SAUDI FEMALE STUDENTS' PERCEPTIONS OF THEIR DEMOCRATIC

EMPOWERMENT IN THE CLASSROOM AT KING SAUD UNIVERSITY

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this quantitative study is to describe female graduate students' perceptions about their democratic empowerment in the classroom at King Saud University in Saudi Arabia. Their perceptions are compared based on female students' tracks. It also investigates the obstacles for democratic empowerment that female students face in the classroom. The theoretical framework depends on Dewey, Freire, and Shor's perspective on critical pedagogy and Islamic teachings that help to create a democratic (Shura) classroom. Both approaches require freedom, dialogue, collaborative learning, equality, and critique concepts. These five concepts seek to create a critical thinking classroom that also encourages students to be empowered and active learners. However, classrooms that use traditional teaching methods that do not exercise the elements of democratic (Shura) empowerment lead to disempowered students by practicing silence, marginalization, and dependence. The data is collected through a questionnaire survey method, and the participants are female graduate students who study at the College of Education in the Department of Educational Policies. The statistical analysis that is used to answer the research questions are descriptive analysis including means, and standard deviation, one-way ANOVA, and Scheffé Post-Hoc Comparisons. The main results of this study are that Graduate female students practiced and showed the importance of the five elements of democratic empowerment in their classrooms. Also, the results show that there was no statistically significant differences at ($\alpha = 0.05$) among female students' perceptions about their practices in dialogue, collaborative learning, and equality, in a classroom based on their study tracks. However, there was statistically significant differences at ($\alpha = 0.05$) among female students' perceptions about their practices in freedom, critique, and the total of practices in a classroom based on their study tracks. The direction of the differences was a benefit for Adult

Education track. About the obstacles for democratic empowerment that female students face in the classroom, two themes emerged: pedagogical methods of teaching and obstacle courses. One of the key recommendations is that the critical Islamic pedagogy that is theorized in this study should be applied in the university classrooms in Saudi Arabia, especially for graduate students.

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CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION

During formal education, lecture has been the primary method of teaching used at the majority of Saudi schools and universities; as a result, when students graduate from a university, they apply the same teaching style. For example, as student-teachers, when they taught at schools, they tried to be good teachers, giving students much information via a lecture format. Even though they used some activities in the classroom, they emphasized rote memorization because the educational process focused on teacher-centered instruction and curriculum-centered teachers (Al-Issa, 2009). As student-teachers, they were expected to teach this way, and they believed that this style of teaching was good. Recently, Saudi government allocated around 25% of total budget expenditure on education which leads Saudi universities to witness a lot of progress and development, so the question here is as follows: Does the development of education have an impact on the teaching style which encourage democratic classrooms?

In Saudi Arabia, the educational system is based on Islamic law which depends on the holy Quran and Sunnah (hadith or narrative record of the saying of the Prophet Mohammed). Every Saudi school or university follows Islamic teaching in their rules and policies. Islamic teaching encourages both men and women to obtain knowledge. For example, the holy Quran clarifies the importance of learning and its scholars, such as one verse enunciating "and say: my Lord, increase me in knowledge" (Quran, n.d., Taa-Haa, Verses 114, p. 320). According to Metwally (2004), the Islamic teaching emphasizes the principle of equality, non-discrimination, and equal opportunities in education. Therefore, the Saudi Ministry of Higher Education seeks to achieve Islamic values by providing students with a quality education, helping society to build and develop its human resources. In recent years, Saudi higher education has scored remarkable leaps by opening universities, expanding the acceptance of students, and launching the King

Abdullah Foreign Scholarship. Also, chairs for scientific research were established to support scientific research and to enhance knowledge creativity, innovation, and development (Ministry of Higher Education, 2013).

King Saud University is one of the oldest and most important universities in Saudi Arabia. In 1957, it was established in Riyadh. The right to study at this educational institution was only given to men. In Saudi Arabia, women and men students study on separate campuses and classes, and their teachers must be the same gender. This separation between the sexes in schools and universities still applies. In 1961, King Saud University opened the door for female students to access the education. The mission of King Saud University is "to provide students with a quality education, conduct valuable research, serve the national and international societies and contribute to Saudi Arabia's knowledge society through learning, creativity, the use of current and developing technologies and effective international partnership" (King Saud University, 2014, para1). King Saud University strives to achieve its values which are based on Islamic and traditional cultures. These values are as follows:

1. Quality and Excellence: [The University] hold [its] values according to extremely high standards, honoring lofty ambitions and the pursuit of excellence through a commitment to rigorous intellectual standards for teaching, learning and innovation.

2. Leadership and Teamwork: [It] is committed to promoting individual and institutional leadership roles, which drive social development, professionalism, responsibility, and innovation. Collaboration and cooperation are recognized as necessary means of attaining excellence.

3. Freedom of Inquiry: Rigorous and honest intellectual exploration is fundamental to [the university's] academic traditions, and is reflected in every facet of scholarship at King Saud University.

4. Fairness and Integrity: [It] abides by the principles of social justice, equal opportunity, and cultural diversity, holding community members to the highest standards of honesty, respect, and professional ethics.

5. Transparency and Accountability: [It] is committed to openly placing [the university's] scholarly ideas and works for society and scholars to judge. In [the university's] pursuit of excellence, it holds everybody in the community accountable for respecting and upholding the values in all forms of their scholarly activities.

6. Lifelong Learning: [It] is committed to lifelong learning inside and outside the KSU community, ensuring continued intellectual growth and welfare of society (King Saud University, 2014, para. 3).

The mission and values of King Saud University may most effectively apply when the strategies that are used at the classroom reflect these values. A classroom is the place where students obtain the primary skills that help them to be effective learners and to efficaciously be involved and participate in the community. To accomplish an institution's goals, the most essential aspect is to look deeper into the classroom practices.

A democratic classroom is an active classroom where both students and the teacher interact with each other in a learning environment that helps students to be empowered not only in their classroom, but also in their society. According to Wilmer (2006), the democratic classroom "creat[es] a learning environment in which students are participants, in which all positions are equally respected without necessarily being equally valued, and where the

evaluation of varying positions takes place through critical, informed and knowledgeable dialogue"(para 1). The view of critical pedagogy supports classrooms that work "to empower people, to make equality a reality, to make our country and our world a better place to live" (Wolk, 1998, p. 91). This study will describe female graduate students' perceptions about their democratic empowerment in the Saudi classroom.

