

"THE IMPACT OF (SAUDIZATION) ON WOMEN CUSTOMERS' ATTITUDE IN THE RETAIL SECTOR IN SAUDI ARABIA"

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Abstract

The need to reduce the unemployment rate is a core responsibility of government and several countries are applying progressive initiatives to do so. (SAUDIZATION) is an example of such an initiative; the Saudi Arabian government first introduced it in 2003 to reduce the percentage of unemployed Saudi nationals. (SAUDIZATION) forces foreign companies in the private sector to replace foreign national employees with Saudis, by imposing government regulations and penalties (Madhi and Barrientos, 2003). Owing to budgetary constraints, the government of Kingdom of Saudi Arabia has been unable to increase employment opportunities within the country's public sector. This explains why (SAUDIZATION) was introduced as a mechanism to encourage the private sector to employ Saudi workers (Aldosary & Rahman, 2005). The Ministry of Labour is exploring the possibility of Saudizing the vast retail sector, especially commercial centres and malls, as part of its efforts to find more areas to employ young Saudi, including women.

The purpose of this study is to investigate the impact of (SAUDIZATION) on Saudi women's attitudes to the retail sector (Saudizing shops from female customers' perspective). The literature review examines previous empirical studies on the context of (SAUDIZATION) in the retail shops, factors that affect Saudi women shopping experience as well as a theoretical framework in this context.

Data for the study has been collected through a survey completed by 173 respondents. The results suggest that the presence of female workers minimize the feeling of embarrassment and creates a pleasurable shopping experience for Saudi female customers. The findings of this research confirm that Saudizing shops has a significant impact on the shopping experience of Saudi women in the retail sector.

Keywords: (SAUDIZATION) * Retail Sector- * ABC model of attitudes * Shopping Experience

Chapter-1 Introduction

1.1 Introduction

This chapter gives an introduction of the research by presenting a brief background description about the context of (SAUDIZATION) in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia followed by the research objectives and research questions.

1.2 Background of (SAUDIZATION) in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

The need to reduce the unemployment rate is a core responsibility of government and several countries are applying progressive initiatives to do so. (SAUDIZATION) is an example of such an initiative; the Saudi Arabian government first introduced it in 2003 to reduce the percentage of unemployed Saudi nationals. (SAUDIZATION) offers foreign companies to replace foreign national employees with Saudis, by imposing government regulations and penalties (Madhi and Barrientos, 2003). Owing to budgetary constraints, the government of Kingdom of Saudi Arabia has been unable to increase employment opportunities within the country's public sector. This explains why (SAUDIZATION) was introduced as a mechanism to encourage the private sector to employ Saudi workers (Aldosary& Rahman, 2005). The Ministry of Labour is exploring the possibility of saudising the vast retail sector, especially commercial centres and malls, as part of its efforts to find more areas to employ young Saudi, including women.

The Saudi Arabian Ministry of Labour has developed a large portfolio of projects designed to train and support the local workforce with the aim of increasing employment rates. The stratification system emphasizes the requirement for employers to address the growth in non-Saudi workers by encouraging them to hire Saudi nationals in the private sector and to increase transparency in the labour market through an easily accessible online interface (Ministry of Labour of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, 2015).

Saudisation has a significant impact on the Saudi's private sector. Firstly, the retail sector heavily relies on the expatriate managers and employees who offer technical expertise. Since the inception of Saudisation, some of these posts have been transferred to Saudi nationals, both male and female. However, it has been equally noted that employment of the Saudi nationals provokes tremendous indirect and direct costs for the companies (Looney, 2007a). On the other hand, the Saudi government has been compelled to spend more resources to prepare the required human capital needed to realisation (SAUDIZATION) (Ministry Of Economy and Planning Report 2008). Al-Shumi (2014) reviews the debates

in employing Saudi women in shops and whether Saudizing shops offers greater opportunities to Saudi women to work and to decrease unemployment rate or whether it leads to a negative impact for the society such as arise some sexual harassment cases. In addition, for some men this trend is seen as challenging the overly patriarchal society. The author suggests that regulations to create a suitable shopping environment for both female workers and customers might help people to accept this situation. More abstract, but no less significant, concerns have been raised by others. For example, Al-Sheikh (2015) argues that the need to improve the picture of Saudi women in the workplace especially in the retail sector is important and suggested that female assistants in shops might make the experience more pleasurable for some sectors of the society. With the above background, women are likely to be the primary beneficiaries of (SAUDIZATION). With the rising literacy levels among women in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia the past decade their translation into the labour market is equally increasing (Pakkiasamy, 2004). Given that opportunities for entertainment are limited in the country, most Saudi patronise malls for purposes of window shopping and socialisation (Sohail, 2009). The growing number of female workers in the retail sector as well as immense fascination among women for shopping lingerie and make-up products justifies the need for a research into this field. The purpose of this study is to investigate the impact of (SAUDIZATION) on women customers' attitude in the retail sector (Saudizing shops from female customers' perspective). Research in this field will unearth attitudes of female customers in the retail sector towards the Saudi female workers in the retail sector and their idea of (SAUDIZATION). The findings of this study are significant to both the government and private sector for a number of reasons. Firstly, the findings of the study will help to find out the impact of (SAUDIZATION) in the retail so as to forecast possible steps to take in order to improve on the existing (SAUDIZATION) processes in the sector. Secondly, information generated from the study will provide the private sector with rationale for decision making particularly concerning marketing of lingerie, make-up and technological products among women customers. By focusing on the female consumers' attitude, the researcher will explore what drives these particular consumers and marketers that use knowledge generated from this study to initiate better marketing strategies.

1.3 Research Objectives and Questions

The main objectives of this research are: 1) to find out the impact of (SAUDIZATION) on Saudi women customers' attitude in the retail sector, 2) to examine Saudi women's attitude to the service offered in shops by female local workers. In order to meet these objectives, the following research questions have been formulated.

1. What is the impact of (SAUDIZATION) on Saudi women's shopping experience in the retail sector?
2. What is Saudi women's attitude to the service offered in shops by female local workers?
3. What are the factors that affect Saudi women customers' shopping experience?
4. How does (SAUDIZATION) impact on female customers' shopping of lingerie and make-up products or technological products?

Chapter 2- Literature Review

2.1 The context of (SAUDIZATION) in the Retail Sector

During the last two decades, the private sector in the kingdom of Saudi Arabia has suffered from several economic challenges and social difficulties, caused by the foreign labour (Ramady, 2005). Of these, the spread of unemployment among Saudi citizens has been one of the most significant concerns. Also, the government has been increasingly wary of over dependence on foreign labour, especially as the economy appears to be suffering from the high percentage of .remittances that foreign employees transfer to their families in their home countries each year (Alshanbri, 2015). However, it was the growing unemployment rate among Saudis that prompted the government to introduce its policy of jobs localization; the aforementioned “(SAUDIZATION)” (Rice, 2004). The policy of (SAUDIZATION) requires the replacement of expatriates with competent and skilled local employees wherever possible (Law et al., 2009).

According to Taecker (2003), (SAUDIZATION) has been found to have a beneficial impact on the country's economy overall, by limiting the amount of money remitted outside the kingdom of Saudi Arabia. Despite the changes, remittances recorded by foreigners living in the kingdom of Saudi Arabia reached a record level during 2015, according to the last monthly report by the Saudi Arabian Monetary Authority (Sama). Foreign remittances reached approximately 156.9 billion Rials, an increase of 4 percent compared to 2014 when they were recorded at 153.3 billion Rials (Ministry of Economy and Planning, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, 2015).

The labour market in the kingdom of Saudi Arabia relies on foreign workers in the private sector. According to Pakkiasamym (2004), the total workforce in the kingdom of Saudi Arabia consists of two-thirds expatriate workers. In

2014 a recent report by the Saudi Arabian Monetary Agency (SAMA) confirmed that non-Saudis private sector workers are more than 8 million, while the total of Saudi workers is just over 1 million.

A report published by Alsheikh(2015) states that the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia is the second country after the United States regarding its outgoing remittances rate, which means the country experiences a high influx of foreign labour at any point of time. According to Looney (2004), the (SAUDIZATION) initiative was introduced with three essential aims as follows:

Increase proportional employment among Saudi citizens (male and female) (1)

Decrease over-reliance on foreign workers in the private sector. The percentage of foreigners in the Saudi labour force is estimated at 51%, considered the highest globally (OECD, 2011). (2)

Reduce the huge amount of remitted money that the foreign workers transfer to their home countries. (3)

2.2 Shopping Experience in Saudi's Retail Sector

Sohail (2015) affirms that the retail industry in the Saudi Arabia is rapidly changing the face of Saudi Arabia. Sohail (2015) further estimated that retail sales would move from \$27 billion in 2011 to over \$37 billion by the year 2015. Over half of these sales come from shopping malls. In the recent past, large retail operators have slowly dominated the sector thus provoking significant competition in the retail marketplace (Sohail, 2008). Saudi Arabia forms one of the largest retail markets in the Arabian Peninsula. Consequent to this, it continues to attract retail investors. Given that Saudi is characterised by; higher population, a larger percentage of the youthful population and high disposable income, it offers a great opportunity for investors in this sector. Sohail (2015) argues that to understand the shopping experience in Saudi, understanding of the Saudi culture is inescapable. Given that opportunities for entertainment are limited in the country, many Saudi patronise malls for purposes of window shopping and socialisation.

