amongst Iranians

by

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Doctor of Philosophy in Education

University of California, Berkeley

Professor Elliot Turiel, Chair

The study examined moral reasoning amongst Iranian men and women regarding gender inequality that is sanctioned by religious and legal laws in Iran. Through interviews with 32 recent Iranian immigrants to Australia aged 22 to 44 years, half of whom were male and half female, the study explored moral judgments on gender inequality and restrictions on women's rights in familial contexts in Iran. The study investigated both the evaluations and justifications provided by participants regarding: (i) specific practices of gender inequality (by men) sanctioned by religious and legal laws, and (ii) transgressions (by women) of religious and legal laws that sanction gender inequality. The practices addressed involved restrictions on females of the rights to travel, work, maintain ownership of financial assets after divorce, and choose whether to wear a hijab. The study also investigated participant evaluations and justifications regarding the mutability of existing laws that sanction gender inequality, by rule abolition, authority dictates from religious and governmental leaders and God, and common practice in countries outside of Iran.

It was found that Iranian men and women engage in critical evaluation of existing social arrangements pertaining to gender inequality, specifically practices that are religiously and legally sanctioned in Iran. The majority of participants of both sexes evaluated practices that enact gender inequality unacceptable. Most participants also approved of the dissolution of such laws, the prospect of support from religious and legal authority figures for the abolition of such practices, and the practices of other countries which denote gender equality in these areas. Reasoning provided by participants for their evaluations were predominantly moral justifications pertaining to human rights, equality and the well-being of persons. Concern with relationship harmony and honesty were also common concerns. Participants demonstrated a plurality of moral, conventional and personal concerns and engaged in coordination of concerns within and amongst these domains.

While most participants evaluated practices that sanction gender inequality as unacceptable, and also condoned the cessation of such laws and practices, there were variegated evaluations regarding the acceptability of transgressions of existing gender restrictive laws. Justifications amongst male participants largely involved concern for honesty and disapproval of the deception involved in violating existing laws. Female participants also demonstrated concern with honesty in their justifications, but this was accompanied by concerns with the wellbeing of females who transgress existing laws and the imperative of challenging unjust social practices.

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Dedication

I dedicate this work to the women and girls of the world. The strong, graceful, intelligent, serving, formidable, nurturing, confident, humble, kind, caring, loving, humorous, courageous, valiant, just, helpful, creative, resourceful, sensitive, gentle, faithful, steadfast, joyful, peaceful, exuberant, enthusiastic, generous, conscientious, flexible, capable, trusting, trustworthy, honest, truthful, reliable, compassionate, determined, tolerant, cooperative, collaborative, hopeful, idealistic and patient women and girls of the world. Your qualities are much needed in the world. May you be surrounded by an environment that is conducive to the flourishing of your potentialities. May you be able to grow, develop, and contribute to a world that will be much better off with your active participation. May the people around you recognize your integrity, respect your human rights, and treat you equal to the best of men. May the long night of oppression end for women, and may the dawn of enlightenment be near.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

Theoretical Context of the Study

Gender equality and the pursuit of human rights for women can be conceptualized as a moral concern (Carr, 2021; Conry-Murray, 2009; Mensing, 2002; Neff, 2001; Nussbaum, 2003; Turiel, 1983a). How individuals evaluate and justify actions that involve gender inequality and the restriction of women's rights can be explored from a psychological perspective using theories of moral reasoning. The present study seeks to examine moral reasoning on the part of Iranian men and women, pertaining to gender inequality in Iran, by using the framework of social domain theory (Turiel, 1983a, 2002, 2015), which provides a structure, language and lens with which to identify ways of thinking.

Social domain theory explains social and cognitive development as entailing distinct developmental frameworks that are constructed in childhood through the individual's interaction with his environment (Turiel, 1983a, 2015). That is, children's interactions with their environment lead to three developmentally different forms of social knowledge, or domains of judgment: the moral, conventional and personal domains (Turiel, 1983a, 2015). According to the theory, morality is not derived from conventional knowledge, but rather, moral and conventional thinking stem from different types of interactions and constitute distinct domains of cognition (Turiel, 1983a, 2015). Thus, the domain in which an interaction occurs bears on how people think about it. For example, rules and authority dictates pertain to the conventional domain, while principles such as justice and rights are central to the moral domain. The domains constitute partial structures rather than a unified system of thought, and the individual actively and consciously coordinates concerns and goals within and amongst these domains in the process of making social and moral judgments and choices (Turiel, 1983a, 2015). According to social domain theory, morality constitutes a universal way of thinking. An elaboration of social domain theory is provided in the literature review chapter.

In contrast, cultural psychologists (Haidt et al., 1993; Markus & Kitayama, 1991; Shweder, 1990; Triandis, 1995) consider morality to be a variable concept, dynamically shifting by cultural context. According to such theories, pursuit of equality, justice, and human rights are not universal moral concerns but rather Western ones. Through such a conception, the Islamic Republic of Iran situated in the East would not be expected to prioritize pursuit of gender equality and women's rights over such values as gender norms, religious duty, respect for religious and governmental authority, and interdependence in familial and societal contexts. The present study explores what concerns guide Iranian men and women in formulating judgments about gender inequality in situations that constitute the intersection of law, religion, culture, and morality.

The concept of moral relativism espoused by cultural psychologists, and the internally uniform cultures it assumes, has historically been utilized to subjugate and silence minorities, especially women (Okin, 1999; Wikan, 2001). The voices, views, meanings, interpretations, goals and priorities of women have not always been represented in depictions of general orientations of cultures (Turiel, 2015). Thus, the present study questions the premise of internally consistent cultures and seeks to investigate whether there is a plurality of concerns that both Iranian men and women hold in relation to everyday practices within the family and social context. Underlying the social domain approach that the present study utilizes is an assumption of heterogeneity within cultures, and that such variation stems from a power differential (i.e., males in Iran have more power than females) and domains of thinking (i.e., the coordination of various moral, conventional

and personal concerns within a particular social situational context). So it is that the present study sought to compare males and females in their judgments of gender inequality and to identify domains of thinking engaged by each gender when reasoning about situations involving gender inequality and restrictions on women's rights.

The study utilized, as stated, the theoretical framework and methodology of social domain theory to investigate how people conceptualize and evaluate gender equality and women's rights in an Iranian context. More specifically, it sought to identify how Iranian men and women think about gender equality in a cultural environment where religious and legal authorities sanction inequality between the sexes both in written law and common practice. The study utilized the construct of the domains to understand judgments amongst Iranians both about the legally sanctioned restriction of rights by males, and the transgression of gender restrictive laws by females. It sought to identify the evaluations and justifications that are involved, and whether the processes of reasoning are based on moral, conventional, or personal concerns, or coordination amongst a combination of concerns within and amongst the domains.

Given the interest in processes of reasoning, thinking and judgment, the methodology utilized in much of the research anchored in social domain theory is semi-structured interviews. The interviews usually present to individuals a series of hypothetical situations which involve what may be considered moral violations and elicit a judgment as to whether the situation described is acceptable, and why or why not. Following this, a series of probes and counter-probes are presented to identify the domain or domains of thinking that are engaged.

Iranian Context

Iranian women have historically been silenced and shuttered, figuratively and literally, behind veils. Speaking up about their moral concerns have had fatal consequences for some and financial, social, and practical ramifications for others. Iranian women constitute a population that has not been readily accessible to academic discourse. However, the events of September 2022 involving the death of 21-year-old Mahsa Amini in Iran while in police custody after she was arrested for allegedly failing to comply with the hijab law, have emboldened Iranian women to an unprecedented extent to speak out publicly about their social and moral concerns. The present climate presents an opportunity to plug into the voices of Iranian women and to hear their own views on rights and gender equality, and also compare these to the views of Iranian men. While Iran is commonly represented as a collectivistic culture concerned with duty and sanctity, it was anticipated that Iranian women would indeed be interested in seeking rights and equality. The present study was, for security reasons, conducted not with Iranians within Iran, but with Iranians who had recently settled in Australia. The situations presented to participants in the interviews were set within Iran itself, and concerned Iran's legal and religious framework of rules and practice.

Goals of the Study

The current study aims to contribute to a body of literature that uses the framework of social domain theory to investigate the ways that individuals reason about gender equality and women's rights in cultural contexts. It seeks to explore how Iranian women and men, who live in a cultural environment where religious and legal laws sanction gender inequality and the restriction of women's rights, evaluate situations involving such inequality in daily life and what types of

reasoning are involved in their evaluations. The study uses social domain theory as the lens through which it identifies the justification categories, or reasoning, involved in these moral judgments.

Key Findings

In contrast with the assumptions of enculturation theories of moral development, whereby individuals internalize moral standards and norms from their environment (Benedict, 1934), the present study found that Iranians engage in critical evaluation of existing social arrangements pertaining to gender inequality. Iranian males and females engaged in reasoning that was critical of practices that are legally and religiously sanctioned by authorities in Iran and which constitute common practice in contemporary Iran. The majority of Iranians in the present study evaluated existing laws and practices that enact gender inequality unacceptable. They disapproved of gender inequality in various familial and social contexts pertaining to travel, work, divorce, and the mandatory hijab. Significantly, this was the case for both sexes. The majority of Iranians in the study approved of the dissolution of such laws, the prospect of support from religious and legal authority figures for the abolition of such practices, and the practices of other countries which embody gender equality in these areas.

While participants generally evaluated laws that sanction gender inequality as unacceptable, and they largely condoned the cessation of such laws and practices, the results were mixed as to whether transgressions of existing restrictive laws are acceptable. A significant portion of males, while recognizing the injustice of the laws, were concerned with honesty, and the deception involved in violating existing laws. Females were concerned with honesty as well as challenging unjust social practices, and in addition the wellbeing of females who transgress existing laws.

Contrary to assumptions that Eastern cultures are collectivistic (Triandis, 2018) and more concerned with duties and interpersonal responsibilities than a 'Western' preoccupation with rights (Shweder et al., 1997), the present study found that Iranian men and women are significantly concerned with rights. Indeed, participants reasoned about gender inequality using predominantly moral justifications: justice, rights, and welfare. Relationship harmony and honesty were also salient concerns, and participants engaged in coordination of various moral, conventional and personal concerns. The study indicates that Iranians grapple with the multidimensional nature of gender inequality and do not have a single homogenous orientation but rather demonstrate a plurality of concerns both within the group and within individuals.

Chapter 2: Review of Literature

Since the present study is concerned with the moral judgments of Iranian adults as pertaining to gender equality and women's rights, the literature review delves into the various facets of the question at hand. It begins with a review of canonical psychological approaches to moral development, moves to a survey of cultural theories on moral variation from anthropology and cultural psychology, turns to critiques of cultural theories by anthropologists and cognitive developmental psychologists, explores the social domain approach to culture and morality, and concludes with a review of studies that examine gender equality and women's rights in various cultural contexts.

The first section of the literature review on canonical approaches to moral development informs an understanding of the study's focus, through a psychological lens, on moral judgments. This section focuses on deterministic theories on the development of morality within individuals, including classic psychoanalytic, sociological, and behaviorist approaches.

Next, the review examines cultural theories on morality and its development, which are to varying extents founded on the underlying premise of determinism. This section describes the origins of the notion of differences at the level of culture in classical anthropological discourse, as well as the moral relativism espoused by cultural psychologists.

The review then turns to a critique of the culture concept and moral relativism by contemporary anthropologists. This part of the literature review is central to the present study because the interrogation of moral relativism is an underlying premise of the framework of the study. The current study is part of a body of literature that questions the notion of culture, and its assumed general orientations, as an informative level at which to study moral development. The study focuses on a particular cultural context but does not accept, uncontested, general assumptions about the culture's moral priorities such as its disinterest in rights.

Following this, the literature review explores several cognitive developmental approaches to morality, and in particular social domain theory. These approaches contrast with the deterministic theories and cultural theories presented in the first part of the review in terms of conceptualizations of moral development. Since the current study utilizes a social domain conceptual framework and methodology, various aspects of social domain theory that pertain to moral reasoning in cultural contexts are examined in this section.

Finally, the literature review surveys studies that specifically examine gender inequality in various cultural contexts, as well as studies on moral reasoning in religious contexts, utilizing the framework of social domain theory. The former body of studies are concerned with patriarchy and moral reasoning about matters pertaining to the family unit and in particular spousal relationships. Since the focus of the current study is moral reasoning about gender equality and women's rights with a population that has historically been characterized by patriarchy, these studies help to situate the current study within a matrix of interrelated studies. The latter set of studies focus on distinctions between reasoning about moral principles or moral religious rules on the one hand and nonmoral religious rules on the other. These studies helped to inform part of the methodology of the present study, as well as identifying theoretical and empirical distinctions in reasoning at the intersection of morality and religion.

Canonical Deterministic Theories of Moral Development

There exist opposing theories of moral development, each underpinned by contrasting assumptions about individuals and society. This part of the literature review traces the historical origins, in the twentieth century, of classic deterministic approaches to the development of morality: Freud's psychoanalytic theory, Skinner's behaviorist theory, and Durkheim's sociological theory. These approaches to moral development constitute deterministic theories in that they attribute development to unconscious, biological, or environmental sources (Turiel, 2015). While differing in fundamental ways, all three approaches share the foundational view that observations of morality as being based on conscious reasoning, judgment and decision-making are illusory (Turiel, 2015). Rather, it is proposed that morality is causally determined by unconscious, biological, and environmental mechanisms (Turiel, 2015). These are assumptions that are continued to various extents in modern theories of socialization and cultural psychology discussed in subsequent sections of the literature review (Turiel, 2015).

Psychoanalytic Theory

Freud's (1930) psychoanalytic theory of moral development emphasizes unconscious processes and the conscience. The theory is based on an assumption of incompatibility between individual needs and collective long-term survival (Asch, 1952). Freud (1923) expounded a theory involving a tripartite psychological system that serves to mediate the individual's instinctive tendencies with environmental demands, as the individual is leagued in a struggle between its own needs and collective survival. According to Freud, tension is caused within the individual in that, at an unconscious level, the individual is pulled in two directions: the instinctive need for gratification on the one hand (the id), and the moral compulsion to comply with social norms on the other (the superego) (Freud, 1930). The conscience serves to dominate the former force with the latter, by way of the faculty of guilt, which applies internal pressure on the individual to conform to internalized standards of societal rules (Freud, 1923).

For Freud, moral development proceeds from the external world in the sense that the environment socializes the individual as it governs social interactions and regulates instincts (Freud, 1930). The individual has instincts that society must keep in check, and in this process development occurs. For Freud (1930), morality involves self-restraint as well as incorporating societal standards. Self-restraint occurs through interactions amongst the individual's tripartite psyche that inhibit the individual's behavior, at times willingly and others unwillingly (Freud, 1930). The incorporation of societal standards emphasizes socialization processes, whereby the individual conforms to demands placed on it by the environment (Freud, 1930). While the id pursues instinctive drives, the superego curtails the instincts of the id that are incongruent with societal standards of morality (Freud, 1923). It directs the ego toward moral goals, rewarding with pride and punishing with guilt when the individual respectively succeeds or fails to conform to the moral standards of the environment (Freud, 1923). However, the id is subdued and moral demands from the environment are obeyed only under pressure from an external force, since individuals consider culture an enemy, albeit one that they are at times concerned with conforming to (Asch, 1952). From a Freudian view, the individual does not possess proactive forces concerned with moral ends that are not based on the gratification of personal needs (Freud, 1923).

Behaviorist Theory

Skinner's behaviorist theory of moral development, as with psychoanalytic theory, attributes behavior to sources beyond the scope of the individual's awareness (Turiel, 2015). However, in contrast, it relegates as irrelevant the role of internal psychological processes and concentrates on the role of external conditioning (Skinner, 1954). Skinner states, "We do not need to try to discover what personalities, states of mind, feelings, traits of character, plans, purposes, intentions, or other perquisites of autonomous man really are to get on with a scientific analysis of behavior" (Skinner, 1971, p. 12-13). Skinner considers introspection on the individual's thoughts and intentions irrelevant to the study of development and psychology and instead he tenders investigation of what is overtly evident, namely, behavior (Skinner, 1971). Skinner's concept of development revolves around the training of the individual through external reinforcements to engender conditioned responses. The individual is conditioned to emit particular responses through positive and negative reinforcers (Skinner, 1954). The positive and negative reinforcers are contrived contingencies in that they bear no natural connection to the behavior elicited (Skinner, 1971). What is central is that such environmental stimuli, when consistently administered to correspond with certain behaviors, elicit conditioned responses from the individual.

For Skinner, morality is that which survival and evolution within a particular historical and cultural context deem it to be (Skinner, 1971). Far from being a universal standard, it is whatever socializing agents such as parents, teachers, and peers reinforce as 'good' or 'right'. The development of morality is thereby construed as the process of reinforcing behavior that is in conformity with the values and norms of the culture (Turiel, 2015). A supposition of the theory is a unidirectional influence of external reinforcement mechanisms originating in the cultural environment acting on and conditioning the behavior of the individual. The notion of morality, from a behaviorist perspective, is not value-laden, but, rather, good acts are those that are reinforced as good and bad acts are those reinforced as bad within the parameters of a designated cultural environment (Skinner, 1971). Skinner states, "The reinforcing effects of things are the province of behavioral science, which, to the extent that it is concerned with operant conditioning, is a science of values" (1971, p. 99). Thus, moral development is concerned with the individual's absorption, through social conditioning, of the environmental norms of morality.

Sociological Theory

Durkheim's sociological theory of moral development, as with psychoanalytic and behaviorist theories, is not concerned with reasoning, judgment or choice on the part of the individual, but rather, focuses on formulaic adherence to socially agreed upon rules. Durkheim (1973) emphasized the role of society in moral development, and indeed he considers the purpose of moral development as being in service to society. In contrast with Skinner's theory, whereby moral standards are arbitrary and anything can be made moral by the use of reinforcements, for Durkheim, morality consists of that which is good for society. According to Durkheim, there are no moral ends except collective ones and "we are moral beings to the extent that we are social beings" (Durkheim, 1973, p. 64). Moral behavior is that carried out in the interest of society, with society constituting more than the sum of its membership and possessing its own character and structure (Durkheim, 1973). Durkheim views morality in terms of adherence to rules that are agreed on within a social context, and attachment to society as central to the process of moral development. Thus, Durkheim considers morality a social product that varies from society to

society, and the morality of each group is based on its social structure, to the exclusion of individual processes of reasoning and choice (Durkheim, 1973).

Like behaviorism, Durkheim's sociological theory of development focuses on explaining what can be seen externally, which is behavior, and discounts cognitive processes. Durkheim emphasizes the societal origins of the individual's thinking as people come to know through participation in social groups, and knowledge is socially derived. The individual for Durkheim (1973) has the potential for both egotism and altruism, and therefore moral education is imperative to guide the individual toward altruistic conduct that is beneficial to social good. Durkheim (1973) posits that by nature, individuals are neither self-interested, nor altruistic, but rather, social. He considers the individual a blank slate with very few alternative thoughts with which to contradict imperative suggestions from society, thus moral education has the role of bringing behavior in alignment with collective interest (Durkheim, 1973). While Freud perceives a constant clash and conflict between the individual and society, Durkheim views the relationship as integrated and respect for society and social rules are willingly accepted by the individual through his attachment to social groups (Durkheim, 1973). For Durkheim, the individual is inherently social, and is fulfilled only to the extent that he is social.

Deterministic Assumptions

An underlying tenet of Freud's psychoanalytic, Skinner's behaviorist, and Durkheim's sociological theories of moral development respectively is that the source of development is unconscious, biological, and environmental factors beyond the individual's own conscious reasoning (Turiel, 2015). The conception of the individual is a passive entity acted on by unconscious processes and mechanisms and forces in the social environment. Moral development is conceptualized as increasing compliance with societal demands and what is considered moral varies by social context (Turiel, 2015). These are assumptions that correspond with cultural theories of moral development espoused by classic anthropologists and contemporary cultural psychologists, reviewed in subsequent sections.

Although the explanations of these three twentieth century theorists have ceased to be considered mainstream in contemporary psychology, several of the assumptions of these foundational deterministic theories have been adopted by socialization and cultural psychology theories that are prevalent today. The notion of the internalization of morality from the external environment and the incorporation of social standards and values is propagated in contemporary discourses of socialization theory and cultural psychology (e.g. Grusec, 2006; Hoffman, 1975; Shweder et al., 1997). Another assumption that is widely accepted is that moral functioning is not based on conscious reasoning and judgment by an autonomous and rational individual but rather subconscious or unconscious processes, such as emotions and intuitions (e.g. Haidt et al., 1993, Haidt, 2001). The next part of the review delves into such cultural theories on morality, from classic anthropology to contemporary cultural psychology.

The Concept of Culture and Moral Relativism in Early 20th Century Anthropological Discourse

The concept of culture is a volatile and heavily contested territory with theoretical and practical implications for numerous facets of human life. In academic discourse, culture has proven "notoriously resistant to definition" (Abu-Lughod, 1991, p. 143) and it has been seized by various

disciplines to advance specific agendas. The concept of culture was used by anthropologists in the early 20th century to dispute notions of Western superiority. An emphasis on biological explanations for hierarchical differences between groups of people was supplanted by a focus on culture, free of evaluative undertone. An assumption of cultural relativism and cultural determinism has driven the fields of anthropology and cultural psychology to characterize each culture as having a general orientation. However, the concept of culture as construed by these theoretical frameworks is a problematic construction. Some contemporary anthropologists and cognitive developmental psychologists critique the culture concept and propose alternative levels at which to study human development.

Cultural Relativism

In the early 20th century, the culture concept was utilized in anthropological discourse as an alternative to theories of Western superiority. Boas, hailed father of anthropology, disputed the nineteenth century evolutionist view of a unitary direction toward progress and the consequent ranking of cultures, pioneering instead a theory of cultural relativism (Hatch, 1983). He posited that each culture has its own goals and that all cultures should be regarded as equal in terms of development and progress within the context of their own respective values (Hatch, 1983). This was a welcome alternative to the Victorian notion of Western superiority and the imposition of Western standards on so-conceived ‘savages’ (Hatch, 1983). Thus, the language of primitive and progressive, of savages and civilized, came to be replaced by a discourse on culture sans evaluative connotation or hierarchical ranking.

Enculturation

Aligned with Boasian cultural relativism, anthropologist Benedict (1934) utilized the concept of culture to refute biological determinism, the basis of the argument for the superiority of the white “pure race”. She proposed that it is not biology that defines who we are but rather socialization in culture. Thus, there is no biological basis for the ascendance of any race over another. Benedict emphasized the impact of culture in shaping human beings: “No man ever looks at the world with pristine eyes. He sees it edited by a definite set of customs and institutions and ways of thinking” (1934, p. 2). She conceptualized culture as the lens through which individuals see the world, thus residing beyond the scope of conscious criticism. Since individuals are immersed in it from birth, culture exists seamlessly outside of our attention and is simply accepted as how the world is, reminiscent of the adage that we do not know who discovered water, but we know it was not a fish.

In order to make visible both culture and the extent of its influence on human development, Benedict proposed study of “primitive” (1934, p. 12) cultures that are isolated from our own societies. Doing so, she logicized, would enable us to distinguish between the limited areas that are common to all human beings and thus determined by biology, on the one hand, and on the other, the magnitude of areas which vary across groups and are thus impacted by culture. Specifically, study of these unfamiliar societies would allow us to transcend our own culture, which she presumed we are somewhat blind to, and demonstrate the diversity that exists across groups in social organization and values. The identification of such social and moral diversity was in pursuit of the overarching goal of differentiating between biologically determined and culturally determined aspects of human development.

Anthropological studies conducted through the framework of her theory led Benedict to the conclusion that no part of culture is biologically transmitted. Neither language, religion, social organization, morality, nor behavior are carried in cells; rather, all are learned through socialization in cultural contexts (Benedict, 1934). Benedict (1934) proposed that individuals learn behavior through the process of enculturation, whereby ways of being and doing are handed down in the home, community and society as culture is produced and reproduced. Through this process, individuals within a group learn culture and become a cohesive unit. Benedict (1934) describes the extent to which individuals are influenced by their cultural context and how groups come to embody a homogeneous entity:

The life-history of the individual is first and foremost an accommodation to the patterns and standards traditionally handed down in his community. From the moment of his birth the customs into which he is born shape his experience and behavior. By the time he can talk, he is the little creature of his culture, and by the time he is grown and able to take part in its activities, its habits are his habits, its beliefs his beliefs, its impossibilities his impossibilities. Every child that is born into his group will share them with him, and no child born into one on the opposite side of the globe can ever achieve the thousandth part (p. 2).

Benedict considered each culture as possessing “one well-defined general pattern” (1934, p. 13) and the development of individuals within each group as heavily influenced by this pattern of culture. Furthermore, she conceived all cultures as being on equal footing and all as constituting valid explanations of human life, eliminating a hierarchical approach from either a biological or social stance. Benedict considered “primitive” isolated cultures as laboratories where we could study the diversity of human institutions and behaviors, in order to identify aspects of human development that are culturally conditioned. Thus, culture is the concept through which Benedict negated theories of biological superiority; there can be no such thing as a ‘pure race’ since biology does not transmit behavior, culture does.

In pursuit of dismantling the theory of biological determinism and the superiority of the white race, Benedict’s advocacy of cultural relativism entailed moral relativism. She states, “We are handicapped in dealing with ethical problems so long as we hold to an absolute definition of morality” (1934, p, 165). Benedict recommended in particular study of the morality and values of other cultures in order to demonstrate the relativity of human morals across cultures. This is a task that cultural psychologists in the late twentieth century readily took on.

The Culture Concept and Moral Variation in Cultural Psychology

The field of cultural psychology is concerned with the way culture influences individuals, resulting in diversity around the world, or otherwise put, cultural psychology is founded on the premise of cultural determinism (Shweder, 1990). A central tenet of the field is that we cannot disjoin self and context, that is, the individual and culture. Rather, the psyche and culture are defined in relation to one another and are co-constitutive in the sense that no objective environment exists outside the conception of the individual, and inversely, the individual’s mental life is altered by meanings and resources extracted from the environment (Shweder, 1990).

Cultural psychology emerged as a reaction against the cognitive revolution of the 1960s and 1970s in the discipline of psychology. The cognitive revolution disputed prevalent deterministic theories which considered illusory the notion of an active rational self (Turiel, 2015). The cognitive revolution brought to the fore the internal psychological processes of the individual

as an autonomous agent capable of rational thought and choice. However, according to cultural psychology, the cognitive revolution and much of traditional psychology failed to develop an adequate theory of the 'person', reducing it to a transcendent, universal entity, characterized by psychic unity (Shweder, 1990).

The claim that traditional psychology had produced an inadequate theory of the person, and the three specific ways in which the notion of the person was reduced, warrants further exploration as it highlights the intersection between the individual and culture so central to cultural psychology. The transcendence of the individual refers to the position of the self above, separate from and unaffected by matter or context, which is problematic for cultural psychologists given their conception of the co-constitutive nature of the self and context, of the individual and his culture. The universality of the individual is also clearly in opposition to the cultural determinism and resultant moral variation espoused by cultural psychology, which emphasizes the influence of culture on individuals and the variation amongst groups of people that it produces. Psychic unity is concerned with the discovery of a central processing mechanism within all people, which cultural psychology rejects because of its premise that the psychology of individuals varies from group to group due to the influence of cultural forces and the coherence between mind and matter. Thus, according to cultural psychology, general psychology assumes that people are the same and that the task of psychology is to discover that universal psychic unity (Shweder, 1990). In contrast, cultural psychology propose that people are different and that the mind is content-driven, thus resulting in psychological variety in different cultural contexts and different truths in different "intentional worlds" (Shweder, 1990, p. 42) or sociocultural settings.

Cultural psychology aimed to bridge a gap between traditional psychology and anthropology. The field conceived of traditional psychology as the study of the individual in isolation from his context and culture, as evident from its claims of personhood being limited to transcendence, universality and psychic unity. At the other pole was anthropology, which studied variation in cultures but was not concerned with the person or psyche. Cultural psychology strove to bring these fields into conversation with one another and provide cultural contexts for theories of the psychological development of individuals and groups.

Divergent Construals of the Self and Individualism and Collectivism

One of the most prominent concepts advanced by cultural psychology is that of divergent construals of the individual based on cultural contexts. Markus and Kitayama (1991) propose that people from different cultures have different construals of the self, others, and the relationships amongst them. They propose that American and Western European cultures generally give rise to an independent view of the self, while Asian, African, Latin and southern European cultures typically produce interdependent perceptions of the self (Markus & Kitayama, 1991). The independent construal emphasizes "attending to the self, the appreciation of one's difference from others, and the importance of asserting the self" (Markus & Kitayama, 1991, p. 224), while the interdependent construal is concerned with "attending to and fitting in with others and the importance of harmonious interdependence with them" (Markus & Kitayama, 1991, p. 224).

The independent and interdependent conceptions of individuals are produced, reproduced and circulated through culture in many ways, including education, family life and discourse. For example, while Americans tout attention to and assertion of the self through such maxims as "the squeaky wheel gets grease", the Japanese approach is to encourage fitting in with others as evidenced by such sayings as "the nail that stands out gets pounded down" (Markus & Kitayama,

1991). Likewise, a child at the dinner table in the United States who is refusing to eat his dinner will likely be reminded of the starving children in Ethiopia and how fortunate he is to be so different from them, while a child at the dinner table in Japan will likely be reminded of how much effort the farmer put into growing the rice and how his work will be in vain if the food does not get eaten (Markus & Kitayama, 1991).

According to the independent construal characteristic of Western culture, the self is a bounded whole separate from others; it is autonomous and comprises unique internal characteristics that guide its behavior. “Achieving the cultural goal of independence requires construing oneself as an individual whose behavior is organized and made meaningful primarily by reference to one’s own internal repertoire of thoughts, feelings and action, rather than by reference to the thoughts, feelings and actions of others” (Markus & Kitayama, 1991, p. 226). The independent self is direct and says what is on his mind; emphasis is on one’s own attributes, abilities, traits and desires.

On the other hand, the interdependent construal of the self, more prevalent in non-Western cultures, stresses the connectedness of individuals to one another and views the self and the world as extensions of one another; the self is fluid and variable as it pertains to particular roles and relationships (Markus & Kitayama, 1991). In contrast with the independent construal, the self is not separate from the other and the individual is less differentiated from social contexts. “The self becomes most meaningful and complete when it is cast in the appropriate social relationship [and] the self-knowledge that guides behavior is of the self-in-relation to specific others in particular contexts” (Markus & Kitayama, 1991, p. 227). The interdependent self is indirect and has the onus of responsibility to read the minds of others; emphasis is on the self in relationship rather than in isolation as a distinct entity.

Markus and Kitayama (1991) assume that the construal of the self as independent or interdependent is culturally determined, whereby Western cultures identify the self as a unitary entity while non-Western cultures define the self in relation to others. They state that “the significance and the exact functional role that the person assigns to the other when defining the self depend on the culturally shared assumptions about the separation or connectedness between the self and others” (1991, p. 226). Furthermore, they maintain that these distinct construals of the self, which have been derived from different cultural environments, can impact cognitive outcomes. They state, “We delineate how these divergent views of the self—the independent and the interdependent—can have systematic influence on various aspects of cognition, emotion and motivation” (1991, p. 224-225). From such a perspective, orientations toward cognition are influenced by culture through its influence on construals of the self in relation to others.