Statement of the Problem

Higher-education classrooms are considered the most important place where students can develop their personal and professional skills which help them to be effective members in their community (Cervero and Wilson, 2001). In a traditional classroom, according to Al-Bakr (2005), in Arab countries, students are treated as a university number (students' ID) that identifies them during their study, so the relationship between students and the teacher is non-interactive with a teacher-centered classroom. Also, AL-Manea (2007) stated that some Saudi universities still depend on rote learning as a teaching method. In Saudi Arabia, there is no published research that focuses on empowerment of female students in education or that addresses a democratic classroom. The majority of studies focus on teachers' perceptions. This focus is not surprising because, globally, research has the same issue. For example, Coons (2003) stated "less attention has been given to actual application of critical pedagogy in the classroom situation, particularly as it is perceived by students" (p. 1). Also, Goomansingh (2009) indicated that "critical pedagogy has not been adequately addressed in terms of how teaching and learning needs to be restructured for the democratic imperative in the university classroom" (p. 28). Additionally, Macdonald and Brooker (1999) detected that there is a need for more information about applying critical pedagogical praxis within the post-secondary classroom. The Islamic teaching as articulated by King Saud University's mission are the stated approach. This Islamic teaching is

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similar to critical pedagogies' views which help to create a democratic classroom. Therefore, this study will describe female graduate students' perceptions about their democratic empowerment in the classroom at King Saud University.

Significance of the Study

According to Al-Issa (2009), in Saudi classrooms, teachers should apply the teaching methods that enhance students' critical-thinking skills and help students develop their problem-solving skills. In additional, McLaren (2003) pointed out that teachers should practice the theory of critical pedagogy within the classroom to empower students to be self-aware and to extend their understanding of the world and themselves. Also, Giroux (1997) stated that critical pedagogy must be not only taught as a subject, but must also be applied in classroom practices. The classroom practice is very important to investigate because a university is a place where students are prepared for the work force and are prepared to become teachers who have a sound foundation to educate new generations. Therefore, this study is significant for several reasons:

1. This study is considered the first study that focuses on democratic empowerment in the classroom at King Saud University.

2. The result of the study may help stakeholders (officials, teachers, and students) to understand female graduate students' perceptions about their democratic empowerment in the classroom at King Saud University. Also, this study will provide stakeholders with the differences among female graduate students' perceptions based on their tracks (Adult Education, Foundations of Education, and Education and Kindergartens).

3. The result of the study may help teachers to focus on how to improve democratic practices.

4. The result of the study may provide teachers with the optimal learning environments for their students.

5. The result of the study may help teachers to design a teaching method that creates a critical democratic classroom.

6. This study identifies the obstacles for democratic empowerment that female students face in the classroom at King Saud University.

7. This study is provided some recommendations to improve classroom practices.

8. This study may draw researchers' attention to the importance of female students' empowerment in the classroom.

Theoretical Framework

Islam is a religion of knowledge and science, so this religion demands that every Muslim should seek not only Islamic knowledge, but also scientific knowledge. According to Metwally (2004), every Muslim is required to go beyond habits that commit them to uphold the inertia, and to adapt to new things that are consistent with the Islamic principles. The Prophet Mohammed said:

> Whosoever introduces a good practice in Islam, there is for him its reward and the reward of those who act upon it after him without anything being diminished from their rewards. And whosoever introduces an evil practice in Islam will shoulder its sin and the sins of all those who will act upon it, without diminishing in any way their burden. (p. 137)

Also, the Prophet Mohammed said, "Seeking knowledge is an obligation upon every Muslim" (Daily Hadith Online, 2014, para. 1). There is no time or a specific place to gain knowledge. In the Islamic view, knowledge should lead to a positive change in human behavior.

Within Islamic teachings, learners are empowered, and the teaching style depends on many methods, such as debates, discussions, group work, and stories, which reject using one style of teaching, such as depending on lectures to obtain knowledge. This rejection occurs because according to Leistyna, Woodrum, and Sherblom (1996), in the traditional model, which depends on a lecture method, a teacher is considered the knower, and a student is the passive recipient of information; undoubtedly, teachers reproduce and maintain particular forms of identity, which means authority and interaction, whether they are aware of it or not. Freire (1996) called this traditional model the "banking" concept of education where students become depositories and the teacher becomes a depositor, so students are taught to be rote learners and have a great deal of repetition. He argued against this type of education because banking education minimizes or annuls the students' inventive power, and helps to practice the domination which stimulates the credulity of students. Shor (1992) also argued that, in the traditional classroom, the discourse is one-directional from teachers to students which reduces students' achievement, suppresses critical thought, increases feeling isolated, and encourages inequality in both school and society. Freire (1996) stated that education must be applied that students and teachers learn together where a teacher learns from students and the students learn from the teacher in the process of dialogue. Therefore, the roles of the teacher and the students interchange. "The teacher-of-the-students and the students-of-the-teacher cease to exist and a new term emerges: teacher-student with students-teachers" (Freire, 1996, p. 67). According to Shor (1996), "The democratic side of critical pedagogy means not ignoring, silencing, or punishing unhappy students but rather inviting them to make their criticisms public for deliberation" (p. 57). Critical pedagogy creates the self-empowering conditions where both

students and teachers can understand the world and their interactions to communicate as participants rather than as passive recipients (Leistyna et al., 1996).

According to Fishman and McCarthy (1998), Dewey's approach to education prioritized certified that students should be active investigators and have continual interaction. This active-learning classroom is a manifestation of democratic education. Dewey (1916) identified democracy as "more than a form of government; [a study] primarily [that it is] a mode of associated living, of conjoint communicated experience . . . and education is an essential component of a democracy" (p. 87). In this point view, there is no education without democracy and no democracy without education. A classroom is the primary place to give students a democratic education. Dewey believed that the relationship between democracy and education is mutual and vital (Garrison, Neubert, & Reich, 2012). Democracy had two different perspectives that could be understood: a political perspective and a social perspective. The political perspective is about governmental policies and processes. The social perspective embraces the values that control self-development and build relationships among individuals.

Thus, this study explores the social perspective of democracy through the lenses of critical pedagogy in a democratic classroom. According to Ryder and Wegmarshaus (2007), democracy (understood as an approach, methods, and procedures) could be discovered in each field of organized social life. Also, Dewey saw that democracy as a way of life could be declared as important for each mature human being to participate in forming the values that organize the people's lives together, so this idea is very necessary for both the general social welfare and the full development of human beings and individuals. In Islam, there is a term known as "Shura" which relates to a democratic approach. Shura is defined as a comprehensive approach to organize the entire life, and it is a principle about all the affairs of the nation. It regulates the

relationship between individuals and the public where the rights of both individuals and the public are the same treatment, so consultation about community affairs must occur. Shura requires freedom, equality, and justice in all forms (Al-Ghannouchi, 1993). Shura and democracy are both systems that care about individuals and the public at the same time.