Research in the retail sector in Saudi shows that the intense competition is growing among various retailers who are striving to maintain customers. Further research shows that there are minimal differences between men and women (Sohail, 2015). However, the shopping experience in Saudi has been stereotyped as dominantly female activity (Buttle, 1992). The female consumers are more likely to purchase items like clothing, perfumes, and make-up while men tend to buy items like cars (Chebaet al, 2005). Aqeel (2012) studies the tendency of Saudi women to consume luxury products. In her research, Aqeel links the considerable social and economic change, as well as the status-seeking behaviour within

the classes to high consumption of luxury products like perfumes, items of clothing and make-up. On the other hand, there has been a higher level of government spending leading to increased disposable income. Moreover, Aqeel further asserts that lack of insufficiency of cinemas and leisure activities making shopping an inevitable pastime activity. Based on these findings by Aqeel(2012), this research has particular interest for shopping experiences of women in luxury products like perfumes, make-up, lingerie, and clothing.

KoonnareeWongsiriwat (2007) argues that it is difficult to understand the mind of women in shopping for products. She further notes that women's mind is dynamic with several things coming into the picture while at the same time getting off the picture. This means that women's purchasing behaviour is highly unpredictable given that they have many ideas coming in and out of the mind at the same time depending on what they see, feel and hear their friends talk about and their inherent needs. Thus, women across the globe tend to follow the universal shopping culture. Wiedmann and Hennigs(2007), in their study, though, note that social values and individual values influence the purchasing intentions for global luxury brands. However, other factors like materialism, conformity, ethnocentrism and vanity could influence Saudi women to spend more on luxury products.

Recent studies into the factors affecting the consumers' purchasing patterns identify three major influencers; environmental and marketing factors, personal and psychological factors, the situation, family and culture (Solomon et al.,2012).Most businesses often try to understand these trends so as to market their products in the most cost-effective way as possible. The consumers can be influenced by mechanisms that a business can control such as grouping, availability of the products, pricing, advertising, music and layout of the store. While some factors are temporary, others are long lasting (Solomon et al.,2013).Ganesh et al. (2007)conducted a study to evaluate the loyalty of both men and women. As shown in the study, women tend to walk away if the shopping experience gets bad or due to lack of sales associates while men only seem to walk away from a store in the event of unavailable products. The same study has indicated that women have more complex loyalty requirements than men. Female shoppers' loyalty is depended on three major factors; emotional, operational as well as consultative factors. On the other hand, males' loyalty depends on the ability of sales associates to get them out of the store the quickest they can.

In other parts of the world too, like in the US, marketing practitioners and researchers have affirmed that there are gender differences in shopping experiences. Klein (1998), unveiled that 37% of men enjoy shopping compared to 67% of

women. A similar by Lucas (1998) found out that men are less likely to buy in a store compared to women. On the other hand, across the globe, women are more likely to buy gifts compared than men (Yin, 2003). Durakbaşa and Cindoğlu (2002) further note that while men go shopping to meet their needs, women do so a way to pass time and browse around. A similar scenario is replicated in Saudi shopping trends.

Saudi demographics reveal that the female population is highly educated with over 58% of students in the university being female. The fact that most of them are progressively educated has an impact on shopping experience. This falls in two levels. Firstly, more and more women are increasingly joining the labour market, albeit the labour participation rate of women in Saudi is still lower than in the neighbouring countries. Saudi female labour participation rate is at 20%, less than half that of Kuwait or UAE (Sohail, 2015). The author further notes that there is considerable progress that has been made concerning women's participation in the labour market. Actually, this rate has tripled in the past few years. Consequent to this, higher number of women has more disposable income. On the other hand, education among women and exposure to westernisation is having an impact on their tastes and preferences especially concerning items of clothing and beauty.

In addition, the increased literacy levels among the female Saudi has led to an increase in demand for online shopping. In research by Sohail (2009) admits that the rise of technology and internet has a positive impact on marketing as it promotes rapid growth of international trade and global corporations. Most of the people in Saudi Arabia are increasingly adopting the use of internet since it is much safer, more efficient and convenient than a trip to the mall. The online sales from the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia in 2010 amounted to 3 billion US dollars and it was noted that over 39% of the consumers engaged in online commerce (ALMowalad and Putit, 2013). In 2011, Communication and Information Technology Commission (CITC) noted that the ICT indicators show that the number of users was estimated to be 12.5 million by the end of 2011 (ALMowalad and Putit, 2013).

2.3 Factors Influencing Female Consumers' Shopping Experience

2.3.1 Value

Sproles (1980) argues that consumer value puts great emphasis on the principle of maximizing output for a given level of input. The available literature on marketing value has been examined within the context (a trade-off between benefits and

satisfaction attained or the sacrifice forgone (Murphy and Enis, 1986). Zeithaml's (1988) defines value as the quality a consumer gets for the price they pay and what they get for what they give. This definition shows a distinct connection between the benefit and cost component of the value of shopping. Other researchers have identified several dimensions of value such as pleasure derived from the shopping experience, convenience of the shopping experience (Mazursky and Jacoby, 1986), and quality of service (Zeithaml, 1988). All these research lay emphasis on the fact that consumers weigh costs of benefits over the monetary cost of the services or goods being bought. Past research by Tai (2008), Doran (2009), and Durvasula et al. (2011) unveils that personal values have an impact on consumption behaviour and the decision-making process. Similar studies in Saudi Arabia have equally studied underlying values' influence on mall shopping (Stoel et al., 2004). However, most of these studies have not explored how values of the Saudi women affect their shopping behaviour (Cai and Shannon, 2012). Phinney et al (2001), in his study, argues that personal values are resultant from ethnicity and culture.

The female consumers in Saudi are characterized by an ardent regard for family and home making. They are particularly fascinated by new fashion, and they often love to research adequately before they physically go to the shop. A large percentage of them are loyal to their brands (Aqeel, 2012). Research conducted by Sohail (2009) shows that Saudi women believe that media advertising does not show the true reflection of Saudi women. It merely portrays a series of stereotypes based on old truths about women's fashion. Research on the portrayal of Muslim women reveals that they are often portrayed as submissive, voiceless and oppressed victims instead of the powerful and creative leaders they are (The Guardian, 2007). In general, there is lack of focus on what these women have achieved particularly those who do not fit the victimized and veiled stereotype. Al-Malki, A. et al. (2012) argue that Muslim women are not all alike but individuals with diverse opinions, spectrums of faith, occupations and even tastes and preferences. Therefore, amid this diversity the shopping experience from one Saudi woman to the other might vary significantly. This understanding of the Saudi women's tastes and preferences unearths what Saudi female consumers' experience (ALMowalad and Putit, 2013).

2.3.2 Lifestyle

Tam and Tai (1998) state that psychographics is a way used to determine and describe the consumers' lifestyle through their interests, activities and opinions. The term lifestyle traces its origin to the field of psychology (Coreil et al. 1985). The term lifestyle encompasses social status, family background, motivation, cognition, cultural affiliation and marketing stimulus (Horley, 1992). Plummer (1974) defines lifestyle as a range of interests, activities and opinions while Engel et al. (1995) define lifestyle analysis as a set of activities on which consumers spend their money (Green et al., 2006). Researchers in the field of psychographics are employed to establish in-depth understanding of the segments of the market based on the individual's interests, opinions needs, motives, perceptions and attitudes. A study of the Saudi demographic variables has failed to recognise the absolute characteristics of the consumers in the retail sector since they provoke different psychographic features even though they come from a similar group (Sinha, 2003).

In other studies, scholars have verified that there is an important connection between online shopping behaviour and consumer lifestyle. Similarly, Nijmeijer et al (2004) who explored the link between food lifestyle and vegetable consumption by use of lifestyle components, attitudes, food beliefs and personal values affirmed that one's personal values had a significant impact on purchasing behavior and consumption frequency. Later studies by also confirmed that psychographics indicated a distinct link between service or product categories and buying frequencies. Among all consumers lifestyle is apparently a predictor of their consumption behavior (Aqeel, 2012). Education, coupled with (SAUDIZATION) has offered more employment opportunities to Saudi women consequently minimizing their leisure time but increasing their disposable income. As Al-Malki, et al (2012) show that there is also a close link between the occupation of women and awareness of luxury products. Based on this assumption, Al-Malki, et al. (2012) suggest that women's shopping experience in Saudi is bound to be affected if they are employed/not employed or self-employed.

There are a wide range of services available to female consumers in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. For instance, in Jeddah and the Eastern Province, there are diverse supermarkets, shopping malls that several goods and services. The shopping malls are full of the familiar brands like; IKEA, Habitat, Next, BHS, Harvey Nichols, DKNY and Italian fashion houses. There are also a good range of electrical goods (AL-Mowalad and Putit, 2013).