The construct of divergent construals of the self as either independent or interdependent depending on cultural context is founded on and also augments another one of cultural psychology’s most influential theories: individualistic and collectivistic cultures. In line with Markus and Kitayama (1994), Triandis (1995) proposes that some cultures are individualistic while others are collectivistic. Individualistic cultures associated with the West are concerned with rights, entitlements, autonomy, independence, personal goals and personal attributes; it is a culture of loosely linked individuals where the individual is the primary unit of analysis (Triandis, 1995). By contrast, collectivistic cultures associated with the East focus on responsibilities, duties, roles, interdependence and relationships; all are seen as being part of a larger group such as the family, tribe or nation, and the primary unit of analysis is the group (Triandis, 1995). It is readily apparent that from the perspective of cultural psychology the independent construal of the self emerges from

individualistic cultures while the interdependent construal of the self is produced by collectivistic cultures.

To illustrate the differences between individualistic and collectivistic cultures, some examples of contrasting situations in daily life will make the distinction more palpable. A waiter in an individualistic culture such as the United States will commonly distribute a menu to each person seated at a table in a restaurant and in turn each person will select their own meal. Meanwhile, a waiter in a collectivistic culture such as Brazil will more likely present the menu to the senior diner at the table who would then order the same meal for each person at the table (Triandis, 2018). In a work environment, an employee from an individualistic culture such as England may often deem it irrelevant and too personal to share with a supervisor such information as the passing of a parent. By contrast, in a collectivistic culture such as Japan a supervisor will often be well acquainted with the personal lives of subordinates and introduce them to potential spouses (Triandis, 2018). In New York a woman asking for help to escape her boyfriend who is beating her may commonly be ignored, while a young mother in Moscow may routinely be scolded by passersby on the street for not clothing her baby with sufficient warmth (Triandis, 2018). These day-to-day scenarios paint a picture of the diverse ways in which the constructs of individualism and collectivism impact cultures and the people within them.

Having described the differences between individualism and collectivism, what is meant by culture by cultural psychologists such as Triandis remains to be explored. Triandis states, “Culture is to society what memory is to individuals” (2018). That is, culture provides a record of what has worked effectively for a group of people in the past and what is deemed worthy of passing to contemporaries and future generations. Culture is superorganic in that it does not depend on the presence of particular individuals in order to permeate (Triandis, 2018). It is anchored in a time, place and language, and it involves values, shared beliefs, attitudes, norms, roles, words and tools (Triandis, 2018).

According to Triandis (1995), people use samples of information from their individualistic or collectivistic cultural context when making choices. These two constructs inform and influence decision making, manifested by concern with personal goals and attributes in the case of individualism, and focus on duties and relationships in collectivistic cultures. For example, in deciding whether to contribute money to a charity, someone from an individualistic culture may conclude, “I am kind so I should contribute money to the charity”. The emphasis in the decision is the individual’s attribute of kindness. By contrast, someone from a collectivistic culture may opt, “My family needs the money so I will not contribute to the charity” (Triandis, 2018). In this case, the emphasis is on one’s duty to the family and relationships with the family group to which one belongs. Notably, the decision to contribute or not could go either way in either cultural environment but the way in which an individual’s cultural context influences decisions is consistent within individualistic cultures with an emphasis on the self and collectivistic cultures with focus on relationships and groups respectively.

The delineation of individualistic and collectivistic cultures was in part a response to the discourse on universal human rights gaining momentum throughout the mid and late twentieth century. While many academic disciplines and socio-political organizations clamored for the rights of the individual as a universal entitlement, cultural psychologists such as Triandis (1995) claimed that concern with the rights and entitlements of the individual is not a universal concern. He (1995) states that focus on individual rights is an element significant to individualistic cultures such as those in the West, but not of the same import to collectivistic cultures which are bound by bonds of interdependent relationships. In opposition to what was perceived as the imposition of a Western

concern with rights on all cultures, Triandis sought to understand and identify the concerns of different cultures through the dichotomous construct of individualistic and collectivistic cultures.

Culture and Moral Variation

The proposition that cultures have a general orientation (e.g., individualistic, collectivistic) and that these orientations vary across cultures has implications for theories of morality. Cultural variation inherently implies moral variation. The notion of divergent construals of the self and of individualistic and collectivistic cultures has been extended by cultural psychologists who propose that different cultures have different types of morality. Shweder and colleagues (1997) propose that morality varies by culture and that individuals within each culture internalize the moral standards and norms that originate in their environment. These moral propositions have been delineated in schemes that distinguish between cultures that uphold an ethics of autonomy, community, or divinity respectively (Shweder et al., 1997), or cultures that have a harm-based morality versus those with a broader-based morality entailing disrespect and disgust (Haidt et al., 1993).

Shweder and colleagues (1997) posit that the morality of a culture is primarily based on autonomy, community, or divinity, and that individuals are enculturated to adopt the version of morality valued by their culture. This adoption occurs through an interplay between immersion and inherent susceptibilities likened to the process of language acquisition (Shweder et al., 1997). Shweder and colleagues (1997) propose that cultures with a morality based on autonomy are concerned with justice, rights, freedom, individual choice and avoiding harm. This type of morality is associated with individualistic cultures. A morality of community, by contrast, values duty, hierarchy, interdependence and social roles (Shweder et al., 1997). It is aligned with collectivistic cultures. A third type of morality identified by Shweder and colleagues (1997) is an ethic of divinity, which focuses on purity, sanctity, spirituality, and a sacred order.

Shweder and colleagues (1997) propose that different cultures elevate different moral goods. While they acknowledge that each culture may incorporate a combination of the three kinds of morality, they maintain that each culture is predominantly characterized by one. The United States, for example, has the morality of autonomy at the forefront of its culture, and the moralities of community and divinity in the background or in certain subgroups that are not considered mainstream American (Shweder et al., 1997). The morality of autonomy in the United States is manifested in its preoccupation with rights: educational rights, healthcare rights, children's rights, animal rights, and the list goes on (Shweder et al., 1997). A moral concern with autonomy is also evident in the United States' engrossment in protection from harm. This concern ranges from the harm of physical abuse to hostile work environments to secondhand cigarette smoke (Shweder et al., 1997).

While it is a prevalent notion that concern with rights and protection from harm are universal moral values, Shweder and colleagues (1997) maintain that as a prominent concern they are unique to certain (usually Western) cultures and that other cultures have alternative schemes of morality that prioritize different moral goods. To empirically demonstrate this, Shweder and colleagues (1997) conducted research with the Oriya people of India investigating to what extent Oriya discourse is saturated with moral ideas from each of the three kinds of morality.

In a series of interviews with Oriya adults, Shweder and colleagues (1997) found that in several instances where Westerners would typically reason based on a concern with rights, harm, and justice, the Oriya people instead focused on concern with duty, sin and pollution. For example,

when interviewed about a hypothetical situation in which a wife is playing cards with her friends while her husband cooks rice for them, Oriya respondents identified the situation as a moral transgression (Shweder et al., 1997). The moral concern was not about autonomy (e.g., the right of the wife for social recreation), but about community and divinity (e.g., the duty of a wife to cook for her husband and the sin of neglecting a responsibility that disrupts the sacred order) (Shweder et al., 1997). Through many such analyses of discourse, Shweder and colleagues (1997) concluded that in contrast with the United States, for the Oriya of India, the morality of community and divinity are at the fore while autonomy is de-emphasized. Thus, they refute the notion of the universality of moral values such as justice, human rights and protection from harm, and propose instead that these are only considered moral goods in the context of certain (Western) cultures.

Another leading cultural psychologist, Haidt, is in agreement with Shweder that morality varies cross-culturally and that cultural norms significantly impact moral values. In one body of research, Haidt, Koller and Dias (1993) sought to demonstrate that concern with harm is not a universal moral principle but is culture-specific, and that principles other than concern with harm form the foundation of morality in many non-Western cultures. In order to empirically investigate whether some cultures have a conception of morality that is not based on harm, Haidt and colleagues (1993) conducted comparative research in the United States and Brazil. They presented interview participants with a prototypical situation which involves harm, as well as their own fabricated situations which do not involve harm but are “affectively loaded” and offensive in that they entail “disgusting” or “disrespectful” (Haidt et al., 1993, p. 615) elements. The harm-based situation involved a girl who pushes a boy off a swing and physically hurts him in order to sit on the swing herself. An example of Haidt and colleagues’ harmless but offensive situations which involve disrespect is a woman who cleans her toilet with a national flag, and examples pertaining to disgust are siblings who kiss and a family who eats their deceased dog (Haidt et al., 1993).

Haidt and colleagues (1993) sought to explore whether disgusting and disrespectful actions are deemed to be moral violations even when they are harmless. They found that Americans identify such harmless actions as disgusting and disrespectful but do not consider them wrong, while Brazilians appraise the disgusting and disrespectful actions as wrong despite being harmless (Haidt et al., 1993). That is, Americans do not moralize disgust and disrespect, but Brazilians do. Thus, they concluded that the United States has a harm-based morality, while the morality of Brazil is broader and encompasses the emotions of disgust and disrespect. This study formed the basis of Haidt and colleagues’ (1993) argument that moral judgments are better predicted by affect than by appraisals of harmfulness. They contend that a focus on harm in moral discourse should be supplanted by a focus on emotions and culture, since culturally shaped emotions such as disrespect and disgust inform moral appraisals and these affective clues help people discern what is right and wrong (Haidt et al., 1993).

Having proposed that the morality of certain cultures such as that of Brazil is not harm-based but founded on a broader conception which entails affect, Haidt and Graham (2007) went on to delineate types of morality that vary across cultures. They extended Shweder’s three types of morality, classifying the morality of various cultures into five categories. Haidt and Graham (2007) proposed that cultures can have a morality based primarily on concern with: (i) harm and care, (ii) fairness and reciprocity, (iii) ingroup and loyalty, (iv) authority and respect, or (v) purity and sanctity.

Morality based on harm and care stems from maternal sensitivity and extends to the social arena, manifesting in a general aversion to suffering and an inclination towards compassion (Haidt and Graham, 2007). Fairness and reciprocity emerged as a moral foundation because cooperation

proved to be an advantageous evolutionary trait, and justice amongst alliances and cooperative groups became key for progress (Haidt and Graham, 2007). The moral foundation of ingroup loyalty values patriotism, solidarity and sacrifice within groups, and considers immoral betrayal, dissent and criticism (Haidt and Graham, 2007). The authority and respect foundation is concerned with a posture of voluntary deference, admiration, duty and obedience towards leadership so as to maintain a hierarchical social structure (Haidt and Graham, 2007). Finally, purity and sanctity operates through the physical and social emotion of disgust which discourages carnal and base passions such as lust and greed, and considers moral the denial of such impulses (Haidt and Graham, 2007). To apply these five moral foundations to an example of cultural differences, in the study cited in the previous section comparing morality in the United States and Brazil, the morality of Americans is based, amongst other things, on harm, while that of Brazilians is founded on respect and sanctity. This can be identified given that harm was moralized by American participants, while disrespect and disgust were moralized by Brazilians.

These five categories constitute “psychological systems that provide the foundations for the world’s many moralities” (Haidt & Graham, 2007, p. 98). Morality is pluralized and is conceptualized as inherently variable based on cultural context as opposed to a static universal phenomenon. According to the theory, each culture involves some combination of the five moral foundations, assigning different levels of emphasis to some and excluding others from its moral framework (Haidt & Graham, 2007). Thus, all moralities stem from these five moral foundations but vary cross-culturally in the foundations included in a moral framework and the weight given to each. The five psychological systems predispose individuals within each culture to respond emotionally to moral issues pertaining to their culture’s particular moral foundation or combination of foundations (Haidt & Graham, 2007). Thus, for example, a liberal American will have moral inclinations towards harm and fairness, but not the latter three types of morality (Haidt & Graham, 2007).

For Haidt and colleagues (1993, 2007), moral functioning is not based on conscious reasoning and judgment by an autonomous and rational individual but rather subconscious or unconscious processes, such as emotions and intuitions. Haidt’s (2001) social intuitionist approach proposes that individuals make moral judgments based on ‘gut feelings’ that are emotionally driven. Moral reasoning is seen only as a post hoc, retroactive element when needed to justify a judgment, but not as the cause of moral judgments (Haidt, 2001). Quick moral intuitions constitute the basis of moral evaluations, which are sometimes followed by slow rationalization (or moral reasoning) in order to justify the evaluation. The role of emotions is key in Haidt’s social intuitionist theory of moral development as emotions such as disgust and fear guide the individual in making moral intuitions.

Critique of the Culture Concept and Moral Relativism in Anthropological Discourse

While classic anthropologists and cultural psychologists espoused moral variation across cultures, with each culture having its own goals and values, some contemporary anthropologists have criticized such a concept of culture and the moral relativism it entails. They assert that some cultural practices are unjust and need to change. A few examples of many such practices in the context of the welfare of women and girls are forced child marriage, female genital mutilation, foot binding, and polygamy. That a culture claims to condone such practices does not make them inherently moral within cultural contexts. This is because tolerance of such variability across cultures is simply a moral commitment to the status quo; cultures are not homogeneous; culture

can be an oppressive force; the influence of culture on individuals is not unidirectional. The following sections will explore these aspects of the critique of the culture concept and moral relativism.

Tolerance: A Moral Commitment to the Status Quo

Hatch (1983), an anthropologist, has critiqued the moral relativism espoused by Boas and other anthropologists following in his footsteps. In contrast with classic relativism which held that nothing is either right or wrong and that there are thus no moral principles with a reasonable claim to legitimacy, Boasian relativism claims that principles of right and wrong have validity within the limited context of each culture or society. Thus, Hatch (1983) points out, Boasian relativism obliges approval of the morality of each culture and not simply indifference to it. However, this moral relativism is “flying under false colors” (1983, p. 64) because, while it claims to be objective, it is “surreptitiously moral” (p. 64). This is because it calls for the value judgment of tolerance: “we ought to respect other ways of life” (p. 64). Therefore, according to Hatch (1983), moral relativism is paradoxically an extreme form of moral universalism with a narrow definition of morality, namely tolerance. That is, moral relativism calls for tolerance toward the moral standards of other cultures, and by demanding the moral principle of tolerance universally, moral relativism morphs into moral universalism and debunks its own theory.

In order to justify tolerance, the supposed fact of the existence of moral relativism is proposed. However, Hatch (1983) calls out two problems with such an approach: disputable evidence, and the irrelevance of evidence. Regarding the first problem with the ‘fact’ of moral relativism—disputable evidence—Hatch (1983) points out that what appear to be moral differences across cultures may in actuality be differences in informational assumptions. For example, one culture may condone corporal punishment of children while another culture deplors it, but this does not necessarily indicate different moral principles. Both cultures may be equally concerned with the moral value of the welfare and edification of children, but operate based on different knowledge bases and assumptions of what actions lead to such welfare and edification. In this example, the moral value remains constant while the informational assumptions and consequent actions vary.

Regarding the second problem with the presumed fact of moral relativism—the irrelevance of evidence—Hatch (1983) maintains that the existence of differences amongst cultures, even if such a thing could be proven, does not necessitate approval of it. The call for tolerance because of the existence of moral differences across cultures is based on “the logical impossibility of deriving ought from is” (Hatch, 1983, p. 68). For example, the existence of cancer does not necessitate valuing ill health (Hatch, 1983). Similarly, moral differences could hypothetically and theoretically exist between cultures without requiring approval of all such moral values.

Hatch (1983) further critiques moral relativism across cultures by highlighting a blind spot caused by a fixation with Western cultural imperialism. While moral relativists from Boas onwards have been concerned with avoiding Western superiority and the imposition of so-called Western moral standards on others, Hatch (1983) states that such moral relativists were so concerned that Western society should not limit the freedom of others that they ignored violence and oppression in other cultures. It is as though they were stating, “It is alright for someone else to engage in coercion, but not us” (Hatch, 1983, p. 98). The preoccupation with avoiding oppression in the form of the projection of supposed Western moral values on other cultures has led to condoning oppression within cultures by approving of violent practices under the name of moral relativism.

As an example, Hatch (1983) describes the practice, allowed in the name of culture, of the family and community killing women who have been victims of rape. The tolerance that moral relativists call for is a moral commitment to the status quo, regardless of the consequences and implications for the welfare of others (Hatch, 1983). It calls for condoning any values and principles a culture professes to value, regardless of their harmful impact, rather than allegiance to universal principles for humanity.

Heterogeneity of Cultures

Cultural psychology rests on the assumption that cultures form consistent wholes, whereas some contemporary anthropologists points to multiple and conflicting perspectives within each culture, some of which are inadequately studied and heard. Cultures are not monolithic, but rather, they comprise a plurality of voices (Abu-Lughod, 1991). The spokesmen of a culture, who often happen to be men, define their culture in ways that serve their interests (Abu-Lughod, 1991). Listening to the voices of those oppressed within cultural contexts, who often tend to be women and children as well as others on the lower rungs of the hierarchy of power, disrupts the notion of a culture being homogenous or internally consistent in the practices it condones and the values it upholds. The philosopher Nussbaum states, “Real cultures contain plurality and conflict, tradition and subversion” (1999, p. 37).

Abu-Lughod (1991), herself an anthropologist, asserts that anthropology has been complicit in constructing and maintaining the concept of culture. She states that “anthropological discourse gives cultural differences (and the separation between groups of people it implies) the air of the self-evident” (1991, p. 470) and admits that her discipline has “high stakes in sustaining and perpetuating a belief in the existence of cultures that are identifiable as discrete, different, and separate from our own” (1993, p. 12). Abu-Lughod (1991) criticizes this approach in anthropology, arguing that cultural theories overemphasize coherence within cultures and create the perception of cultures as bounded and discrete. She maintains that generalizations about cultures artificially impose barriers between cultures, investing each culture with a distortedly coherent quality and creating the myth of separation between cultures. Indeed, Abu-Lughod asserts that “the hallmark of twentieth century anthropology has been its promotion of cultural relativism” (1991, p. 471).

Through the lens of such cultural theories, a segment of a cultural group is seen as representative of the entire culture, and practices touted by some are considered as favored by all. This distortion is problematic and can have significant ramifications for those not represented. Furthermore, in anthropological discourse, non-Western cultures are anchored in the moment in which they are studied, and assumed bereft of past historical context or future evolution, thus amplifying the sense of monolithism. Abu-Lughod identifies “the complicity of the anthropological concept of culture in a continuing ‘incarceration’ of non-Western peoples in time and place” (Abu-Lughod, 1991, p. 471). The anthropological concept of culture as coherent, timeless, and discrete, has served as a tool for making ‘other’ (Abu-Lughod, 1991). While differences within cultures have been attenuated, differences between cultures have been accentuated.

In opposition to such tendencies, Abu-Lughod proposes that anthropologists should “write against culture” (1993, p. 13) in the sense that they should combat generalizations. She (1991) maintains that the concept of cultural differences is a problematic construction, authored by anthropologists, and she calls on contemporary anthropologists to disturb the culture concept and write against culture theoretically, substantively, and textually. In her own work, Abu-Lughod

(1993) does so by focusing on individual stories in an attempt to discern the multidimensional and complex nature of human experience within a given culture. This strategy for combating the construct of cultural differences, which Abu-Lughod recommends other anthropologists adopt, is writing ethnographies of the particular, as opposed to generalizations that homogenize groups. For example, instead of writing about “the Balinese” anthropologists should write about “one Bedouin woman” (Abu-Lughod, 1993). In so doing, the ethnography will invariably touch on universal themes such as loss, pain, conflict and joy, which highlight similarities across cultures and don’t ‘other’ a group, while also highlighting particularities within a cultural context without claiming that such differences are representative of the group (Abu-Lughod, 1993).

Culture as an Oppressive Force

In alignment with Abu-Lughod, Wikan (2001) maintains that the anthropological essentialist view of cultures as coherent, distinct and bereft of internal contestation is problematic. It exaggerates the differences between groups and disguises differences within them. Such a conceptualization allows culture to become an oppressive force as individual rights are overridden for cultural group rights as portrayed by those who benefit from the status quo (Wikan, 2001). While the concept of culture was originally intended to foster interpersonal understanding, instead it has become a weapon for pursuing particular interests (Wikan, 2001). Those in power portray the culture in ways that promote particular practices, structures, systems, and outcomes.

Moral relativists espouse respect for each culture and its own moral values. However, respect for ‘the culture’ is a flawed moral principle because of the interplay between culture and power. Some assert power to speak on behalf of the culture and they define culture in ways that serve their interests (Wikan, 2001). However, oppressors and the oppressed rarely agree (Okin, 1999). Thus, Wikan proposes that culture is not inherently entitled to respect. Rather, one must ask, “If I respect this, who will suffer the consequences?” (Wikan, 2001, p. 77). The answer is invariably those who are oppressed by the current system, often women and girls.

In the name of culture, women are commonly oppressed and subjected to harm. “When a man is subject to violence, it is called torture. When a woman is subject to violence, it is called culture” (Karim in Wikan, 2001, p. 16). Classification as a cultural practice provides impunity for a plethora of human rights violations against women ranging from rape to genital mutilation to kidnapping to denial of ownership rights. Thus it is that equality is “sacrificed on the altar of culture” (Wikan, 2001, p. 69). Although it may have originally been intended to be liberating, the culture concept perpetuates oppressive and unjust norms.

To illustrate how moral values such as human rights are sacrificed in the name of culture, Wikan (2001) describes the plight of Aisha, a 14-year-old Norwegian girl whose Pakistani parents married her at the age of 14 to an elderly Pakistani man. Despite the facts that Aisha protested the marriage and that child marriage is against the law in Norway, where Aisha and her parents resided, the state upheld her marriage on cultural grounds since it was considered a Pakistani practice to marry children (Wikan, 2001). Norway listened to the spokesmen of the culture, and the voices of women were silenced. Aisha’s parents’ culture was used to violate her rights and she endured the consequences of being spoken for by those in power.

Wikan (2001) proposes that culture is not static but dynamic, and that it shifts with each generation. People are not only influenced by culture, but can themselves influence it (Wikan, 2001). The conception that ‘we’ are individuals and ‘they’ are products of their culture assumes that individuals in other cultural contexts are not willful, authentic or thinking beings (Wikan,

2001). Thus, the conceptualization of culture as bearing a unidirectional influence on individuals is problematic. It ignores the impact that individuals have on shaping and reshaping their culture, and it perpetuates and justifies oppression.

Cultural Group Rights and Women's Human Rights

Okin (1999), a political scientist, takes an anti-relativist stance on morality and culture that is in consonance with propositions by anthropologists Wikan and Abu-Lughod, and she elaborates on how the culture concept is used to oppress women. Okin (1999) recounts that while previously, immigrants and indigenous populations were expected to assimilate into the majority culture, nowadays assimilation is considered oppressive. Thus, group rights are granted to minority cultures founded on the premise of cultural moral relativism. For example, in the 1980s the French government legalized polygamy for men, due to immigration from West Africa where the practice is common, resulting in over 200,000 polygamous families in France (Okin, 1999). However, Okin (1999) takes issue with relativist group rights granted on the grounds of multiculturalism, arguing that group rights can be antifeminist and perpetuate power relations that disadvantage and violate women.

The notion of cultural differences and minority group rights is used to justify violence against women, sexual slavery, murder and rape amongst other human rights violations (Okin, 1999). Nussbaum states, "Customs and political arrangements are important causes of women's misery and death" (1999, p. 32). The court plea, "My culture made me do it" has become less an exaggeration in jest and more a legitimate legal defense. To illustrate, the practice "marriage by capture" is used to vindicate kidnap and rape (Okin, 1999). In certain cultural contexts rapists are exonerated if they offer to marry the victim (Okin, 1999). In others, killing one's wife is not considered murder (Okin, 1999). And in others still female genital mutilation is acceptable (Okin, 1999). When cultural group rights allow oppressive practices, Okin (1999) asserts that we must ask: "Why should minority women have less rights than majority women?" Okin (1999) maintains that it is not racist to be acultural, but it is sexist and oppressive to silence the voices of women as minorities within a culture.

Okin (1999) also proposes that cultures are not monoliths; there is diversity within each culture and divergent voices to be heard. However, since men are often the representative voice of their culture, while women are silent, oppressive practices are classified as cultural practices and justified in the name of multiculturalism and cultural relativism. While associated with multiculturalism and antiracism, culture has been used to perpetuate violence, unjust norms, and oppression against women. Okin (1999) asserts that women's voices must be heard in group rights negotiations, otherwise they are likely to be harmed by those 'rights'. The voiceless, too, are part of their culture, but as long as they remain voiceless their human rights are often violated in the name of their culture.

Bidirectional Influence Between Culture and Individuals

Although not an anthropologist, psychologist Gjerde (2004) has contributed significantly to the anthropological discourse on culture and he critiques the culture-centered approach of cultural psychology in concert with other contemporary anthropologists. Gjerde (2004) asserts that cultural psychology presupposes unified groups that can be studied in their totality. This essentialist view assumes that people are interchangeable carbon copies and that a group contains

features emblematic of all its members (Gjerde, 2004). However, Gjerde (2004) critiques, cultural psychology neglects inequality and power hierarchies. It homogenizes groups and ignores gender and class differences and how these can impact people's views. Gjerde (2004) asserts that people don't simply internalize culture; they interpret it, and often resist and oppose it. Thus, cultures are not bounded and coherent but rather are heterogeneous.

Gjerde (2004) further postulates that culture is not 'out there' to be discovered, nor is it handed down from one generation to the next as a static body of knowledge and practice. Rather, culture is made and remade as people embrace, accept, negotiate and reject cultural values (Gjerde, 2004). Culture is dynamic and fluid, and it is the ever-changing result of ideological struggles and competing systems of meaning. Gjerde (2004) maintains that people not only learn from culture, but they also transform culture through interaction with it. Thus, conceptualizing culture as a fixed entity that wields a unidirectional influence on individuals is problematic.

Individuals do not simply internalize their culture as passive recipients; they interpret it, accept some elements, but also critique, negotiate, subvert, and reject other aspects of their culture. Individuals transform and influence their culture. To illustrate the complex web of influence and agency between individuals and culture, Abu-Lughod (1993) describes the practices of polygamy and arranged marriage in Bedouin families. The women she interviewed describe their opposition to the practices and the lengths they go to avoid it, including deception and subversion. Women plot amongst themselves to oppose, through the means available to them such as gossip, the practices of polygamy and arranged marriage which they consider unfair (Abu-Lughod, 1991).

The conceptualization of culture as bearing a unidirectional influence on individuals does not allow scope for individuals to critique their culture and to make changes to it when necessary. It renders individuals as passive and unthinking, and elevates culture to the repository of omniscient power. However, there are some cultural practices that are unjust and need to be changed. In the words of Martin Luther King Junior, "There are some things concerning which we must always be maladjusted if we are to be people of good will" (1968, p. 185). Theories that do not allow for a bidirectional influence between individuals and society do not allow for cultural shifts to bring cultural practices in alignment with justice, welfare and human rights.

Cognitive Developmental Approaches to Culture and Moral Development

The concept of culture as presented by classic anthropology and cultural psychology has been criticized not only by a number of contemporary anthropologists but also by some cognitive developmental psychologists, in particular social domain theorists. In order to grasp the intricacies of this critique and the alternative approach proposed by social domain theory, a preliminary exposition of some relevant aspects of social domain theory, as well as structural developmental theory on which it is founded, will prove helpful, before highlighting the themes of its critique of the culture concept and moral relativism. Thus, the following sections encompass structural developmental explanations of moral development, an elaboration of social domain theory, and a cognitive developmental critique of cultural theories of morality. Since the present study is based on social domain theory, the discussion of this theory will be in more depth.

Structural Developmental Theory

Constructivist Foundations. Piaget's (1937), Kohlberg's (1969) and Turiel's (1983a) respective structural-developmental theories of moral development are anchored in a constructivist

approach to human development, whereby development occurs through the interaction of the individual with his or her environment. This is in contrast with environmentalist approaches, such as socialization theory and behaviorism, which focus on the unidirectional influence of the environment on the individual, granting culture and society power of impact while rendering the individual passive (Baumrind, 1989; Dunn, Brown & Maguire, 1995; Durkheim, 1961; Grusec, 2006; Miller, 2006; Miller, 2014; Shweder et al. 1997; Skinner, 1954; Skinner, 1971). Constructivism likewise contrasts with nativist approaches to development which overlook environmental factors and explain development in terms of predetermined biological and maturational processes. To be clear, the constructivist approach is distinct from combinational interactionism which holds that development occurs as a result of both the environment and the individual's own internal processes.

Rather, constructivism explains development as a product of the individual's interaction with the environment. It is not a matter of the individual 'and' his environment, but the individual 'with' his environment, and the individual is actively seeking interaction with his environment and reflecting on such experience (Crotty, 1998; Ginsburg & Opper, 1988; Kohlberg, 1963; Piaget, 1932, 1937; Turiel, 2015). The events and experiences the individual engages in influence the structural development of his cognition, and in turn those structures are utilized to interpret and attribute meaning to his experiences (Piaget, 1937). These processes make the individual a proactive participant in meaning making.

This conceptualization of the individual as an active, stimulation-seeking, rational, thinking, and reasoning agent is central to social domain theory's interest in tapping into the judgments and processes of reasoning that individuals engage in. The approach does not assume that a cultural environment simply imprints itself on individuals, as socialization theorists (Baumrind, 1989; Grusec, 2006) do, nor that individuals make evaluations through quick, automatic intuitions (Haidt, 2001). Rather, it seeks to understand how individuals think about and make sense of cultural norms, moral principles, and other social phenomena as proactive reasoning agents.

Piagetian Theory of Moral Development. In contrast with the deterministic theories of Freud, Skinner and Durkheim presented earlier in the review, which attribute moral development primarily to unconscious, biological and environmental sources, Piaget emphasizes the agency of the individual. He views moral development as structural-relational, reciprocal and bidirectional. Piaget explains development as an interactive process between the environment and a conscious, rational, agentic individual (Turiel, 2015). Thus, his approach emphasizes the role of cognition in moral development.

For Piaget, morality can be conceived as a fixed phenomenon that does not change over time or across different environmental contexts, although its manifestation may vary (Piaget, 1932). Its development does not require reinforcements through reward and punishment, nor training in predetermined formulaic rules imposed by society. Rather, morality follows its own developmental course that is stimulated through the individual's interaction with his environment. Through the complementary processes of assimilation and accommodation, the individual's psychological structures are influenced by objects and events, and the individual in turn applies his structures to deal with his environment. Piaget explains, "the child abstracts logic not from the properties of objects but, rather, from the coordination of his actions upon those objects which is not the same thing at all" (1932, p. 294). A Piagetian elaboration on moral

development must take into account the individual's thinking and structures and the way that these influence and are influenced by his interactions with the environment.

Piaget's notion of the individual is that each organism is an active contributor to the process of its own development. He assigns to the individual a significantly more active and collaborative role than any of the deterministic theorists reviewed. Although he acknowledges the influence exerted on the individual by the environment, Piaget maintains that the environment does not simply impose itself on a passive subject, automatically transposing objects and events from the external plane to the internal plane, nor does it single-handedly structure the individual's behavior by conditioning responses (Ginsburg & Opper, 1988). Rather, the individual actively seeks engagement with his environment, adjusts his cognitive structures in order to accommodate for environmental demands, and also utilizes his cognitive structures in order to deal with the environment (Ginsburg & Opper, 1988). In these activities, the individual not only accommodates to the environment and modifies his own structures, but also interprets experience, assigning meaning to objects and events, and thus assimilating the environment to his own cognitive structures (Ginsburg & Opper, 1988). Thus, to describe the individual's relationship with his environment, it can be said that the environment "does not exert effects *on* an infant, but instead, exerts effects *with* an infant" (Ginsburg & Opper, 1988, p. 68). Piaget's concept of the individual is that of an active collaborator who pursues interaction with his environment, and in concert with experiences with his environment, molds his cognitive structures and his knowledge of the external world.