The aim of this study is to describe female graduate students' perceptions about their democratic empowerment at King Saud University. The conceptual framework for this study is derived from Dewey, Freire, and Shor's perspective on critical pedagogy. The democratic classroom depends on five concepts of empowerment: freedom, dialogue, collaborative learning, equality, and critique in the classroom. These five concepts inform some processes that apply in the classroom such as method of teaching, assignments, participations, collaborative work, decision making, and other activities. Figure 1 shows the theoretical framework for the critical-pedagogy classroom which divides into two types: with and without democracy. If female students have democratic empowerment, it may give them freedom, dialogue, the ability to work with a group, equality, and critique in the classroom. However, if they do not have empowerment in the classroom, it may cause silence, marginalization, and dependence. In this study, the freedom is to give students the responsibility in a classroom by sharing power between students and teachers in order to participate in the decision-making, to select their teaching materials, assignments, and textbooks, and to negotiate the syllabus. Dialogue is the interaction among students and between the teacher and students; the interactions could be about their experiences or practices in the classroom. Collaborative learning is an educational method of learning where students work together in small groups to achieve the goal of a democratic classroom. Equality is defined as the sense of being equal among students, so everyone has the same chance in the classroom, and there is no discrimination among students. Critique relates to conscious thought

that help students to develop their analytical and thinking skills. All five concepts connect with each other; for example, if students have the freedom to share their opinions, they may confidently use dialogue and feel equal among their peers. On the other hand, if these practices do not exist, students may feel marginalized in the classroom, and that situation may lead them to practice silence and to be dependent.
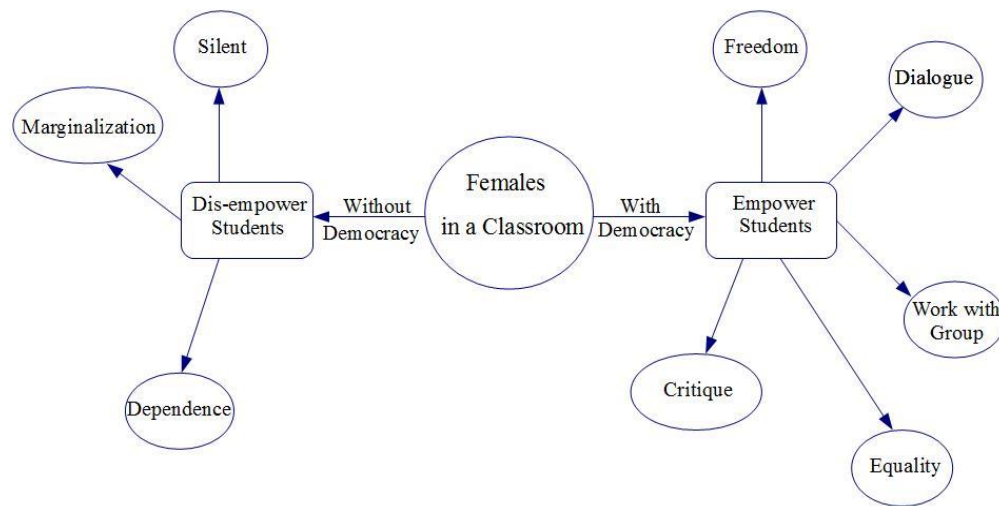
Figure 1. The Theoretical Framework (Critical Pedagogy)

Research Questions and Hypotheses

The research questions for this study are as follows:

1. What are female students' perceptions about their democratic empowerment in the classroom at King Saud University?

2. Are there statistically significant differences among female students' perceptions about their democratic empowerment in a classroom at King Saud University based on their study tracks (Adult Education, Foundations of Education, and Education and Kindergartens)?

3. What are the obstacles for democratic empowerment that female students face in the classroom at King Saud University?

Null Hypothesis 1

Female students' perceptions about their democratic empowerment in the classroom at King Saud University will not be significantly different than the neutral target value at the midpoint of the Likert scale on the survey.

Alternative Hypothesis 1

Female students' perceptions about their democratic empowerment in the classroom at King Saud University will show they experience democratic empowerment in their classrooms.

Null Hypothesis 2

There are no statistically significant differences among female students' perceptions about their democratic empowerment in a classroom at King Saud University based on their study tracks.

Alternative Hypothesis 2

There are statistically significant differences among female students' perceptions about their democratic empowerment in a classroom at King Saud University based on their study tracks.

<div align="center">Purpose of the Study</div>

The aim of this study is to describe female students' perceptions about their democratic empowerment at King Saud University. From this aim, the goals of the study are as follows:

1. To understand how much female students are democratically empowered in their classroom.

2. To discover if there are statistically significant differences among female students' perceptions about their democratic empowerment in a classroom at King Saud University due to their study tracks (Adult Education, Foundations of Education, and Education and Kindergartens).

3. To understand the obstacles for democratic empowerment that female students face in the classroom at the King Saud University.

Limitations and Delimitations of the Study

This study is limited to graduate female students. Also, one ethnic group is examined because Saudi Arabia does not have a mix of ethnic cultures. The language that use to collect the data is Arabic.

The data for the study will come from a public higher-educational institution in Saudi Arabia, King Saud University. Additionally, this study focuses on the College of Education in the Department of Educational Policies which include Adult Education, Foundations of Education, and Education and Kindergartens.

Concepts of this Study

The key concepts of terms used in this study are unique from conventional use because they were intended to reflect Islamic values in some respects. This Islamic values provide a brief set of definitions.

Democratic Classroom, in this study, is a place where students can be active learners and practice effective strategies which includes freedom, dialogue, collaborative learning, equality, and critique in the classroom.

Traditional Teachings are methods that make students passive learners in the classroom. These teachings are like what Freire called banking education.

Democratic Empowerment refers to enhancing female students' opportunity to be able using effective strategies which include freedom, dialogue, collaborative learning, equality, and critique in the classroom.

Critical Pedagogy is a teaching approach that seeks to help students to be effective and critical learners in both their classroom and community; it rejects the traditional methods which make students passive learners.

Freedom is to give students the responsibility in a classroom by sharing power between students and teachers in order to participate in the decision-making, to select their teaching materials, assignments, and textbooks, and to negotiate the syllabus.

Dialogue is the interactions among students and between the instructor and students in order to share their experiences, perspectives, and thoughts. It is "creative exchange in which new understandings are generated. Previous ideas and knowledge may be injected, but they are offered as tools and not as ends in themselves" (Newman, 2006, p. 110).

Collaborative learning is an educational method of teaching where students work together in groups to achieve the goal of a democratic classroom.

Equality is defined as the sense of being equal among students, so everyone has the same chance in the classroom, and there is no discrimination among students.

Critique relates to conscious thought that help students to develop their analytical and thinking skills.

Silence is a form of disempowerment, and in this study, according to Botas (2004)," the students' silence is resistance to the teacher's authority or coercive powers in the classroom" (p. 26).

Marginalization relates to an unimportant or powerless position within a society or group (Merriam-Webster, 2015) where students' skills, abilities, thoughts, and experiences are ignored. *Dependence* occurs when passive students who wait to be told what to do and what things mean.

Overview of the Study

The aim of this study is to describe Saudi female students' perceptions about their democratic empowerment in the classroom at King Saud University. This study contains five chapters. The first chapter includes the introduction, statement of the problem, significance of the study, theoretical framework, research questions and hypotheses, limitations of the study, concepts of this study, and overview of study. The second chapter is the literature review which includes women in Islam (their knowledge, status, and education), the college of education at King Saud University, critical pedagogy, democracy and education, empowerment with a democracy classroom, disempowerment without a democracy classroom, and the conclusion. The third chapter is methodology. The fourth chapter presents the results of the study. The fifth chapter includes a discussion of the results.