2.4 Saudizing Shops in the Retail Sector

The Ministry of Labour is exploring the possibility of Saudising the vast retail sector, especially commercial centres and malls, as part of its efforts to find more areas to employ young Saudi, including women. The objective of the initiative was to create real opportunities for Saudi youth in small and medium enterprises, including restaurants, bookstores, supermarkets, shops, furniture, toiletries, industrial materials and electrical supplies. In addition, the initiative would mark the beginning of nationalising the retail sector in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (Jiffry, 2014). Stressing the potential of the retail sector - in particular, commercial centres as a plentiful source of jobs, the official urged business owners to improve the work environment in commercial centres to suit working Saudi women.

SAUDIZATION) of the retail shops has given difference face of the shopping environment for women. Female) consumers' tastes and preferences are increasingly becoming prominent in the retail shops due to the increased number of females working in these shops. On a larger scale, marketers are becoming more conscious of the needs of females consumers and inventing diverse marketing strategies that will appeal this particular audience. This is particularly so in the make-up and lingerie and luxury products.

2.5 Theoretical Framework of the Research

This research will adopt the theory of attitude as the basis for its theoretical framework. This theory has been selected given that the researcher intends to study the attitudes of the female consumers (affective components, behavioural component and cognitive component) and their beliefs about ideas about the concept of (SAUDIZATION) in the retail sector. People have power when they can affect others' attitudes, beliefs and their course of actions (Northouse, 2010). The concept of attitudes has been and will continue to be a core concept of social psychology (Pennington et al., 1999). Individuals carry inside themselves a very large number of attitudes towards many subjects and about other individuals, as well as about themselves. Allport (1935) defined an attitude as "a mental and neural state of readiness, organized through experience, exerting a directive and dynamic influence upon the individual's response to all objects and situations with which it is related" (p. 810). According to Breckler (1994), attitude is composed of three components: the affective component involves the feelings, responses, and emotions of the individual towards the issue of the attitude; the behavioural component includes the intentions or the tendency of conduct or to act in a certain way about the subject of

the attitude; the cognitive component, which comprises the beliefs about and ideas on the subject of the attitude. This model is known as the **ABC model of attitudes**.

Breckler (1994), notes that Plato was among the first scholars to theorise the human mind into three distinct categories, similar to what proponents of the ABC model have developed; emotion or feeling, knowing or cognition, and connotation or willing. These three categories have remained largely useful for very many years and inevitably widely used by many researchers. The present research indicates that there is a lot of emphasis on the belief component of the mental activities. Investigations on processing of consumer information rely heavily on verbal communication.

According to Breckler (1994), emotion is represented by subcontract of affect. The resultant emotive response (in the manner in which it is measured) represents a mere evaluation of a customer's tangible attributes of given products.

Breckler (1994), further notes strong feelings of anguish or rapture are hardly explored or accounted for. Such neglect is consequent to the traditional view of the products as objects of the consumer's desire to utilise desires to maximum.

Such an approach is valid for products whose utilitarian performance acts as the key determinant of their value to the consumers. This implies that such an assumption is best fit for products whose choice and use is based on meeting emotional wants instead of utilitarian function. It has been noted that in some instances, emotional desires override utilitarian motives in the choice of a product or a product. There are certain areas where a customer's emotions like love or hate for the retail/shop environment might override one's economic desire to purchase an item. For example, in the study the presence or absence of female Saudi workers can provoke positive emotional reactions that will propel customers to purchase products whose utilitarian function overrides the emotional desires.

In view of the ABC model, the affective component refers to the emotional response an individual exhibits (disliking or liking) towards the attitude of the object. Most research studies lay a lot of emphasis on the significance of the affective components. Emotion works simultaneously with the cognitive process. Therefore, one's attitude towards an object cannot be determined by simple identification of its beliefs. Agarwal & Malhotra, (2005) note that the affect (emotions and feelings) and attitude research are joined to initiate a model of choice and attitude. The behavioural component is non-verbal or verbal tendency by an individual. It comprises of actions or responses (observable that is) which come up as a result of an attitude object. It includes one's response to perform an act in relation to attitude object. These particular responses are more often bound to exhibit succinct predictability or organisational structure. The cognitive component refers to the thoughts and beliefs an individual has about the attitude object. A belief is defined as the information that an

individual possess regarding an object; this is information that connects an object with an attribute. In other words, the cognitive component is the storage section where one organises the information

In reference to this study, the cognitive component entails their beliefs and ideas about the concept of (SAUDIZATION). The affective component involves Saudi women customers' feelings and emotions which determine the desire to continue shopping or not. It is assumed that people have inherent emotional responses towards their immediate environment—a notion that is widely acknowledged in psychology. Marketing researchers take considerable interest in the pervasive influence of emotional response in different contexts such as product consumption, advertising and shopping (Holbrook, Chestnut, Oliva, and Greenleaf, 1984). The Saudi female consumers come to the stores with set goals and constraints (e.g., to buy a specific item; meet their recreational with maybe time pressure of budgetary constraint). In addition, affective reactions occur in the process of attempting to meet these goals. Donovan and Rossiter (1982), notes that particular store atmospheres are bound to provoke emotional responses in shoppers.

In the Saudi retail, the design elements of clothing items for women and other products like lingerie are designed to offer consumers a satisfying shopping experience. Besides, the design gives a favourable image of the stores and shops. Marketers in Saudi attempt to induce some desirable emotions in their brands while at the same time trying to limit the negative affective responses that might arise due to undesirable conditions like shoppers perception, excessive noise and crowding or lack of visibility. Marketers in Saudi must be cognisant of the fact that shoppers experience diverse emotions upon their entry into the shops ranging from surprise, anger, frustration or arousal. Thus, knowledge of these diverse emotions is important in understanding particular manipulations that can be done to attract and retain the shoppers (Darden and Babin, 1994). Lastly, the behavioural component includes the decision to stay loyal or not to given shop or and includes the dimension of the psychological and social which help to configure attitude towards a retail shop, either positively or negatively.

Chapter 3: Methodology

3.1. Introduction

According to Saunders et al. (2012), the construction of a well-designed research framework is integral to meeting the objectives of the study. Thus, this chapter outlines detailed information about the research philosophy, research design and methods, as well as the data collection analysis tools and techniques used. In addition, this chapter discusses data collection evaluation, research reliability and validity.

3.2 Research Philosophy

This research adopted a positivist research philosophy. The positivist research philosophy is common in scientific research, and assumes that reality can be assessed as a singular concept through the collection of quantitative and independent data (Healy & Perry, 2000). This applies to the data collection and the analysis process, and is value-free such that the data collected does not change in any way in response to who is observing it. Saunders et al. (2012) argue that positivists perceive reality as stable, choosing to study and explain it from an objective viewpoint, without any interference from the phenomena being studied. According to Novikov and Novikov (2013), positivists further believe in the isolation of phenomena during study and emphasise the capacity to conduct repeatable observations. This process often involves the manipulation of reality, encompassing variations in an independent variable to identify regularities, in order to define relationships between elements in the real/social world.

Heshusius and Ballard (1996) affirm that positivism has a long and rich history in the field of social sciences. Positivism has also played a successful role in the natural and physical sciences disciplines. However, there has been debate concerning the suitability of applying the positivism paradigm to the social sciences (Krauss, 2005). Nevertheless, the intent of this research is to investigate the opinions and views of Saudi collection of comparable data. For instance, the researcher will be able to compare women's shopping experience in items of clothing and technological products.

3.3. Research Approach

It is well known that a researchers approach derives from their research philosophy. The positivism research paradigm used in this study indicates a deductive research approach. A deductive approach begins by positing a specific idea or theory,

from which a hypothesis can be generated and tested by collecting empirical evidence, resulting in acceptance or rejection of that theory (Babbie, 2009).

Given the research questions for this study and the time available, this research used survey questionnaires to fulfil its objectives. The survey questionnaires were employed to collect data about the opinions of female customers concerning Saudisation. Saunders et al. (2012) argue that questionnaires are efficient when a researcher intends to collect responses from a large sample. The quantitative data collection focused on two main areas. Firstly, it focused on the opinions of Saudi women regarding their shopping experience when buying clothing and makeup. Secondly, it focused on their shopping experience in relation to technology products, to facilitate a comparative study of the two.

In order to collect as much information as possible from the questionnaires, the researcher included both closed and open-ended questions. The researcher reviewed the existing literature about Saudisation and the female shopping experience in Saudi Arabia, to identify factors that influence female customers' shopping experiences. Based on this literature review, the researcher designed the survey questionnaires to collect data from female customers of the retail sector in Saudi Arabia.

3.4 Research Design

According to Saunders et al. (2012), a research design is the overall strategy that a researcher chooses to incorporate the diverse elements of a study in a logical and coherent manner, thereby guaranteeing that the research findings effectively elucidate the research problem. Babbie (2009) notes that a research design includes details about how the data should be collected, the instruments to be used, and information about how the data will be analysed. The researcher intended to apply a quantitative research design to meet the objectives of the study. Northcott (2008) argues that the structure of the quantitative design has remained unchanged for centuries. Thus, the standards are homogenous across all disciplines. The use of quantitative research in this study will lead to comprehensive data to describe the impact of (SAUDIZATION) on female customers in the retail sector. The questionnaire method of the data collection has been adopted for this particular study. Based on the theoretical framework in the chapter two (literature review) the research questions were developed. Questionnaire questions were further generated from the research questions. The attitude theory selected for the study enables the researcher derive research questions touching on three key areas; the attitudes of the female consumers (affective components); behaviour resultant from impact of (SAUDIZATION) (behavioural component) and; their beliefs about ideas about the concept of (SAUDIZATION) in the retail sector.