According to Piaget, the individual has the tendency to adapt to his environment, and this adaptation consists of the complementary and simultaneous processes of assimilation and accommodation (Ginsburg & Opper, 1988). Assimilation refers to the individual's incorporation of environmental objects and events into existing psychological structures, or phrased differently, the utilization of his current internal structures to deal with external reality (Piaget, 1937). Accommodation marks the individual's mutation according to his interaction with objects and events, or put another way, the modification of existing cognitive structures in response to environmental demands (Piaget, 1937). The psychological structures that are pivotal to Piaget's theory of development vary in form at different stages of the individual's development. Piaget propounds a stage theory of development, whereby the individual proceeds through a series of distinct stages in the course of his cognitive development, differentiated by qualitatively different psychological structures (Piaget, 1954). The process of cognitive development through these various stages is driven by pursuit of equilibrium between the individual's psychological structures and his environment, or put another way, the individual's adaptation to his environment (Ginsburg & Opper, 1988). The stages Piaget describes, the individual's interaction with his environment, evolving psychological structures, and processes of adaptation tell the story of "the evolution of attempts at equilibrium" (Ginsburg & Opper, 1988, p. 13).

A key feature that distinguishes Piaget from the deterministic theorists reviewed earlier is that his conception of morality involves critical thinking. While the other theories exclude the notion that individuals can think about things, the process of thinking and formulating judgments is central to Piaget's approach to moral development. Indeed, for Piaget, morality *is* a way of thinking. In the process of the bidirectional interaction between the individual and the environment, children develop ways of thinking, and morality is a result of reflection on social interactions. Two kinds of social interaction are particularly important for the development of morality: relations between the child and adults, and relations between the child and other children (Piaget, 1932). Relations between the child and adults are characterized by the authority of the

adult over the child and such interaction leads to the development of heteronomy in the child (Piaget, 1932). Children's peer relations are characterized by equality and lead to the development of autonomy in the child (Piaget, 1932). While the former interaction entails constraint of an authority over the child, the latter involves cooperation amongst equal peers (Piaget, 1932). In Piaget's stage theory of the development of moral judgments, heteronomous morality constitutes the basic level of morality, which is later superseded by autonomous morality (Piaget, 1932).

While the more basic stage of heteronomy (ages 3-7 years) is characterized by a unilateral respect from the child toward the adult, at the stage of autonomy (ages 8 years and over), there is mutual respect amongst peers. While the heteronomous child focuses on objective responsibility (the consequences of an action) and expiatory punishment, the autonomous child considers subjective responsibility (intentions) and distributive justice. Heteronomous morality considers rules as strict and absolute, and what is deemed right is obedience to such rules (Piaget, 1932). With the emergence of autonomous morality, rules come to be seen as relative and mutable subject to consensus, and reciprocity and fairness are deemed right (Piaget, 1932). However, it is important to note that autonomous morality is not synonymous with moral relativism. There exist at the level of autonomous morality universal principles such as justice and cooperation, but the application of such principles may differ across contexts and situations. Rules can be changed or created based on social agreement, in harmony with universal principles.

In order for the child to move from heteronomous toward autonomous morality, he needs to develop concepts of justice, mutual respect, reciprocity and cooperation. Piaget views adult authority as a potential interference to the social and moral development of the child., and he identifies the child's relations with his peers as being of chief import in the development of morality (Piaget, 1932). Constraint imposed by adults does not help the child move toward autonomy; what is needed is for the child to relate to equals in relations of cooperation and exercises in role-taking (Piaget, 1932). As the child interacts with peers, he moves away from thinking that adults determine rules and must be obeyed (Piaget, 1932). A morality of unilateral respect from the child toward the adult is inadequate because it is less equilibrated than one based on mutual respect (Piaget, 1932). Mutual respect and equality provide the foundation for the development of the concept of justice (Piaget, 1932). Adult explanations are not helpful to the process of moral development; the child needs interaction with his peers and in such relations of equality he carries out his own thinking and comes to formulate his own judgments.

Moral development for Piaget involves these invariant stages the individual progresses through that form successive structures of knowledge. Moral development entails the differentiation of the domains of knowledge from heteronomy to autonomy, or from conventions to morality. Morality is present in the earlier stage of development but it is not differentiated from rules and authority. For Piaget, knowledge, including moral knowledge, is constructed and stage-like, and the process of adaptation (through assimilation and accommodation) facilitates development of the individual from stage to stage. Moral development in such a conception is the result of cognitive structures transforming from individual-environment interactions, and is a universal phenomenon.

Kohlbergian Stages of Moral Development. Kohlberg applied Piaget's framework of cognitive development specifically to moral reasoning, introducing a cognitive developmental approach to social and moral development. Like Piaget, Kohlberg (1969) maintained that knowledge is constructed and that morality develops in successive stages throughout the lifespan. Kohlberg (1969) considered moral development a separate category of knowledge informed by

but not solely dependent on general cognitive development. He explained that children's moral and social reasoning is the result of constructed knowledge that undergoes a series of developmental changes of progression. Kohlberg (1969) articulated a systematic sequence of six invariant stages the individual traverses in the process of moral development. Moral development begins with the pre-operational stages concerned with obedience and self-interest, progresses to the conventional stages concerned with conformity and rules, and finally advances to the post-conventional stages concerned with social contracts and universal human ethics (Kohlberg, 1969).

Social Domain Theory. Turiel's (1983a) theory of moral development shares constructivist foundations with the other structural developmental psychologists reviewed. It recognizes the role of the individual's reasoning, judgment, and decision-making, and these processes are indeed central to the domain approach. While the core tenets of Piaget's and Kohlberg's structural developmental theory live on in social domain theory, Turiel's (1983a) social domain theory departs from them at a critical juncture.

The Differentiation Problem. Piaget and Kohlberg consider morality to emerge from conventional knowledge, whereas Turiel (1983a) conceives of the moral domain as an independent and whole organized system underived from the other domains. Piaget "examined the moral judgments of children and adolescents, proposing sequences of development entailing increasing differentiations of moral judgments from other types of personal and social judgments" (Turiel, 2015, p. 489). Piaget's and Kohlberg's respective theories conceptualize morality as being present in earlier stages but not differentiated from conventional knowledge; as the child develops he gradually differentiates morality from rules, norms and authority dictates. Turiel (1983a) builds on Piaget's theory, but explains development as entailing distinct cognitive developmental frameworks, or systems of thought, that are constructed in early childhood through the individual's interaction with his environment and which constitute specific domains of judgment, including the moral, conventional and personal. "This approach differs from structural-developmental stage models of moral judgment, which have described moral development in terms of the gradual differentiation of moral principles of justice or rights from nonmoral concerns regarding conventions, pragmatics, and prudence" (Smetana et al., 2014, p. 23).

Thus, Turiel (1983a) proposed that Piaget and Kohlberg's theories suffer from the "differentiation problem". For Piaget, true moral reasoning does not occur until the individual reaches the autonomous stage, at age 8 and often not until adolescence. Prior to that, heteronomous morality is more akin to conventions than morality since it is concerned with rules, authority, and self-concern. For Kohlberg, true morality emerges in the post-conventional stage as a sequential graduation from conventional forms of morality including obedience and conformity, and does not occur until adolescence or adulthood. However, for Turiel (1983a), morality is not derived from conventions but rather moral and conventional thinking stem from different types of interactions. For Turiel, the domain in which an interaction occurs bears on how people think about it. Neither socialization theorists, cultural psychologists nor even other cognitive developmental psychologists have provided a robust theory that accounts for different forms of knowledge. Social domain theory explains that the domain of interaction impacts ways of thinking (e.g., rule or authority contingency in the conventional domain, and principles of justice and rights in the moral domain). Children's interactions with their environment lead to developmentally different forms of social knowledge (Turiel, 1983b). According to social domain theory, the social judgments of

individuals do not form a unified system, but rather, partial distinct structures that interact, namely the domains (Turiel, 1983b).

In social domain studies, children as young as age 2 or 3 have demonstrated the capacity to distinguish between different forms of knowledge, specifically to distinguish between the moral and conventional domains (Smetana, 1981). These young children have already developed, based on discrete types of interactions with their environment, understanding of intrinsic consequences being distinct from norms. It can be seen that Piaget's notion of heteronomous morality and Kohlberg's post-conventional stages substantially correspond with Turiel's conventional domain, while Piaget's autonomous morality and Kohlberg's pre-conventional and conventional stages are akin to Turiel's moral domain. However, moral thinking, according to Turiel, begins much earlier than age 8 or adolescence, and is not a result of differentiation from conventional knowledge. Rather, morality stems from qualitatively different types of social interactions. While much of the early research of social domain theory focused on empirically testing the notion that children distinguish different forms of knowledge, later work has focused on how children balance and coordinate amongst the different forms of knowledge (Smetana et al., 2014). The notion of coordination, elaborated later in the review, is also an example of how Turiel extended cognitive developmental theory.

Conventional and Moral Domains. The domains identified by social domain theory are the moral, conventional, and personal. The moral domain centers on concepts of justice, rights, and welfare; the conventional domain involves judgments about practices that serve to coordinate interactions within a social system; and the personal domain concerns reasoning about actions that are squarely of personal choice and that fall beyond the purview of the moral imperative or social regulation (Turiel, 1983a). In making judgments, individuals coordinate within and amongst the domains.

Social conventions are “behavioral uniformities which coordinate the actions of individuals participating in a social system” (Turiel, 1977, p. 79). They are learned behaviors that require shared knowledge of the arbitrary attachment of particular practices to meanings (Turiel, 1977). Examples of conventions include dress, forms of address, and modes of greeting (Turiel, 1977). They are arbitrary in the sense that within different social situational contexts, alternative behaviors can be substituted to designate the same meaning (Turiel, 1983b). There is nothing intrinsic to, for example, the appellation ‘mister’ that denotes formality and respect for teachers, but within a particular social situational context, it can be agreed upon that the title carries such a meaning. In another social environment an alternative behavior that is socially consented to could represent formality and respect with equal claim to legitimacy. Conventions are functional to the coordination of social interactions and they facilitate the operation of a social system (Turiel, 1977).

From a domain perspective, morality can be conceptualized, not as a trait, adherence to a list of rules, or the learning of specific courses of action, but rather, as a universal way of reasoning based on the principles of justice, rights, and welfare (Turiel, 1977). In contrast with conventions, morality—concern for justice, rights, and the welfare of others—is not arbitrarily defined within the boundaries of a particular social situational context, but is universal (Turiel, 1977). Morality does not constitute a meaning that is culturally assigned to a behavior, but rather, is intrinsic to the behavior itself (Turiel, 1983b). For example, while formality may be associated with the convention of different attire in different cultures, a judgment of disapproval with regard to the unreasoned beating of another individual, based on concern for their welfare, is inherently and

universally moral in nature. The attribution of harm and concern for welfare to the behavior of unreasoned beating is not a socially or culturally agreed upon connection, but rather, is inherent to the action itself.

What distinguishes the moral domain from the conventional is that “morality is not conditioned by or defined by existing social arrangements” (Turiel, 2015, p. 506), including cultural influences. Rather, moral “prescriptions are characterized as obligatory, generalizable, and impersonal insofar as they stem from concepts of welfare, justice, and rights” (Turiel, 2015, p. 506). While conventions are learned and agreed upon contingent on social context, the development of moral judgment occurs with fixed results through the individual’s social interactions across cultures or environmental contexts. Fixed results do not mean uniform judgments across individuals or situations, but rather, a universal concern for justice, rights and welfare. The theory does not posit moral absolutism, but rather, moral universalism. Centrally, reasoning is involved in making moral judgments and not simply adherence to static rules, as multiple factors are rationally coordinated. The kinds of experiences that lead to development in the moral domain are common to all cultural contexts, and development occurs through the interaction of the individual with their environment (Turiel, 1977).

The moral domain encompasses a process of constructions about what ought to exist, not simply acceptance of what already exists in social arrangements. That is, the moral domain is concerned, not with descriptive, but prescriptive judgments. This allows the individual to transcend social reality and create new possibilities for human life founded on justice, rights, and welfare. Far from accepting the status quo, the moral domain allows the individual to question, critique and change existing arrangements.

Social Domain Theory’s Critique of Some Concepts of Culture

Having provided an overview of some relevant aspects of social domain theory and research pertaining to moral development, we can articulate the theory’s critique of the concept of culture as put forward by classic anthropology and cultural psychology. The key areas of critique, from the perspective of social domain theory, are that the culture concept overstates the differences between cultures and understates the differences within cultures; that it overemphasizes the power of the cultural environment to shape individuals and neglects to adequately address the impact of individuals on their environment; and that it reduces the product of development to compliance with social norms and rules. Social domain theory proposes alternative conceptions of culture: that there is variation within each culture; that there is contextual variation within an individual; that individuals can influence their cultural environment; and that neither cultures nor individuals can be characterized by general orientations. Furthermore, it demonstrates that heterogeneity in moral judgments is not attributable to cultural differences, as classic anthropologists and cultural psychologists have stated, but rather the source of variation can be explained by a power differential and domains of thinking entailing informational assumptions and cognitive coordination. Significantly, the notion which cultural psychologists postulate, that rights and autonomy are only one culture’s (Western) version of morality and that other versions are concerned with duty, purity and other moral goals, is rejected by social domain theorists. Instead, social domain theorists maintain, a concern with rights is universal and intrinsic to human thinking. The sections below elaborate on the aforementioned list of aspects of critique as well as the alternative conceptions proposed by social domain theory.

Variation Within Each Culture. Social domain theorists maintain that cultural psychology homogenizes each culture and assumes that each culture has a single orientation, a distinctive view, and one local voice. In so doing, cultural psychology overlooks differences within each culture, in terms of views and experiences (Wainryb, 2006). This view of internally uniform cultures is countered by those who maintain that cultures are heterogeneous and include conflict and contestation. Differences exist not only amongst different individuals in general, but also categorically between groups of people at different levels on the hierarchy of power. Those who have access to various forms of power and who claim to speak on behalf of a cultural group have experiences and perspectives that are often at odds with those who are bereft of such power.

Nussbaum (1999), whose philosophical work social domain theorists call upon, posits that the notion of cultures as monolithic, uniform, and timeless is inaccurate, and that indeed there is variety within groups. She asserts that we should be skeptical of deferring to the most powerful voices within a particular society as representative, and that we should recognize the plurality and argument that is apparent in a more textured reading of a given culture. She states, “people are not stamped out like coins by the power machine of social convention... norms are plural and people are devious” (1999, p. 14). Additionally, cultural psychology understates similarities between cultures. For example, the wealthy across different countries are more alike in many ways than they are with the poor in their respective countries (Gjerde, 2004).

Contextual Variation Within Individuals. Social domain theory proposes that the aim of social and moral development is not, as cultural psychology indicates, arriving at shared understanding through socialization or achieving increasing compliance on the part of the individual with social norms and rules. Nor do individuals simply engage in a uniform application of thoughts and habits. Rather, cognitive development is conceptualized as the process of constructing domains of thought and judgment through social experience that allow for flexibilities of mind regarding existing social practices and conditions (Turiel, 1983a; Turiel & Perkins, 2004).

Human thought is flexible in that people reflect on existing social conditions in ways that they can work towards change and not in ways that are predetermined by culture (Turiel, 2004). Thus, within an individual, social harmony coexists with social conflict (Turiel, 2004). The individual factors into his judgment a given situation, anchored in a particular context, and with multiple aspects to it, and he is also able to transcend what currently exists to strive to create new possibilities. This conception of development provides scope for the individual not only to accept input from his social environment, but also to engage in critical evaluation of existing social arrangements that are seen as unfair. At times the individual may side with tradition, at others with subversion. An implication is that conflict exists between individuals, and also within individuals, as they engage in reasoning with flexibilities of mind (Turiel & Perkins, 2004).

Furthermore, human thought is flexible in that individuals do not view actions in a vacuum and compute a formulaic judgment, but rather, they view situations in context and in totality. Thus, the meaning attributed to an action can vary depending on the social situational context resulting in contextual variation in judgment within an individual (Turiel & Perkins, 2004). To illustrate, social domain research has demonstrated that in the West, rights are upheld in certain contexts but subordinated to other moral goals in other contexts. For example, while the right to freedom of speech is endorsed in many contexts, it is commonly subdued in the context of a Nazi meeting being held in a community hall, because of other factors in the situation as a whole pertaining to welfare and potential harm.

Another example of flexibilities of mind and variations in judgments within individuals from social domain research is amongst the Arab Druze in Israel. For this population, regardless of existing laws, freedom of speech, religion and reproduction are upheld for all people, men and women, in the abstract, though subordinated to competing goals in certain contexts (Turiel & Wainryb, 1998). A third example is that amongst the Arab Druze, there is contextual variation based on sex in order to justify gender inequality. Wainryb and Turiel (1994) found that different justification categories are used for men and women in order to justify male dominance and female subordination. Male dominance is explained by the concepts of personal choice, autonomy and entitlements, while female subordination is justified by the concepts of roles, relationships, and duties (Wainryb & Turiel, 1994). Thus, the flexibility of mind to perceive situations in totality and in context can result in variations in judgment within the individual.

The Individual as Agentic. Another aspect of social domain theorists' critique of the culture concept is that cultural psychology emphasizes the individual's participation in culture, but does not give credence to his resistance or opposition to it, nor his agency to change it. Cultural psychology overstates the power of culture to shape individuals and understates the agency of the individual to critique cultural norms, practices and social arrangements. According to social domain theory, individuals have the rational capacity to think, interpret, oppose, subvert, and reject aspects of culture, and not simply to accept it (Turiel, 1983a, 2015). Culture does not bear a unidirectional influence on individuals, but rather, individuals can change aspects of culture (Turiel, 2004). The relationship between the individual and culture can be likened to the relationship between the individual and language. As people use language to express their thoughts, the language shapes what is said, but also, simply put, people can say what they want to (Miller & Bland, 2014).

Grounded in developmental theory, Wainryb (2006) maintains that people develop social and moral concepts through participation in and reflection on social interactions. She proposes that culture is not something to be internalized, and individuals are not carbon copies of their culture. Rather, cultures are historical constructs created and maintained through power clashes and contested meanings, and individuals, including young children, actively interpret culture as well as reflect on and critique interactions in cultural environments (Wainryb, 2006). This is in opposition to the cultural psychology view of cultural determinism whereby cultures are seen as coherent and the psychological development of the individual occurs in alignment with culture through processes of socialization, internalization and enculturation.

Inadequacy of General Orientations of Cultures and Individuals. Cultural psychology reduces cultures to possessing general orientations, such as individualistic or collectivistic (Markus & Kitayama, 1991; Triandis, 1995). According to domain theorists, this dichotomy is invalid because it overstates cross-cultural variation and understates within-culture variation. In contrast, social domain theorists propose that individualism and collectivism both exist in all cultures, and that we cannot characterize cultures by general orientations (Wainryb & Turiel, 1994). Individualistic and collectivistic concerns are intertwined in all groups and independence and interdependence are both embedded in the structure of social relations of all cultures (Turiel & Perkins, 2004). Within cultures we find a plurality of concerns, multiple interpretations, conflict, disagreement, and critical judgments with regard to cultural norms (Wainryb, 2006).

Social domain theorists also maintain that people possess more than one orientation stemming from culture, and that a concern with autonomy and rights coexists with a concern with

duty, roles and relationships in the minds of people in both the East and the West (Wainryb, 2006). Wainryb and Turiel (1994) found in a study with Arab Druze adults – a population that is hierarchically organized and considered to be collectivistic – that both men and women held personal entitlements as important. Wainryb and Turiel (1994) conducted a study comparing Arab Druze and Jewish females and males in Israel. They presented participants with hypothetical situations centered on a conflict between a husband and wife regarding work, leisure and other social arrangements respectively, in which either the husband objects to the wife's activities or vice versa. They asked participants who should make the choice and why.

Wainryb and Turiel (1994) found that both sexes in both populations considered personal entitlements important, despite the Arab Druze population being a hierarchically organized society. In the study, men were found to be concerned with freedom, choice, entitlements, and they valued possession of this autonomy. For example, it was found that the man can do what he wants even if the wife objects (Wainryb & Turiel, 1994). This demonstration of a concern for personal choice and entitlements is at odds with the cultural psychology assumption of interdependent cultures and their disinterest in rights and entitlements in preference for interdependent moral goals such as duty.

Furthermore, the study found that while the man can tell the wife what to do, the woman cannot tell the husband what to do, and the reasoning provided concerned roles, responsibilities and duties. Thus, autonomy rights and choice were attributed to men but not to women. Different justification categories, or reasoning, were used for men as compared with women, with the concept of autonomy being used to justify male dominance, and the concept of roles being used to justify female subordination (Wainryb & Turiel, 1994). Women found the disparity of existing social arrangements unfair and wanted more autonomy, but avoided conflict for pragmatic reasons such as preventing a beating or divorce, instead engaging in subversive or deceptive forms of opposition (Wainryb & Turiel, 1994).

Further demonstrating the coexistence of multiple orientations within a culture, Wainryb and Turiel (1994) found that men were concerned with their right to freedom and autonomy, while also being interested in cooperation and reciprocity, and women would uphold their role and duty while also subverting what they perceived as unfair practices. The Druze were not found to subordinate the self in preference for group goals, but rather, men were concerned with freedoms and entitlements and asserted that wives should not object to them seeking this autonomy (Wainryb & Turiel, 1994). This contrasts to the expectation that such a cultural group would not be concerned with rights, freedoms and fair entitlements, and instead would only be occupied with duty and interdependence. For both men and women, multiple orientations with regard to cultural practices coexist (Wainryb & Turiel, 1994). There is heterogeneity within cultures as there are differences in experiences, interpretations, meanings, and perspectives on social arrangements.

Nor can we characterize individuals by general orientations. Not only is culture heterogeneous, but so too is each individual. With regard to the relationship of the individual with his cultural environment, he accepts some aspects of it while rejecting others, he lives in harmony with it while also critiquing it, he upholds it while subverting it and at times is in direct conflict with it (Wainryb & Turiel, 1994). According to social domain theorists, culture is an inadequate level at which to study human orientations, in the way that cultural psychologists do. However, the individual as a whole is likewise too broad a level at which to study it, as many traditional psychologists do. Individuals behave in ways that are seemingly contradictory and inconsistent. Cognition comprises multiple domains—each with unique developmental trajectories and sometimes competing appeals—that individuals struggle to coordinate with one another (Turiel,

2002). Turiel's (2002) notion of cognitive domains provides a helpful unit of analysis for studying human orientations: it is the very process of reasoning and making judgments that is of interest in moral development. In this process, individuals strive to coordinate within and between various domains.

Social domain theory identifies two particular sources of variation in moral and social reasoning: (1) Different views, interests and goals of people at different levels of the hierarchy of power; (2) Domains of thinking.

Power Differential as a Source of Variation. Regarding the first explanation for variation within a cultural grouping, social domain theorists maintain that the views of all need to be heard, including those who “lack the power to make their views count as culture” (Wainryb, 2006, p. 221). These voices often call for autonomy and rights. In contrast with the cultural psychology theory that Western and non-Western cultures differ in moral values, with the former upholding personal entitlements, autonomy and rights, and the latter devaluing these in preference of the subordination of the self for collective good (Markus & Kitayama, 1991; Shweder et al., 1997), social domain research demonstrates that values of personal freedom, autonomy and rights are indeed universal values observable in Western and non-Western cultures alike. For example, men in Eastern hierarchically organized cultures are shown to possess and value personal freedom, autonomy, and rights, relative to women, and women have been shown to want such personal entitlements (Turiel, 2015). In this regard, Wainryb and Turiel (1994) found that women from Druze communities in the aforementioned study in Israel “accept the legitimacy of males’ power and personal autonomy, recognize the consequences for those in subordinate positions, and regard the existing social arrangements as unfair” (p. 1701).

A concern with independence is apparent in the hierarchical organization of not only Western but non-Western societies, whereby certain groups possess personal entitlements and autonomy relative to others (Turiel, 2015). This is evident in relationships amongst members of higher and lower castes, social classes, and familial statuses, as well as in relationships between genders. Far from a unified voice there is a plurality of viewpoints within cultures, and the position of an individual in the social hierarchy of power can have more of a bearing on his perspective than does his culture (Turiel, 2004). Thus, members of dominant groups from diverse cultures have demonstrated similar perspectives to one another but divergent views to groups within their own culture who are in lower positions in the social hierarchy. Correspondingly, the perspective of members of subordinate groups from various cultures have also shown to be more aligned with one another than with dominant groups within their own culture (Turiel, 2015). Conflict and disagreement within cultures, especially amongst groups at different levels of the social hierarchy, are well established.

Cultures consist of hierarchies of power, multiple interpretations, opposition, conflict, resistance, and subversion, not only in the form of dramatic revolt and iconic protest, but also in daily life (Turiel, 2002). “Concern with equal rights and unfair treatment are not only part of political movements, but are also part of people’s everyday lives in Western and non-Western cultures alike” (Turiel, 2015). Individuals do not simply accept a single interpretation of social reality representative of their culture, but rather, as an example, subordinate groups oppose and resist practices that perpetuate inequality and find ways of undermining such practices and interpretations of social reality in their pursuit of personal freedom and entitlements. People in subordinate positions do not accept inequality; they engage in opposition, resistance and deception in order to correct injustices (Turiel & Perkins, 2004). This constitutes heterogeneity within

cultures based on a power differential. Regarding a power differential and the avenues open to those in subordinate positions, the present study involves enquiry into judgments about female acts of deception and subversion that seek to undermine unjust laws that restrict the rights of women.

People at different levels on the hierarchy of power often have different views, goals and interests to one another, thus resulting in variation in moral judgments. Individuals strive to apply moral thinking to cultural practices and social issues from different positions on the power hierarchy, leading to variation in judgments as well as conflict (Turiel & Wainryb, 2000). For example, social domain research has shown that amongst Druze adults in the aforementioned study, people in different roles with varying levels of power make different judgments regarding the same situation: women should acquiesce based on reasoning concerned with duty, while men should not acquiesce based on reasoning about autonomy, rights and entitlements (Wainryb & Turiel, 1994). Within social hierarchies and the different levels of power they embody, there is conflict amongst groups at different levels as well as conflict with existing practices (Turiel & Wainryb, 2000). This power differential explains variation within cultures. Thus, the present study seeks to compare the judgments and reasoning of male and female Iranians, representing two distinct levels on the hierarchy of power. Given the heterogeneity within culture, it is maintained by social domain theorists that culture constitutes an inadequate level at which to study human orientations.

Domain Specificity as a Source of Variation. Regarding domains of thought as a source of variation within and amongst individuals, social domain theory explains that individuals have multiple orientations which they weigh in formulating judgments. According to social domain theory, the judgment and reasoning of individuals with regard to the moral domain differs to that within the conventional domain (Turiel, 1977). Depending on the domain of reference, disparate meanings are attributed by individuals to principles, rules, actions and events. Individuals approach conventions with what may be termed a relativist (or context-specific) and mutable paradigm, and approach morality as universal and immutable. Each domain constitutes a complex system, with its own unique attributes. The process of thinking within the moral domain is distinct from thinking within the conventional domain, and from a very young age “children make moral judgments different from their judgments about conventions, rules and laws, authority, and personal choices” (Turiel, 2015, p. 507). The co-existence of the moral, conventional and personal domains of thought is a source of heterogeneity in thinking and action amongst individuals as well as within individuals across situations.

Social domain research has found that individuals differentiate between the conventional and the moral domains, and that this distinction explains variations in judgments more adequately than the culture concept and moral relativism do. Research into the judgments of children, adolescents and adults in the moral and conventional domains focus on criterion judgments—“the criteria according to which thinking within domains is identified” (Turiel, 2015, p. 508)—and justifications—“the ways individuals reason about courses of action” (Turiel, 2015, p. 508). Numerous studies have found that while the criterion judgments and justifications that children use when reasoning about conventions are related to existing social structures, systems and practices, the criterion judgments and justifications used when reasoning about morality are independent of such social arrangements (Smetana et al., 2014).

The criterion judgments that children and adolescents use when reasoning about conventions involve rules, authority, and social or cultural practices, and the justifications involve “understandings of social organization, including the role of authority, custom, and social

coordination” (Turiel, 2015, p. 508). In contrast, the criterion judgments that children and adolescents use when reasoning about morality pertain to concepts of welfare, justice, and rights, which are deemed obligatory and not dependent on social arrangements, and the justifications relate to “preventing harm, promoting welfare, fairness, and rights” (Turiel, 2015, p. 508). Distinguishing between conventional and moral reasoning provides a framework for interpreting differences in moral judgments across individuals and situations, in a manner that contrasts with the aforementioned theories that propose that morality varies uniformly by cultural group. The present study adopts a domain approach to identifying and examining judgments.

Research into rules and reasoning in the conventional and moral domains has inquired of children and adolescents whether certain actions and events that participants judged as wrong would still be considered wrong in the absence of a prohibitory rule. Some of the actions presented to participants are conventions; for example, whether wearing pajamas to school would be wrong if there was no school uniform rule. Other actions pertain to moral issues; for example, whether hitting a sibling would be wrong if the parents allowed it. Studies have found that conventions are judged as contingent on rules, laws or authority pronouncements, reasoning that the conventional acts initially identified as wrong could be considered right in the absence of rules forbidding it because of the jurisdictional authority of the rule makers to govern conventions. In contrast, moral issues are judged as wrong despite the absence of rules prohibiting the action, and reasoning relates to the harm that the actions cause to others, as well as issues of welfare, justice and rights. In the examples provided above, wearing pajamas to school could be judged as legitimate if an authority such as the school principal permitted such attire, while hitting a sibling would not be condoned even if the parental authority allowed it because of the inherent harm that the action would cause. This demonstrates that in contrast with conventions such as dress, which may vary by culture and be subject to rules, authority dictates or group consensus, individuals think about moral issues, such as physical or psychological harm, based on universal and not culture-specific principles.

Regarding the relationship between consensus and culture, on the one hand, and reasoning within the conventional and moral domains, on the other, research has examined whether the classification of certain actions and events as wrong is maintained by participants when they are queried about the act taking place in a different culture in which the practice is considered acceptable. For example, posing to participants whether wearing pajamas to school would be wrong in a culture in which such school attire was acceptable, and whether hitting someone would be wrong in a group or culture in which hitting was common and acceptable. Studies have found that, as with rule contingency, participants judge conventions as contingent on consensus and social or cultural context because of the significant role of social arrangements, social coordination and custom for conventions. However, participants judge moral issues independent of consensus and social or cultural context, and as inherently obligatory. Similarly, social domain research has demonstrated that children and adolescents aged 6 to 17 think of conventions as changeable, whereas they think of morality as fixed and universal (Turiel, 1983b).

Thus, social domain theory articulates the criteria by which thinking within the conventional and the moral domain can be identified and distinguished from one another. The criterion judgments for the conventional domain can be summarized as: being based on consensus, social agreement or authority dictates; contextually relative; and alterable. In contrast, the criterion judgments for the moral domain are that it is: not contingent on rules, social agreements, or authority dictates; inherent to action; obligatory; generalizable and universal; and unalterable. According to social domain theory, while conventions can vary cross-culturally, morality does not

vary by culture. Thus, domain specificity provides an alternative to theories of cultural relativism as to explanations for variations in judgments.