CHAPTER 2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

This chapter of the study encompasses a review of the literature pertaining to two sections: women in Islam and a democratic empowerment classroom through the lens of critical pedagogy. The first section includes an overview of Muslim women's education in Islam. This overview is followed by a brief information about the educational college at King Saud University, whose female students are the sample of this study. The second section discusses critical pedagogy and its key concepts that relate to a democratic empowerment classroom including empowerment, democracy education, freedom, dialogue, collaborative learning, equality, and disempowerment (silence, marginalization, and dependence). Finally, a conclusion is provided.

Women in Islam

In Saudi Arabia, Islam is the official religion; Islam is the religion of faith, worship, ethics, legislation, and rule. It is an integrated system of life that constitutes a fundamental pillar of the country's overall policy (Al-Muhaiz'i, 2002). However, people who do not understand the Islamic teachings suppose that Islam is the main reason behind some prohibitions against women's education and that Islam treats women unjustly and differently than men. Therefore, it is important to highlight a brief review of the fundamentals of Islamic teaching that Saudi Universities and schools follow on their policies.

Islam and Knowledge

Islam makes a great position for learning, education, experts, teachers, and everything relating to learning because learning and education are the best things in a Muslim's life. According to Al-Ghazali (1987), one of the most influential scholars in Islamic thought, in Islam learning is life. There are many verses in the holy Quran that encourage people to forcefully

pursue knowledge, such as "Allah will raise to high ranks those of you who believe and are endowed with knowledge" (Quran, n.d., Al-Mujadila, Verse 11, p. 543). Additionally, in Islam, women and men both have equal rights to obtain knowledge. Anas Ibn Malik reported that Mohammed, the messenger of Allah, said, "Seeking knowledge is an obligation upon every Muslim" (Daily Hadith Online, 2014, para. 1). Through history, the Islamic community is characterized as the religion of knowledge and learning, so the first verse of the Quran starts with the word "read." This verse is "Read in the name of your Lord who created. Created human from a clinging substance. Read, and your Lord is the most Generous. Who taught by the pen. Taught human that which he knew not" (Quran, n.d., Al-Alaq, Verses 1-5, p. 597). These verses are an explicit call to read and write as well as to stimulate learning because reading is the window for other knowledge, wisdom, and culture. Therefore, Islamic teachings stress that obtaining knowledge is very necessary for all people without distinctions made between men and women.

The Status of Women in Islam

Islam honors women as the spiritual, intellectual, and educational equals of men. There is no text in the Quran or Sunnah (what the Prophet Mohammed said) that indicates the prohibition of women's education (Metwally, 2004). Also, Islam regards women as girls, wives, mothers, and workers. Therefore, the Islamic religion is a restoration of women's dignity and gives women their rights; for instance, before Islamic civilization, women did not have any rights, such as material rights. With material rights, Islam gives women economic independence, the right to inheritance, and the right to an allowance (the cost that men, as husbands or fathers, pay their wife, mother, or children for daily needs such as food or clothing). In addition, a Muslim woman is responsible for herself, her worship, her family, her husband, her children, and her education (Ben Dhich, 1998).

Education for Women in Islam

        Muslim women emerge in many scientific fields which construct deep knowledge and understanding to extend their culture, such as medicine, nursing, religious studies, social studies, literature, and politics. According to Metwally (2004), women's education is prioritized similarly to reach a high level that compares to the level of men's education. In the history of Islam, there were many examples of highly educated women. Among the most famous educated women were: Aisha Bint Abu Bakr, Al-Shifa Bint Abdullah Al- Qurasyiah, and Zainab Al-Chamih. Aisha Bint Abu Bakr (613/614 – 678 CE) was one of the Prophet Mohammed's wives. She emerged in Islamic sciences, especially in the Quran, Hadith, and Jurisprudence, medicine, and poetry. Aisha was viewed as one of the best teachers of her time; therefore, both women and men asked her for advice when they faced something difficult. Also, Aisha participated in armies, and she was characterized by sayings of wisdom. The Prophet Mohammed listened to her when they discussed various issues and political matters. Additionally, Al-Shifa Bint Abdullah Al-Qurasyiah (living in the seventh century) was a notable wise woman; many Muslims asked for her opinion, and they trusted her. She excelled in writing, reading, medicine, and Islamic sciences, especially in Hadith, so Alshifa taught women at her house. In the medical field, she was a specialist of skin diseases and was known for correct opinions. Caliph (the head of state in Caliphate) Omar Ibn Al-Khattab gave her the responsibility of business marketing. Another well-known women, Zainab Al-Chamih (living in the seventh century) was known as doctor Banee Owod. Zainab excelled in the medical field, especially in ophthalmology and general surgery (Ben Dhich, 1998; Lal and Algendy 2004; Metwally, 2004).

        These three exemplars show that Muslim women have knowledge and high social status in the Islamic community since its inception. Women have the freedom to study what they

wanted and needed as well as to teach their knowledge and skills. Therefore, it can be inferred that, within Islamic cultures, there was no difference between the educational opportunities for women and men although they were separate.

The Educational College at King Saud University

The College of Education at King Saud University was established under an agreement that was signed by the Saudi Ministry of Education with the United Nations Development Programme. The Saudi Ministry of Education implemented this project in conjunction with the international organization education, The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). In 1966, the College of Education began its work. In 1967, the College of Education joined King Saud University. The chronology of the emergence of departments within the College of Education was as follows: In 1973, the department of Educational Policies and Psychology; in 1974, the department of Islamic Culture and Curriculum and Instruction; in 1978, Art Education, Sport Science and Physical Activity, and Education Technology; in 1985, Special Education; in 1997 Educational Administration; and in 2011, Quranic Studies. The female and male students are educated in separate colleges, so the College of Education for women has the same men's departments except Sport Science and Physical Activity. This study focuses on graduate female students who study at the College of Education in the Department of Educational Policies which include Adult Education, Foundations of Education, and Education and Kindergartens.

According to the requirements and conditions of the community and its needs, the College of Education has worked to achieve many objectives; in the forefront of them, to prepare educators at a high level that help them to be eligible to work in the fields of education. Also, it has worked to serve as a center for educational research that contributes to finding appropriate

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solutions to the problems of Saudi education by following the methods of scientific research. In addition, the College of Education has worked with the Ministry of Education to raise the level of science and education for current teachers in various stages of education, school administrators, and officials of educational departments, so they organize training courses that are appropriate to them. Moreover, the College of Education implements some programs that aim to develop teaching methods, to improve the educational levels, and to disseminate the educational awareness among citizens through using educational methods and media available (King Saud University, 2014).