3.5 Research Methods

Quantitative survey questionnaires were used to collect the necessary data to fulfil the aims of this study. The first step was to conduct a pilot study involving five participants only to complete the questionnaire. The aim of the pilot study was to collect feedback on the validity and usability of the questionnaires. Furthermore, crucial information concerning the clarity of the questionnaires, appropriateness of the language used, time taken to complete the questionnaire, as well the sensitivity of the questions was generated. The study methodically employed quantitative data collected from survey questionnaires, secondary data obtained from published research, and service sector experts. The survey questionnaires including both open and closed questions were implemented in an authentic work setting in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, to collect data from the research sample. This procedure is common to large-scale survey research.

The selection of a sample is an important stage in any research. Saunders et al. (2007) note that the sampling technique offers a range of methods that enable one to minimise the amount of data they need to collect by studying a portion of a larger population. Sampling techniques can be divided into two: probability and non-probability sampling. In probability sampling the chance of an item being selected is known and equal for all cases, while in non-probability (random) sampling the probability of a case being selected is unknown (Saunders et al., 2007).

The researcher determined the categories of participants interviewed based on their educational status, occupation and age. In the age criteria there were three groupings: those under 25 years, those aged between 25-30 and participants aged 31-40. In terms of education, the researcher divided the female customers according to those who had attained a high school certificate, and those who had attained a bachelor's degree or postgraduate qualification. In reference to occupation, the researcher considered women who were employed, self-employed, or unemployed.

3.6 Data Analysis

Saunders et al. (2012) define data analysis as the systematic process of applying statistical methods to describe, illustrate, recap and evaluate data. Saunders et al. (2007) suggest that several analytical procedures offer rationale for drawing inferences and differentiating phenomenon of interest from statistical fluctuations. In other words, analysis is the process of breaking down information in order to clarify the nature of constituent components and to show relationships between

them. As stated above, the researcher adopted a deductive approach as the basis for analysing the data (Bryman and Bell, 2007). The research method produced clear data pertaining to the research topic.

As the data was collected using quantitative research methods, quantitative data analysis tools were employed. Data from the survey questionnaires was analysed using the SPSS programme. The SPSS programme is a Windows-based program that can be used for data entry as well as analysis, to generate graphs and tables. This programme was selected for this study as it can handle large amounts of data and can perform the type of analysis needed for the study. This research was also based on secondary data collection mechanisms, including information from relevant books, academic journals, and databases.

In chapters one and two above, the researcher explored the available literature on (SAUDIZATION), and the factors that influence the purchasing behaviour of Saudi female consumers. The questionnaires for the study were derived from the literature review. The advantage of secondary data is that it is readily available. Nevertheless, when employing this type of data, the researcher has no control over the quality of the data collected.

3.7 Ethical issues

Ethical issues in research are integral to its validity and reliability, and for this reason, they cannot be ignored. Saunders et al. (2012) define ethical issues in research as the expectations, norms or moral standards that a researcher is expected to meet when conducting research. Paul (2010) emphasises the consideration of ethical issues in the research process. Saunders et al. (2012) consider both privacy and confidentiality as the two primary ethical issues. However, this research considered other ethical issues that could not be overlooked. In order to ensure confidentiality of information, the researcher protected the identity of all the participants at all times and took steps not to reveal any personal details. Prior to gaining the participants' consent to participate, the researcher explained the aims and objectives of the study. The researcher also emphasized the voluntary nature of the research, and that the participants had the right to withdraw from the study at any time.

3.8 Data Evaluation

Data evaluation was the next step in the research process. This process was important for the study as it not only establishes the quality of the data but also enables the research to stand up to scrutiny. Collis and Hussey (2009) propose four criteria, which could be applied to this research:

1. **Credibility.** This relates to whether the research was conducted so that the subject under study was correctly identified and described. As noted earlier, the researcher correctly identified the subject of inquiry and examined the literature review on the topic. After the data collection, the researcher is then obliged to describe the subject under study appropriately.

2. **Transferability.** The data collected and findings derived from the study were tested to determine whether they were replicable.

3. **Dependability.** Dependability assesses whether a research process is systematic, rigorous and documented.

4. **Conformability.** In order to satisfy this requirement, the entire research process is described to ensure that the findings flow from the data.

Collis and Hussey (2009) suggest that a systematic approach be taken in the process of data analysis. Furthermore, the researcher needs to keep the research question as the primary focus when conducting a data analysis.

3.9 Methodology Limitations

Blumberg et al (2008) affirm that the findings of any research ought to not only be credible, but also stand up to scrutiny. Well-designed research needs to consider the diverse factors that can have a negative impact or limit the research and take into account possible researcher bias.

One of the limitations of this study was the language barrier. Some of the respondents did not speak and understand English. To counter this problem, the researcher translated the questionnaire into Arabic. By doing so, the researcher was able to reach as many respondents as possible in order to gather sufficient data concerning female consumers' shopping experience. Boynton and Greenhalgh (2004) affirm that a researcher must adequately translate the every element so as to avert any possible compromise to the validity and reliability of the questionnaires.

Reliability is an important element in the research and is defined as the absence of scope for variance in the results if the research were repeated (Collis and Hussey, 2009). There are three aspects of reliability, according to Blumberg et al (2008); stability of the measure over time, internal consistency between the items, and independence of the measure from the observer. The positivist paradigm used in this research proposes that reality is stable and that it can only be studied and explained from an objective viewpoint, without any interference of the phenomena being studied. According to Levin (1988), positivist theory further believes in isolation of the phenomena under study and in the conducting of repeatable observations. In the event that there is lack of time or budgetary constraints, it may be difficult to carry repeatable observations on a subject. Thus, the researcher might need to establish procedures and protocols to eradicate threats to the reliability of the research.

Research validity is the other consideration that any research project needs to take into account. Validity refers to the ability of the findings to reflect the phenomena under study. Typically, the concept of validity is more difficult to ensure than reliability. Cameron and Price (2009) affirm that if a measure does not measure what it is meant to then the data may produce irrelevant and invalid findings. The primary concern of validity is the integrity of the conclusions arrived at from the research (Bryman and Bell, 2007). This implies that the criterion for validity must be evaluated in four distinct qualities: availability, freedom from bias, reliability and relevance (Cooper and Schindler, 2014). A criterion will be deemed relevant if it is defined in terms that are considered proper measures. On the other hand, freedom from bias will be achieved if the given criterion offers a person the chance to score well.

Chapter 4: Results

4.1 Introduction

In this chapter the researcher intends to present and interpret the data that were obtained from the data collection process. The main research question to be answered in the study is: What are Saudi women attitude to the service offered in shops by female workers? The study will achieve this by identifying the context of (SAUDIZATION) of shops; and examine female customers' attitude in Saudized shops. The data collected was from 173 respondents from female customers via an on-line survey. The questionnaire is presented in Appendix 1. Data was analyzed using the statistical package SPSS. Descriptive statistics computed frequencies and percentages were computed and data presented in text, graphs and in tables.

During the survey, two hundred and eight people selected to participate. A total number of 173 participants successfully completed the questionnaire representing the opinions and views of women in the kingdom of Saudi Arabia concerning their shopping experiences and their attitude in Saudized shops, resulting in an 84% response rate. The respondents were given a choice to complete the survey questionnaires either in English or Arabic. Majority of the women who participated in the survey preferred answering the survey questionnaire in Arabic and this justified the need to offer the survey in English and the predominant local language-Arabic. Most of the participants opted to skip some questions, especially where they were required to compare between female and male Saudi workers. This tendency cannot be attributed to lack of time but supposedly the idea that the participants don't feel that gender is an issue of concern in shaping their shopping experience. The open-ended question was skipped most and this could be due to one major reason. Data collection methods that require respondents to write are bound to experience non-response since people do not like too much writing.

4.2 Socio-demographic variables

As it can be seen in Figure 1, majority of the participants (38.2%) were aged between 31-40 years, followed by 25-30 years (29.5%), less than 25 years (19.1%) and over 40 years (13.3%). The sample selected is representative of the Saudi population whose median age is 15-64 years (64.8%).