Informational Assumptions as a Source of Variation. Another explanation that social domain theory provides for variation in moral judgments across individuals and groups is differences in the knowledge base upon which individuals reason. While morality is universal, what may differ across individuals and groups are knowledge bases, or informational assumptions, that are utilized in making moral judgments (Turiel, 2002). Informational assumptions are “what one correctly or incorrectly believes to be the facts regarding a given phenomenon” (Wainryb, 1991, p. 841) and they constitute “descriptive concepts regarding the nature of reality” (Wainryb, 1991, p. 841). They are distinct from moral judgments, which are concerned with evaluation of a given act or situation and involve “prescriptive concepts of worth and value, of right and wrong” (Wainryb, 1991, p. 841). Thus, in contrast with the classical anthropological and cultural psychology view that morality itself varies across cultures, social domain research has demonstrated that what actually varies is informational assumptions. For example, the practice of patricide, and in particular leaving one’s parents to die before they are infirm, does not necessarily point to a different definition of morality, nor its absence (Hatch, 1983). One group may prohibit such a practice as an implication of the principle of the welfare of others, while another may condone patricide on the basis of the same moral principle but with a belief in an afterlife in which one continues to exist in the same state as at the time of death (Wainryb, 1991). Based on such an informational assumption, the moral principle of concern for the welfare of others could reasonably manifest itself as patricide, so as to preserve the parent’s youthful vigor and health for eternity before it is lost to the process of aging.

Wainryb’s (1991) research has demonstrated a relationship between informational assumptions and moral judgments, such that a distinction between the two is critical to an understanding of apparent differences in decisions across individuals or cultural groups. Wainryb (1991) found that differing informational assumptions constitute a source of variation in moral judgments, in that they impact the interpretation of and meaning attributed to a situation. She conducted interviews with participants who were presented with two kinds of events: prototypical moral violations, that is, acts involving harm, injustice, or violation of rights carried out self-interestedly, and goal-directed acts, that is, acts similar to the former but in pursuit of goals that may potentially be deemed morally valid. For example, the prototypical moral violation regarding justice involved a retail manager who refused to consider qualified female applicants for employment due to his dislike for the gender, and the corresponding goal-directed act regarding justice involved a military officer who refused to consider pilots over the age of 40 for recruitment on a critical mission. Participants were asked to evaluate both prototypical moral violations and goal-directed acts dichotomously as right or wrong and to provide reasoning.

All participants evaluated the prototypical moral violations in all three sets of actions to be wrong. However, participant evaluations of the corresponding goal-directed acts resulted in significant variation. It was hypothesized that this difference in act evaluations between prototypical moral violations and goal-directed acts was due, not to differences in moral judgment, but to differences in the meaning attributed to the acts, that is, variation in informational assumptions (Wainryb, 1991). Wainryb states, “informational assumptions [...] bear on the interpretation or meaning attached to the event in such a way that if differences were to exist in informational judgments (e.g., in what two individuals or two cultures believe to be true), different meanings would be attached to the same event” (1991, p.841).

Thus, Wainryb (1991) applied informational manipulations in the study in order to investigate the relationship between informational assumptions and moral judgment. Each participant was presented with information directly oppositional to the position that they had articulated for each goal-directed act. For example, for the story relating to welfare which described a father physically punishing his child for misbehavior, participants who had evaluated the act as right were asked how they would evaluate the act if educational experts could prove that physical punishment was detrimental to the child's learning, and conversely, participants who had evaluated the act as wrong were asked how they would evaluate it if educational experts could prove that physical punishment was in the interest of the child's learning. Informational manipulation was applied to goal-directed acts as they were designed to include both moral and informational dimensions, whereas prototypical moral violations involved only moral concerns and therefore no informational manipulation was applied to those events. The study found that participants' act evaluations did indeed change as the informational assumptions were varied. The main reasoning provided by participants for change in act evaluation was classified as either informational agreement. Thus, the study demonstrates that informational assumptions perform a critical role in moral act evaluations by influencing the meaning attributed to an act. "Consequently, it is proposed that observed differences among individuals or groups in their moral evaluation of an event may actually be indicative of differences at the informational, and not necessarily the moral, level" (Wainryb, 1991, p. 841).

Coordination Within and Amongst Domains as a Source of Variation. Another of social domain theory's explanations for variation in judgments, including moral judgments, pertains to the concept of cognitive coordination. The process of decision-making requires the individual to coordinate both within the moral domain as well as between the moral, conventional and personal domains. Coordination within the moral domain involves considering different and at times competing moral goals pertaining to justice, welfare and rights, and identifying priorities in the particular social situational context. Likewise, coordination amongst the domains entails consideration of both moral and nonmoral social goals, and identification in the specific situation of priorities, be they moral, conventional or personal. This process of coordination within and amongst the domains results in varying judgments across situations and individuals. In contrast with moral relativism which views such variation as culture-based, social domain theory explains the variation as an outcome of the process of coordination as individuals weigh and balance competing goals.

Contrary to the assumption of cultural psychology and socialization theories that individuals internalize their cultural environment, social domain theory conceptualizes the individual as an active and agentic protagonist who formulates judgments in the context of social situations. The process of coordination, far from the automatic transmission of internalized rules into mechanistic action, necessitates active reasoning on the part of the individual, and thinking about various considerations in order to arrive at a conclusion for each particular situation. However, this is not to say that individuals do not possess principles or abstract judgments within the moral and other domains, nor does it infer that individuals fail to apply their theoretical judgments in specific situations (Turiel, 2015). Rather, individuals possess principles and judgments in the abstract, which in the context of concrete situations, must be prioritized or balanced against one another in order for a conclusion to be drawn. Turiel states, "Coordination reflects the fundamental flexibility of thought and its relational nature" (2015, p. 512). Individuals

have multiple orientations which are weighed; for example, in some contexts rights and authority are prioritized, while in other situations tradition and social harmony are prioritized.

Research into coordination within and amongst the domains demonstrates the reasoned cognitive approach of individuals as they reconcile different abstract principles, goals and judgments in the domains with one another as well as with the particulars of a situation, making choices that take into account informational assumptions and priorities. For example, Helwig (1995) investigated the judgments of children, adolescents and adults regarding freedom of speech and religion in the abstract as well as in concrete situations where freedom is in conflict with other moral considerations. It was found that most individuals judge freedom of speech and religion as obligatory and generalizable when presented in general terms, but also approved restrictions on these freedoms in particular contexts when they were in conflict with other moral considerations. For example, participants upheld in the abstract the right of an individual to express their views or to practice religious customs, but concessions were made in situations where these rights of freedom of speech and religion caused physical or psychological harm or when they came up against equality of opportunity (Helwig, 1995). The study demonstrates that in making moral judgments individuals weigh various moral goals, prioritize them and make reasoned choices. This explanation for variation in moral judgments, which takes into account the active thinking and cognitive coordination of reasoning individuals, differs markedly to the cultural psychology explanation that different cultures possess different moralities to one another which are uniformly adopted by individuals within each culture.

Likewise, in a different study to the aforementioned one but with the same population, Turiel and Wainryb (1998) found that amongst Arab Druze adults, the moral rights of freedom of speech, religion and reproduction were endorsed in the abstract but subordinated to conflicting social goals such as avoiding harm and following a directive from an authority. The study found that the criteria for the moral domain of non-contingency and generalizability were applied to rights in general; that is, freedom of speech, religion and reproduction were reasoned as moral rights. However, within specific contexts, these rights were not inviolable. Rights pertaining to freedom were weighed against and at times subordinated to other goals, including other moral goals as well as cultural factors such as hierarchy and family. This demonstrates the way in which individuals take into account the specific factors within a social situational context and coordinate multiple competing goals in the process of formulating moral judgments, thus resulting in variation across situations and individuals.

Another study looked at the process of coordination in choices about honesty and deception. This area is of particular interest in the context of the present study, since several of the situations presented to participants involve an element of deception. An example of coordinating moral goals involving deception is the act of hiding Jews in Nazi Germany: while honesty may be a moral goal that an individual values, that is weighed up against the welfare and protection from harm of a human being. Thus, honesty is in certain contexts subordinated to other goals. Perkins and Turiel (2007) interviewed adolescents regarding deceiving their parents about parental directives and demands. They found that individuals discriminate and distinguish between different situations depending on whether the parental directive pertains to moral, personal or prudential issues. Adolescents judged it wrong to deceive parents regarding parental directives about prudential matters, reasoning that it is within the authority and jurisdiction of parents to make demands on such matters that pertain to their children's welfare (Perkins and Turiel, 2007). However, the majority of participants in the study endorsed deception of parents when the parental directive was deemed morally wrong, or when it curtailed personal choice (Perkins & Turiel,

2007). This study demonstrates the nuanced manner in which individuals coordinate appeals from the various domains in making judgments. Thus, based on social domain theory, processes of coordination are demonstrably a source of variation in moral judgments across situations and individuals.

Studies on Patriarchy and Religion

Social Domain Research on Gender Equality in Patriarchal Contexts

A body of literature has emerged which utilizes the framework of social domain theory to investigate reasoning about gender equality and gender hierarchies in various cultural contexts. This includes a foundational study, referred to in the previous section, investigating concerns with dominance, subordination, social hierarchy, power, personal entitlements and personal autonomy amongst the Arab Druze and Jewish populations in Israel (Wainryb & Turiel, 1994). The body of literature also includes an examination of hierarchical marital practices and judgments pertaining to personal autonomy and interpersonal responsibility in the context of spousal conflicts in India (Neff, 2001). Another study compares families in Colombia and the United States in terms of individualistic and collectivistic tendencies (Mensing, 2002). A further study examines reasoning about fairness in traditional practices related to gender as well as decision making authority in the marital context in Benin (Conry-Murray, 2009).

Neff (2001) conducted research in India utilizing the framework of social domain theory to examine judgments pertaining to personal autonomy and interpersonal responsibility in the context of spousal relationships in India. Personal autonomy is concerned with fulfilling one's own wants and needs, while interpersonal responsibility is associated with attending to the wants and needs of others (Neff, 2001). Cultural psychologists (Shweder & Bourne, 1984; Markus & Kitayama, 1991; Triandis, 1995; Shweder et al., 1997) associate a preoccupation with personal autonomy with the independent and individualistic West, while attributing concern for interpersonal responsibility to the interdependent and collectivist East. India, often characterized as a collectivistic culture, is assumed to subordinate personal autonomy in preference for interpersonal responsibility. However, Neff (2001) found that Indians are concerned with both autonomy and responsibility.

Neff (2001) presented to male and female participants a series of situations in which the wants and needs of husbands and wives conflicted (e.g. one spouse wants to visit friends or take an art class while the other spouse does not want him or her to do so), and asked participants what the protagonist (either the husband or the wife) should do and why, so as to identify whether concerns with personal autonomy or interpersonal responsibility were prevalent. Neff (2001) found a difference between reasoning about the role of husbands as compared with wives, in particular, evidence of male entitlement and female obligation. Autonomy was emphasized more for husbands, while responsibility was emphasized more for wives (Neff, 2001). That is, husbands were granted autonomy to pursue their own activity more frequently and this right to choose was justified by their authority (Neff, 2001). In contrast, wives were expected to defer to their husbands more frequently and this obligation was justified by duty (Neff, 2001). This indicates that cultural norms of patriarchy present as differences in reasoning about autonomy and responsibility regarding the roles of males and females (Neff, 2001).

Mensing (2002) investigated individualistic and collectivistic tendencies within the family unit, comparing adults and adolescents from Colombia and the United States. He presented male

and female participants a series of hypothetical situations involving a combination of individual concerns and interpersonal responsibility in the family context. Examples of situations from the study include the choice of whether to go on vacation where the father or the rest of the family wants, and a woman's choice to take lunch to her husband or to comfort her upset daughter (Mensing, 2002). Participants were asked to decide what course of action should be taken between the two presented in each story, and responses were considered interpersonally oriented for actions that aligned with the will of the majority, and individually oriented if they served the interest of the story protagonist or a single other (Mensing, 2002). The assumption of cultural relativism would be that those in the so-conceived collectivistic cultural environment of Colombia would make family choices that benefitted the collective, while Americans who are cast as an individualistic culture would choose individual concerns as primary.

However, Mensing (2002) did not find significant differences between the responses of Colombian and American participants. Rather, his results indicated a variegated web of factors influencing the choice of respondents that did not fall cleanly within cultural or gender categories. Overall, Mensing's (2002) study shows that individuals across both Colombia and the United States take into account multiple factors when reasoning about choices within the context of the family unit, factors that encompass both individual rights and interpersonal responsibilities.

Conry-Murray (2009) conducted social domain research in Benin, West Africa to investigate how growing up in a cultural context where males are considered dominant to women affects reasoning about gender equality. The cultural psychology assumption would be that individuals are enculturated into accepting male dominance and come to accept it as a moral good. In contrast, the social domain hypothesis is that social hierarchies based on gender are not accepted or valued; that people all over the world develop the moral domain which is concerned with justice, rights and welfare; that authority and gender roles are not part of the moral domain and are thus not unalterable, but rather, are conventions which are alterable; and that gender hierarchy involves both factors pertaining to conventions (social roles) and morality (justice, welfare and rights) and that these factors are weighed up and coordinated by individuals engaged in reasoning (Conry-Murray, 2009).

In the study, male and female adults and adolescents in Benin evaluated conflict between a husband and wife over gender norms in order to identify whether participants judged the norms as moral or conventional. Participants were presented with a story situation involving marital conflict and asked who should have the power to decide in the situation and why. This was in order to investigate whether or not male authority is endorsed and what justifications are provided for such endorsement or lack thereof. In alignment with the social domain hypothesis, Conry-Murray (2009) found that social roles are seen as alterable conventions. The justifications provided for male authority pertained to conventional criterion judgments including authority and tradition. The study (2009) found that men uphold rights for their own gender, and women want rights and are critical of gender roles that restrict rights. Existing social arrangements are a result of coercion and not enculturation (Conry-Murray, 2009). A significant implication of the study is that individuals who grow up with gender hierarchies do not simply accept them, but are critical of them when they are not in the interest of all (Conry-Murray, 2009).

Social Domain Research on Moral Reasoning in Religious Contexts

A series of studies were conducted on judgments about moral and nonmoral religious rules amongst Jewish and Christian children and adolescents (Nucci & Turiel, 1993). Children were

presented with several situations involving moral religious rules, such as not hitting another, as well as several nonmoral rules, such as not working on the Sabbath, and evaluations and justifications were elicited through questioning. Additionally, participants were asked questions to probe as to the contingency of evaluations on rules, situation generalizability, and God's word or authority (Nucci & Turiel, 1993). It was found that children distinguish between moral and nonmoral religious rules (Nucci & Turiel, 1993). Moral rules were considered applicable to the general population, not restricted to members of a particular religion. They were also judged as residing beyond the jurisdiction of religious authorities to negate, and not contingent on rules or mandates from God (Nucci & Turiel, 1993). Rather, reasoning about moral issues centered on concepts of justice and welfare (Nucci & Turiel, 1993). The present study modeled its contingency questions on the Nucci and Turiel (1993) study, in order to identify whether gender equality is seen as contingent on rules, the authority of religious and governmental leaders, the authority of God, or situation generalizability.

Another series of studies conducted recently in India focused on reasoning about the scope of religious norms and moral principles (Srinivasan et al., 2019). Hindu and Muslim children and adolescents were interviewed about situations involving Hindu norms, Muslim norms, and moral principles respectively. It was found that children from both religious groups conceptualized religious norms as distinct from moral principles such as harm, and that they limited the scope of religious norms to members of the particular religion while applying moral principles as governable for members of both religions (Srinivasan et al., 2019). Children often evaluated it as acceptable for adherents of one religion to violate the norms of another religion, such as the Hindu prohibition of the eating of beef, or the Muslim prohibition against not fasting (Srinivasan et al., 2019). That is, while it was often judged wrong for a Hindu to violate their own religious norms, it was not often so for Muslims who did not comply with Hindu norms, and vice versa. While children restricted the scope of religious norms, they judged it wrong for either Hindus or Muslims to harm others (Srinivasan et al., 2019). The present study examines moral reasoning about gender inequality within a Muslim context, in that participants are Muslim and the situations in the interviews pertain to Islamic Sharia law. As such, the distinction between reasoning about religious norms on the one hand and moral principles on the other identified by Srinivasan and colleagues (2019) aligns with the purview of the current study. Reasoning about gender inequality as a moral concern and as a social practice sanctioned by religious laws constitutes the intersection of moral reasoning and religion at the center of both studies.

Summary of Literature Review

Canonical Deterministic Theories of Moral Development

Freud, Skinner and Durkheim's respective theories of moral development attribute development to sources outside of conscious reasoning on the part of the individual. They posit that what may appear to be reasoning is in actuality unconscious processes (Freud, 1923), environmental manipulations (Skinner, 1971), or socialization (Durkheim, 1973). The assumption that development is biologically or environmentally determined and the characterization of the individual as a passive entity acted on by forces in biology and society, are carried forward in contemporary psychological theories on internalization, social intuitionism, and socialization.

Classic Anthropological Concepts of Culture and Moral Relativism

The notion of culture was employed in the early twentieth century as a reaction to nineteenth century Western imperialism, rooted in evolutionist theories of biological differences amongst races and the concept of the ‘pure’ race. Against the historical backdrop of Western superiority, the concept of culture, along with its call for tolerance of cultural differences, was a favorable alternative. Anthropologists Boas and Benedict were chief proponents of the notion that differences amongst human beings are not due to biology, but rather to socialization in culture, and that we should be tolerant of differences rather than seek to impose culturally based values on other cultures. Benedict (1934) recommended study of “primitive”, isolated societies in order to recognize how much of what was previously thought to be biological differences are indeed cultural differences. She called for future research to study the values of different cultures to identify culturally based differences.

Cultural Psychological Treatment of Culture and Moral Variation

In the late twentieth century and continuing on in the twenty-first century, cultural psychologists heeded Benedict’s call and conducted research into perceived differences amongst cultures. Indeed, the field of cultural psychology is dedicated to studying the way in which culture influences individuals, resulting in diversity around the world. This body of literature has given rise to construals of independent and interdependent cultures, individualistic and collectivistic cultures, and other similar conceptualizations of cultures and their differences (Markus & Kitayama, 1991; Triandis, 2018). While independent and individualistic cultures are said to be concerned with rights, entitlements, and autonomy, interdependent or collectivistic cultures are concerned with duties, roles, and relationships. Moral relativism has also been propagated in schemes that distinguish between cultures that uphold an ethics of autonomy, community, or divinity respectively, or cultures that have a harm-based morality in contrast with those with a broader-based morality entailing disrespect and disgust (Haidt et al., 1993; Shweder et al., 1997). Another model of cultural variations in morality distinguishes between moralities based on harm and care, fairness and reciprocity, ingroup and loyalty, authority and respect, and purity and sanctity (Haidt & Graham, 2007). Thus, cultural psychology stands in opposition to theories of moral universalism and posits instead that what some consider to be universal standards and values are indeed Western standards imposed on all, and that each culture or grouping of cultures has its own equally valid morality.

Critique of the Culture Concept by Anthropological Discourse and Cognitive Developmental Psychology

Both early proponents of the culture concept (including classic anthropologists) as well as contemporary ones (including cultural psychologists), overlooked a number of important factors in their approach to culture and human development. Some contemporary anthropologists and cognitive developmental psychologists critique the culture concept as conceptualized by classic anthropologists and cultural psychologists. The four main aspects to their collective criticism can be summarized thus:

(i) *Ethical relativism is inherently problematic*: The tolerance called for by ethical relativists is surreptitiously moral because it requires a moral commitment to the status quo and

approval of the practices of any culture, thus it ironically constitutes a theory of moral universalism whereby morality is narrowly defined as tolerance. Furthermore, the existence or the fact of variation in morality amongst cultures pointed to as evidence supporting ethical relativism and a call for tolerance is problematic because (a) the evidence is disputable because such variation could indeed be attributable to differences in informational assumptions or knowledge bases and not morality itself; and (b) the evidence is irrelevant because the supposed existence of differences are descriptive and not prescriptive.

(ii) *Cultures are not homogenous*: A salient theme in twentieth century anthropology has been its promotion of cultural relativism. However, anthropologists have a professional bias toward constructing and maintaining cultural differences and presenting such differences as self-evident. In doing so, each individual culture is homogenized as it is assumed that each culture has a general orientation and a single voice, overlooking differences between people, especially people at different levels of the power hierarchy. Similarities between cultures are overlooked and any real or imagined differences amongst them emphasized. Critics of the culture concept maintain that we must recognize culture as a problematic construction, and see that cultures are not monolithic, coherent or bounded. We must recognize the plurality of voices, practices, interpretations, meanings and interests within a single culture, especially at different levels on the hierarchy of power.

(iii) *Culture can be an oppressive force*: Although the concept of culture was intended to promote interpersonal understanding, it has been deployed as a means of attaining particular interests. For example, in the past immigrants and indigenous groups were expected to assimilate into the majority culture, whereas today such an expectation is considered oppressive and group rights are upheld. However, group rights granted to certain cultures can perpetuate power relations that are unjust and oppressive. One must ask who has spoken as the representative of the culture and what are their interests? Those with power to decide what counts as culture often portray their culture in ways that serve their own interests, and it is often men who are the spokesmen for the culture, leaving women's voices silent and their interests not represented in projections of their culture. Thus, culture has been used as a tool for justifying oppressive and unjust practices against women.

(iv) *There is a bi-directional relationship between individuals and culture*: While classic anthropologists and contemporary cultural psychologists assume a unidirectional enculturation of individuals who are somewhat passively socialized by their culture, critics postulate that individuals can also influence culture. They assert that culture is not a static entity but shifts through human interaction with it. Contemporary anthropologists and cognitive developmental psychologists conceive of individuals as thinking, reasoning beings who critique, resist, oppose, subvert, and reject aspects of their culture, while also accepting other aspects. Thus, individuals are not simply products of their culture, stamped out as interchangeable representatives of their whole group, but rather, they have agency and live in harmony with some elements of their culture while in conflict with others. Thus, individuals can change culture and not only be changed by it. This is significant because in contrast with cultural psychology which emphasizes participation in and acceptance of social and cultural arrangements, the position of contemporary anthropologists and cognitive developmental psychologists explains, for example, how individuals can recognize injustice that is embedded in social arrangements and work to make changes.

Social Domain Theory on Culture and Morality

In alignment with contemporary anthropologists, some cognitive developmental psychologists, specifically social domain theorists, posit that cultures cannot be characterized by general orientations (e.g., individualistic and collectivistic). Rather, concerns with individuality and collectivism, with rights and duties, co-exist in all cultures. There is heterogeneity within each culture: there is opposition, resistance, conflict, subversion, deception, multiple interpretations of practices, divergent meanings attributed to the same situation, all co-existing with harmonious alignment with some aspects of culture.

From a social domain approach there are two main explanations for heterogeneity within cultures: (i) *Power-related variation*: People at different levels of the hierarchy of power have shown to have different views to one another; indeed, the powerful and those who lack power in any given culture often have more in common with their counterparts in other cultures than any other group within their own culture. (ii) *Domain-related variation*: This source of variation relates to contextual variations in judgment based on whether they pertain to moral, conventional or personal concerns. It involves the operation of different informational assumptions as well as an understanding of how various concerns within and amongst the domains are weighed up and coordinated to identify different priorities in particular social situational contexts using flexibilities of mind. Given the variation that exists within each culture, cognitive developmental psychologists render it an inadequate level at which to study human orientations and development, instead proposing enquiry at the level of domains. Thus, the present study, utilizes a domain approach to studying judgments of males and females within a particular cultural context.

Patriarchy, Religion and Morality

Empirical research conducted on reasoning about gender inequality in patriarchal contexts, utilizing the framework of social domain theory, includes studies in various cultural environments. Judgments amongst males and females about dominance and subordination, personal autonomy and interpersonal responsibility, as well as individualistic and collectivistic tendencies within spousal and family relationships have been studied in Israel (Wainryb & Turiel, 1994), India (Neff, 2001), Colombia and the United States (Mensing, 2002), and Benin (Conry-Murray, 2009). These studies examined reasoning pertaining to gender equality amongst participants who had grown up in environments where males are afforded a dominant position to females. The studies found that in making judgments on gender equality, individuals are concerned with multiple factors including both personal rights and entitlements, as well as interpersonal responsibilities (Mensing, 2002, Wainryb & Turiel, 1994). Social norms of patriarchy were also reflected in reasoning, with personal autonomy used to justify male entitlement, and interpersonal responsibility used to justify female subordination (Neff, 2001, Wainryb & Turiel, 1994). Findings indicate that individuals do not simply accept or internalize gender hierarchies from their environment, but rather engage in critical reflection on social norms, gender roles and patriarchy (Conry-Murray, 2009).

Social domain research in religious contexts has investigated judgments about the scope of religious rules, as well as differences in thinking about moral and nonmoral religious rules (Nucci & Turiel, 1993; Srinivasan et al., 2019). They examined the role of rules, authority dictates from religious leaders and God, and generalizability in reasoning about moral principles and nonmoral religious rules. These studies have found that individuals distinguish between moral and nonmoral religious rules, considering the former obligatory and generalizable while the latter restricted in

scope to members of the particular religion (Nucci & Turiel, 1993; Srinivasan et al., 2019). Furthermore, moral concerns and moral religious rules were not considered contingent on God's word or religious authorities, but rather on principles of justice and welfare (Nucci & Turiel, 1993; Srinivasan et al., 2019).

Research Questions

The present study explored the processes of reasoning and the formulation of moral judgments amongst the Iranian adult population on the concepts of gender equality and women's rights in the context of a religious and legal system that sanctions inequality between men and women. It endeavored to discover, through interviews about hypothetical situations with very recent Iranian immigrants to Australia, whether gender inequality is accepted or rejected, as well as whether violations of gender restrictive laws are accepted or rejected. It also aimed to identify through interviews the reasoning involved in the acceptance or rejection of gender inequality and violations of gender restrictive laws respectively. The construct of moral, conventional, and personal domains provides a lens through which to understand and analyze the evaluations and justifications provided in the interview process.

Specifically, the study investigated the following questions and sub-questions:

1. What *evaluations* do Iranian adults make regarding gender inequality that is sanctioned by religious and legal laws?
 - a. Are there differences between men and women in evaluations of such gender inequality?
2. What evaluations do Iranian adults make regarding transgressions of religious and legal laws that sanction gender inequality?
 - a. Are there differences between men and women in evaluations of such gender inequality?
3. What types of reasoning (*justifications*) are involved in acceptance / rejection of gender inequality that is sanctioned by religious and legal laws?
 - a. Is acceptance / rejection of such gender inequality justified on moral, conventional or personal grounds?
 - b. Are there differences between men and women in justification categories for acceptance / rejection of such gender inequality?
4. What types of reasoning (*justifications*) are involved in acceptance / rejection of transgressions of religious and legal laws that sanction gender inequality?
 - a. Is acceptance / rejection of such gender inequality justified on moral, conventional or personal grounds?
 - b. Are there differences between men and women in justification categories for acceptance / rejection of such gender inequality?

Chapter 3: Methodology

Setting

The Relationship between Religious and Legal Laws in Iran

Since the present study involved elements from religious rules, legal laws, cultural or conventional norms, and moral principles in an Iranian context, some background regarding the relationship amongst them in Iran will prove helpful. In Iran, especially since the Islamic Revolution in 1979 which resulted in the country officially becoming an Islamic Republic, religious laws (Sharia) have become legal laws, enforced by the government and its ‘morality police’ and punishable by the judicial system. Thus, when the study refers to religious and legal laws, it is in actuality a single body of law with two different sources of authority. Furthermore, these two sources of authority themselves—religious and legal—while conceptually different, are commonly a single authority in terms of system, structure, and function. That is, while an individual may intellectually interact in different ways with the concepts of religious authority and legal authority, the ‘Church’ (or more accurately the ‘Mosque’) and ‘State’ are not separate entities that are easily distinguishable from one another in contemporary Iran.

To illustrate the inseparability of legislative and religious law in Iran, a description of the specific process of law formation and enforcement in Iran will prove helpful. In Iran, the legislation of law is conducted by the Islamic Consultative Assembly, which is also known as the Parliament of Iran, and laws enacted by this government body must be consistent with Sharia law. Sharia law is derived both from the Qur’an (considered the direct Word of God through Muhammad) and also ‘hadith’ (a collection of sayings and practices attributed to Muhammad) (Amanat, 2017). Approval of the legislated laws is carried out by the Guardian Council, which consists of 12 Muslim jurists, six of whom the Iranian Constitution stipulates must be ‘faqih’s’, that is, experts in Islamic (Sharia) Law. A final signature of approval must be provided by the President of Iran. The Iranian Constitution states that “all civil, criminal, financial, economic, administrative, cultural, military, political, and all other statutes and regulations must be keeping with Islamic measures;...the Islamic legal scholars of the Guardian Council (Shura yi Nigahban) will keep watch over this” (Iranian Constitution, Article 4).

Enforcement of Sharia law at the national level is overseen by the Supreme Leader, who is the lifetime head of state and the highest religious and legal authority in the country, even over the President of Iran who must follow the decrees of the Supreme Leader (Amanat, 2017). The armed forces, judicial system, and Guardian Council all report to the Supreme Leader and he also has the power to veto legislated laws (Amanat, 2017; Iranian Constitution, Article 113). The position of Supreme Leader of Iran came into existence during the Islamic Revolution of Iran in 1979 and there have been two Supreme Leaders to date (Ayatollah Khomeini and Ali Khamenei). The Iranian constitution stipulates that the Supreme Leader must be a cleric and scholar of Islam (Iranian Constitution, Article 109). At a local level, Sharia law is enforced primarily by the ‘morality police’ or ‘guidance patrol’ (Gasht-e-Ershad), which is a unit of Iran’s police force. Thus, it can be seen that in the Iranian context, legal laws that are legislated by the government and religious laws that stem from Islamic Sharia law are inextricable.

Within the Iranian context, where religious and legal laws (Sharia law) sanction inequality between women and men, the reasoning of individuals on gender equality is of paramount interest. In particular, what role do conventional norms, moral principles, and personal concerns play in

judgments? The ways that Iranian adults conceptualize and formulate judgments about gender equality and women's rights within the context of religious and legal laws that enact inequality between the sexes is the focus of the present research study.

Restrictions on Women's Rights and Gender Inequality in Sharia Law

Given that the study is focused on gender equality and that Islamic Sharia law is central to the research, some aspects of Sharia law that relate to women are relevant to describe. According to Sharia law, which is presently enforced in Iran and has been for over 40 years, women do not have many of the rights that men do. Some of these legally enforced Sharia laws form the basis of the situations presented to participants in the study interviews and are described here for context.

Regarding some of the rights that women are denied under Iran's Sharia law, a woman is not permitted to travel outside of the country without her husband's permission (Passport Law, 1973, Article 18) and a woman is not allowed to gain employment if her husband deems it against family values (Civil Code, 1928, Article 1117). In the event that her husband dies, a woman loses custody of her children and instead the children go to her late husband's father or brother (Civil Code, 1928, Articles 1168-1170). Regarding the right to choose personal attire, the hijab is mandatory for women in Iran, and obviously this compulsory covering in public is not imposed on men (Islamic Penal Code, Article 638). Another example of inequality is that inheritance law prescribes that daughters are to receive half the financial share of sons (Civil Code, 1928, Article 907). While it is not written in law, women are banned from watching sports in stadiums, even if their brothers or sons are playing, and the unwritten law is enforced by the police through physical punishments (Human Rights Watch, 2022).

Regarding unequal laws on the dissolution of marriage, a man has the unilateral right to divorce, while a woman can only initiate divorce on certain grounds that must be proven to a court (Civil Code, Articles 1129, 1130, 1133). The husband does not need grounds for divorce and can divorce his wife simply by stating it verbally, even outside of his wife's presence. In contrast, in order to be granted a divorce, a woman must provide to the court evidence of specified grounds, such as the husband's imprisonment for more than five years, his desertion of the family home for more than six months, or physical violence that results in permanent—but not temporary—injury to the wife. In the event of divorce initiated by a woman, or initiated by a man but identified by a court as caused by the wife, the woman has no claim to ownership of the financial assets, home or money, except for her pre-marriage dowry (mehr) (The Iranian Marriage Contract; and Civil Code, 1928, Article 1146).