The College of Education's philosophy concentrates on the fact that learning is a form of worship that make humans more close to Allah. This philosophy derives from the Islamic principle which emphasizes seeking education where ever it can be found, spreading knowledge, and getting benefit from it as much as possible. Also, this philosophy underlines that seeking education is an obligation of every Muslim, meaning that all individuals are able to learn and are obliged to continue learning. Therefore, the principal values of the college of education also stem from the Islamic teaching which is represented in:

1. Life-long learning: God has urged man to seek knowledge, acquire it, and disseminate it in order to fulfill an act of worship to God and to inhabit the earth and be His agent on earth. Thus, the educator's concern with acquiring knowledge and facilitating the search for it is considered an act of seeking to please God.

2. Fairness and integrity: This is represented in the educator's concern to teach and learn as an act of worship by which s/he seeks to please God, whom s/he covertly and overtly minds in her/his professional and lifestyle practices, and whose purposes s/he seeks to accomplish with intrinsic, sincere motives. Also, the educator is careful to respect

individual privacy and the confidentiality of data and information, while maintaining high

standards of integrity and self-accountability.

3. Perfection: Educators are determined to accomplish their mission of teaching their

   students and educating them well and serving their country and society. To fulfill that,

   they try many methods, strategies, and techniques, and they follow closely excellence

   criteria in all their practices.

4. Professionalism: Teaching is a specialized profession that requires study, knowledge,

   education, and continuous growth. It is also governed by rules and traditions by which

   educators, and the society at large, need to abide.

5. Freedom: The teaching profession grants every educator and every learner the freedom to

   question, research and change, believing that this freedom is the path that leads to

   prominence, creativity, and novel discoveries, as long as it functions within the

   boundaries of religious laws and societal values. Also, freedom helps in the building of

   the knowledge society that the college seeks to achieve through its vision and mission

   (King Saud University, 2014, para. 4).

These principle values are considered as the branch of the whole values of the King Saud

University which depend also on Islamic teachings. The goals, philosophy, and values of the

educational college focus on preparing educators to be active and positively effective in their

society and this preparation may occur by giving them equal opportunities to participate and

share their knowledge with each other. Therefore, if a democratic classroom, which depends on

some important elements, such as freedom, dialogue, collaborative learning, equality, and

critique, is applied at the university, that will help students to be effective learners not only in the

classroom but also in their society. In this study, critical pedagogy is utilized as the theoretical

framework by focusing on Dewey, Freire, and Shor's prospective on a democratic empowerment classroom based on these five elements.

Critical Pedagogy

There is no consensus about the construction of critical pedagogy; however, the practices and frameworks of critical pedagogy are offer deduced from the foundation of Paulo Freire's work, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (1970). Therefore, Paulo Freire, a Brazilian educator, is usually regarded as the most likely candidate to have originated critical pedagogy (Duncan-Andrade & Morrell, 2008; McLaren, 2000). In his work, Freire rejected and critiqued the concept of banking education, and he described it as follows:

> Education thus becomes an act of depositing, in which the students are the depositories and the teacher is the depositor. Instead of communicating, the teacher issues communiques and makes deposits which the students patiently receive, memorize, and repeat . . . the scope of action allowed to the students extends only as far as receiving, filing, and storing the deposits. (Freire, 1996, p. 53)

In this concept of education, Freire (1996) believed that teachers are considered to be knowledgeable while students do not know anything. This concept attributes an absolute ignorance onto people which nullifies education and knowledge as processes of inquiry. According to Irwin (2012), "banking education is an invidious kind of pedagogy with pernicious effects on human individuals and on the possibility of community or inter-subjective solidarity" (p.49). Therefore, Freire (1996) emphasized that education must start with the solution of the teacher-student contradiction, "by reconciling the poles of the contradiction so that both are simultaneously teachers and students" (p.53). This solution does not exist in the banking concept

which maintains and encourages the contradiction. In the banking concept, the contradiction between teacher and students appears as follows:

1. the teacher teaches and the students are taught;

2. the teacher knows everything and the students know nothing;

3. the teacher thinks and the students are thought about;

4. the teacher talks and the students listen-meekly;

5. the teacher disciplines and the students are disciplined;

6. the teacher chooses and enforces his choice, and the students comply;

7. the teacher acts and the students have the illusion of acting through the action of the teacher;

8. the teacher chooses the program content, and the students (who were not consulted) adapt to it;

9. the teacher confuses the authority of knowledge with his or her own professional authority, which she and he sets in opposition to the freedom of the students;

10. the teacher is the subject of the learning process while the pupils are mere objects.

(Freire, 1996, p. 54)

As a result of the banking education, a majority of students work on memorizing the information that was given to them, and fewer students evolve the critical consciousness, "which would result from their interference in the world as transformers of that world" (p. 54).

Freire (1996) suggested an alternative method to banking education what he called problem-posing education which "epitomizes the special characteristic of consciousness" (p. 60). Educators and other people "must abandon the educational goal of deposit-making and replace it with the posing of the problems of human beings in their relations with the world" (p. 60).

Problem-posing education is different than banking education in many ways; for instance, problem-posing education considers dialogue as indispensable, so it encourages the development of critical thinking. Moreover, problem-posing education "bases itself on creativity and stimulates true reflection and action upon reality . . . theory and practice take the people's historicity as their starting point" (p. 64). Like Freire, Dewey preferred problem-posing education over traditional education because he believed that, through a problem-solving process, students learn by doing and interacting in real-life situations.

Shor (1992, 1996) criticized traditional education by describing it as the authoritarian approach where teachers unilaterally create the rules and lecture about a subject that they chose. In an authoritarian classroom, students become passive, conformist, and obedient. Shor agreed with Freire that traditional education is oppressive because it restricts students to positions of powerlessness, does not acknowledge students' prior experiences and knowledge, and grants teachers the authority. Therefore, both students and teachers feel estranged and disconnected from the curriculum and schooling. Also, students develop authority-dependence, so they wait to be told what to do and what things mean.

Additionally, Dewey criticized the traditional education, and he described a set of inherited information from the past that transferred in a steady way to students without their participation. In a traditional classroom, students are silent and passive for a lot of their time, so this classroom leads to (1) the repression of students' expression and creativity, (2) cultivation of individuality, and (3) acquisition of isolated skills (Dewey, 1998; Wolk, 1998). Dewey (1998) claimed that progressive education is opposed in the traditional schools. Dewey emphasized that the progressive education focuses on the learners' motivation and interest by taking into account that "there is an intimate and necessary relation between the processes of actual experience and

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education" (p. 7). Also, progressive education helps learners to build a growth mindset, to express their individuality, and to free activity. Therefore, Dewey (1916) viewed that "the aim of education is to enable individuals to continue their education" (p. 107). Through this aim, he considered that education is for lifelong learning.

According to Deans (1999), both Dewey and Freire were progressives who criticized educational philosophies that depend on mechanistic, fixed, industrial, or elitist metaphors. Also, they were both humanists who viewed "the educational process as bringing action and reflection, theory and practice, means and ends, self and society into intimate and ultimately transformative dialectical relationships on cognitive and social levels" (Deans, 1999, p. 20). Dewey's and Freire's philosophies were created around the essential concepts of experience, growth, inquiry, communication, mediation, problem posing or solving, consciousness-increasing, ethical social action, and transformation. For example, like Freire, Dewey confirmed that learning always takes place in the context of the learner's prior knowledge and experience. In education, Freire and Dewey asserted that the relationship between theory and practice must be combined; for Dewey, learning by doing is the norm of education, and Freire mentioned this relationship in praxis (Gadotti, 1994).