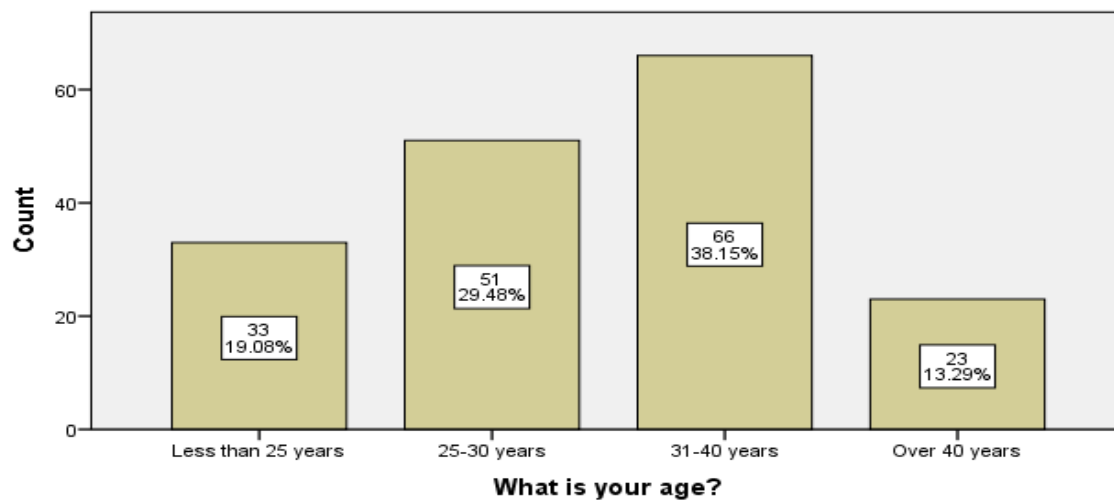


Figure 1 Age of respondents

There was notable disparity in representation of the sample population on the basis of their level of education. Out of the 173 participants, about 67.1% had Bachelor level of education, post-graduate (19.1%), and high school (13.9%). The high number of female respondents with a bachelor's degree can be justified the rising literacy levels among women in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. In 2015, the ministry of education released the last statistic which indicated the number of female enrolled in the universities reached 551.192 student, while the number of male 513.688 students. In other word, the women literacy level is higher than that of men in the kingdom of Saudi Arabia. Moreover, there is a higher enrolment rate of women (51%) in Saudi universities than men (49%). The researcher equally noted that the responses of the participants in the rest of the questionnaires had no relationship with their level of education. Their perception of both the female and male workers is dependent on their shopping experience only.

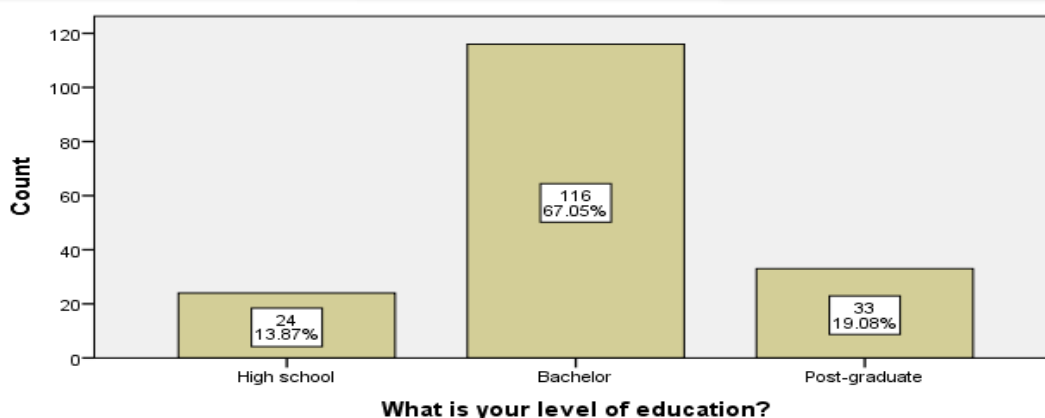


Figure 2 Level of education

Among the respondents, 53.8% of them were employed, 32.9% not employed while the rest of them were students as shown by figure 3. As illustrated in the literature review, occupation is part and parcel of their lifestyle and is thus presumed to influence the female consumers' shopping experience. The higher number of respondents who are employed corresponds with that of women with higher level of academic qualification (a bachelor's degree and above). Thus, it can be presumed that one's level of education, in the sample, is directly linked to one's employability.

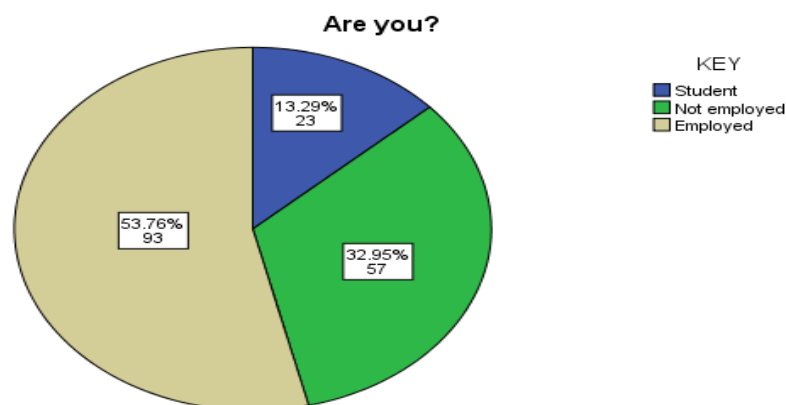


Figure 3 Occupation of the participants

In reference to the question: "How often do you shop in a store, online or at a physical store for items of clothing or makeup or technological products?" the study found out that majority of the women. Majority of the women (64.2%) shop in a store, online or shopping mall for items of clothing, makeup or technological products monthly, followed by other (17.9%), bi-weekly (10.4%) and weekly (7.5%). However, 31 of the respondents stated that they do their shopping on

different frequencies other than the ones provided in the questionnaire. For instance, others do their shopping anytime depending on what they need (Figure 4).

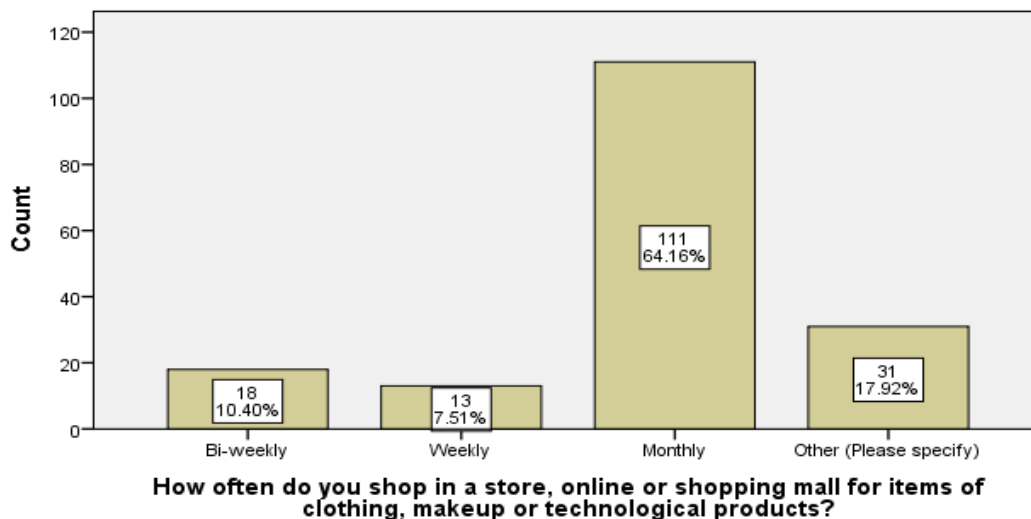
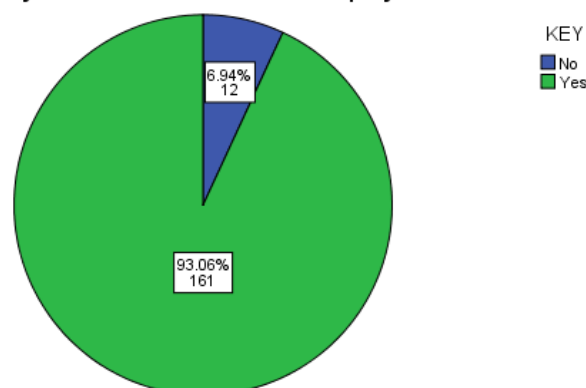


Figure 4 Frequency of shopping

As showed in Figure 5, about 93.1% have been served in the shop by a female Saudi national.

Have you ever been served in a shop by a female Saudi national?



**female Saudi
national**

Figure 5 Served by

As illustrated in figure 6 below approximately 32.37% of the women agreed that the service provided by female workers is different to the service provided by male workers, followed by neutral (31.21%), strongly agree (30.06%), disagree (4.05%), and strongly disagree (2.31%) as shown by figure. Very few respondents showed contrary opinion indicating that most women agree that the service provided by female workers is different to the service provided by male workers.

Therefore, it is common knowledge that the service provided by female workers is different from that of men and that of women workers has unique attraction to the female consumers.