A further example of inequality is that while a woman is permitted one husband, a man is allowed to have up to four wives and an unlimited number of temporary wives (Civil Code, Articles 1075-1076; The Qur'an, Sura 4, An-Nisa, Ayah 3). Regarding temporary wives, a married (or unmarried) man is allowed to initiate a 'sigheh', which is a religiously sanctioned and legally recognized temporary marriage which may last some hours or longer (Nikaḥ al-Mut'ah: Pleasure Marriage Contract). Sexual intercourse within this temporary marriage is not considered adultery by religious or legal authorities. Women are not allowed to initiate a temporary marriage.

To illustrate the value assigned to women, if someone causes the death of another, whether it be manslaughter or murder, they must pay a fine ("blood money") to the family of the deceased; this is a fixed sum for a deceased man and precisely half of that sum for a deceased woman (Islamic Penal Code, Article 300). The same occurs in the event that someone causes a pregnant woman to miscarry: if the fetus is female the amount of the fine is half of what it is for a male fetus (Islamic

Penal Code, Articles 17 and 551). This is a mathematical and monetary manifestation of a perception of women as not having the same intrinsic or inherent worth as men, an assessment of women as subhuman.

Physical Setting

The study investigated the judgments and reasoning of Iranian men and women about legally and religiously sanctioned gender inequality in contemporary Iran. Given this subject matter, it was not deemed safe, feasible, or ethically defensible at the time of the study to undertake such research in Iran due to the risk of potential harm that could come upon participants who were interviewed in the study. The political upheaval and civil unrest in Iran over the months following the death of Mahsa Amini while in police custody in September 2022, and the ensuing waves of protests regarding women's rights, resulted in arrests, imprisonment, torture, and executions of Iranians en masse in Iran. In the four months following September 2022, Iran's security forces killed 527 protesters including 71 children (United Nations Human Rights Council, 2023). Thousands of others were subject to torture and sexual violence including beatings, flogging, electric shocks, death threats, rape and other acts of sexual violence (Amnesty International, 2023). Over 22,000 people were arrested and detained in relation to the protests (Amnesty International, 2023). This social and political climate posed insurmountable obstacles to conducting the study within Iran and the recruitment of participants within Iran, particularly for the purpose of interviewing them about women's rights which were the subject of the protests. The potential risk of harm to prospective participants who would have spoken on the record about legally and religiously sanctioned gender inequality was substantial. At a time when speaking out about gender equality and women's rights was (and continues at the time of writing to be) a potentially life-threatening endeavor for Iranians in Iran, engaging in such research within Iran was ethically problematic.

The prospect of conducting interviews with Iranians via online video conference was likewise untenable. This was partially due to the broadly known state surveillance of online and telephone conversations, which would pose safety concerns. In addition, from October 2022, the Iranian government intermittently shut down the internet nationwide in response to the protests, enabling it at undisclosed times in certain cities and disabling it without warning (Iran International, 2023). The disruption of internet access was to prevent the dissemination of news about civil unrest inside and outside of Iran, as well as to impede coordination and communication amongst various groups of protesters (Iran International, 2023). The economic impact of the intermittent disabling of the internet is estimated to be hundreds of trillions of rials (US\$773 million) (Iran International, 2023). Thus, conducting scheduled interviews online with Iranians in Iran was deemed unfeasible both from the perspective of pragmatics and human subject welfare.

Given that the setting of Iran itself was untenable, the study focused on Iranians who had recently immigrated from Iran to Australia. In order to reduce the potential impact of influences after leaving Iran, the study exclusively recruited participants who had lived in Iran since birth and had moved to Australia within the past two years. Participants resided in various cities across Australia. The interviews with these participants took place via an online video conferencing platform.

Participants

The study recruited 32 Iranian participants, half of whom are female and half male. Participant age was between 22 and 44 years. The age bracket was in order to focus on adults who were born subsequent to the Islamic Revolution in Iran in 1979, so that from the time of their birth onwards Iran has been an Islamic republic operating under Sharia law. Prior to that there was no mandatory hijab for women, nor were there the other gender-based restrictions that the study is concerned with.

All participants were born in Iran, had lived in Iran their whole lives until moving to Australia, and had resided in Australia for less than two years. The study focused on recent immigrants in order to minimize any potential influence from the Australian setting, and to concentrate on the experience of those who have lived most of their lives in the Iranian cultural context.

All participants were born into Muslim families and experienced an Islamic upbringing; participants varied in the extent to which they identified as Muslim, with some wearing the hijab, observing the Ramadan fast, and praying five times daily, while others were Muslim on paper but their personal beliefs had deviated from Islam. The study did not distinguish between followers of various sects of Islam such as Shi'ite and Sunni. Iran is officially an Islamic Republic and, according to the 2016 Iranian Census, which is the most recent Census administered within Iran to date, 99.6% of Iranians are Muslim. An online survey conducted in 2020 with over 50,000 respondents by an independent non-profit organization based in the Netherlands known as The Group for Analyzing and Measuring Attitudes in Iran found that 37% of Iranians identify as Muslim, with the survey including both Iranians living within and outside of Iran. Given that the religious and legal laws that the study focused on are Islamic (Sharia), the study exclusively recruited people who grew up in Muslim families within Iran.

Participant Recruitment

Recruitment of participants occurred through a combination of purposive sampling, convenience sampling and snowball sampling. Purposive sampling was employed based on preselected criteria pertaining to sex, religion, age, country of origin, country of residence, and duration of time since immigration. That is, participants included 16 males and 16 females, aged between 22 and 44 years, who were born in Iran into Muslim families, currently reside in Australia, and had moved from Iran to Australia within two years from the time of interview. Some participants had moved from Iran to Australia less than two weeks prior to the interviews, and a large number had moved just some months prior.

The study also utilized convenience sampling: since the researcher is an Iranian currently residing in Australia, access to Iranians existed through a network of acquaintances. The researcher did not recruit any participants personally known to her, but rather, reached out to individuals in her network who were connected with recent immigrants from Iran, such as Farsi-English translators for community based non-profit organizations and staff at Iranian restaurants and stores. Those individuals introduced a number of their clients and patrons, who were recruited.

Snowball sampling was also a key method of recruitment. While some individuals who were encountered were not eligible for the study based on the criteria, they introduced their friends and acquaintances who were eligible. Some participants who were interviewed subsequently connected the researcher with other prospective participants. The researcher limited the number of

referrals to three per person. This was a measure to enhance diversity of the sample, recruiting a wide range of people and not simply a single large group of friends, family members or colleagues. The sample included individuals who were fourth-generation snowball sampling recruits; that is a participant had referred another, who referred another, and so on for four iterations across multiple cities. As far as is known, most participants in the study were only connected to one or two other participants, if any. Through the use of snowball sampling with the described measures of discretion, the researcher sought to facilitate access to different segments of the Iranian population.

The recruitment process invariably involved conversations via telephone calls and text messages with prospective participants in which the researcher described the study, the interview, and the relevant human subjects information such as confidentiality. During these conversations, prospective participants were able to ask any questions they had or express any concerns. The researcher also emailed all participants a 2-page informed consent form (Appendix B) which described the purpose of the research study, the procedures including the interview, benefits, risks and discomforts, confidentiality, compensation, rights, and where to direct questions. Participants who were willing to participate in the study signed the informed consent form and emailed it to the researcher. Interviews were scheduled in coordination with the researcher and each participant, and a single-use video conference link was emailed to participants.

There was a challenge in the recruitment process pertaining to the social and political situation in Iran and the fact that the data collection interviews occurred in June and July 2023. Not only are many Iranians recently living abroad generally cautious of Iranian government spies and state surveillance operating internationally, but the events in Iran in the weeks directly prior to recruitment and data collection interviews made prospective participants particularly cautious of engaging in the study.

May 2023 was called the “bloodiest month” in Iran because it recorded the most number of executions in a single month for over half a decade: 106 executions in the first 20 days of the month. While not all of these deaths were related to protests for gender equality and women’s rights, there was a climate of apprehension to put oneself in a position that may appear like any wrongdoing. A number of prospective participants voiced fear over speaking about anything that could be construed by the Iranian government as dissension or opposition. Thirteen participants who were approached in the recruitment process all gave a variation of the same reason for declining to participate: they were afraid to speak about Iran on the record because if the information were to be leaked, they feared for the safety of their family members living in Iran, or their own safety on subsequent trips to Iran.

The researcher wishes to note that the study is clearly not critical of any culture, religion, country or government, nor is it protesting for any outcome pertaining to gender; it is a psychological study concerned with human reasoning. However, the researcher also acknowledges and respects the sensitivities of the Iranian social and political context and the welfare of all prospective participants, with their physical and psychological comfort foremost. Thus, the decision of potential recruits who were not comfortable participating was immediately respected and they were not contacted again.

Procedures

Data were collected using the methodology of semi-structured interviews. Each interview was approximately 40 minutes in duration and each participant was interviewed once. Females were interviewed by a female and males were interviewed by a male. The female interviewer was

the researcher, and the male interviewer was a doctoral candidate trained in the interview method and in the interview protocol. Both interviewers were Iranian individuals within Australia.

All interviews were conducted in English. This was deemed an appropriate language given that 53% of Iranians in Iran speak English, English is taught at primary and secondary schools in Iran, and it is also the language of Australia where participants had immigrated. The interviewers were both bilingual, proficient in English and Farsi, and on occasion they provided live translations of certain words from the interview questions as needed. Additionally, at times a participant expressed a particular word or term in Farsi, and this too was verbally translated into English by the interviewer during the interview, and confirmed by the participant.

Interviews were conducted via an online video conference platform. All interviews were audio recorded and a written transcript was generated using digital software. Interview scenarios and questions were read to participants verbally and also displayed on a shared screen on the video conference call utilizing a PowerPoint format with one scenario and question displayed at a time. In this way, participants listened to the questions being read, and also were able to follow along and re-read questions as needed before responding.

Each interview started with a statement of welcome and notes about the nature of participation in the interview, such as the fact that it is voluntary and that participants are welcome to pause or permanently stop the interview process at any time; this statement was also displayed on the shared screen as text. Next, the interviewer asked five preliminary questions about the participant: sex/gender, age, duration of time living in Iran, duration of time living in Australia, and a description of their religiosity.

Following this, the interviewer presented verbally and in text on the shared screen five situations, one at a time, to participants. Each situation was three to four sentences long, and was followed by 10-12 questions per situation presented verbally and in writing on the shared screen. Regarding the questions, after presenting each situation to the participant, the interviewer asked the participant to evaluate whether the action in the situation is acceptable or not, and to provide reasons or justifications by asking why or why not. The participant condoning or disapproving of the action in the situation (or being undecided) allowed for the classification of evaluations, and the reasoning provided allowed for the identification of justification categories during data analysis. Following the fifth situation and its corresponding questions, each interview concluded. A within-subjects design, in which all 32 participants were presented with all five situations, was employed.

Interviews

Interview Situations

The interview protocol (Appendix A) centered around five hypothetical situations involving Iranian male and female fictional characters. The situations presented to participants pertained to rights and gender equality in Iran. The themes of the situations were identified through preliminary meetings with 12 Iranian consultants residing in Australia, several of whom immigrated to Australia in recent months and years as well as some who moved prior to the Islamic Revolution of 1979. None of the consultants were recruited as participants in the study since they were already familiar with the project from a researcher perspective. A series of one-on-one meetings with these consultants gave rise to a recurring pattern of concerns pertaining to gender inequality which formed the foundation of the situations.

The situations and questions explored how Iranian men and women think about actions that are *sanctioned* by religious-judicial rules and authorities but that treat the sexes unequally or encroach on a right, as well as how they think about *transgressions* of such laws. Four of the situations in the interview involved gender inequality that is sanctioned by religious and legal law in Iran, and one of the situations was about inequality that is not gender related. The latter situation constituted a prototypical moral violation designed to ascertain whether or not participants were engaging in moral reasoning about inequality in general, before analyzing their reasoning about gender inequality specifically. The four situations related to gender inequality involved fictional husbands and wives and were about the right to travel, to work, to maintain ownership of financial assets after divorce, and to choose whether to wear a hijab. The study considered it assumed knowledge on the part of participants that the husband's actions in each story were permitted by Sharia law since such Muslim practices as those featured in the interview situations are common knowledge amongst Iranians who have lived in Iran. Therefore, Sharia law was not specifically mentioned in any stories, and this was partially so as not to lead participants toward a particular justification pertaining to religion or law, but rather, to maintain an open frame of reference. The prototypical moral violation was about equal pay for equal work amongst males.

Each of the four situations pertaining to gender inequality involved an action carried out by a husband that is *sanctioned* by Iranian Sharia law, but that encroaches on a right and/or treats women and men unequally. The questions that followed also included a variation of the original situation in which the wife engages in the *transgression* of the same Sharia law in order to seek a right or gender equality. The transgression involved some form of deception, secrecy or subversion. As with the primary situations and questions, all five were presented to all participants, together with the evaluation and justification questions following them.

The issues represented in the situations are:

1. Husband permission regarding wife traveling (Travel)
 2. Husband permission regarding wife working (Work)
 3. Distribution of money and assets in divorce (Divorce)
 4. Wearing hijab (Hijab)
 5. Different pay for same work amongst males (Wage / Prototypical Moral Violation)
- See Table 1 for the details of each situation.

Table 1: Primary Questions Across Situations

Situation	Primary Evaluation and Justification Questions
Travel	Niloufar lives in Iran and her mother lives in Canada. Niloufar tells her husband Husayn that she wants to go to Canada to visit her mother. Husayn says she is not allowed to go and refuses to provide permission for her to travel.
Work	Faezeh lives in Iran and has worked as an accountant for 5 years. Recently her schedule has become busier and her husband Omid tells her she must stop working because he deems it against family values. Faezeh insists that she wants to continue working but he refuses to let her.

Divorce	Arash and Parisa live in Iran and have been married for 10 years. Parisa has filed for divorce. Parisa keeps her small dowry (mehr), but Arash keeps the house, both cars, and all the money they have in the bank. Parisa tells Arash she should get half of the money and assets, but he refuses and keeps them himself.
Hijab	Leila is a woman living in Iran. She wants to go to the market without wearing her hijab, but her husband Farokh tells her she has to wear it. Leila obeys and wears the hijab to the market.
Wage	Siamak and Behzad are two men who work full time as cleaners at the same office cleaning company in Iran. They are both good, experienced cleaners. Their boss pays Siamak half the amount of money that he pays Behzad because Siamak is tall and the boss doesn't like tall people.

The fifth and final situation (Wage) is a prototypical moral violation and its purpose is to serve as a benchmark for responses about moral violations that do not pertain to gender equality so as to analyze responses about the other situations that do involve gender inequality. It involves a situation of inequality between two males and thus pertains to the issue of equality but not gender. This is in order to ascertain whether the participant is applying the concept of equality in general before focusing on their reasoning about gender equality in particular. The prototypical moral violation situation is different from the other situations in two ways. Firstly, it does not describe an action that is sanctioned by Sharia law but rather is a general moral violation regarding inequality. Secondly, the prototypical moral violation does not pertain to gender inequality or women's rights, and does not even include a female character, but is about unequal pay for the same work between two males of different heights. It serves the purpose of providing a baseline in order to analyze responses to the other situations relating to gender inequality and restrictions on women's rights.

In all the other situations (Travel, Work, Divorce, and Hijab), as per Iranian Sharia law, a woman does not have equal rights as a man. In the Travel situation, a woman does not have the right to travel without her husband's permission. In the Work situation, a woman does not have the right to work if her husband deems it against family values. In the Divorce situation, a woman who initiates divorce does not have the right to keep ownership of the marital money and assets. In the Hijab situation, a woman does not have the right to go out in public without wearing a hijab. These restrictions on women's rights constitute inequality in that they are not applied to men. That is, according to Sharia law in Iran, a man does not require permission from his wife to travel or work, nor does he lose ownership of marital assets if he initiates divorce, and he does not have to wear a hijab in public.

Three of the situations (Travel, Work, and Divorce) are contingent on the man's authorization while the Hijab situation is not. In the former three situations, the man could, if he so wishes, authorize the wife to do or have what she wants: he could provide permission for his wife to travel or work, and he could give her half of the money and assets in divorce if he so chooses. However, what is key is that a woman does not have the right under Sharia law to do or have these things without her husband's authorization. The Hijab situation is somewhat different in that the husband does not have the authority to allow his wife to go out in public without wearing a hijab. That is, even if he were to allow it, it would still be unlawful for the woman to go out without a hijab. By contrast, in the former three situations, the act is only unlawful without the

husband's permission. With the husband's permission, there is nothing inherently unlawful within Iranian Sharia law about a woman traveling, working, or keeping marital money and assets (on the condition that her husband approves it). The role of the husband's authority in the former three situations as compared with the Hijab situation was taken into account when discussing results.

To be clear, what is of interest is not whether or not a husband chooses to provide permission for his wife to do something, or whether he chooses to give her money or assets. Rather, what is central to the study is the restriction of the woman's right in the first place and part of that restriction entails requiring permission from her husband, and the inequality between women and men in that these restrictions are placed on women and not men.

Primary Evaluation and Justification Questions

Following each of the five situations were 10-12 questions about the evaluations that participants make of the action in the situation as well as the justifications for their evaluation. For the four situations relating to gender inequality, six pairs of evaluation and justification questions were asked, and for the prototypical moral violation scenario, five pairs of evaluation and justification questions were asked. This is because the question pair pertaining to the transgression of a law was not applicable to the prototypical moral scenario nor relevant to its purpose in the research design. Evaluation questions asked the participant whether a certain action in the situation was acceptable or not, while justification questions asked participants to explain why or why not (i.e., to provide reasoning for their evaluation).

The first (primary) question pair asked whether the action carried out by the husband in the situation, which is sanctioned by Sharia law, is acceptable or not, and why or why not. For example, "Is it ok or not ok that Omid will not let Faezeh work?" or "Is it ok or not ok that Arash keeps all the money and assets after the divorce?"

Contingency Questions

Following the initial question pair were four question pairs that constitute criterion judgment or contingency questions, pertaining to the possible influence of presence of a rule, authority dictates, and situation generalizability. The contingency questions in the present study were modeled based on prior social domain research in religious contexts (Nucci & Turiel, 1993) and the categories constitute criteria for distinguishing reasoning in the moral, conventional and personal domains. There were two pairs of questions for authority dictates, one with religious and governmental leaders as authority figures, and the other with God as the authority figure. Given the religious nature of Sharia law, it was deemed appropriate to include different forms of religious authority figures, including both human leaders and God.

As part of each criterion judgment question, the interviewer asked for evaluations and justifications by asking participants whether, under such circumstances, the situation would be acceptable or not, and why or why not. The contingency questions for all five situations are provided in Table 2. To highlight the contingency questions for one of the situations: in the Hijab situation, participants were asked to evaluate and justify the hypothetical abolition of the rule mandating the hijab for women in Iran (rule contingency), a dictate from religious and governmental leaders eliminating the mandatory hijab for women in Iran (authority of leaders), a dictate from God eliminating the mandatory hijab for women in Iran (authority of God), and the

common practice in a foreign country of women going out in public without a hijab (situation generalizability).

Table 2: Contingency Questions Across Situations

Situation	Presence of a Rule	Authority Dictate (Leaders)	Authority Dictate (God)	Situation Generalizability
Travel	<p>Suppose if there was no rule in Iran that a woman requires her husband's permission to travel.</p> <p>Is it ok to not have that rule in Iran? Why or why not?</p>	<p>Suppose if religious and governmental leaders in Iran said a woman is allowed to travel without her husband's permission.</p> <p>Is it ok or not ok for the leaders to say that? Why or why not?</p>	<p>Suppose if God said a woman is allowed to travel without her husband's permission.</p> <p>Is it ok or not ok for God to say that? Why or why not?</p>	<p>Suppose if in another country outside of Iran it is generally accepted that a woman is allowed to travel without her husband's permission.</p> <p>Is it ok or not ok that this is acceptable practice in another country? Why or why not?</p>
Work	<p>Suppose if there was no rule in Iran that a woman can not work if her husband deems it against family values.</p> <p>Is it ok to not have that rule in Iran it ok to not have that rule in Iran? Why or why not?</p>	<p>Suppose if religious and governmental leaders in Iran said a woman is allowed to work even if her husband deems it against family values.</p> <p>Is it ok or not ok for the leaders to say that? Why or why not?</p>	<p>Suppose if God said a woman is allowed to work even if her husband deems it against family values.</p> <p>Is it ok or not ok for God to say that? Why or why not?</p>	<p>Suppose if in another country outside of Iran it is generally accepted that a woman is allowed to work even if her husband deems it against family values.</p> <p>Is it ok or not ok that this is acceptable practice in another country? Why or why not?</p>

<p>Divorce</p>	<p>Suppose if there was no rule in Iran that a woman who initiates a divorce does not have ownership of the money and assets after divorce.</p> <p>Is it ok to not have that rule in Iran? Why or why not?</p>	<p>Suppose if religious and governmental leaders in Iran said a woman should own half of the money and assets after a divorce even if she initiates the divorce.</p> <p>Is it ok or not ok for the leaders to say that? Why or why not?</p>	<p>Suppose if God said a woman who initiates a divorce should own half of the money and assets after divorce.</p> <p>Is it ok or not ok for God to say that? Why or why not?</p>	<p>Suppose if in another country outside of Iran it is generally accepted that a woman who initiates a divorce has ownership of half of the money and assets in a divorce settlement.</p> <p>Is it ok or not ok that this is acceptable practice in another country? Why or why not?</p>
<p>Hijab</p>	<p>Suppose if there was no rule in Iran that a woman must wear a hijab in public.</p> <p>Is it ok to not have that rule in Iran? Why or why not?</p>	<p>Suppose if religious and governmental leaders in Iran said a woman does not have to wear a hijab in public.</p> <p>Is it ok or not ok for the leaders to say that? Why or why not?</p>	<p>Suppose if God said a woman can go out in public without wearing a hijab.</p> <p>Is it ok or not ok for God to say that? Why or why not?</p>	<p>Suppose if in another country outside of Iran it is generally accepted that a woman does not have to wear a hijab in public.</p> <p>Is it ok or not ok that this is acceptable practice in another country? Why or why not?</p>
<p>Wage</p>	<p>Suppose if there was a rule in Iran that men of different heights get paid different amounts for the same work.</p> <p>Is it ok or not ok to have that rule</p>	<p>Suppose if religious and governmental leaders in Iran said that men of different heights get paid different amounts for the same work.</p>	<p>Suppose if God said that men of different heights get paid different amounts for the same work.</p> <p>Is it ok or not ok for God to say that? Why or why not?</p>	<p>Suppose if in another country outside of Iran it is generally accepted that men of different heights get paid different amounts for the same work.</p>

	in Iran? Why or why not?	Is it ok or not ok for the leaders to say that? Why or why not?		Is it ok or not ok that this is acceptable practice in another country? Why or why not?
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Transgression Questions

The sixth question pair for each situation provided a 1-2 sentence variation of the original depiction. In the variation, the wife in the situation engages in the transgression of the law from the original situation, that is, a violation of the religious and legal Sharia law in the scenario, in order to pursue a right or gender equality. The transgressions involved deception and/or secrecy and the violation of the restrictive law. The question pair following this variation asks whether the wife's action is acceptable or not, and why or why not.

For clarity, the original situations described actions that are sanctioned by Sharia law but that encroach on rights or equality, while the sixth question pair described actions that are transgressions of Sharia law but that seek a right or equality. This final question pair was not included in the prototypical moral violation involving two men since that situation does not relate to Sharia law or gender equality. The transgression questions for the four situations are displayed in Table 3.

Table 3: Transgression Questions Across Situations

Situation	Primary Evaluation and Justification Questions
Travel	<p>Suppose if Niloufar secretly forges a document from her husband stating that she is allowed to travel to Canada and she goes to see her mother.</p> <p>Is it ok or not ok that Niloufar forges a document and goes from Iran to Canada without her husband's permission? Why or why not?</p>
Work	<p>Suppose if Faezeh tells her employer that her husband allows her to work, even though he hasn't really. She continues to work secretly without her husband finding out.</p> <p>Is it ok or not ok that Faezeh tells her employer that her husband allows her to work and she continues working secretly without her husband finding out? Why or why not?</p>
Divorce	<p>Suppose if Parisa has secretly put some money aside in a private place every month since she got married. She doesn't tell Arash about the money and she keeps it after the divorce.</p>

	Is it ok or not ok that Parisa keeps the secret stash of money after the divorce? Why or why not?
Hijab	Suppose that when Farokh tells Leila to wear the hijab, she says ok and she puts it on. But as soon as she leaves the house she takes it off and goes to the market without wearing a hijab. Is it ok or not ok that Leila goes to the market without wearing a hijab? Why or why not?

Data Analysis

Transcription

Interviews were conducted on video conference where all interviews were audio-recorded. The audio-recording of the interviews were transcribed into text utilizing a digital transcription service. Coding of data was based on both the original audio-recording as well as the transcripts.

Coding

The categories that were used to code responses to interview questions were based on coding schemes used in prior social domain research (Carr, 2021; Conry-Murray, 2009; Creane, 2022; Neff, 2001; Wainryb & Turiel; 1994). The coding schemes used in these studies were adapted to the present study through an iterative process of abridging responses into themes which may or may not have been used in prior studies, and identifying categories by detecting repeated themes. Thus, the existing coding schemes provided a foundational structure with which to conceptualize responses, but did not impose restrictions on the data by insisting that all data be classified within its existing schema. The process allowed for the modification of the coding structure itself by adding, deleting, expanding and collapsing categories as needed by the data. This approach to data coding seemed particularly fitting given the constructivist underpinnings of the research and the analogous Piagetian concepts of assimilation and accommodation of data from the environment using existing and evolving cognitive structures.

Two components of data were coded: evaluations of actions and justifications for the evaluations. Evaluations were coded as positive (the action is alright or acceptable), negative (the action is not alright or unacceptable), and mixed (it depends, ambiguous or ambivalent response). For the primary question, a positive response condones gender inequality or the denial of women's rights, and a negative response disapproves of gender inequality or the denial of women's rights. However, for both the contingency questions and the transgression questions, the allocations are reversed.

Justifications were coded based on categories identified through an iterative process of identifying reasoning used to support evaluations, applying the social domain framework. These justifications related to a variety of concerns classified under the moral, conventional and personal domains. Justification categories were primarily coded as moral, conventional, personal, or relationship-centered, and also secondarily coded using subcategories within each of the three domains of reasoning and the relationship category.

The subcategories started out as an extensive and overly specific list in order to attempt to capture slight variations, but through multiple iterations of analysis they were refined into a somewhat shorter list of more useful categories of justifications. For example, what started as multiple categories for “the right to travel”, “the right to work”, “the right to divorce”, “the right to choose one’s clothing”, and “the right to do what one wants” were combined into the single category, “the right to pursue goals”. However, more moderate variations in justifications were maintained and such nuances were captured within the final coding scheme. For example, “the right to choose”, “the right to freedom from coercion”, “the right to financial assets”, “the right to pursue goals”, and “general human rights” were all preserved as distinct justification subcategories in order to distinguish amongst these various aspects of a concern with rights. Thus, discretion was shown in amalgamating some original justification categories while retaining the discreteness of others. The final version of the justification categories subcategories is shown in Table 4.

Statistical analyses were based on the justification categories of the three domains and relationship, and descriptive analyses were based on the domain level justification categories as well as the subcategories of justifications within each domain. All distinct justifications were coded with no limit on the number of justifications per participant. The maximum number of justifications used per participant was four distinct justification subcategories, which may span one or more domain level justification categories.

Table 4: Justification Categories and Subcategories

Moral	
Equality	Equality of persons, equality of genders, and/or equality of rights; Equal division of material resources
General human rights	Rights in general and/or human rights; The irrelevance of geographic borders and cultural distinctions
Right to choose	The right a person has to choose for oneself
Right to pursue goals	The right a person has to pursue one's own goals including travel, work, marriage, divorce, and attire; Freedom to pursue goals; Independence in life's pursuits
Right to freedom from coercion	The right to be free from coercion or force from an external party
Right to property	The right to property, money, and/or other financial assets
Fairness	Fairness and justice
Challenge injustice	Challenging, resisting, subverting, opposing, and/or protesting a perceived injustice
Welfare	Concern for the welfare, well-being, physical and psychological health, protection from harm, and the preservation of the life of

	someone; Concern about presence of or prevention of harm; Concern about the punishment and/or negative consequences of an action
Honesty	Concern with honesty; Disapproval of deceit and/or secrecy
Conventional	
Authority	The legitimacy of the authority of a male/ husband, rule, religious leader, governmental leader, or God to dictate
Illegitimate authority	The illegitimacy of the authority of a male/ husband, rule, religious leader, governmental leader, or God to dictate; Not their business or jurisdiction
Culture	Culture, custom and/or tradition; Differences between countries in terms of rules, cultural norms, values and/or social organization
Society	Social progress, societal advancement, benefit to society, and/or the evolution of rules and norms
Illegality	The illegal nature of an action according to the governing judicial and/or religious laws
Personal	
Personal choice	Personal choice; According to the discretion and preference of the individual
Relationship	
Relationship maintenance	Concern for the relationship, marriage and/or family; Benefit and/or Harm that may come upon the relationship; Preservation of and trust within the relationship; Upholding of family values; Valuing mutual agreement

Reliability

In order to establish inter-coder reliability, 20% of the interviews were coded by a second coder, in addition to being coded by the researcher. These interviews were selected at random and identifiable information on the participant, such as sex, was not provided to the coder. The second coder had completed a doctoral degree, was experienced in interview analysis and was trained in the research design and the coding categories for evaluations and justifications.

Cohen's kappa was used to assess inter-coder agreement for evaluations and justifications separately. For Evaluations, inter-coder agreement was $\kappa = 0.96$. Inter-coder agreement for justifications was $\kappa = 0.81$. The coding scheme was finalized after all 32 interviews had been initially coded and subsequently refined based on creation of new categories and integration of existing categories. Justifications (less than 1% of data) that were not coded as moral,

conventional, personal, or an additional category of relationship-centered were deemed uncodable and were discarded from statistical analyses.

Variables

The study included one nominal independent variable: the sex of the participant. There are two dependent variables in the study: evaluations and justifications.

Analysis of Evaluations

Evaluations, judgments of whether the action presented in the situation was acceptable or not, were coded as acceptable (positive), unacceptable (negative), or ambivalent. In the presentation of results in the form of descriptive statistics, all three categories are represented. For the purpose of inferential statistical analyses (e.g., in order to conduct two proportion z-tests with binary variables), the categories were condensed into two. Positive and mixed results were collapsed into a single category for the primary situations, and negative and mixed results were combined for the contingency and transgression situations. This is because (as described in the section on coding above), for the primary situations, a positive evaluation condones gender inequality, while for the contingency and transgression situations, a negative evaluation condones gender inequality. By combining the categories in the way described above, the analytical tests were able to distinguish between responses that were unambiguously disapproving of gender inequality on the one hand, and those that were either condoning it, accepting it under conditions, or ambiguous on the other.

The response patterns of evaluations were assessed using both descriptive and inferential statistics. Descriptive statistics involved measures of frequency distribution in the form of percentages of occurrence of the data within the set. This included percentage frequency of positive, negative and ambivalent evaluations for males, females and both sexes combined, for each primary situation individually and in aggregate, transgression situations individually and in aggregate, as well as for each contingency situation individually within each situation individually and across all situations in aggregate.