Duncan-Andrade and Morrell (2008) stated that Shor (1992) integrated Freire's, Giroux's, and Dewey's critical-education theories with Piaget's theories of learning and development that rejected traditional education, claiming a mutual relationship between the teacher and student to analyze the effect of critical pedagogy and empowering education on classroom practices. For example, Shor's (1983) early work *Critical Teaching and Everyday Life* was an adaptation of Freire's methodology in the context of North American classrooms. Also, Shor collaborated with Freire when they published *A Pedagogy for Liberation: Dialogues on Transforming Education*

(1987). Shor (1996) believed that he attempted to discipline himself to follow students, instead of disciplining students "to follow the teacher's pre-emptive lecture" (p.41). In Freire's terms, this practice was known as a praxis of dialogue, and in Dewey's terms, this practice was known as an "agency of democratic education—that is practical means to put theory into action" (p.41). Shor's perspective was that the teacher and student must share authority to counter hegemony and pursue critical-democratic pedagogy. Therefore, Shor (1993) presented ten values of Freirean pedagogy: participatory, situated (in student thought and language), critical, democratic, dialogic, dissocialized, multicultural, research-oriented, activist, and affective.

The aim of critical pedagogues is to separate theories from the academics and to integrate these theories into educational practice (Duncan-Andrade & Morrell, 2008). With critical pedagogy, primary attention is paid to the type of educational theories and practices that support both teachers and students and provide an opportunity for them to understand the relationship among ideology, power, and culture. Also, critical pedagogy creates a space for both teachers and students to become involved with a critical dialogue where they produce the learning objective from their own ideas and values rather than the reproduction of the dominant groups (Leistyna et al., 1996). McLaren (2003) emphasized that the relationship between teachers' practices within the classroom and their efforts to build a better society must be investigated by teachers. Therefore, critical pedagogues claim to support democratic education. For example, both Dewey and Freire claim freedom for learners, and they believe that this freedom is only probable in the democratic society. In a classroom, this freedom may best be realized when the teacher utilizes dialogue or communication with the students. As a result, the teacher directs the students toward a better life through learning about his/her own experiences (Darwish, 2009). According to Goomansingh (2009) "critical pedagogy must move beyond a broad perspective of

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democracy by exploring its impact along the lines of classroom interactions and dynamics" (p. 28).

Democracy and Education

Dewey believed that "for education to be most successful, it is necessary that people participate in democratic forms of life" (Tozer, Senese, & Violas, 2009, p. 152). Democracy is not something people own or rent, such as, a house or a television; Democracy is something that all people working together, need to strive for, and need to constantly question. Dewey's hope of democracy was that "our lives would be filled with talk, discourse, social interaction, of letting our infinite voices be heard about the important issues and questions of the day" (Wolk, 1998, p. 10). In a school, when students have a democratic education which helps them to have the opportunity to make choices, they obtain the freedom to understand their choices about the way they live and learn because their thoughts are appreciated (Morrison, 2008). Also, both Freire and Dewey stated in a democratic classroom students learn many skills such as dialogue and critical thinking, in order to be active in their communities. Freire argued that students can learn democracy through the practice of democracy in a classroom. This democracy relies on particular knowledge that is provided by students' experiences. Like Freire, Dewey believed in the importance of students' experiences to develop their skills; for example, students learn best when they choose the subject-matter from their experiences, which gives them the opportunity to grow, to understand their experiences, as well as participating to alter their behaviors (Darwish, 2009).

According to Walk (1998), democratic classrooms begin with teachers who must recognize that they have the primary responsibility to create a democratic classroom environment that gives both students and teachers the opportunities to learn and question together as a

community of critical learners. Dewey, Freire, and Shor also agreed that teachers have a responsibility to create democratic classroom environments; for instance, Dewey indicated that the quality of the classroom experience is contingent on the educative value of a classroom, and that teachers are the most responsible for creating that environment. Therefore, the notion of democratic classrooms is to provide a trusting environment that gives both teachers and students the freedom to practice method of critical thinking, such as using dialogue. In this democratic classroom, students become empowered because, according to Shor (1996), the "democratic disturbance of the teacher-centered classroom confirms a primary goal of shared authority: to restructure education into something done by and with students rather than by the teacher for and over them" (p. 148). Frymier, Shulman, and Houser (1996) stated that students who feel empowered are committed to producing high-quality work. Therefore, democratic classrooms provide a great environment that supports both the students and teachers to be empowered not only in a classroom, but also in society.

Empowerment with A Democratic Classroom

The root of the word "empowerment" refers to power. In this study, the term "power" refers to sharing power in education, especially in classrooms among students and teachers. Many literature reviews, such as Kreisberg (1992), Erwin (2004), and Berger (2005), attempt to define the notion of power relationships by dividing this concept into many types including *power over* and *power with*. A *power over* relationship relates to a traditional dominance model which means that the desire to control others may be for personal satisfaction or for people's own good. *Power over* relationship is most characterized by self-interest. In education, *power over* relationships are typically used in a traditional classroom where teachers control their students by utilizing their authority. Alternatively, *power with* relationships refer to an empowerment model.

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In a classroom, *power with* relationships appear when teachers choose to give up the domination of the learning environment by inviting all students to share power through learning dialogues and collaboration in order to form a democratic classroom.

According to Kreisberg (1992), the term "co-agency" explains the notion of *power with* where teachers seek to follow a diversity of interests that align with students' and teachers' interests. Erwin (2004) stated that, if a teacher gives students the opportunity to achieve *power with*, students can meet their need for power. However, if students do not have opportunities to achieve power in these healthy, productive, and responsible ways, they will most likely select *power over* relationships. Therefore, in democratic classrooms, teachers apply the concept of *power with* because, according to Kreisberg (1992), teachers see that both students and teachers make a difference when empowerment becomes the primary goal for the teachers' instruction style.

There are no power relationships without knowledge, so both power and knowledge are intertwined and cannot be separated (Gaventa and Coranwall, 2011). According to Coetzee "power is not a possession of a particular institution, an elite group or class but a technique embedded in the knowledge content of the school curriculum which allows and prohibits certain behaviours" (Nekhwevha, 2012, p. 160). Students need to obtain more knowledge, not only to talk in a classroom, but also to use this knowledge to change things (Shor, 1996). Shor and Freire (1987) agreed that, "if teachers or students exercised the power to remake knowledge in the classroom, then they would be asserting their power to remake society" (p. 10). Therefore, to enhance students' existing knowledge and experience, both Dewey and Freire emphasized that "knowledge is only acquired through making live connections with activities and interests of the individual student" (Bradley, 2005).