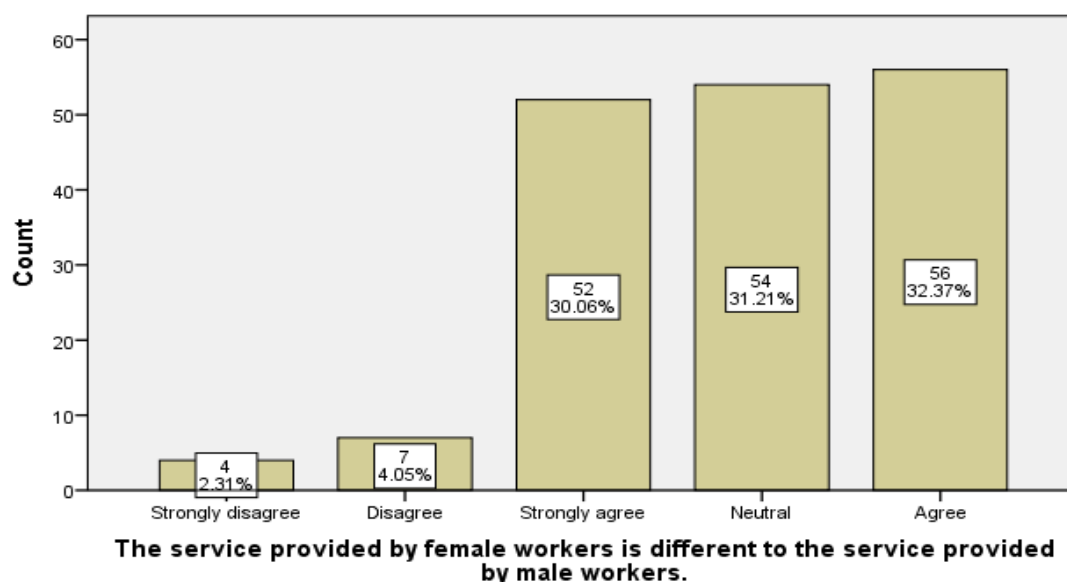


Figure 6 Service provided by female workers

According to female customers' attitude towards female workers, 10.4 %, equivalent to 18 respondents strongly agreed that female workers are more patient. 16.2 % (28 respondents) just agreed. A good number, equivalent to 31.2 % or 54 respondents showed neutrality on this matter while a majority (34.7% of the respondents or 60 disagreed. Those who strongly disagreed were only 2.9 %. In general, women do not perceive that female workers are more patient than male workers. Probably, male workers are equally patient. On the other hand, there is a possibility that the neutrality indicated by some respondents can be interpreted that this phenomena is not perceived by consumers on either gender.

Majority of the participants were neutral (36.4%) that female workers are better able to establish a relationship with their customers, followed by agreed (30.1%), strongly agreed (17.3%), disagreed (13.3%), and strongly disagreed (2.9%). Most of the women strongly agreed (52%) that the presence of female workers in the shops minimises any feeling of embarrassment, followed by agreed (30.1%), neutral (12.7%), disagreed (2.9%) and strongly disagreed (2.3%). About 43.4% of the female participants were neutral that female workers are more able to handle customers' complaints, followed by disagreed (23.1%), agreed (21.4%), strongly agreed (9.8%), and strongly disagreed (2.3%). Approximately (35.26%) of the participants were neutral that female workers are more persuasive, followed by agreed (31.79%), strongly agreed (17.92%), disagreed (13.87%) and strongly disagreed (1.16%) as shown by table 1.

Table 1 Female customers' attitude towards female workers

Items		Frequency	Percent
Female workers are more patient than men workers	Strongly disagree	13	7.5
	Disagree	60	34.7
	Neutral	54	31.2
	Agree	28	16.2
	Strongly agree	18	10.4
Female workers are better able to establish a relationship with their customers.	Strongly disagree	5	2.9
	Disagree	23	13.3
	Neutral	63	36.4
	Agree	52	30.1
	Strongly agree	30	17.3
The presence of female workers in the shops minimises any feeling of embarrassment.	Strongly disagree	4	2.3
	Disagree	5	2.9
	Neutral	22	12.7
	Agree	52	30.1
	Strongly agree	90	52.0
Female workers are more able to handle customers' complaints	Strongly disagree	4	2.3
	Disagree	40	23.1
	Neutral	75	43.4
	Agree	37	21.4
	Strongly agree	17	9.8
The female workers are more persuasive	Strongly disagree	2	1.16
	Disagree	24	13.87
	Neutral	61	35.26
	Agree	55	31.79
	Strongly agree	31	17.92

Total 173 100%

Majority of the participants agreed (45.09%) that female workers understand their needs better, followed by strongly agreed (34.68%), neutral (16.18%), disagreed (2.89%) and strongly disagreed (1.16%) as shown by figure 2. A small number of women do not agree that female workers better understand the needs of the female customers (2.89% who disagreed and another 1.16% who strongly disagreed). This analysis shows that customer think that female workers better understand their needs. However, although the research suggests this it cannot be said that all men do not understand female shopper's needs.

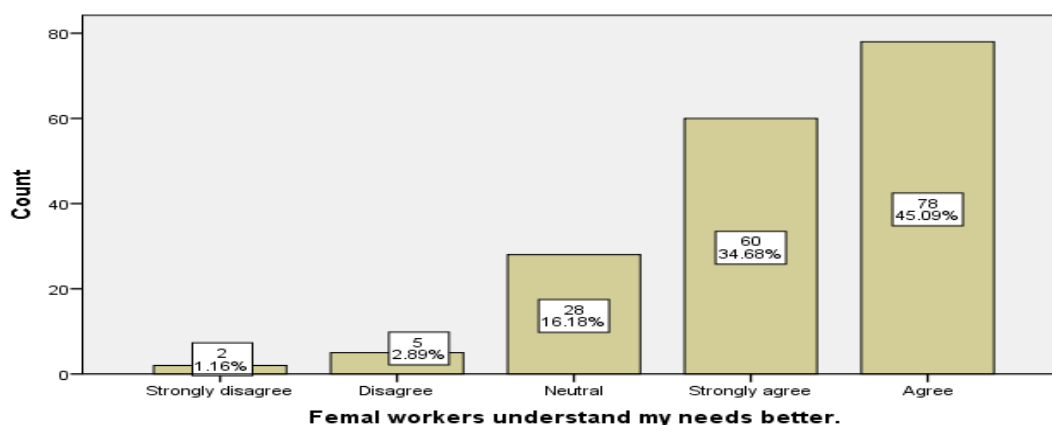
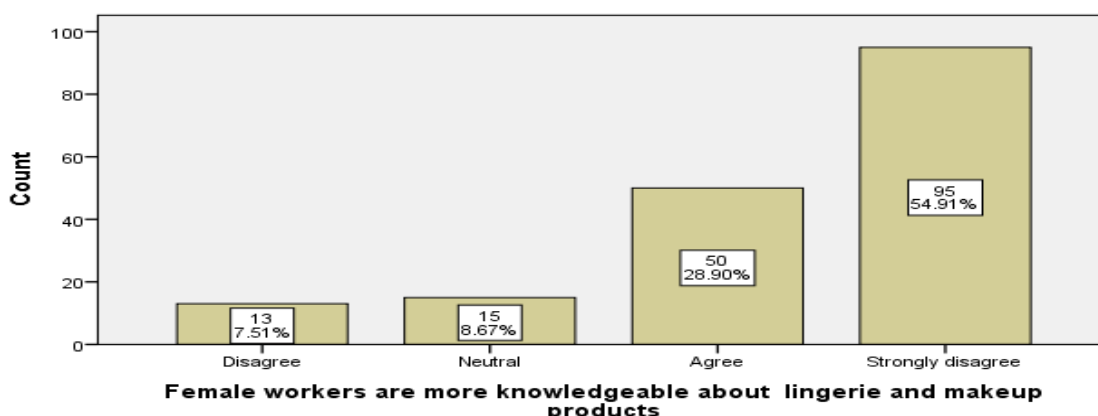


Figure 7

Understanding needs.

Majority of the participants strongly agreed (54.91%) that female workers are more knowledgeable about lingerie and makeup products, followed by agreed (28.90%), neutral (8.67%), and disagreed (7.51%) (Figure 8 below). The fact that the workers are female, they are more likely to understand the needs of their fellow women counterparts. This implies that having more female consumers in these shops may attract female customers since they not only feel at home but also



understood by
the workers.

Figure 8 Knowledge about products

Majority of the participants disagreed (41.6%) that female workers are more knowledgeable about technological products than male worker, agreed (12.1%), strongly disagreed (5.2%), and strongly agreed (8.1%). A good number, represented by 32.95% responded neutral meaning that either the female workers or male workers are knowledgeable about technology products. On the contrary, there are numbers that believe that women are knowledgeable about technology products. For example, as shown in figure 4 above, 8.09% of the women strongly agreed to the statement and another 12.14 % agreed. Shops selling technological products with male workers are likely to attract more female customers based on the fact that these workers are more knowledgeable on technological products. Some females have confidence in men's knowledge of technological products and this could influence their choice of the shop they want to buy from.

Table 2 Knowledge and advice on products

Items		Frequency	Percent
Female workers are more knowledgeable about technological products than male worker	Strongly disagree	9	5.2
	Disagree	72	41.6
	Neutral	57	32.9
	Agree	21	12.1
	Strongly agree	14	8.1
Female workers are better able to advise me on lingerie or makeup products	Disagree	6	3.5
	Neutral	26	15.0
	Agree	57	32.9
	Strongly agree	84	48.6
Female workers are better able to advise me on technological products than male workers	Strongly disagree	5	2.9
	Disagree	73	42.2
	Neutral	58	33.5
	Agree	23	13.3
	Strongly agree	14	8.1
	Total	173	100.0

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Table 3 One-sample t-test analysis

	N	Mean	SD	T	df	p-value	95% C.I	
							Upper	Lower
Female workers are more knowledgeable about lingerie and makeup products	173	2.12	1.337	20.805	172	.000	1.91	2.32
Female workers are more knowledgeable about technological products than male worker	173	2.76	1.009	36.000	172	.000	2.61	2.91

From the analysis above it is evident that there is significant mean difference between the respondents opinions on the female workers are more knowledgeable about lingerie and makeup products with t-value = 20.805, $p < 0.001$; and Female workers are more knowledgeable about technological products than male worker with t-value = 36.000, $p < 0.001$ as shown by table 3.