Inferential statistics were also utilized in the analysis of evaluations. Evaluations were analyzed using two-sample z-tests of proportion, measuring evaluation by sex. The z-tests allowed for a statistical comparison of the proportions of males and females in their evaluations. In contrast with chi-square or t-tests, two proportion z-tests are robust against inclusion of multiple parameters (e.g., multiple situations for the same participant in the sample). A total of 31 z-tests were conducted for between group analyses in order to identify whether there were significant differences in the patterns of evaluative responses between males and females.

Z-tests were carried out comparing males and females as independent variables for the primary situations in aggregate, the gender-related situations in aggregate, the transgression situations in aggregate, and for each of the contingency situations respectively across situations in aggregate. In order to probe further, two proportion z-tests were also conducted for each situation individually. That is, z-tests were carried out for all five primary situations combined, all four gender-related situations individually and in aggregate, all four transgression situations individually and in aggregate, as well as for each of the four contingency situations across all situations in aggregate, and each of the contingency situations within each situation.

Analysis of Justifications

The reasoning that participants used to justify their evaluations—justifications—were examined using both descriptive and inferential statistical analyses. There were 17 subcategories of justifications coded within four justification categories of the three domains (moral, conventional and personal) as well as an additional category pertaining to relationship maintenance.

Descriptive analyses comprised measures of frequency distribution and percentages of occurrence within the data set. This included percentage frequency for each justification category and subcategory in total and by sex, for primary situations, transgression situations and contingency situations.

Inferential statistical analyses of justifications involved two-sample, two-tailed, homoscedastic t-tests. A total of 76 t-tests were conducted for justifications, 20 t-tests each for the primary and transgression situations respectively, and 36 t-tests for the contingency situations. T-tests allowed for the comparison of means between the independent variables (the sexes) in terms of justification categories. The tests were conducted for each primary situation individually and in aggregate, for each transgression situation individually and in aggregate, as well as for each contingency situation individually across all situations in aggregate, each situation individually across all contingency situations in aggregate, and all contingency situations and situations combined.

Limitations

The study sought to examine the reasoning of Iranian males and females about legally and religiously sanctioned gender inequality and restrictions of women's rights in Iran. The study encompassed evaluations and justifications of the familial practice and enforcement of restrictive laws (by husbands), the transgression of such laws (by wives), as well as their mutability (by various sources of authority and in various contexts). While the study has gleaned insights into these questions, some points of limitation should be noted.

The sample size was relatively small (N=32) and generalizable conclusions cannot be drawn. Iranians are a large and diverse group and this study does not seek to represent the judgments of Iranians in general. Furthermore, the study gained access to a particular subsection of Iranians, specifically, Iranians who reside in Australia. It is acknowledged that the judgments of Iranians who have immigrated to a Western country may markedly differ to those who choose to remain in Iran. For example, it may (or may not) be the case that Iranians who have moved to the West are more supportive of the notions of gender equality and rights. One female participant, when discussing the mandatory hijab in Iran, made reference to relocation based on rights: "That's why because of these kinds of human rights that they have in other countries that we move to other country. Otherwise it's very hard because of language and everything to leave our country." Additionally, the degree of religiosity may vary between Iranians living within Iran and those who have relocated to Australia, and thus their commitment to Sharia law (which featured prominently in the interview situations) may differ. A portion of participants identified as officially Muslim on paper, but explained that they do not practice Islam or believe many of its precepts. Given that the 2016 Iranian Census reported that 99.6% of Iranians in Iran are Muslim, it is possible that the degree of religiosity amongst Iranian Muslims is higher within Iran than amongst those living in Australia. This may impact judgments on the acceptability of behaviours aligned with Sharia law

that deny women rights. It is likely, however, that the Census results also includes a sizable portion who identify as Muslim only on paper.

Related to this limitation, the study sought to interview Iranians who had lived in Australia for two years or less, and indeed some participants had moved from Iran less than two weeks prior to being interviewed. This was in order to minimize potential influences from Australia. Nonetheless, it is acknowledged that the presence of participants in Australia for whatever duration may have had bearing on the results in terms of possible influences from discourses and cultural elements within Australia. Future research conducted within Iran could examine judgments of Iranians who reside within their country of birth, encompassing both larger cities and smaller rural areas. However, such studies would need to exercise meticulous care so as not to risk endangering participants (as discussed in the Methodology chapter sections on setting and participant recruitment).

The current study focused on the variable of sex, but did not investigate potential differences based on age, education, various religious affiliations, or socio-economic status. Future research would benefit from including a larger and more diverse sample, and investigating potential differences between individuals of various ages, education levels, religions and socio-economic statuses. With regard to age, of particular interest would be a comparison of individuals born prior to the Iranian Revolution of 1979 and those born subsequent to it, in order to investigate shifts in judgments since Iran became an Islamic Republic.

Furthermore, interviewing Iranians who speak English may not constitute a representative sample of Iranians in terms of education, but rather, a subsection of Iranians who have access to such language education. Beyond education, language proficiency in English may also be an indicator of higher socioeconomic status of the sample as well as their openness to Western culture. It is acknowledged that these factors may have borne on the results of the study in terms of generalizability.

Finally, the timing of the study coincided with a period of protests within Iran on gender inequality following the death of Mahsa Amini. The particulars of this setting are elaborated in the methodology chapter. Given that the wave of protests began in 2022 and continued throughout 2023, collecting data on judgments about gender equality at such a time may potentially have impact the results. Freedoms, rights, and equality were salient themes in the protests and indeed the slogan of the protests broadcast nationally and internationally was “Zan. Zendegi. Azadi.”, which translates to “Woman. Life. Freedom.” The primacy of rights and equality in the discourse of the time may have potentially influenced participant responses, such that there was more emphasis on rights and equality than would be generally found. Critics could argue that the findings of the present study represent a temporary concern with rights and gender equality due to the environment of protests, and that a study would yield different results if conducted, for example, two years prior or two years subsequent to the timing of the present study.

Chapter 4: Results

The results of the study are presented in two distinct parts. The first constitutes analyses of participant *evaluations* of the actions in the primary and transgression situations, as well as contingency situations (responding to the first two research questions and sub-questions). The second part turns to participant *justifications* used to support the aforementioned evaluations (responding to the latter two research questions and subquestions). The analyses demonstrate general trends as well as comparisons between the sexes.

Findings on Evaluations

Evaluations of Primary Situations

This section reports findings regarding Research Question 1 and 1(a):

1. What *evaluations* do Iranian adults make regarding gender inequality that is sanctioned by religious and legal laws?
 - a. Are there differences between men and women in evaluations of such gender inequality?

Evaluations of Aggregated Primary Situations. The primary situations presented to participants are presented in Table 1 in the Methodology chapter. They involve actions that restrict human rights and treat individuals unequally. Participants were directly asked whether the action carried out by the male actor in the situation is acceptable or not. A single evaluation category was recorded for each participant: approval, disapproval, or ambivalence (“maybe”, “it depends”, “not sure”).

Across all five situations combined, the majority of participants (88%) evaluated disapproval of the action in the situation. A minority (9%) evaluated with ambivalence, and an even smaller minority (3%) evaluated approval of the action. The evaluations are itemized by situation and sex (M= males; F= females) as well as totals combining both sexes (T= total) in Table 5.

In the case of the primary situations (unlike the transgression situation and contingency situations), an evaluation of “not alright” corresponds with the disapproval of an action that restricts women’s rights or enacts inequality (i.e., the action of the male protagonist in accordance with religious and legal laws). As mentioned in the Methodology chapter, for descriptive statistical analyses, all three categories of evaluations (acceptable, unacceptable and ambivalent) were differentiated, while for inferential statistical analyses, the ambivalent category was combined with the evaluation category that does not unambiguously disapprove of gender inequality.

A two proportion z-test was conducted to compare the proportions of males and females who evaluated the action as unacceptable (not alright). A statistically significant difference was found ($z = 1.7107$, $p = 0.08726$, $p < 0.1$), with a greater proportion of females evaluating the action as unacceptable than males.

Table 5: Evaluations of Primary Situations by Sex and Situation including Prototypical Moral Violation (Percentage)

	Travel			Work			Divorce			Hijab			Wage			Total		
Sex	M	F	T	M	F	T	M	F	T	M	F	T	M	F	T	M	F	T
Alright	0	0	0	12.5	6.25	9.38	0	0	0	6.25	0	3.13	0	0	0	3.75	1.25	2.5
Not Alright	100	100	100	81.25	87.5	84.38	75	100	87.5	62.5	75	68.75	100	100	100	83.75	92.5	88.13
Maybe	0	0	0	6.25	6.25	6.25	25	0	12.5	31.25	25	28.13	0	0	0	12.5	6.25	9.38

*Note: For Primary Situations, Alright condones gender inequality

The Wage situation is a prototypical moral violation and does not pertain to gender, which is the focus of the present study, and the situation's purpose in the research design is to serve as a benchmark for the other four situations which all relate to gender equality and to ensure that participants are engaging in a basic level of straightforward (uncoordinated) moral reasoning. The Wage situation, which centered on differential wages based on height amongst men, was evaluated with disapproval by 100% of participants, both males and females. Therefore, all participants were shown to be engaging in straightforward moral reasoning, and the following results within this section focus on the four situations pertaining to gender equality, as depicted in Table 6.

Across the four situations centered on gender equality combined, the majority of participants (85%) evaluated disapproval of the action in the situation involving restriction of women's rights and gender inequality. A minority evaluated with ambivalence (12%) or approval (3%) of such action.

Female evaluations of disapproval were higher than males for the four situations combined (91% compared with 80%). Conversely, male evaluations of approval and ambivalence were higher than females (5% compared with 2% approval, and 16% compared with 8% ambivalence).

In order to compare the proportion of males and females who evaluated the action as unacceptable, a two proportion z-test was conducted for evaluations of the four gender-related primary situations in aggregate. A statistically significant difference was found ($z = 1.7403$, $p = 0.08186$, $p < 0.1$), with a greater proportion of females evaluating the action as unacceptable than males.

Table 6: Evaluations of Primary Situations by Sex and Situation (Percentage)

Sex	Travel			Work			Divorce			Hijab			Total		
	M	F	T	M	F	T	M	F	T	M	F	T	M	F	T
Alright	0	0	0	12.5	6.25	9.38	0	0	0	6.25	0	3.13	4.69	1.56	3.13
Not Alright	100	100	100	81.25	87.5	84.38	75	100	87.5	62.5	75	68.75	79.69	90.63	85.16
Maybe	0	0	0	6.25	6.25	6.25	25	0	12.5	31.25	25	28.13	15.63	7.81	11.72

*Note: For Primary Situations, Alright condones gender inequality (in contrast to Transgression & Contingencies)

Evaluations within each Primary Situation. For the situation pertaining to a woman's right to travel without her husband's permission (Travel), 100% of participants, both males and females, evaluated disapproval of the husband's action to prohibit his wife's travel. There was less agreement in the Work, Divorce, and Hijab situations concerning a woman's right to work, maintain ownership of financial assets after divorce, and choose whether or not to wear a hijab, respectively.

For the Work situation, a majority (84%) of the participants evaluated the husband's action to prohibit his wife from working as not alright, with the remaining 16% evaluating it with approval or ambivalence. Males expressed approval of the husband's restrictions on his wife more than did females in the Work situation (13% compared with 6%).

In the Divorce situation, the action involving gender inequality was not evaluated with approval by any participants. The majority of participants evaluated disapproval (88%), with the remainder evaluating with ambivalence. While 100% of females evaluated disapproval, a contrasting 75% of males evaluated disapproval with the remainder of men in the ambivalent category.

Four z-tests were conducted to compare the proportions of males and females who evaluated the action in the situation as unacceptable, and females significantly evaluated with disapproval more than males for the Divorce situation ($z = 2.1381$, $p = 0.03236$, $p < 0.05$). The other three situations did not yield statistically significant sex differences in evaluations.

The Hijab situation elicited less evaluations of disapproval than did the other situations, with 69% of participants evaluating disapproval. As presented above, the actions in the other four situations were evaluated with disapproval by a high number of participants (100%, 100%, 84%, and 88% respectively). The Hijab situation's evaluations of disapproval (69%) are the lowest of all five situations. A small minority (3%) evaluated approval of the husband's restrictive action, and a sizable portion (28%) evaluated with ambivalence.

Evaluations of Transgression Situations

This section reports findings on Research question 2 and 2(a):

2. What *evaluations* do Iranian adults make regarding transgressions of religious and legal laws that sanction gender inequality?
 - a. Are there differences between men and women in evaluations of such gender inequality?

Each of the four situations pertaining to gender equality and women's rights involved a subsequent extension to the primary situation: a transgression situation. The prototypical moral violation did not include a transgression situation because it did not involve any religious or legal (Sharia) law for the actor to violate; it did not include any female actor who would seek a goal or right (only two male actors); and it did not relate to women's rights or gender equality, which is the focus of the study. Table 3 in the Methodology chapter displays the four transgression situations that are appended to each primary situation.

The primary situations reported on in the above section involve the male actor (husband) acting in accordance with religious and legal laws that sanction gender inequality and restrictions on the rights of women, and prohibiting his wife from pursuing a goal or right. In contrast, the transgression situations attached to each of the primary situations involve the female actor (wife) engaging in the violation of the religious and legal law that sanctions gender inequality and restrictions on the rights of women. That is, the female actor is transgressing a restrictive law in order to seek a right or equality. The transgression situations all involve the female actor engaging in an act of deception and/or secrecy as she seeks to subvert the law in pursuit of her goal or right. Each transgression situation involves the same actors, situation and law as the corresponding primary situation.

Evaluations of Aggregated Transgression Situations. Table 7 shows the evaluations that participants made of the transgression situations involving a female actor engaging in the violation of a restrictive law in pursuit of rights and equality. There was less agreement in the transgression situations than with the primary situations, with evaluations spread more evenly across approval and disapproval. Across all four situations combined, less than half of the participants (39%) approved of the female actor's (wife) actions, while just over half (55%) disapproved of her action, and the remainder evaluated with ambivalence.

Female evaluations of approval for the four situations combined were higher than males (47% compared with 31%), as were evaluations of ambivalence (9% compared with 3%). Conversely, male evaluations of disapproval were higher than females (66% compared with 43%).

A z-test of two proportions was carried out to compare the proportions of males and females who evaluated the action in the situation as acceptable (alright). In contrast with the primary situations, for the transgression situations, an evaluation of "alright" corresponds with the approval of females seeking rights and equality (i.e., the action of the female protagonist in violation of religious and legal laws). A significant difference was found ($z = 1.8116$, $p = 0.0703$, $p < 0.1$), with a greater proportion of females evaluating the action as acceptable than males.

Table 7: Evaluations of Transgression Situations by Sex and Situation (Percentage)

Sex	Travel			Work			Divorce			Hijab			Total		
	M	F	T	M	F	T	M	F	T	M	F	T	M	F	T
Alright	31.2 5	43.7 5	37.5	25	43.7 5	34.3 8	31.2 5	56.2 5	43.7 5	37.5	43.7 5	40.6 3	31.2 5	46.8 8	39.0 6
Not Alright	68.7 5	50	59.3 8	68.7 5	50	59.3 8	68.7 5	31.2 5	50	56.2 5	43.7 5	50	65.6 3	43.7 5	54.6 9
Maybe	0	6.25	3.13	6.25	6.25	6.25	0	12.5	6.25	6.25	12.5	9.38	3.13	9.38	6.25

*Note: For Transgression Situations, Alright condones pursuit of gender equality involving transgressions of law

Evaluations within each Transgression Situation. An inspection of each of the situations individually garners similar results to one another and to the combined view. For each situation, one-third to less than half of participants evaluated approval, while half to a majority disapproved. For the Travel situation, under half (38%) of total participants evaluated approval and over half (59%) evaluated disapproval. Similarly, in the Work situation, approximately one third (34%) evaluated approval and over half (59%) evaluated disapproval. Correspondingly, in the Divorce situation, under half (43%) expressed approval and half (50%) expressed disapproval. As with the previous situations, in the Hijab situation, under half (41%) expressed approval and half (50%) expressed disapproval.

A comparison of the sexes in terms of evaluations of the transgression situations within each situation shows that males disapproved of the transgressive action of the female actor more than females, within each and all of the four situations. In the Travel situation and the Work situation, a majority (69%) of the males disapproved of the female actor's actions, while only 50% of the females disapproved. The results for the Divorce situation differed somewhat. While the results for the males were similar with the majority of males (69%) evaluating with disapproval, less than one third of females (31%) disapproved. For that situation, the majority of females (56%) approved of the transgressive action. The Hijab situation demonstrated the most even distribution between males and females, with approximately half of males (56%) and half of females (44%) disapproving of the action. This demonstrates less agreement within each sex regarding the action in the Hijab situation.

Four z-tests were conducted to compare male and female proportions in acceptable evaluations for transgression situations, and females significantly evaluated with acceptability more than males for the Divorce situation ($z = 2.1213$, $p = 0.034$, $p < 0.05$). As with the primary situations, the other three situations did not yield statistically significant sex differences in evaluations.

The majority of males (69% for three situations and 56% for the other situation) disapproved of the female actor's actions. By contrast, half or less than half of the females (50% for two of the situations and 44% and 31% for the other two situations) disapproved of the transgressive action. This marks more heterogeneity in evaluations of female transgressions within the female sample than the male.

Evaluations of Contingency Situations

This section (in addition to the section titled “Evaluations of Primary Situations”) reports findings regarding Research Question 1 and 1(a):

1. What *evaluations* do Iranian adults make regarding gender inequality that is sanctioned by religious and legal laws?
 - a. Are there differences between men and women in evaluations of such gender inequality?

For each primary situation, participants also evaluated four contingencies pertaining to the presence of a rule, authority dictates from religious and governmental leaders, authority dictates from God, and situation generalizability whereby the situation occurs in a foreign country. These contingency questions proposed hypothetical suppositions that the existing Sharia law in question was not being imposed by a rule, authority figure or foreign country respectively. That is, while the primary situations were based on existing Sharia law as it is enacted in contemporary Iran, the contingency questions proposed an alternate reality in which such religious and governmental laws were not being sanctioned. As two such examples, the contingency question focused on the presence of a rule for the Hijab situation is, “Suppose if there was no rule in Iran that a woman must wear a hijab in public. Is it ok to not have that rule in Iran?”, and the contingency question focused on authority dictates for the Travel situation is, “Suppose if religious and governmental leaders in Iran said a woman is allowed to travel without her husband’s permission. Is it ok or not ok for the leaders to say that?” The twenty contingency questions, four contingency questions for each of the five situations, can be seen in full in Table 2 of the Methodology chapter.

In the prototypical moral violation situation, which does not pertain to gender equality, 100% of participants— males and females— disapproved of all contingencies. That is, when evaluating whether or not it would be acceptable for a rule, authority figure, or foreign country to mandate that men of taller height be paid less than short men for the same work, all participants evaluated disapproval. This reveals a point of reference, indicating that all participants are demonstrating a moral reasoning for situations that involve a moral violation that is straightforward and not gender related. Thus, its purpose in the research design as far as evaluations are concerned is established in the unanimous results above. Given that the situation does not pertain to gender equality, which is the focus of the present study, it is omitted from the following presentation of results within this section.

Furthermore, the contingency questions, by necessity in the research design, were reversed in the prototypical moral violation as compared with the gender related situations and would thus unnecessarily obfuscate the presentation of results if presented side by side. This is because the four gender related situations center on existing Sharia law, and the contingency questions involve hypothetical suppositions in which such Sharia law is *not* being sanctioned. By contrast, the prototypical moral violation does not involve Sharia law or a system that sanctions such inequality or denial of rights, but rather is simply a situation in which two men are treated unequally. Therefore, the contingency questions for the prototypical moral violation involve hypothetical suppositions that the practice described in the primary situation *is* sanctioned by a rule, authority figure or foreign country respectively. For example, the contingency question for the presence of a rule in the prototypical moral violation situation is, “Suppose if there was a rule in Iran that men of different heights get paid different amounts for the same work. Is it ok or not ok to have that rule in Iran?” Table 2 in the Methodology section illustrates the distinction between the

contingency questions for the four gender-related situations on the one hand, and the prototypical moral violation situation on the other. The present explanation was to clarify the reason for the omission of such evaluations from Table 8, although the results were presented above as 100% for all participants.

Evaluations of Rule Contingency. Across all situations in aggregate, the situations pertaining to rule contingency were highly (98%) evaluated as acceptable. For the Travel and Hijab situations, the evaluations were unanimous, and for the Work and Divorce situations, evaluations of acceptability were 94% and 97% respectively. As depicted in Table 8, both sexes consistently evaluated the absence of a rule that restricts women’s rights or enacts gender inequality as acceptable.

A two proportion z-test was conducted to compare male and female proportions of an evaluation of acceptable (“alright”) for the rule contingency across all four situations, and no statistically significant difference was found. In contrast with the primary situations, and in alignment with the transgression situations, for the contingency situations, an evaluation of “alright” corresponds with the approval of gender equality and the upholding of women’s rights.

Four further z-tests were carried out to compare sex evaluations within situations and once again no statistically significant differences were found.

Table 8: Evaluations of Rule Contingency by Sex and Situation (Percentages)

Sex	Travel			Work			Divorce			Hijab			Total		
	M	F	T	M	F	T	M	F	T	M	F	T	M	F	T
Alright	100	100	100	93.75	93.75	93.75	93.75	100	96.88	100	100	100	96.88	98.44	97.66
Not Alright	0	0	0	6.25	6.25	6.25	0	0	0	0	0	0	1.56	1.56	1.56
Maybe	0	0	0	0	0	0	6.25	0	3.13	0	0	0	1.56	0	0.78

*Note: For Contingency Situations, Alright condones gender equality

Evaluations of Authority Dictates from Religious and Governmental Leaders. For the contingency pertaining to authority dictates from religious and governmental leaders, for all situations in aggregate, evaluations of acceptability were high (88%) but not as high as the rule contingency (98%). Females (95%) evaluated with acceptability more than males (81%).

A z-test of two proportions was carried out for the authority dictate contingency pertaining to the authority of religious and governmental leaders, and females evaluated the contingency situation as acceptable significantly more than males ($z = 2.4732$, $p = 0.01352$, $p < 0.05$).

Table 9 lays out sex differences, showing that for the Work situation, while female evaluations of acceptability were high (94%), males evaluated acceptability just over half of the time (56%).

Four further z-tests were carried out to compare sex evaluations within situations. A statistically significant difference was found ($z = 2.4495$, $p = 0.01428$, $p < 0.05$) for the Work situation, and no significant differences for the other three situations.

Table 9: Evaluations of Authority Dictate (Religious and Governmental Leaders) by Sex and Situation (Percentages)

Sex	Travel			Work			Divorce			Hijab			Total		
	M	F	T	M	F	T	M	F	T	M	F	T	M	F	T
Alright	81.25	93.75	87.50	56.25	93.75	75	87.50	93.75	90.63	100	100	100	81.25	95.31	88.28
Not Alright	12.50	0	6.25	31.25	6.25	18.75	12.50	6.25	9.38	0	0	0	14.06	3.13	8.59
Maybe	6.25	6.25	6.25	12.50	0	6.25	0	0	0	0	0	0	4.69	1.56	3.13

*Note: For Contingency Situations, Alright condones gender equality

Evaluations of Authority Dictates from God. Regarding the contingency of authority dictates from God, evaluations of acceptability (84%) were high, but lower than both rule contingency (98%) and authority dictates from leaders (88%). Once again, females evaluated with more acceptability (95%) than males (81%).

A two proportion z-test comparing males and females for the authority dictate contingency pertaining to the authority of God, found that females evaluated the contingency situation as acceptable significantly more than males ($z = 2.1481$, $p = 0.03156$, $p < 0.05$).

In Table 10, sex differences can be seen in aggregate and by situation. For the Travel situation, the majority of females (94%) evaluated approval while just over half of males (56%) did so.

Z-tests were conducted to compare sex proportions of evaluations within situations and females were found to evaluate acceptability of the contingency pertaining to God's authority significantly more than males for the Travel situation ($z = 2.4495$, $p = 0.01428$, $p < 0.05$). No statistically significant differences were found for the other three situations.

Table 10: Evaluations of Authority Dictate (God) by Sex and Situation (Percentages)

Sex	Travel			Work			Divorce			Hijab			Total		
	M	F	T	M	F	T	M	F	T	M	F	T	M	F	T
Alright	56.25	93.75	75	75	87.5	81.25	81.25	93.75	87.5	93.75	87.5	90.63	76.56	90.63	83.59
Not Alright	25	0	12.5	18.75	0	9.38	12.5	0	6.25	0	0	0	14.06	0	7.03
Maybe	18.75	6.25	12.5	6.25	12.5	9.38	6.25	6.25	6.25	6.25	12.5	9.38	9.38	9.38	9.38

*Note: For Contingency Situations, Alright condones gender equality

Evaluations of Situation Generalizability. Evaluations of acceptability for the contingency of situation generalizability were high (95%), and this was the case for both males and females. Evaluations were unanimous for the Travel and Hijab situations, and high for the other situations.

A z-test comparing the proportions of males and females who evaluated the situation generalizability contingency as acceptable was conducted, and no statistically significant difference was found. Further z-tests probing into sex differences within each situation likewise yielded no statistically significant differences.

Table 11: Evaluations of Situation Generalizability by Sex and Situation (Percentages)

Sex	Travel			Work			Divorce			Hijab			Total		
	M	F	T	M	F	T	M	F	T	M	F	T	M	F	T
Alright	100	100	100	87.5	93.75	90.63	87.5	87.5	87.5	100	100	100	93.75	95.31	94.53
Not Alright	0	0	0	12.5	0	6.25	12.5	6.25	9.38	0	0	0	6.25	1.56	3.91
Maybe	0	0	0	0	6.25	3.13	0	6.25	3.13	0	0	0	0	3.13	1.56

*Note: For Contingency Situations, Alright condones gender equality

Findings on Justifications

The reasoning, or justifications, provided by participants to support their evaluations of the actions in the situations are examined in this section through both descriptive and inferential statistical analyses. The descriptive component of the findings constitutes measures of frequency distribution by calculating percentages of occurrence within the data set. This included percentage frequency for each justification category and subcategory in total and by sex, for primary situations, transgression situations and contingency situations.

Inferential statistical analyses of justifications involved 76 two-sample, two-tailed, homoscedastic t-tests (20 t-tests each for the primary and transgression situations respectively, and 36 t-tests for the contingency situations). These analyses compared means between males and females in the justification categories provided. The tests were conducted for each primary situation individually and combined, for each transgression situation and combined, as well as for each contingency situation individually across all situations, each situation individually across all contingency situations, and all contingency situations and situations combined.

The justifications provided for the prototypical moral violation were 53 in total across primary and transgression situations, as well as all four contingency situations. These justifications were omitted from statistical analyses in this section because their purpose in the research design was not to inform the research questions concerning reasoning about gender equality. The purpose of the prototypical moral violation, which does not pertain to gender but is about differential wages amongst males, was to identify if any participants were not engaging in straightforward moral reasoning. Since this was not the case, all participants were included and the prototypical moral violation data was omitted from further analyses.

For the four gender related situations, there were a total of 997 justifications used across the 24 justification questions and 32 participants (a mean of 1.3 justifications per person per question). This included 188 justifications for primary situations, 185 for transgression situations, and 607 for contingency situations. The reason for the larger number of justifications for

contingency situations is that there were four questions for the primary and transgression situations respectively, while there were 16 contingency questions (four for each contingency situation).

The justifications span across 17 subcategories embedded within the overarching justification categories of the three domains (moral, conventional and personal) as well as an additional relationship category. Definitions and parameters of each of the justification subcategories can be found in Table 4 of the Methodology chapter.

Justifications of Primary Situations

This section reports findings regarding Research Question 3, 3(a) and 3(b):

3. What types of reasoning (*justifications*) are involved in acceptance / rejection of gender inequality that is sanctioned by religious and legal laws?
 - a. Is acceptance / rejection of such gender inequality justified on moral, conventional or personal grounds?
 - b. Are there differences between men and women in justification categories for acceptance / rejection of such gender inequality?

In this section, findings are reported based on both descriptive and inferential statistical analyses of primary situation justifications. The primary situations all involve a male protagonist (husband) restricting the rights of a woman (his wife). In all primary situations, the husband is acting in accordance with religious and governmental laws that sanction gender inequality and restrictions on women's rights.

A total of 188 codable justifications were used across the four primary gender-related situations amongst all 32 participants. Between one to three justifications were provided per person (including uncodable as a justification code), with a mean of 1.5 justifications per person per primary situation. Males and females used a similar number of justifications for primary situations (96 and 92 respectively). Uncodable justifications (less than 3% of the data for primary situations) were discarded from further analysis. Justifications were classified as moral, conventional, personal, or relationship, as well as being coded into distinct subcategories. All categories and subcategories were distinctly represented in descriptive statistical analyses, while inferential statistical analyses were conducted at the category (domain) level.

Justification Categories for Aggregated Primary Situations. For primary situations, the majority of justifications provided by both sexes were moral (73%). A minority were relationship centered (11%), personal (10%), and conventional (6%) justifications. A greater proportion of justifications used by females were moral, than for males (78% compared with 69%). Table 12 shows the distribution of justifications by justification category and sex.

Table 12: Justification Categories of Aggregated Primary Situations by Sex (Percentages)

Justification Category	Male	Female	Total
Moral	68.75 (35.11)	78.26 (38.30)	73.4
Conventional	8.33 (4.26)	3.26 (1.60)	5.85
Personal	9.38 (4.79)	9.78 (4.79)	9.57
Relationship	13.54 (6.91)	8.70 (4.26)	11.17

*Note: The figures in parentheses denote the percentage of total justifications, in contrast to percentages within each sex which show the percentage out of the justifications used by that sex

Two-sample, two-tailed homoscedastic t-tests were conducted to compare the means between the sexes for each justification category across all four situations in aggregate. A statistically significant difference was found between males and females for justifications provided in the conventional domain ($t(30)= 2.468$, $p= 0.010$). That is, male respondents supported their evaluations using conventional justifications more than females to a statistically significant extent for all primary situations combined (i.e., situations in which the male restricts the rights of a female). The results of these four t-tests can be seen in Table 13.

Table 13: t-test Results for Justifications of Aggregated Primary Situations by Sex

Justification Category	Males		Females		p	t
	\bar{x}	s	\bar{x}	s		
Moral	4.1	1.8	4.5	1.4	0.510	0.024
Conventional	0.7	0.6	0.2	0.4	0.010***	2.468
Personal	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.9	1	x
Relationship	0.8	0.8	0.5	0.6	0.242	0.709

Justification Categories within each Primary Situation. A series of t-tests were also conducted for each primary situation, and no significant sex differences were found. The results of these t-tests can be seen in Table 14.