McLaren (2003) indicated that understanding the relationship between power and knowledge is a fundamental concern of critical pedagogy as Shor defined it, "A power-sharing critical pedagogy is a process for restructuring authority, teaching, and learning" (1996, p. 147). Restructuring empowers students to apply their knowledge in a democratic classroom when the power of a teacher is shared. According to Shor (1996), this sharing of power means that "with knowledge and authority question-able [sic], some students will take the lead in negotiating the agendas of the class and the teacher, whose unilateral power to dominate knowledge-making ends where power-sharing begins" (pp. 147-148). Teachers create learning contexts that help students to be able to empower themselves throughout the strategic learning process when teachers allow students to speak and share their own opinions. If the teacher supports students to discuss their knowledge and experiences and to express what they know best, that support gives students the confidence and motivation to participate constructively because they are treated as experts who refine their knowledge base with the new content that was provided (Cook-Sather, 2002; Leistyna et al., 1996). Ross, Bondy, and Kyle (1993) indicated that students who are empowered "become eager and successful learners, determine their own futures, participate productively in society, and play an active role in making society a better place for all" (p. 1).

In a democratic classroom, students become responsibly independent to express their opinions. According to Shor (1992), this independence was a result of critical thought empowering students and helping them to make their own way in life instead of receiving orders from others. Wolk (1996) also emphasized the importance of allowing students to learn about what interests them, and he called this method "student-created projects" (p. 113). The idea for this method was that students' questions, which they want to explore, are purposeful and have value, so this encouraged students "to put a lot of thought into their work, to create a quality final

product, to demonstrate what they have studied, and to do all of this while being a caring member of the classroom community (p. 113). Achatz (2011) stated that a democratic classroom is a place that creates the best learning conditions where each student is supported to be a member of the educational process based on his or her interests. Additionally, this classroom encourages students to investigate local and global themes. Therefore, to achieve a democratic classroom, Shor (1992) suggested 11 values for empowering education: "participatory, affective, problem-posing, situated, multicultural, dialogic, de-socializing, democratic, researching, interdisciplinary, and activist" (p. 17).

Shor (1992) defines these values in the following ways: participatory means that students are given the opportunities to effectively participate in classroom activities instead of being passive recipients. Affective relates to developing human feelings, social inquiry, and conceptual habits of mind within the teaching and learning process. To help students to questioning their contexts critical understanding depends on problem-posing. Situated is grounded in the experiences and thoughts of students. Multicultural values refer to the classroom that acknowledges issues of race, gender, class and sexuality in the curriculum. Dialogic means that creating a learning environment which depends on a student-centered and teacher-directed method. Desocializing means deconstructing the traditional classroom through an acknowledgement of students' educational and social conditioning, which help students to deeply understand their lives. Democratic is an educational process that allows students to engage rather than follow a rigid structured learning that is disconnected from their lives. Researching emphasizes investigating, analyzing, critiquing, rethinking, contemplating, and communicating on the subjects students are learning. Interdisciplinary is a method which combines multiple academic disciplines, bodies of knowledge, and multimodal resources to

construct understanding. Activist occurs when students take an active role in their learning and in their social worlds outside of a school.

In her 2009 study, Goomansingh adapted Shor's agenda of values (except interdisciplinary) as a model of critical pedagogy that was constructed for her study. Goomansingh used this model to understand the pedagogical environment that transforms the interactions between teachers and students in order to teach for democracy. In the current study, the model of critical pedagogy was constructed from Dewey, Freire, and Shor's perspective, and they were known as critical pedagogues. The work of Dewey, Freire, and Shor indicates that the learning environment must be active, and this activation occurs through the critical paradigm which relies on strategies such as participation as a necessary condition for an empowered education (Mulcahy, 2010). They also agreed about many concepts of critical pedagogy that help to create a democratic classroom; for example, they support critical thinking skills. Therefore, with this study, the model of critical pedagogy consists of five concepts: freedom, dialogue, working with a group, equality, and critique. These concepts are the underlying basis of education for democratic classroom. The following paragraphs describe each concept of the critical pedagogy's model. Each concept first is discussed in the Western scholarship, then reviewed in the context of Islamic teachings.

Freedom

Freedom is considered the most fundamental element of democracy. The freedom that must apply in schools, particularly in classrooms, is wide-awakeness which is the idea of action, of choosing not to live isolated, passive, conventional lives. If teachers nurture this type of freedom in students, teachers can free students and themselves "to live thoughtful lives of importance, free [students] to imagine, to create, to define themselves, to think and to act, to

make a better world" (Wolk, 1998, p. 95). This freedom gives students responsibility in a classroom by sharing power between students and teachers in order to participate in the decision making; to select students teaching materials, assignments, and textbooks; and to negotiate the syllabus. This definition of freedom applies in this study. According to Dewey, if students become intellectually responsible, they must do more than concisely express their own and others' opinions. They "consider the consequences of their positions and adopt these consequences when they follow reasonably" (Fishman & McCarthy, 1998, p. 215). This responsibility encourages students to ask about "the meaning of what they learn, in the sense of what difference it makes to the rest of their beliefs and to their actions" (Fishman & McCarthy, 1998, p. 215). Also, Wolk (1998) pointed out that students "become self-directed learners by giving them as much freedom as they can responsibly accept" (p. 100).

Freire, like Dewey, believed that the decision maker assumes the consequences of any decision-making, and that is considered essential to the learning experience for decision-making. For Freire, freedom is a necessity when it is accompanied by the awareness that every practice of freedom implies an ethical responsibility for that process. Therefore, freedom is restricted by the burden of responsibility (Lewis, 2012). Also, Shor (1996) stated that "when you have intentions, power, responsibilities, and purposes, you are more connected to what you do and focus more intelligence on your experience" (pp. 75-76). For instance, if students are given the opportunity to engage in shared decision making about course content, they understand the work as well as the why, what, how, and for whom of their work. As a result, this participation inspires students to take more responsibility for their choices, making students innovative learners (Abdelmalak & Trespalacios, 2013). According to Shor (1996), "[n]egotiating the syllabus offers students and

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teachers alternative social development, alternative ways of being, knowing, speaking, relating, and feeling, beyond and against traditional classroom arrangements" (p. 62).

Additionally, Abdelmalak and Trespalacios (2013) mentioned that the teacher allows students to share power by taking responsibility for making decisions about topic selections, the technology tools, textbooks, and assignments they want to learn. For example, the teacher chooses some textbooks and asks the students to make decisions about which textbook they would prefer to read in the course and to clarify why. Also, students are allowed to select their assignments and the appropriate day to submit the work, helping students to effectively use the power they are given, and to increase their sense of ownership and responsibility about their own learning.

In Islam, students have the freedom to share power in decision-making in order to choose their course materials, curricula study, and the subject matter (Metwally, 2004). For example, Ibn Khaldun (1979), an Arab Muslim historiographer who is considered as the founding father of modern sociology, historiography, and economics, believed that freedom was regarded as choice, creativity, and responsibility in the formation of person. He claimed that students must select their curriculum and the knowledge that they need to know. Ibn Khaldun also saw that knowledge had multiplicity of visions and difference of opinions, so there was no absolute knowledge. Therefore, it was obvious that Islamic scholars' perspectives agreed with Western scholars' perspectives about the freedom in a classroom.