Majority of the participants strongly agreed (66.47%) that regarding to buying lingerie or makeup products, they prefer being served by female workers, followed by agreed (21.39%), neutral (8.67%), and disagreed (3.47%) as shown by figure 9. This perhaps is linked to the feeling of embarrassment that arises whenever male workers are around. A minority prefer men workers whenever they are buying lingerie or make-up products. This factor is attributed to the fact that some men are knowledgeable too about lingerie or make up products and are thus equally better placed to advise women about such products

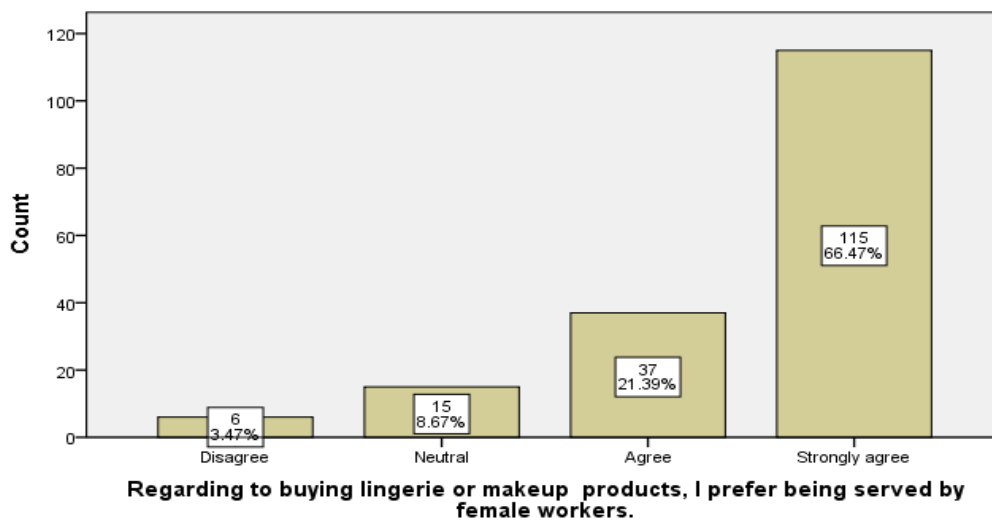


Figure 9 Purchasing lingerie or makeup products

Majority of the participants disagreed (39.31%) that regarding to buying technological products, they prefer being served by female workers, followed by neutral (24.86%), agreed (20.81%), strongly agreed (8.09%) and strongly disagreed (6.94%) as shown by figure 10.

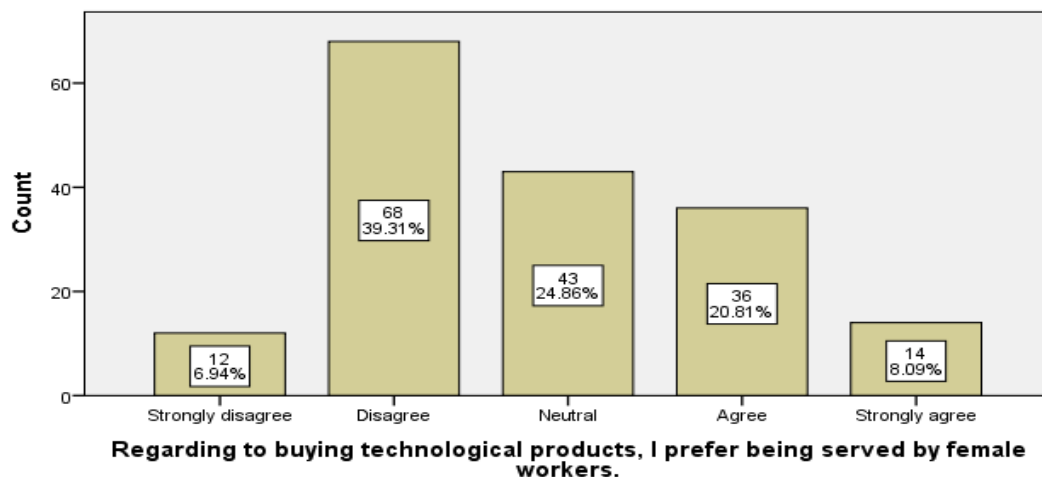


Figure 10 Purchasing technological products

Majority of the participants strongly agreed (39.9%) that (SAUDIZATION) of retail is a good idea, followed by agreed (31.8%), neutral (19.7%), disagreed (4.6%), strongly disagreed (4%). Approximately 32.9% of the women agreed that Saudizing shops and employing Saudi female workers has improved my shopping experience, followed by strongly agreed and neutral (27.7%) each, disagreed (6.9%) and strongly disagreed (4.6%). It is also established that participants were

neutral (35.3%) on the fact that Saudizing shops by female workers has changed the shopping experience followed by agreed (31.2%), strongly agreed (23.1%), disagreed (7.5%) and strongly disagreed (2.9%) as shown by table 4 below.

Items		Frequency	Percent
(SAUDIZATION) of retail is a good idea	Strongly disagree	7	4.0
	Disagree	8	4.6
	Neutral	34	19.7
	Agree	55	31.8
	Strongly agree	69	39.9
Saudizing shops and employing Saudi female workers has improved my shopping experience	Strongly disagree	8	4.6
	Disagree	12	6.9
	Neutral	48	27.7
	Agree	57	32.9
	Strongly agree	48	27.7
Saudizing shops by female workers has changed the shopping experience	Strongly disagree	5	2.9
	Disagree	13	7.5
	Neutral	61	35.3
	Agree	54	31.2
	Strongly agree	40	23.1
	Total	173	100%

Table 4 (SAUDIZATION) of Retail Shops

Service being provided in shops staffed by Saudi female workers compared to other shops

In overall, (SAUDIZATION) has improved the shopping of experience of female consumers. (SAUDIZATION) has increased the number of women in Saudi shops. This implies that more women are attracted to the retail shops given that there are fellow women workers who are not only knowledgeable about make-up or technology products but also better in handling in handling customers' complaints. 23.1 % of the respondents strongly agree that (SAUDIZATION) has changed the shopping experience. In addition, 31.2% agree while 27.75 % were just neutral. However, some respondents still

believe that (SAUDIZATION) has not changed, in any way, the female's shopping experience. This view was held by 7.5 % of the respondents who disagreed and 2.9 % who strongly disagreed.

Chapter 5- Discussion and conclusion

5.1 Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to discuss further the findings already presented in the previous chapter as well as highlight the significance of this research in helping marketers understand the shopping experience of Saudi women in the retail sector. The literature review discussed in the second chapter of this dissertation is used as the theoretical framework for discussing the findings of this study. This chapter discusses the findings in reference to the three main research questions outlined in chapter one. In the process, answers to the research questions are provided..

5.2 The Impact of (SAUDIZATION) on Saudi Women customers' attitude in the Retail Sector

The findings of this research show that there is an impact of (SAUDIZATION) on Saudi women shopping experience in the retail sector. (SAUDIZATION) has led to an increase in the number of women workers in the retail shops who assist female customers in doing shopping. According to the research, most women customers attested to have been served by a female Saudi national, representing 92.86% of the sum total of the respondents. The large percentage of those who attested to have been served by Saudi female national is evidence of the increased number of Saudi women in the retail shop. This mirrors the general increase of women workers in the labour market. The figures above (especially those showing frequency of shopping activities among women) show that there is an accelerated consumption of items of clothing and lingerie. The findings of this research confirm the study by Aqeel (2012) who links the considerable social and economic change, as well as the status-seeking behaviour within the classes to high consumption of luxury products like perfumes, items of clothing and make-up. The presence of more female workers in the retail sector appears to inject a significant impact on the shopping experience of women. As noted in the literature review, the Saudi female consumers come to the stores with set goals and constraints (e.g., to buy a specific item; meet their recreational with maybe time pressure of budgetary constraint). In addition, affective reactions occur in the process of attempting to meet these goals. Donovan and Rossiter (1982), notes that particular store atmospheres are bound to provoke emotional responses in shoppers. These emotional responses are confirmed in the responses derived by the researcher concerning question 7 (the service provided by female workers is different to the service provided by male workers) in the Appendix 1. Question seven intended to find

out the extent to which female consumers agree/disagree that the service provided by female workers is different to the service provided by male workers. 29.73% out of the 173 respondents who chose to answer this question strongly agreed to this statement while a majority 34.05% just agreed while 29.73% exhibited neutrality in this regard. The responses given in this case suggest that presence of female customers in the retail shops provokes positive emotional reactions among female customers. Consequently, shops with more female workers are more likely to attract more customers than those without. It could equally be concluded that (SAUDIZATION) has a positive impact on women's shopping experience as it makes the shopping experience in the retail shops more enjoyable for them. The findings of this study agree with the sentiments of Tai (2008) and Doran (2009) who affirm that those personal values have an impact on consumption behaviour and the decision-making process. Female consumers are largely from the Islamic faith where acts like not being an object of a male gaze is disallowed. These values certainly will make female customers to inevitably feel embarrassed when male workers are around.