Table 14: t-test Results for Justifications within each Primary Situation by Sex

	Males		Females			
Justification Category	\bar{x}	s	\bar{x}	s	p	t
Travel Situation						
Moral	1.1	0.8	1.1	0.5	0.788	0.809
Conventional	0.1	0.3	0	0	0.154	1.039
Personal	0.3	0.5	0.2	0.4	0.074	1.485
Relationship	0.6	0.3	0.1	0.3	1	x
Work Situation						
Moral	0.9	0.6	1	0.6	0.772	0.754
Conventional	0.1	0.3	0	0	0.154	1.039
Personal	0.1	0.3	0.1	0.3	0.074	1.485
Relationship	0.6	0.5	0.3	0.5	0.081	1.434
Divorce Situation						
Moral	1.3	0.7	1.3	0.5	0.766	0.737
Conventional	0	0	0	0	x	x
Personal	0	0	0	0	x	x
Relationship	0	0	0	0	x	x
Hijab Situation						
Moral	0.9	0.6	1.1	0.7	0.421	0.201
Conventional	0.3	0.4	0.2	0.4	0.681	0.485
Personal	0.2	0.4	0.3	0.5	0.640	0.361
Relationship	0.1	0.3	0.1	0.3	1	x

Justification Subcategories for Aggregated Primary Situations. Justification subcategories used to support evaluations of primary situations are shown by sex in Table 15. These subcategories are described in Table 4 of the Methodology chapter. Amongst all participants, the justification subcategories utilized most frequently were the right to choose (16%), the right to freedom from coercion (12%), equality (12%), relationship maintenance (11%), and the right to pursue goals (10%). All other justifications occurred less than 10% in the data set. All but one of these five subcategories are moral justifications. The subcategories that pertain to some form of human rights (the rights to choose, pursue goals, freedom from coercion, and property respectively) constitute more than half (51%) of all justifications provided by participants.

Males most frequently justified their evaluations of the primary situations with the subcategories of the right to choose (19%), equality (15%), relationship maintenance (14%), and the right to pursue goals (10%). Only one of these is not a moral justification. All other subcategories of justifications were used less than 10% by males.

Females frequently used the justification subcategories of the right to freedom from coercion (15%), the right to choose (14%), the right to property (12%), the right to pursue goals (10%), and personal choice (10%). All but one of these are moral justifications and specifically forms of rights. Other subcategories of justifications were used by females less than 10% in the data set.

Table 15: Justification Subcategories of Aggregated Primary Situations by Sex (%)

Justification Subcategory	Male	Female	Total
Moral	68.75 (35.11)	78.26 (38.30)	73.4
Equality	14.58 (7.44)	8.70 (4.26)	11.70
General human rights	0.00 (0.00)	5.43 (2.66)	2.66
Right to choose	18.75 (9.57)	14.13 (6.91)	16.49
Right to pursue goals	10.42 (5.32)	9.78 (4.79)	10.11
Right to freedom from coercion	9.38 (4.79)	15.22 (7.45)	12.23
Right to property	7.29 (3.72)	11.96 (5.85)	9.57
Fairness	2.08 (1.06)	4.35 (2.13)	3.19
Challenging injustice	1.04 (0.53)	1.09 (0.53)	1.06
Welfare	5.21 (2.66)	6.52 (3.19)	5.85
Honesty	0.00 (0.00)	1.09 (0.53)	0.53

Conventional	8.33 (4.26)	3.26 (1.60)	5.85
Authority	2.08 (1.06)	0.00 (0.00)	1.06
Illegitimate authority	6.25 (3.19)	2.17 (1.06)	4.26
Culture	0.00 (0.00)	0.00 (0.00)	0.00
Society	0.00 (0.00)	0.00 (0.00)	0.00
Illegality	0.00 (0.00)	1.09 (0.53)	0.53
Personal	9.38 (4.79)	9.78 (4.79)	9.57
Personal choice	9.38 (4.79)	9.78 (4.79)	9.57
Relationship	13.54 (6.91)	8.70 (4.26)	22.34
Relationship maintenance	13.54 (6.91)	8.70 (4.26)	11.17

*Note 1: The justification categories are bold and left indented; the subcategories are classic text and centered

*Note 2: The figures in parentheses denote the percentage of total justifications, in contrast to percentages within each sex

Justifications of Transgression Situations

This section reports findings regarding Research Question 4, 4(a) and 4(b):

4. What types of reasoning (*justifications*) are involved in acceptance / rejection of transgressions of religious and legal laws that sanction gender inequality?
 - a. Is acceptance / rejection of such gender inequality justified on moral, conventional or personal grounds?
 - b. Are there differences between men and women in justification categories for acceptance / rejection of such gender inequality?

This section presents the results found through both descriptive and inferential statistical analyses regarding justifications of transgression situations. The transgression situations all involve a female protagonist violating (or transgressing) religious and governmental laws in pursuit of gender equality and/or women's rights for herself. They also all involve some form of deception, subversion and/or secrecy. In contrast with the primary situations, where participants responded to the actions of the male (husband) who was restricting a right (in accordance with laws that sanction gender inequality and restrictions on women's rights), in the transgression situations the participants responded to the actions of the female (wife) who is claiming a right (in violation of restrictive laws and through the use of subversion and secrecy).

There was a total of 185 codable justifications recorded across all four transgression situations and all 32 participants. The range in the number of justifications provided per person was from one (including uncodable as a justification code) to four, and the mean number of justifications per person per transgression situation was 1.4. A small portion (3%) of justifications were uncodable and discarded from further analysis. The remaining justifications were classified as: moral, conventional, personal, and relationship. Each justification included subcategories that

were differentiated in the descriptive statistical analyses. For the purpose of inferential statistical analyses, the three domain level justification categories as well as the additional category of relationship-centered justifications were used.

Justification Categories for Aggregated Transgression Situations. With regard to the four transgression situations, Table 16 presents the distribution of responses for the four justification categories in total and by sex. It was found that for the transgression situations, a majority of justifications provided (77%) were moral. A minority of reasoning was based on relationship (11%), personal (6%), and conventional (11%) justifications.

Both sexes reasoned primarily using moral justifications (73% for males and 81% for females). With regard to the other justification categories, males more frequently reasoned based on personal justifications (12% for males compared with 2% for females), while females more frequently reasoned based on relationship justifications (14% for males compared with 9% for males).

Table 16: Justification Categories of Aggregated Transgression Situations by Sex (Percentages)

Justification Category	Male	Female	Total
Moral	73.17 (32.43)	80.58 (44.86)	77.30
Conventional	6.10 (2.70)	3.88 (2.16)	4.86
Personal	12.20 (5.41)	1.94 (1.08)	6.49
Relationship	8.54 (3.78)	13.59 (7.57)	11.35

*Note: The figures in parentheses denote the percentage of total justifications, in contrast to percentages within each sex which show the percentage out of the total justifications used by that sex

T-tests were conducted for each justification category respectively to compare male and female justifications for the four transgression situations combined. A statistically significant difference was found between the sexes for moral justifications ($t(30) = 2.226, p = 0.017$). Additionally, a statistically significant sex difference was found for justifications in the personal domain ($t(30) = 1.961, p = 0.030$). That is, females used moral justifications more than males, and conversely males used personal justifications more than females, both to a statistically significant extent. The results of the four t-tests can be viewed in Table 17.

Table 17: t-test Results for Justifications of Aggregated Transgression Situations by Sex

Justification Category	Males		Females		p	t
	\bar{x}	s	\bar{x}	s		
Moral	3.8	1.5	5.2	1.7	0.017**	2.226
Conventional	0.3	0.5	0.3	0.6	0.741	0.655
Personal	0.6	0.8	0.1	0.3	0.030**	1.961
Relationship	0.4	0.8	0.9	0.9	0.156	1.029

Justification Categories within each Transgression Situation. A set of t-tests were also conducted for each transgression situation individually and the results are presented in Table 18. A statistically significant difference was found between males and females for the Hijab situation ($t(30)= 1.780$, $p= 0.043$) with significantly more of the moral justifications being provided by females than males.

Table 18: t-test Results for Justifications within each Transgression Situation by Sex

Justification Category	Males		Females		p	t
	\bar{x}	s	\bar{x}	s		
Travel Situation						
Moral	1	0.6	1.2	0.9	0.504	0.010
Conventional	0.3	0.4	1.9	0.4	0.681	0.475
Personal	0	0	0	0	x	x
Relationship	0.1	0.3	0.3	0.4	0.154	1.039
Work Situation						
Moral	0.6	0.6	1.1	0.9	0.074*	1.485
Conventional	0	0	0.1	0.3	0.325	0.457
Personal	0.3	0.5	0	0	1	x

Relationship	0.2	0.4	0.3	0.5	0.431	0.176
Divorce Situation						
Moral	1.2	0.5	1.4	0.7	0.412	0.224
Conventional	0	0	0	0	x	x
Personal	0	0	0	0	0.325	0.457
Relationship	0	0	0.1	0.3	0.325	0.457
Hijab Situation						
Moral	0.9	0.6	1.5	0.9	0.043**	1.780
Conventional	0.1	0.3	0	0	0.325	0.457
Personal	0.3	0.5	0.1	0.3	0.705	0.546
Relationship	0.2	0.4	0.3	0.4	0.681	0.475

Justification Subcategories for Aggregated Transgression Situations. Table 19 sets out the justification subcategories used to support evaluations of transgression situations by sex. The most frequently used justification subcategories for the transgression situations for both sexes combined were honesty (23%), welfare (12%), relationship maintenance (11%), and challenging injustice (11%). Three out of four of these subcategories are moral justifications. All other justification subcategories occurred less than 10% in the data set.

Amongst males, the subcategories used most frequently to justify evaluations of the transgression situations were honesty (33%), followed by personal choice (12%). All other subcategories were used less than 10% by the males. One of these two is a moral justification.

Females predominantly used welfare (17%), honesty (16%), challenging injustice (14%), and relationship maintenance (14%) to justify evaluations of transgression situations. All other subcategories were used less than 10% by the females. Three of these four are moral justifications.

Table 19: Justification Subcategories of Aggregated Transgression Situations by Sex (Percentages)

Justification Subcategory	Male	Female	Total
Moral	73.17 (32.43)	80.58 (44.86)	77.30
Equality	0.00 (0.00)	1.94 (1.08)	1.08
General human rights	3.66 (1.62)	6.80 (3.78)	5.41

Right to choose	7.32 (3.24)	8.74 (4.86)	8.11
Right to pursue goals	4.88 (2.16)	5.83 (3.24)	5.41
Right to freedom from coercion	0.00 (0.00)	2.91 (1.62)	1.62
Right to property	6.10 (2.70)	5.83 (3.24)	5.95
Fairness	4.88 (2.16)	1.94 (1.08)	3.24
Challenging injustice	7.32 (3.24)	13.59 (7.57)	10.81
Welfare	6.10 (2.70)	17.48 (9.73)	12.43
Honesty	32.93 (14.59)	15.53 (8.65)	23.24
Conventional	6.10 (2.70)	3.88 (2.16)	4.86
Authority	1.22 (0.54)	0.00 (0.00)	0.54
Illegitimate authority	1.22 (0.54)	0.00 (0.00)	0.54
Culture	0.00 (0.00)	0.00 (0.00)	0.00
Society	0.00 (0.00)	0.00 (0.00)	0.00
Illegality	3.66 (1.62)	3.88 (2.16)	3.78
Personal	12.20 (5.41)	1.94 (1.08)	6.49
Personal choice	12.2 (5.41)	1.94 (1.08)	6.49
Relationship	8.54 (3.78)	13.59 (7.57)	11.35
Relationship maintenance	8.54 (3.78)	13.59 (7.57)	11.35

*Note 1: The justification categories are bold and left indented; the subcategories are classic text and centered

*Note 2: The figures in parentheses denote the percentage of total justifications, in contrast to percentages within each sex

Justifications of Contingency Situations

This section (in addition to the section titled “Justifications of Primary Situations”) reports findings regarding Research Question 3, 3(a) and 3(b):

3. What types of reasoning (*justifications*) are involved in acceptance / rejection of gender inequality that is sanctioned by religious and legal laws?
 - a. Is acceptance / rejection of such gender inequality justified on moral, conventional or personal grounds?

- b. Are there differences between men and women in justification categories for acceptance / rejection of such gender inequality?

As with the previous sections, both descriptive and inferential statistical analyses are presented here for justifications of contingency questions. The contingency questions pertain to rule contingency (the presence of a rule), authority dictates (from religious and governmental leaders), authority dictates (from God), and situation generalizability (a practice carried out in a foreign country). All four contingency situations were given for all four gender-related situations (16 total contingencies for each gender).

The contingency questions for each situation examined the same gender restriction as the primary situation, but in a hypothetical supposition that it was no longer sanctioned by the rule, authority, or country respectively, and rather, the specific women's right was indeed being upheld. For example, the rule contingency question for the Travel situation was, "Suppose if there was no rule in Iran that a woman requires her husband's permission to travel. Is it ok to not have that rule in Iran? Why or why not?" The contingency question regarding the first form of authority dictate for the Hijab situation was, "Suppose if religious and governmental leaders in Iran said a woman does not have to wear a hijab in public. Is it ok or not ok for the leaders to say that? Why or why not?"

The justifications for contingency questions were analyzed from multiple frames of reference since there were four contingency situations corresponding with each of the four primary situations as well as four justification categories, and it was of interest to distinguish between contingency type, situation and justification category. The initial stage of statistical analysis constituted a summary comparison between the sexes of justifications for the aggregated contingency situations across aggregated situations. The second set of statistical analyses involved collapsing the four situations and differentiating between contingency situations (i.e., examining the rule contingency, leadership authority, God's authority, and generalizability respectively for all situations collated). Conversely, the third series of tests combined data across contingency situations but distinguished the particular situation (i.e., the four contingency situations for the Travel, Work, Divorce and Hijab situations respectively).

All three of these approaches to analysis of justifications of contingency situations involved comparisons between the sexes, as well as trends in general. Both descriptive and inferential analyses were utilized, and the latter incorporated 36 t-tests (four t-tests for the first approach to analysis, and sixteen t-tests for each of the second and third approaches respectively). In order to accurately execute the t-tests with multiple parameters, data pertaining to each individual was summed (across situations, across contingency types, or both), and each individual's sum was used in calculations, so that each individual was represented only once in each t-test.

A total of 607 justifications were used across the 16 contingency situations amongst all 32 participants (four for each of the four situations), with a mean of 1.2 justifications per person per contingency situation per situation. Males used slightly more justifications than females (313 compared with 294). Consistent with the approach used for the other situations, uncodable justifications were discarded. Justifications were classified using the same categories (moral, conventional, personal, and relationship) and subcategories as the primary and transgression situations. Descriptive statistical analyses included the subcategories, and inferential statistical analyses examined the justification categories (domains).

Justification Categories for Aggregated Contingency Situations and Aggregated Situations. Table 20 shows the distribution of justifications within each category by sex for contingency situations. As with justifications for primary and transgression situations, the majority of justifications provided (73%) were moral. Each sex reasoned primarily using moral justifications (71% for males and 74% for females).

Table 20: Justification Categories of Aggregated Contingency Situations and Aggregated Situations by Sex (Percentages)

Justification Category	Male	Female	Total
Moral	70.93 (36.57)	74.49 (36.08)	72.65
Conventional	16.61 (8.57)	16.67 (8.07)	16.64
Personal	10.22 (5.27)	6.80 (3.29)	8.57
Relationship	2.24 (1.15)	2.04 (0.99)	2.14

*Note: The figures in parentheses denote the percentage of total justifications, in contrast to percentages within each sex which show the percentage out of the total justifications used by that sex

The remainder of this section presents the results for four t-tests carried out based on data pertaining to the four contingency types combined for the four gender-related situations combined. As mentioned above, data were attached to each individual and was not simply treated as a single entity; data for each individual were summed so as to represent each individual only once per t-test. The tests compared the means between males and females in terms of justifications used across the four contingency types and four situations. None of the four t-tests yielded statistically significant sex differences. The results are tabulated in Table 21.

Table 21: t-test Results for Aggregated Contingency Justifications across Aggregated Situations by Sex

Justification Category	Males		Females		p	t
	\bar{x}	s	\bar{x}	s		
Moral	13.9	4.5	13.7	4.9	0.911	1.379
Conventional	3.3	2.4	3.1	2.3	0.824	0.946
Personal	2.0	1.7	1.3	1.9	0.247	0.691
Relationship	0.4	1.2	0.4	0.6	0.855	1.078

Justification Categories for Aggregated Situations within each Contingency Situation. This section reports findings on justifications for rule contingency, leadership authority, God's authority, and situation generalizability respectively for all four gender-related situations combined. It reports the results of 16 t-tests, four for each contingency type, comparing the mean moral, conventional, personal and relationship justifications provided by males and females respectively. Table 22 reports the results of 16 t-tests, with each row representing a t-test. None of these inferential statistical analyses yielded statistically significant results in terms of sex differences.

For the sake of clarity and specificity, a series of four t-tests were carried out for each of the four contingency types. In order to compare the mean moral justifications between males and females for rule contingency across all four situations, a t-test was conducted. Three further t-tests were conducted comparing mean conventional, personal and relationship justifications for rule contingency respectively between the sexes. Similarly, four t-tests were conducted for the contingency pertaining to the authority of religious and governmental leaders. Means were compared between the sexes for each of the four justification categories, collapsing the data for all four situations together. Another four t-tests were carried out for the contingency of God's authority. The mean male and female justifications were compared for each of the four justification categories, across all four situations. Likewise, a further four t-tests were carried out for the contingency of situation generalizability. Males and females were compared in terms of means for each of the four justification categories, across all four situations.

Table 22: t-test Results for Justification Categories for Aggregated Situations within each Contingency Situation by Sex

	Males		Females			
Justification Category	\bar{x}	s	\bar{x}	s	p	t
Rule Contingency						
Moral	4.1	1.7	4.7	1.9	0.384	0.298
Conventional	0.3	0.4	0.3	0.7	0.766	0.737
Personal	0.9	0.9	0.5	0.8	0.149	1.059
Relationship	0	0	0.1	0.3	0.153	1.039
Authority (Leaders) Contingency						
Moral	3.4	1.4	3.4	1.7	1	x
Conventional	1.3	1.2	0.9	1.1	0.368	0.341
Personal	0.5	0.6	0.3	0.4	0.207	0.830

Relationship	0.1	0.3	0.1	0.3	0.560	0.150
Authority (God) Contingency						
Moral	2.8	1.5	1.9	1.5	0.104	1.29
Conventional	1.3	1.2	1.6	1.4	0.504	0.010
Personal	0.3	0.5	0.3	0.6	0.741	0.655
Relationship	0.1	0.3	0	0	0.154	1.039
Generalizability Contingency						
Moral	3.5	1.2	3.6	1.4	0.790	0.816
Conventional	0.4	0.6	0.2	0.6	0.370	0.335
Personal	0.3	0.6	0.3	0.4	1	x
Relationship	0.2	0.6	0.2	0.4	1	x

Justification Categories for Aggregated Contingency Situations within each Situation. In this section, the justifications provided for all four contingency questions combined are compared by sex, for the Travel, Work, Divorce and Hijab situations separately. The results of all 16 t-tests are shown in Table 23, with each test represented in a single row. Amongst the 16 t-tests conducted, no statistically significant sex differences were found in mean justifications within each justification category (moral, conventional, personal, and relationship).

Table 23: t-test Results for Justification Categories for Aggregated Contingency Situations within each Situation by Sex

Justification Category	Males		Females		p	t
	\bar{x}	s	\bar{x}	s		
Travel Situation						
Moral	3.7	1.6	3.3	1.9	0.542	0.107
Conventional	0.9	0.8	0.9	0.8	0.824	0.947
Personal	0.6	0.8	0.2	0.4	0.109	1.258
Relationship	0.1	0.3	0.1	0.3	1	x

Work Situation						
Moral	3.2	2.1	3.0	1.0	0.796	0.840
Conventional	0.8	1.0	0.7	0.9	0.852	1.063
Personal	0.4	0.8	0.1	0.5	0.300	0.529
Relationship	0.4	1.2	0.3	0.4	0.565	0.165
Divorce Situation						
Moral	4.1	2.1	4.3	1	0.737	0.641
Conventional	0.8	1	0.4	0.5	0.275	0.605
Personal	0.1	0.3	0	0	0.325	0.457
Relationship	0	0	0.1	0.3	0.325	0.457
Hijab Situation						
Moral	2.9	1.4	2.8	0.9	0.827	0.958
Conventional	0.8	0.9	1.1	1.1	0.495	0.014
Personal	1.0	1.1	0.9	1.3	0.884	1.217
Relationship	0	0	0	0	x	x

Chapter 5: Discussion

According to cultural psychology and socialization theories regarding moral development, and more specifically their assumptions about differences in the moral values of so-conceived individualistic and collectivistic cultures, the Iranian population (an Eastern, Islamic, and hierarchically-organized society) would be expected to be concerned with collectivist moral values such as interdependence, interpersonal responsibilities, duty, respect for authority, reciprocity, and social roles, as well as sanctity. Through such a lens, it would not be predicted that Iranians demonstrate a priority for so-called ‘Western’ moral values such as a concern for rights (including freedoms and entitlements), justice, welfare and avoidance of harm, or personal choice. However, the present study found that Iranians are indeed concerned with rights, justice, welfare and personal choice, and that these in fact superseded other concerns of a conventional, personal or interpersonal (relational) nature. These findings are at odds with the theories of cultural psychologists such as Shweder and colleagues (1984, 1990, 1997), Triandis (1995, 2018), Markus and Kitayama (1994), and Haidt and colleagues (1993, 2001, 2007), since they do not present a picture of a collectivist society disinterested in justice, welfare and rights, and in pursuit of interdependent relational and role concerns, nor respect for authority as a moral guide.

The study found that in all the situations pertaining to restrictions of women’s rights and the enactment of gender inequality—whether it be regarding a woman traveling, working, maintaining ownership of financial assets after divorce, or choosing whether or not to wear a hijab—the moral concerns of justice (including fairness, equality, and challenging injustice), rights (including general human rights as well as the specific rights to choose, to pursue goals, to freedom from coercion, and to property), and welfare (including wellbeing and protection from harm) constituted the overwhelming majority of concerns for both male and female Iranians. The moral concerns of justice, rights, and welfare dominated concerns for relationship maintenance, social and cultural norms, the private or personal choices of individuals, the sanctity of religious dictates, and the authority of governmental laws or dictates from leadership. Concerns for interdependence, interpersonal responsibility, duty, reciprocity, social roles, and sanctity, were either absent in the reasoning of participants or formed the minority of judgments, as measured by categories such as “relationship maintenance”, “society”, and “culture”. Moral concerns trumped conventional, personal and relationship concerns across situations.

In the situations involving a female transgressing gender restrictive laws in pursuit of rights and equality, the moral concerns with justice, rights, and welfare were again prevalent, in addition to the moral concern with honesty. While participants were concerned with pursuing justice, challenging injustice, achieving equality, protecting human welfare, and asserting various human rights for women, Iranians, especially males, were also notably concerned with honesty and the avoidance of deception. That is, both pursuing justice and also doing so in an honest way, were important to participants. These various moral concerns were weighed and balanced by participants in the process of coordination, with mixed results. For some (especially males) the moral concern for honesty and avoidance of deception was emphasized, and for others (especially females), protesting unjust systemic laws and practices, eclipsed competing concerns. For the situations involving transgressions of restrictive laws, once again, moral concerns were prevalent while conventional, personal and relationship concerns were minor.

This preliminary finding provides fertile soil for future research into the various ways in which Iranian males and females coordinate competing moral, conventional and pragmatic concerns regarding the transgression of unjust laws, the protest of systemic injustice through

various legal and illegal practices, compliance with unjust laws while finding such laws unacceptable, and consideration of the physical, social and psychological ramifications of subversion and deception on the part of the protagonists.

The study found that both males and females evaluate gender inequality and restrictions of women's rights as unacceptable, although females do so to a significantly greater extent. This demonstrates that concern for gender equality and rights for women is a concern, not only for females who are subjugated by the current system of religious and governmental laws, but also by males who benefit from the status quo. This finding provides opportunities for future research to delve more deeply into the reasoning that guides males to prioritize gender equality and women's rights over their own personal gain.

Regarding situations in which females transgress restrictive laws in pursuit of gender equality and women's rights, Iranians demonstrated mixed results, with approximately half of the participants (though significantly more males than females) disapproving of such transgressions.

The remainder of this chapter furnishes a discussion of the findings of the present study. It describes the trends with regard to the judgments of participants and also reports excerpts from participant interviews to illustrate justifications and the reasoning process. It begins with a discussion of patterns in responses as to acceptance and rejection of gender inequality (i.e., primary situations), then moves to a discussion of participants accepting and rejecting the violation of restrictive laws by female protagonists who seek gender equality (i.e., transgression situations), and finally turns to a discussion of the alterability of existing laws that restrict women's rights (i.e., contingency situations). For each of these three sections, participant responses for evaluations and justifications are taken up separately. A discussion of the justifications involves teasing out the main themes of concern for males and females independently, and the inclusion of participant quotes for each significant theme.

Acceptance and Rejection of Gender Inequality and Restrictions of Women's Rights (Primary Situations)

Evaluations

The study showed that the majority of both Iranian males and females in the sample evaluated restrictions of women's rights and the enactment of gender inequality sanctioned by religious and governmental laws in Iran as unacceptable. More specifically, the majority of both sexes disapproved of a husband enforcing such sanctioned laws on his wife. This was the case for all rights included in the study: the rights to travel, work, maintain ownership of financial assets, and to choose whether to wear a hijab (the right to choose for oneself and to enjoy freedom are embedded within each of these).

Compared with the other rights, the restriction concerning the wearing of a hijab was disapproved of less by both males and females. As described in the Methodology chapter, the situation involving the hijab was the only situation in which, even if the husband provides permission, the goal of the wife would still not be lawful. That is, a woman traveling, working and maintaining ownership of financial assets after divorce are not illegal if the husband provides permission for it. However, a woman being in public without wearing a hijab would still be illegal even with the husband's permission. This distinction may account for the relative decrease in disapproval rates of the action.

While a majority of both males and females evaluated such actions as unacceptable across all situations in aggregate, significantly more females than males evaluated it so. Within the Divorce situation specifically, significantly more females disapproved of the husband's actions, with females unanimous in disapproval and males presenting mixed evaluations.

The occurrence of ambivalent evaluations (for primary as well as transgression situations), where participants responded that an evaluation depends on certain factors or might be one way in a given circumstance and another way in a different circumstance ("it depends" and "maybe"), indicate that participants were exercising flexibilities of mind (Turiel, 1983a; Turiel & Perkins, 2004) in their process of reasoning. That is, they were not simply making judgments in the abstract but were considering the specific social situational context and striving to factor in the particulars that may influence their evaluations.

Justifications

The majority of justifications supporting evaluations of gender inequality and restrictions of women's rights were moral. Justifications based on conventional, personal and relationship factors combined constituted only approximately one quarter of justifications. This was the case for both males and females.

While justifications used by both sexes were predominantly moral, significantly more conventional justifications were used by males than females. These justifications pertained to the legitimacy and/or illegitimacy of sources of authority (including the authority of males, husbands, laws, morality police, leaders, religion and God).

The subcategories of reasoning used differed somewhat between males and females. While the most common justification subcategories used by females pertained to moral and personal factors, the justification subcategories most commonly used by males included a mix of moral and relationship-centered reasoning. Amongst the most commonly used subcategories, women also used a greater range of moral subcategories than males.

Human Rights and Freedoms (Females). More specifically, female reasoning about gender inequality in Iran predominantly referenced the right to freedom from coercion, the right to choose, the right to pursue goals, the right to property, and personal choice. Examples are as follows:

"The woman can identify themselves as the way they want to wear their dress. This is part of people's identity to choose what they want to wear. When they force women to choose specific dressing it's like getting a part of the human being from them." (Female, Hijab)

"No-one can make decision for a woman. If he thinks that it's against family values so maybe he can do his job like part time job." (Female, Work)

"About the job, about the everythings for the self, everybody should think about their business and make a decision, and father and brother and husband and everyone can't have a rule for them." (Female, Work)

"In our culture, Iranian culture and Muslim culture, when a boy marries a girl he owns it, owns that person, and this is not ok." (Female, Travel)

"Now there are some men in Iran who think they can decide for their wife... they can't compel their wives that leave their job." (Female, Work)

“They have to be free to choose. Like in Turkey, it's a Muslim country but they can choose to wear it or not wear it.” (Female, Hijab)

“The hair doesn't belong to him so he can't say anything.” (Female, Hijab)

“My body, my choice.” (Female, Hijab)

“Everything I think is half. Even the wife doesn't work outside so but she spends her life in that house cooking, cleaning, I don't know, laundry, so she deserves half of the money” (Female, Divorce)

“She can earn her own money. If I was Faezeh, I would tell my husband: “Ok, if you pay me more than my work, then I'll stay home.” (Female, Work)

“Marriage is a commitment, not something to be stuck in. She is not his slave, she is human. Government makes men think they are superior. They think they are the most powerful existence in the world and they can think they are better than anyone.” (Female, Travel)

Well-being (Females). Concern for these rights was also enmeshed with a concern for the well-being of the woman, both physically and psychologically. This was particularly the case for the wearing of a hijab in public. Concern for psychological well-being centered on the negative psychological impact that being forced to wear a hijab can have on women, while concern for physical well-being focused on possible repercussions of going in public without a hijab. Females demonstrated coordination between various moral concerns in their reasoning about the right to choose whether or not to wear a hijab in public within a religious and political environment that outlaws women's faces from being shown in public. Examples are as follows:

“If the neighborhood is unsafe, then it's ok because she isn't safe. Men's eyes are not used to see these kinds of things.” (Female, Hijab)

“I think it's not ok because it has negative effects on the woman's psychology and it can cause embarrassment for the wife and feeling that she's like a slave or she is in a prison, and she has to choose to wear what she wants.” (Female, Hijab)

“So in this situation, what I'm assuming is because of the situation in Iran if you go out without wearing hijab, because of basijis, the morality police, they come and beat you. There are these kinds of crazy people out there so then Farokh may be worried about his wife and wants to protect her from bad things to happen.” (Female, Hijab)

“Sometimes Farokh is very good man. He can, he want to say to Leila, “Leila outside is very terrible, some people attack you because you haven't wear hijab. Use this one and we go to shopping and back because your safety.” But this is ok. He want to keep her safe, but he is free man. They can go to everyone, the party, without wearing hijab. This man is very enlightened. This is ok. But some man has such rule: “You should have hijab near my family, you should have hijab...” This is not ok.” (Female, Hijab)

Relationship Maintenance (Males). Male reasoning about gender inequality was commonly justified on relationship centered grounds. In the situation in which a husband prohibits his wife from working, the maintenance of the marriage and family were frequently used as justifications for inequality. However, the good of the family unit was narrowly defined as the good of the husband and children, without inclusion of the wife's intellectual development, emotional state, career pursuits or contributions to society. Notably, the justifications were not

arguing that the family unit should consult on a work and family balance, but rather, that the wife should simply prioritize family responsibilities over work, as enforced by the husband. Examples are as follows:

- “Not damaging the family is more important than working.” (Male, Work)
- “So they can have a happy family life together instead of her working.” (Male, Work)
- “The wife needs to be there for the family in the same way she was before” (Male, Work)
- “The family unit should not be questioned.” (Male, Work)
- “Family is the number one priority in life.” (Male, Work)
- “Family values are important.” (Male, Work)

Equality (Males). Male reasoning also referenced concern for equality and the woman’s right to choose. Examples are as follows:

- “We need to respect freedom of people. Progress of society is according to respect for women in that society. The rule is outdated and for 1000 years ago, not today. Today we need equality for women and men.” (Male, Travel)
- “She should make her own decision about her work.” (Male, Work)
- “You should have the right to choose for yourself. Society is for people, not governments. So they should live in society how they like.” (Male, Hijab)
- “Men and women are equal in what they should be allowed to do. The regulations in Iran are wrong.” (Male, Work)
- “We need respect for all people equally. No discrimination.” (Male, Work)
- “It’s a woman’s right to choose for her own life.” (Male, Work)
- “It’s her choice. She should be free to choose if she wants to wear or not.” (Male, Hijab)

Acceptance and Rejection of Transgressions of Restrictive Laws in Pursuit of Gender Equality and Women’s Rights (Transgression Situations)

Evaluations

There was less agreement regarding transgressions of restrictive laws than there were regarding restrictive actions sanctioned by law. That is, while the majority of the sample evaluated restrictions on women’s rights and the enactment of gender inequality as unacceptable, less than half of Iranians interviewed approved of females transgressing those restrictive laws in pursuit of rights and gender equality. Specifically, evaluations of primary situations (in which a male protagonist inhibits the rights of his wife in accordance with restrictive laws) were met with disapproval by the majority of the sample; however, transgression situations (in which the wife in the same situation transgresses the restrictive law in order to pursue a right and gender equality) were evaluated with approval by a minority. This discrepancy may be explained by the involvement of illegality, deception and secrecy in the transgressive actions of the female protagonists, as evidenced by the justifications provided.