5.3 Factors that Affect Saudi Women Customers' Shopping Experience

In the literature review, value is defined as the quality a consumer gets for the price they pay and what they get for what they give (Zeithaml's, 1988). This definition shows a distinct connection between the benefit and cost component of the value of shopping. Mazursky and Jacoby (1986) identify several dimensions of value such as pleasure derived from the shopping experience, convenience of the shopping. The pleasure derived from the shopping experience Saudi proves to be one of the factors that affect Saudi women customers' shopping experience. For instance, customer relationship skills such as patience and the ability to handle customers' complaints among the shop attendants are of significant importance to the female customers. In the research findings, approximately 34.7% of the respondents disagreed that female workers are more patient than men workers, followed by neutral (31.2%), agreed (16.2%), strongly agreed (10.4%) and strongly disagreed (7.5%). A good number, equivalent to 32.43% or 60 respondents showed neutrality on this matter while a majority 33.51% of the respondents or 62 disagreed. Those who strongly disagreed were only 16 or 8.65 %. In general; women don't perceive that female workers are more patient than male workers. Probably, male workers are equally patient. On the other hand, there is a possibility that the neutrality indicated by some respondents can be interpreted that this phenomena is not perceived by consumers on either gender.

In one of the open-ended questions, some female respondents attested to finding some female workers moody. This sort of behaviour, coupled with lack of patience does not create a pleasurable shopping experience. The ability of the works to

handle customers' complaints creates a pleasurable shopping experience too. The disparity indicated in the responses concerning the ability of women and men to handle customers' complaints shows that women are more inclined to prefer women workers to male. In the study, 16.76% of the respondents strongly agreed that female workers are better able to establish a relationship with their customers. Another 29.73% just agreed and the majority chose the neutral response (36.22%). On the other hand, only 14.05% disagreed while 3.24% strongly disagreed. Nevertheless, women still feel that that gender is not a determinant for one's capability to handle clients better. Both men and women, depending on their training on customer relationship management and personal attributes, can handle customers differently.

As noted earlier in the theoretical framework, individuals carry inside themselves a very large number of attitudes towards many subjects and about other individuals, as well as about themselves. Allport (1935) defined an attitude as "a mental and neural state of readiness, organized through experience, exerting a directive and dynamic influence upon the individual's response to all objects and situations with which it is related" (p. 810). Lack or presence of patience, among the female workers is thus bound to have a negative or positive impact on Saudi female customers. Female workers who are patient with the customers shape the experience of their customers in a positive light while those who lack (or moody as noted) create negative shopping experience.

Among the Saudi female consumers, lifestyle is apparently a predictor of their consumption behaviour. Education, coupled with (SAUDIZATION), has offered more employment opportunities to Saudi women consequently minimizing their leisure time but increasing their disposable income. Among the respondents, 50.96% of them were employed, 36.06% not employed while the rest of them were students. As illustrated in the literature review, one's occupation is part and parcel of their lifestyle and is thus presumed to influence the female consumers' shopping experience. The higher number of respondents who are employed corresponds with that of women with higher level of academic qualification (a bachelor's degree and above). Thus, it can be presumed that one's level of education, in the sample, is directly linked to one's employability. Employment opportunities (as a result of (SAUDIZATION) among other factors) have given rise to number of women with disposable income but minimised the available time for shopping. In fact, the study confirms this trend by revealing that majority of the women (66.33%) do their shopping for clothing or technological products on monthly basis. Twenty out of the 196 respondents who answered this question (representing 10.20%) said that they do their shopping on a bi-weekly basis. Thirteen of them (6.63%) do their shopping on a weekly

basis. However, 33 of the respondents stated that they do their shopping on different frequencies other than the ones provided in the questionnaire.

5.4 Impact of (SAUDIZATION) on female customers' shopping of lingerie and make-up products

The study confirms that (SAUDIZATION) has a positive impact on female customers' shopping of lingerie and make-up products. For instance, presence of female workers in the shops minimizes the feeling of embarrassment. Data collected from question ten (Presence of female workers minimizes the feeling of embarrassment), in Appendix 1 confirms that female retail staff reduces the level of embarrassment for most customers. Nearly all the women consent to the fact that presence of female workers in the shops minimises the feeling of embarrassment. The largest number of respondents (49.73%) strongly agreed and another 30.81% agreed. This translates to 80.54% of the respondents consenting to this opinion. A small number, equivalent to 12.97% were neutral, 3.78% disagreed while 2.70% strongly disagreed. In essence, Saudi women feel that presence of female workers in the shops minimises the feeling of embarrassment. Owners of retail shops dealing in lingerie and make-up products thus need to consider having more female workers in the shops as opposed to male so as to minimise the feeling of embarrassment. Shops with more female workers are likely to attract female customers as opposed to those that do not. Marketing researchers take considerable interest in the pervasive influence of emotional response in different contexts such as product consumption, advertising and shopping (Holbrook, Chestnut, Oliva, and Greenleaf, 1984). The Saudi female consumers come to the stores with set goals and constraints (e.g., to buy a specific item; meet their recreational with maybe time pressure of budgetary constraint) (Sohail, 2015). Affective reactions like feeling of embarrassment occur in the process of attempting to meet these goals. The presence of male workers in the retail shops, according to Donovan and Rossiter (1982), provokes emotional responses like the feeling of embarrassment.

Additionally, shopping of women in the retail shops has been made easier since the female customers. The research findings confirm that female workers are more knowledgeable about lingerie and makeup products. 54.94% strongly agreed and another 28.90% agreed making a total of 83.81%. Those who were neutral on this matter were only 8.67% of the total respondents. It is also important to note that 7.51% of the respondents disagreed and no respondents strongly disagreed. This implies that having more female consumers in these shops is bound to attract female customers since they not only feel at home but also understood by the workers.

However, knowledge of women concerning technology products is limited and are not efficient in advising fellow women on such products. Most female respondents in the survey objected that female workers are more knowledgeable about technological products. 41.62% of the 173 respondents for this question disagreed together with a further 5.2 % who strongly disagreed. A good number, represented by 32.95% responded neutral meaning that either the female workers or male workers are knowledgeable about technology products. Women in Saudi are mainly end users of these products as opposed to men. Also, this could also imply that their participation in manufacture and marketing of technology products is very limited. Women ought to be taking higher managerial position to gain experience, knowledge and influence fellow females to inculcate interest in technological products as well. Shops selling technological products with male workers are likely to attract more female customers based on the fact that these workers are more knowledgeable on technological products. Female have confidence in men's knowledge of technological products and this influences their choice of the shop they want to buy from.

In overall, (SAUDIZATION) has improved the shopping of experience of female consumers. (SAUDIZATION) has increased the number of women in Saudi shops. This implies that more women are attracted to the retail shops given that there are fellow women workers who are not only knowledgeable about make-up or technology products but also better in handling in handling customers' complaints. 27.75% of the respondents strongly agree that (SAUDIZATION) has changed the shopping experience. In addition, 32.95% agree while 27.75% were just neutral. However, some respondents still believe that (SAUDIZATION) has not changed, in any way, the female's shopping experience. This view was held by 6.9 % of the respondents who disagreed and 4.62 % who strongly disagreed.

5.7 Conclusion

The need to reduce the unemployment rate is a core responsibility of government and several countries are applying progressive initiatives to do so. (SAUDIZATION) is an example of such an initiative; the Saudi Arabian government first introduced it in 2003 to reduce the percentage of unemployed Saudi nationals. (SAUDIZATION) offers foreign companies in the private sector incentive to replace foreign national employees with Saudis, by imposing government regulations and penalties. The purpose of this study was to investigate the impact of (SAUDIZATION) on women customers' attitude in the retail sector (Saudizing shops from female customers' perspective). As noted in the literature review, value is a key influence on their shopping experience of women in Saudi. The literature review also notes that pleasure derived from the

shopping experience, as well as convenience of shopping itself adds to perception of value for money among the customers. Therefore, the presence of female workers who minimize the feeling of embarrassment and care for the needs of the Saudi women creates a pleasurable shopping experience for these customers.

The findings of this research confirm that (SAUDIZATION) had a positive impact on the shopping experience of women customers' attitude in the retail sector in the kingdom of Saudi Arabia. Furthermore, the findings of this research give light into key areas that future studies should focus on. For example, there is need to explore the opinions of male respondents about (SAUDIZATION). Use of both interviews and survey questionnaires would be invaluable for future studies. In addition, conducting similar studies would serve to retest the findings for this particular study. It is believed that, the findings of this study will provide rationale for improving the existing (SAUDIZATION) of retail shops in Saudi Arabia. As reflected in the research, (SAUDIZATION) has led to an increase in the number of Saudi female workers in the retail shops; consequently impacting on the Saudi women shopping experience. For instance, female workers; understand the needs of the customers, better able to handle customers' complaints, knowledgeable about lingerie and make-up products; thus creating an ideal environment for pleasurable shopping experience.

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