While less than half of each sex evaluated the transgressive action in pursuit of rights as acceptable, females evaluated it so significantly more than males across all situations presented. Indeed, in each situation, while the majority of males evaluated the transgressive action as

unacceptable, females were more heterogeneous in their evaluations with only half or less than half disapproving of the action and many ambivalent responses. In the situation pertaining to the ownership of financial assets after divorce specifically, females significantly approved of the transgressive action of the female protagonist more than males. This may be explained, as evidenced by the justifications, by the fact that males have a higher stake in the situation of divorce than they do with travel, work and the wearing of a hijab. That is, males are likely to be more impacted by having half of their marital financial assets go to their wife than they would be by their wife traveling, working, or choosing not to wear a hijab.

Justifications

When justifying evaluations of transgressions of restrictive laws, the majority of justifications used were moral. Consistent with justifications for restrictions of women's rights, justifications based on conventional, personal and relationship factors again made up approximately a quarter of justifications for transgressions of restrictive laws. This was the case for both males and females.

While the majority of justifications used by both sexes were moral, significantly more females than males used moral justifications. Females used moral reasoning to justify actions more than males for all situations in aggregate and also for the specific situation entailing going out in public without wearing a hijab. Conversely, significantly more males than females used personal justifications (relating to personal choice).

The subcategories of reasoning used most frequently differed somewhat between males and females. While females predominantly used subcategories pertaining to moral and relationship factors (honesty, welfare, challenging injustice, and relationship maintenance), males used moral and personal subcategories (honesty and personal choice). While both males and females were concerned about honesty (given that the transgression situations entailed deception), females were also concerned about the wellbeing of the female protagonist, protesting systemic injustice, and maintaining harmonious relationships, while males viewed the situations as a matter of personal choice. Consistent with reasoning about gender inequality (in the primary situations), in the most commonly used justifications of transgressive actions, females used a broader range of moral justification subcategories than males.

Female reasoning about females transgressing restrictive laws included a web of moral concerns including the need to challenge injustice, the well-being of the woman, and honesty. For example, dishonesty was disapproved of in general terms, but was considered appropriate in the context of the transgressive situations due to it being in pursuit of justice within an unjust system of oppression. As another example, protesting for change was upheld in general terms but concern for the female protagonist's safety made such actions unviable for some participants. Females demonstrated coordination, whereby they viewed each situation in its totality, acknowledged its complexity and multifaceted nature, navigated amongst various moral goals, and weighed them against each other, at times subduing one to another. The following sections demonstrate how concerns about challenging injustice, well-being, and honesty arose as salient themes, both individually and interconnected with one another through processes of coordination.

Challenging Injustice (Females). Females largely referenced the need to challenge systemic injustice and to protest for change. For some females, it was a straightforward matter of protesting injustice. Other females commonly acknowledged the problematic nature of the action

(its illegality and dishonesty) but they coordinated between the moral goals of honesty and justice, subduing honesty to the need to challenge injustice. That is, some participants weighed deception, dishonesty, and breaking of law, against the need to protest for change and challenge unfair social practices and laws. Examples of both straightforward reasoning on challenging injustice, as well as some examples of coordinated reasoning, are as follows:

“I think it’s ok because when there is no law supporting someone's right, you then have to do stuff. Like I know it's illegal to forge a document, but when there is no law in place to support your right, you need to take some action. You know, it's not lawfully law, but it's something you need to do to sometimes have your rights in a context where law doesn't support you.” (Female, Travel)

“To me, breaking the law is not a good thing, but to me, it's ok because you have a, how can I say, a more valuable goal or purpose in that.” (Female, Travel)

“Yeah I think it's ok because you know, it's a way that women use to just challenge this rule because they don't have the authority to change this rule. It's normal for them to find other ways.” (Female, Divorce)

“I know this might be against the law but in this situation I would say yes it's ok. To me no-one has the right to say what I do, so if, unfortunately if the government rules or my husband is like this, I have to say yeah if i was in her situation I would do this to be honest.” (Female, Travel)

“Women need their independence. I know it's not right but yeah.” (Female, Work)

“I think it's ok because you should be able to break any law that is nonsense.” (Female, Hijab)

“It's ok because you have to survive somehow.” (Female, Work)

“I think it's ok. It's some like underground fight with some clear rights that we should have but we don't have so I just look at it as fighting against ridiculous rules.” (Female, Hijab)

“To me breaking the nonsense law is ok.” (Female, Work)

“She needs to somehow make her point somehow.” (Female, Hijab)

“This is something we see a lot in Persian families, especially traditional ones, but yeah unfortunately because they don’t have the support from their government and most of the time from their families so they have to have something for themselves.” (Female, Divorce)

Well-being (Females). Female reasoning about the need to challenge injustice was commonly accompanied by concerns for the woman’s safety and well-being should she protest for justice. Females demonstrated coordination between the moral goals of justice and human rights on the one hand, together with physical and psychological well-being, as they navigated the various actions of females in a terrain that outlaws many of their freedoms. The well-being of females was often in the context of physical harm that may come upon them from external actors, but also included the psychological impact of engaging in deceitful actions or living a duplicitous existence. For example, participants expressed concern for rights and freedom of choice, but cited psychological issues, rape, and murder as possible consequences of the female protagonist’s transgressive action. The process of coordination demonstrated the push and pull between the moral goals of justice, rights and well-being. Examples of both straightforward concern for wellbeing as well as efforts at coordinated reasoning are as follows:

“It's ok but it has lots of consequences, after that maybe it would be dangerous for her. I'm ok with that but it would be dangerous. When the rules don't support the women's right she needs to do something separately.” (Female, Work)

“Here again I'm concerned about Leila if something happens to her in the street, yeah, I think Leila also has to consider this aspect that maybe something will happen to her. But if I want to consider the part that she is free and she can choose. It's her choice but she has to consider the situation in Iran that you can go in the street and not wear the hijab and someone comes and hits you or takes you somewhere and rapes you. Women have no protection in Iran. Answering this one is tricky. All I'm concerned is her not to risk her life. But if it's her choice then yeah that's fine.” (Female, Hijab)

“If she wants to not come back. If she wants to stay forever, yes. If she returns home, um, not sure what happens but I'm sure that something bad is gonna happen. Lots of different things gonna happen. 'Cause the man Hosein find themselves in a situation where they are allowed to do anything. Smallest thing is just complain and sue her, and the biggest thing is just kill her. 'Cause there are no rules for that for them.” (Female, Travel)

“Personally I think it's not ok because even though some rules are wrong we should obey the rules because it can have dire consequences if you don't follow the wrong rule.” (Female, Travel)

“From outside it's ok because she can choose what she wants to wear. But from the internal, she might think that her behavior contradicts to each other and she has two faces and this will lead to psychological issues eventually and she can't find her identity. And she might be worried how people judge her.” (Female, Hijab)

“I think it's not ok. But in countries like Iran women need to do this because if they don't feel safe from their husbands side it's better that they put money in the bank in case something happens.” (Female, Divorce)

“It's impossible. Finally husband will find out and it may put her in big trouble. If she wants to stay alive, it's not good to do because of the culture.” (Female, Work)

Honesty (Females). Conversely, in the process of coordination by females, the need to challenge injustice was also frequently subdued to honesty. The moral concern to be honest trumped the pursuit of justice, or it was reasoned that dishonest means do not justify the ends even if those ends are yearned for. Examples are as follows:

“I would prefer to divorce my husband instead of lie.” (Female, Travel)

“Working can bring self-confidence for women and help them stand on their own feet. But definitely I'm not agree secretly doing this.” (Female, Work)

“This behavior make a weak woman. Strong woman should have a rule the first day. We have two question. Leila goes to market without hijab is ok. But with husband talking one way and doing another is not ok.” (Female, Hijab)

Honesty (Males). Male moral reasoning about female transgressions of restrictive laws most commonly referenced honesty. This was most commonly a straightforward concern with honesty, but on occasion male reasoning about honesty was coordinated with competing goals. For example, the female protagonist's right to travel was acknowledged, but the need for honesty was maintained as paramount. The means (of engaging in deception, especially in married life)

were not seen to justify the ends (pursuing women's rights). Examples of straightforward and coordinated examples of honesty amongst male participants are as follows:

"Cheating and lying in married life is never ok. She should find another way."

(Male, Travel)

"Before marriage she should have put an amendment in the marriage contract to travel. But if there is no amendment, then after marriage the man should decide for his wife. She should not lie." (Male, Travel)

"Change the rule if you don't like it. But Iranian society demands hijab. So you have to wear it. She shouldn't do what she wants in secret." (Male, Hijab)

"She should be able to travel, but even though the goal is good, the way to reach the goal is not defensible. She should not lie to her husband." (Male, Travel)

"It's her right to travel, but not like this, not with forgery." (Male, Travel)

"It's the wrong way to go about it. Lying is never ok in married life." (Male, Work)

"Lying and hiding things from your partner is bad, but pursuing your goals in life is important. She should try to just convince her husband." (Male, Work)

"Secrets are not ok in marriage. Even indirect lying is just morally wrong." (Male, Divorce)

"She has a marital commitment not to lie or keep secrets." (Male, Divorce)

"It's unethical, it's not fair to hide things from her partner." (Male, Divorce)

"She shouldn't lie to her husband. She should just say she doesn't want to wear it." (Male, Hijab)

Acceptance and Rejection of Mutability of Existing Laws that Enact Gender Inequality and Restrictions of Women's Rights (Contingency Situations)

Evaluations

The majority of participants evaluated the mutability of existing laws that sanction gender inequality and restrictions of women's rights as acceptable. This was the case for mutability based on the presence or absence of a rule, authority dictates from religious and governmental leaders, authority dictates from God, and also customary practices in a foreign country, and held for both males and females. That is, most participants approved of changing existing religious and legal laws that sanction gender inequality.

While both sexes found the changing of such restrictions acceptable, significantly more females than males evaluated approval for mutability based on the two contingencies centered on authority dictates across all situations. That is, significantly less males than females accepted changing the existing laws by the authority dictates of religious and governmental leaders, or God. This was also the case for changing the specific laws of a male restricting his wife from working (leadership contingency), and a male restricting his wife from traveling (God contingency). For both of these specific laws, significantly fewer males than females accepted the mutability of the existing restrictive law based on authority dictates from leaders and God respectively.

Justifications

As with justifications for restrictions on women's rights and transgressions of restrictive laws, the justifications used to support evaluations of contingency situations were mostly moral.

Once again approximately a quarter of justifications used were based on conventional, personal and relationship factors.

No significant differences were found between males and females in the justification categories on which their evaluations of the contingency situations were based. This was the case when contingencies were analyzed in aggregate as well as individually, for situations in aggregate and individually. Since sex differences were not found for contingency situations, male and female responses are presented together (but marked as male or female for each quote).

Legitimate Authority. In reasoning about the mutability of existing restrictive laws against women, a conventional justification that was commonly referenced was the legitimacy of the authority figure. The source of authority, be it a rule, leader or God, was recognized as a rightful or effective means by which to change existing laws and practices based on gender inequality. Examples are as follows:

“He is my Master so...” (Female, God, Hijab)

“That's a dream for every woman in Iran because they are the main authority in Iran and they play a big role in rules and regulations” (Female, Leaders, Travel)

“Because we need a framework of clear and strict laws in society.” (Male, Rule, Divorce)

“Some people are religious and they just want to obey what God says and follow that structure for their life and this would help those people know that they should be free.” (Female, God, Travel)

“Because the government controls society, and it's a good thing to say.” (Male, Leaders, Hijab)

“If God says it, it will be accepted by government and people.” (Male, God, Divorce)

“It helps religious people to have God endorsement” (Male, God, Hijab)

Evolution of Laws. There was also a subset of justifications regarding the legitimacy of the source of authority in a different context. These justifications upheld the legitimacy of the source of authority (religion and the law), but acknowledged that the existing laws are unjust and need to be updated. The reasoning process condoned neither following nor breaking unjust laws, but rather, focused on changing them. Examples are as follows:

“I think people should obey laws. So the law should change.” (Male, Rule, Travel)

“It really helps to amend the culture, to change the culture, because half of our culture has roots in religious things apart from the rules that governments have and this can help from two sides, from government side and the religious side, to change what people believe.” (Female, Leaders, Hijab)

“The rule creates superiority and dominance of men so it needs to change.” (Male, Rule, Travel)

Illegitimate Authority. Inversely, the illegitimacy of the source of authority was also a common theme in justifications of the mutability of existing laws. In these cases, respondents argued that it is not within the jurisdiction of such a party, be it leaders or God, to dictate on such matters. Rather, certain principles were viewed as intrinsically true, regardless of whether or not an authority figure comments on it. The illegitimacy of the authority was most commonly used to

support inherent human rights, arguing that the right is a fundamental aspect of reality rather than a variable notion that authorities have jurisdiction to pronounce. However, on occasion the illegitimacy of the authority of a rule was used to uphold the legitimacy of the authority of the husband (e.g., the first quote below). Examples are as follows:

“They should not force people to do something the husband does not agree with.”
(Male, Rule, Work)

“Most other countries have a voting system so the government represents people's wants. But in Iran, it's not like that. So what they say isn't even what people want.”
(Male, Generalizability, Divorce)

“I really respect God but no, some things is not wisdom. It's no difference who tells this, even God so no I don't agree.” (Female, God, Wage)

“I don't care what they said, it's none of their business.” (Female, Leaders, Travel)

“Yes it's ok, but in the first place there is no need for someone to approve or not, it's their right.” (Female, God, Travel)

“It's not up to God to force people one way or the other about this.” (Male, God, Divorce)

“What you eat, what you wear, what you want, it not should be rule in society.”
(Female, Rule, Hijab)

Well-being. A moral concern that was evoked in relation to the mutability of restrictive laws against women, was the well-being of females. This includes concern for the psychological well-being of women, including protection from abusive marriages and financial destitution after divorce, as well as physical well-being, including possible consequences of having exposed female faces seen by men in public. Examples are as follows:

“Otherwise I can see so many people who are in toxic relationships staying and suffering just because they can't have money after divorce.” (Female, Leader, Divorce)

“It's good because it stops the man from bullying, from pressuring, the wife to stay in the marriage.” (Male, Rule, Divorce)

“In this case women feel confident if they want to finish their married life they can initiate it without thinking they're gonna lose money and can't live.” (Female, God, Divorce)

“There are some womens in Iran that they want to get divorced but because they think they don't have any support, they scared and continue in their life that they don't feel happy. But in this case like in developed countries like Australia these rules help women that start getting divorced.” (Female, Generalizability, Divorce)

“There is some consequences but it will be ok little by little. Every starting point there is struggling but it's worth it. It's a starting point for improvement in many things in women's life.” (Female, Rule, Travel)

“There will be some chaos at the beginning because men are not used to it but little by little they'll get used to it. But the government would also need to make some protection for women against men.” (Female, Rule, Hijab)

“The reason in Iran they always tell us to wear hijab is to protect ourselves against men. But when I compare us with other countries, I see women are more protected here [in Australia]. We couldn't say anything when someone harassed you. Hijab does not do anything. It's just a rule.” (Female, Generalizability, Hijab)

Human Rights. Another moral concern that was commonly referenced in relation to the mutability of gender restrictive laws was human rights of various kinds. These included general appeals to human rights, as well as the specific rights to choose, to property, to pursue goals, and others. Examples are as follows:

“That’s why because of these kinds of human rights that they have in other countries that we move to other country. Otherwise it’s very hard because of language and everything to leave our country.” (Female, Generalizability, Hijab)

“It’s their duty to have some laws in place that will protect women’s rights.” (Female, Leaders, Travel)

“Having the option is good. Not forcing her to wear it, or forcing her not to wear it. It’s her right to choose if she wants, wear. If she doesn’t, don’t wear.” (Male, Leaders, Hijab)

“That’s human rights. You need to have freedom to do what you want.” (Male, Generalizability, Hijab)

“We should respect the woman’s freedom to choose.” (Male, Generalizability, Hijab)

“It’s not about where the person lives. It’s just a human thing, it’s a human freedom.” (Male, Generalizability, Hijab)

“It’s not related to the country, it’s just a human right to work.” (Male, Generalizability, Work)

Equality. Another moral concern that was frequently referenced to justify the mutability of restrictive laws against women was the equality of women and men. Respondents appealed that the sexes are inherently equal and should be treated thus by rules and sources of authority. Examples are as follows:

“In Iran the main issue is some discrimination rules that unfortunately every woman faces that. One of them is the divorce rights for females. I think it should be removed this rule because there is no difference between women and men.” (Female, Leaders, Divorce)

“There should be liberty and freedom of people. Equal rights for husbands and wives.” (Male, Rule, Travel)

“I believe we should have respect for all people equally. No discrimination man or woman.” (Male, Leader, Work)

“If there would be a rule for hijab, it should be for male and female, not just female.” (Female, Rule, Hijab)

Conclusion

This study sought to examine the judgments of Iranian adults about gender equality and women’s rights in the context of a religious and legal system that sanctions inequality between the sexes. Specifically, the study explored evaluations and reasoning regarding restrictions of women’s rights by males, transgressions of gender restrictive laws by females, and the mutability of existing gender restrictive practices based on various sources of law, authority and cultural norms. It was found that the majority of participants, both males and females, judged existing legal and religious laws that enact gender inequality unacceptable. It was also found that while they deem such laws and practices unacceptable, there were mixed results regarding whether

transgressing such unjust laws is acceptable. Males in particular took issue with the deception and subversion involved in such transgressions, despite it being in pursuit of rights and equality.

The study also found that Iranians reason about these issues using predominantly moral justifications, and that these justifications are based on concerns with justice, rights, and welfare. Regarding transgressions of restrictive laws, a moral concern with honesty was also salient. Concerns with relationship harmony (interdependence, reciprocity, duty) were also common. There was a weighing and balancing of various moral and other concerns in the process of reasoning. The results demonstrate the complexity of these issues as perceived by Iranian adults, and indicate that Iranians do not have a general orientation but rather, as a group, and within individuals, there is a multiplicity of meanings, values and priorities.

Through in-depth interviews with Iranian men and women, in which they contemplated hypothetical situations regarding various restrictions on the rights of women in Iran—the right to travel, work, maintain ownership of financial assets after divorce, and choose whether to wear a hijab—and the practice of husband's enforcing these legal and religious laws in a family context, the study provided information about the judgments and reasoning of Iranians on issues where law, religion, social norms, cultural conventions, and morality intersect. Participant deliberations on situations involving the subversion of existing legal and religious laws that sanction gender inequality, through female transgressions and deception, yielded information into the ways in which men and women coordinate various competing moral goals with one another, as well as with conventional, personal, and relational concerns. Assessments made by participants regarding the potential mutability of existing laws and practices that subjugate females, contributed to knowledge as to whether the enactment of change is deemed possible and what factors it depends on. As a whole, the evaluations and justifications of participants offer a glimpse into the yearning of Iranians—both males and females—for gender equality and women's rights in multiple facets of social and familial life, and the coordination of various moral concerns pertaining to honesty, welfare, rights and justice.

These findings bode well for the prospect of social change in Iran toward the direction of gender equality and women's rights. The demonstration of a moral concern with gender equality and women's rights amongst both Iranian males and females provides hope for the gradual evolution and alignment of existing laws and practices with these principles. While assumptions of enculturation, internalization, and socialization emphasize the influence of culture from the external environment on somewhat passive individuals, the present study demonstrates that individuals who have grown up in an environment that sanctions gender inequality can indeed be critical of such social arrangements and oppose such practices. Evidence of Iranian men and women disapproving of existing religious and legal laws that enact gender inequality, as well as engaging in critical reasoning based on a moral concern for principles of equality and rights, constitutes a promising sign for social change. While systemic, structural, institutional, constitutional and social changes may still be a distant reality, the moral judgments of Iranian men and women pertaining to gender equality and women's rights signal hope for change.

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Appendix A

Interview Protocol

Introductory Remarks

Thank you for participating in this interview. Please kindly note that participation in this interview is voluntary. If you would like to pause or permanently stop the interview at any time throughout the interview process, you are very welcome to do so. Please simply say that you would like to pause or stop, or type it in the chat box if you prefer, and this is completely fine.

If you would like to have a break to use the bathroom, get a drink of water, stretch, or give your eyes a break from the screen, you are very welcome to do so. Please simply ask for a break verbally or by typing in the chat box.

A reminder that the interview will probably take about 25-30 minutes, but it may take up to a maximum of 60 minutes if additional time is needed.

The interview will start with a few general questions about you, and then I'll read a few hypothetical situations to you and ask you some questions about them. There are no right or wrong answers to these questions. Please tell me what you think.

If you have questions or concerns at any time, please let me know. Do you have any questions or comments before we begin?

General Questions

1. What is your sex / gender?
2. How old are you?
3. How long have you lived in Australia?
4. How long did you live in Iran?
5. Are you Muslim? How would you describe your own belief and practice of Islam?

Situation 1: Travel

Niloufar lives in Iran and her mother lives in Canada. Niloufar tells her husband Husayn that she wants to go to Canada to visit her mother. Husayn says she is not allowed to go and refuses to provide permission for her to travel.

1. Is it ok or not ok that Husayn does not let Niloufar travel to Canada?
2. Why or why not?

Criterion Judgment (Presence of a Rule): Suppose if there was no rule in Iran that a woman requires her husband's permission to travel.

3. Is it ok to not have that rule in Iran?
4. Why or why not?

Criterion Judgment (Authority Dictate 1): Suppose if religious and governmental leaders in Iran said a woman is allowed to travel without her husband's permission.

5. Is it ok or not ok for the leaders to say that?
6. Why or why not?

Criterion Judgment (Authority Dictate 2): Suppose if God said a woman is allowed to travel without her husband's permission.

7. Is it ok or not ok for God to say that?
8. Why or why not?

Criterion Judgment (Situation Generalizability): Suppose if in another country outside of Iran it is generally accepted that a woman is allowed to travel without her husband's permission.

9. Is it ok or not ok that this is acceptable practice in another country?
10. Why or why not?

Criterion Judgment (Violation of Restrictive Law): Suppose if Niloufar secretly forges a document from her husband stating that she is allowed to travel to Canada and she goes to see her mother.

11. Is it ok or not ok that Niloufar forges a document and goes from Iran to Canada without her husband's permission?
12. Why or why not?

Situation 2: Work

Faezeh lives in Iran and has worked as an accountant for 5 years. Recently her schedule has become busier and her husband Omid tells her she must stop working because he deems it against family values. Faezeh insists that she wants to continue working but he refuses to let her.

1. Is it ok or not ok that Omid will not let Faezeh work?
2. Why or why not?

Criterion Judgment (Presence of a Rule): Suppose if there was no rule in Iran that a woman can not work if her husband deems it against family values.

3. Is it ok to not have that rule in Iran?
4. Why or why not?

Criterion Judgment (Authority Dictate 1): Suppose if religious and governmental leaders in Iran said a woman is allowed to work even if her husband deems it against family values.

5. Is it ok or not ok for the leaders to say that?
6. Why or why not?

Criterion Judgment (Authority Dictate 2): Suppose if God said a woman is allowed to work even if her husband deems it against family values.

7. Is it ok or not ok for God to say that?
8. Why or why not?

Criterion Judgment (Situation Generalizability): Suppose if in another country outside of Iran it is generally accepted that a woman is allowed to work even if her husband deems it against family values.

9. Is it ok or not ok that this is acceptable practice in another country?
10. Why or why not?

Criterion Judgment (Violation of Restrictive Law): Suppose if Faezeh tells her employer that her husband allows her to work, even though he hasn't really. She continues to work secretly without her husband finding out.

11. Is it ok or not ok that Faezeh tells her employer that her husband allows her to work and she continues working secretly without her husband finding out?
12. Why or why not?

Situation 3: Divorce

Arash and Parisa live in Iran and have been married for 10 years. Parisa has filed for divorce. Parisa keeps her small dowry (mehr), but Arash keeps the house, both cars, and all the money they have in the bank. Parisa tells Arash she should get half of the money and assets, but he refuses and keeps them himself.

1. Is it ok or not ok that Arash keeps all the money and assets after the divorce?
2. Why or why not?

Criterion Judgment (Presence of a Rule): Suppose if there was no rule in Iran that a woman who initiates a divorce does not have ownership of the money and assets after divorce.

1. Is it ok to not have that rule in Iran?
2. Why or why not?

Criterion Judgment (Authority Dictate 1): Suppose if religious and governmental leaders in Iran said a woman should own half of the money and assets after a divorce even if she initiates the divorce.

5. Is it ok or not ok for the leaders to say that?
6. Why or why not?

Criterion Judgment (Authority Dictate 2): Suppose if God said a woman who initiates a divorce should own half of the money and assets after divorce.

7. Is it ok or not ok for God to say that?
8. Why or why not?

Criterion Judgment (Situation Generalizability): Suppose if in another country outside of Iran it is generally accepted that a woman who initiates a divorce has ownership of half of the money and assets in a divorce settlement.

9. Is it ok or not ok that this is acceptable practice in another country?
10. Why or why not?

Criterion Judgment (Violation of Restrictive Law): Suppose if Parisa has secretly put some money aside in a private place every month since she got married. She doesn't tell Arash about the money and she keeps it after the divorce.

11. Is it ok or not ok that Parisa keeps the secret stash of money after the divorce?
12. Why or why not?

Situation 4: Hijab

Leila is a woman living in Iran. She wants to go to the market without wearing her hijab, but her husband Farokh tells her she has to wear it. Leila obeys and wears the hijab to the market.

1. Is it ok or not ok that Farokh directs his wife to wear the hijab?
2. Why or why not?

Criterion Judgment (Presence of a Rule): Suppose if there was no rule in Iran that a woman must wear a hijab in public.

3. Is it ok to not have that rule in Iran?
4. Why or why not?

Criterion Judgment (Authority Dictate 1): Suppose if religious and governmental leaders in Iran said a woman does not have to wear a hijab in public.

5. Is it ok or not ok for the leaders to say that?
6. Why or why not?

Criterion Judgment (Authority Dictate 2): Suppose if God said a woman can go out in public without wearing a hijab.

7. Is it ok or not ok for God to say that?
8. Why or why not?

Criterion Judgment (Situation Generalizability): Suppose if in another country outside of Iran it is generally accepted that a woman does not have to wear a hijab in public.

9. Is it ok or not ok that this is acceptable practice in another country?
10. Why or why not?

Criterion Judgment (Violation of Restrictive Law): Suppose that when Farokh tells Leila to wear the hijab, she says ok and she puts it on. But as soon as she leaves the house she takes it off and goes to the market without wearing a hijab.

11. Is it ok or not ok that Leila goes to the market without wearing a hijab?
12. Why or why not?

Situation 5: Wage / Prototypical Moral Violation

Siamak and Behzad are two men who work full time as cleaners at the same office cleaning company in Iran. They are both good, experienced cleaners. Their boss pays Siamak half the amount of money that he pays Behzad because Siamak is tall and the boss doesn't like tall people.

1. Is it ok or not ok that the boss pays Siamak half of what he pays Behzad?
2. Why or why not?

Criterion Judgment (Presence of a Rule): Suppose if there was a rule in Iran that men of different heights get paid different amounts for the same work.

3. Is it ok or not ok to have that rule in Iran?
4. Why or why not?

Criterion Judgment (Authority Dictate 1): Suppose if religious and governmental leaders in Iran said that men of different heights get paid different amounts for the same work.

5. Is it ok or not ok for the leaders to say that?
6. Why or why not?

Criterion Judgment (Authority Dictate 2): Suppose if God said that men of different heights get paid different amounts for the same work.

7. Is it ok or not ok for God to say that?
8. Why or why not?

Criterion Judgment (Situation Generalizability): Suppose if in another country outside of Iran it is generally accepted that men of different heights get paid different amounts for the same work.

9. Is it ok or not ok that this is acceptable practice in another country?
10. Why or why not?

Appendix B

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Berkeley School of Education

CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN A RESEARCH STUDY

Judgments about social practices in Iran

Introduction: My name is Neika Portillo and I am a doctoral student in the School of Education at the University of California, Berkeley. I am working with my faculty advisor, Professor Elliot Turiel, on a research study. We invite you to be part of it. Here is some information about the research and what would be involved for participants to help you decide whether you would like to participate in the study.

Purpose of this Research Study: We are conducting this study to investigate how immigrants in Australia think about social relationships and practices in Iran. About 32 people will be interviewed.

Procedures

Be interviewed: If you choose to participate in this research, you will be interviewed either by me, (the student researcher) or by Saba Naghipour (a collaborator). The interview will be on Zoom (online video conference). During the interview, we will ask a few questions about yourself and then ask you about several hypothetical situations taking place between people in Iran. We will ask a few questions about what you think about each situation. We will audio and video record the Zoom interview so that we can accurately record the answers you give. The audio and video recordings will be permanently deleted after we transcribe (type into text) the interview conversation. The interview will be in English, and the hypothetical situations and questions will be asked verbally and shown on the screen in writing.

Total time: The interview will usually take approximately 30 minutes of your time, but if additional time is needed we can continue for up to a maximum of 60 minutes.

Benefits: There is no benefit to you personally for taking part in this study. However, we hope that you enjoy sharing your thoughts and your point of view on the hypothetical situations in the interview. Additionally, you may appreciate that the results of the research will help people understand more about the Iranian cultural context.

Risks/Discomforts: Since the interview takes place via Zoom for approximately 30 minutes, you may experience some discomfort from looking at your computer screen or sitting down. The possibility always exists that you may feel uncomfortable during the interview due to the nature of the questions. You are welcome to ask for a break or ask to stop the interview completely at any time, and the interview will pause or be ended immediately accordingly.

Breach of Confidentiality: A possible risk for any research is that confidentiality could be compromised; that is, people outside the study might get hold of confidential study information. We will do everything we can to minimize this risk; please see the next section for more information.

Confidentiality: We will keep your study data as confidential as possible. If we publish or present results of this study, we will not use individual names or other personally identifiable information.

To help protect confidentiality, all digital files will be encrypted (password protected) and stored on a locked computer that only the researchers have access to. We will transcribe (type into text) all audio and video recordings and then delete the audio and video files permanently.

We plan to keep the transcribed (typed) information for 25 years in case we or other researchers want to use it later for other studies. We will follow the same steps we just described to keep it as confidential as possible.

Compensation/Payment: There is no compensation for participating in this study.

Rights: *Participation in research is completely voluntary.* You have the right to decline to participate in the study or to withdraw at any point in this study without penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled.

Questions: You can ask questions about this study at any time. You can talk to me, Neika Portillo, at any time during the study. You can contact me at 0434 232 555 or neika@berkeley.edu. If you have any questions or concerns about your rights and treatment as a research subject, you may contact OPHS, the office of UC Berkeley's Committee for the Protection of Human Subjects, at 510-642-7461 or subjects@berkeley.edu.

CONSENT FORM

If you have considered all the information provided in this Informed Consent Form, and you decide that you would like to participate in this study, *please indicate your agreement by signing and writing the date below.* We will give you a copy of this form to keep for future reference.

Name (*please print*)

Date _____

Signature

Date _____