Dialogue

Talking is the most important feature that makes a classroom a democratic environment that provides meaningful learning and community. In the classroom, talk is not only about being verbal, but the purposeful dialogue is also "about important topics; the point is to share our

questions, our ideas, our thought, our opinions, our concerns, and our lives. This is exactly what constitutes democracy in the Deweyan sense" (Wolk, 1998, p. 187). Dialogue is considered as the heart of educational pedagogy. The idea of participation through dialogue is what both Dewey and Freire believe to be active learning (Darwish, 2009). Dialogical education is not the sole transferal of knowledge from the teacher to students, but it is the process where the teacher poses different problems, encouraging students to be involved in a dialogue in order to solve these problems where both the students and teachers learn (Freire, 1996; Shor 1996). According to Freire (1996), there is a relationship among dialogue, critical thinking, and communication. To illustrate, the true dialogue is the ability to engage in critical thinking; there is no communication without dialogue, and without communication, there can be no true education.

Gadotti (1994) stated, "Dialogue is not just a way to achieve better results; it is not a tactic to make friends or to conquer the [students]" (p. 29). Freire saw dialogue as part of human nature. Through dialogue, human beings are basically communicative, so without dialogue, there is no human progress. Freire urged the necessity of dialogue as a teaching strategy. Also, teachers should always listen to their students, especially about what is taught. Shor (1996) agreed with Freire and suggested that, through dialogue in the class discussion, students have to be leaders and do more than just talk. They listened to what students say, asked their peers questions, joined in student-to-student cross-talk without the intervention of the teacher, and took responsibility for picking up the dialogue when students hit silences or points of dispute. In Freire's conception, dialogue was fed by love, faith, humility, respect, and confidence (Gadotti, 1994). Freire (1996) stated that dialogue cannot exist in the absence of love, so love was both the foundation of dialogue as well as dialogue itself. "If I do not love the world, if I do not love life, if I do not love people, I cannot enter into dialogue" (p. 71). Therefore, dialogue plays an

essential function to achieve the democratic education that helps to empower students. Darwish (2009) pointed out that dialogue helps students to question the inequalities and injustices in their lives. Also, through dialogue, students and the teacher were involved with power-sharing. To confirm this statement, Shor (1992) indicated:

> Dialogue transforms the teacher's unilateral authority by putting limits on his or her dominating voice and calling on students to co-develop a joint learning process. The teacher opens the process to greater student participation, less student resistance, and more fertile contact with student thought and experience. (p. 90)

In short, the concept of democracy that is based on dialogue is deeply rooted in the notions of equality, humility, tolerance, love, respect, and care.

In Islam, dialogue occupies an important position, which is mentioned many times in the Quran and the Sunnah (Hadith of the Prophet Mohammed). Therefore, it is the proper approach, which reduces the authoritarian excesses as well as supports the freedom of thought and expression. The Quran regards dialogue as an important method for the educational situation that guides people and attracts their minds. Dialogue in the Quran is characterized by respecting people and using different methods according to people's minds, so dialogue in the Quran seeks to achieve its goal by the best words and gentler ways. There are many verses that encourage Muslims to engage in dialogue with others. One such verse is as follows: "Invite to the way of your Lord with wisdom and good instruction, and argue with them in a way that is best" (Quran, n.d., An-Nahl, Verse 125, p. 218).

The Prophet Mohammed used dialogue in many educational situations with valued companions and other people. He encouraged Muslims to utilize dialogue and to question in order to generate thinking and to understand things about which they are unaware. Therefore, a

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lot of Muslim scholars use dialogue in their teaching; and they indicate that not using dialogue is considered one of the main reasons for the scientific weakness and sterile debate among students. For example, Ibn Khaldun (1979) stated that, if students have a dialogue about important issues, it will help them to understand and express these issues. He also believed in the importance of helping students to think through concepts and situations, rather than memorize. The dialogue was based on many values, such as kindness, humility, patience, listening, and facilitation. In a nutshell, with both Islam and Western perspective, dialogue was very important to develop the educational processes.

Collaborative Learning

Collaborative learning is an essential teaching strategy that is known by different terms, such as group work, cooperative learning, collective learning, learning communities, peer teaching, peer learning, or team learning. Collaborative learning is based on working together as a group to achieve one goal, so students are responsible for each other's learning; they help each other to understand and to learn (Dooly, 2008). Dewey is one of the pedagogues who emphasized the collaborative learning classroom, and he viewed collaboration as essential to democracy. Dewey sought to make students members of a learning community where knowledge is built collaboratively, so students' sense of belonging to a social group should be encouraged by giving them an opportunity to participate with others to discover common projects and concerns (Fishman & McCarthy, 1998; Jolliffe, 2010).

Both Freire (1996) and Shor (1996) confirmed that collaborative learning is one of the fundamental components of critical pedagogy to accomplish the democratic classroom. Collaborative learning as a tool for social praxis — which is Freire's goal of emancipatory education — is accepted and used by teachers. This social praxis means freeing human beings

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from the oppression that oppression constricts them in their objective reality. To clarify this statement in term of education, when students are given authority over their own learning then they will refuse the "banking transaction of education" where students become passive learners; they acknowledge that teaching, learning, and obtaining literacy are acts (Reagan, Fox, & Bleich, 1994). Shor pointed out that adults learn best in democratic classrooms that depend on such collaborations because these classrooms assist students to move from a disempowered role into "a full consideration of their own potential for making new meaning and self-management, not only in the classroom, but also in other areas of life" (Bailie, 2012, p. 99).

According to Hur, Glassman, and Kim (2013), collaborative learning is not accomplished merely through pushing people to work together in order to teach them team learning. It is something to be taught and examined in itself. Wolk (1996) stated:

If everything students do in cooperative groups has been predetermined, if they have assigned roles, if their thinking has been narrowly defined, if the content to be learned is externally dictated and remains embedded in technical knowledge, then the notion of spontaneous social interaction is being hindered and any sense of community is a false one. (p. 61)

Therefore, collaborative learning presents students with a way of thinking about teaching and understanding freedom and power, as well as "the responsibilities that go with them, and their social and cultural consequences and implications" (Wolk, 1996, p. 62). Also, collaborative learning changes the responsibility of learning for students who become researchers and self-directed learners, so teachers must understand their students' preferred learning styles and their students' conceptions of learning. This understanding helps teachers decide where and how to start collaborative learning (Dooly, 2008). Additionally, teachers must encourage positive

relationships among students. When collaborative learning relies more on friendship than competition this friendship helps to have open relational space where the communications are made easily, so students can take interpersonal risks; then, group members are more ready to engage in collaborative problem solving (Hur, Glassman, & Kim, 2013; Wolk, 1998). Students look to their peers as often as they look to the teacher in order to help solve problems and to complete assignments. Therefore, all students of "the cooperative group feel a sense of ownership over the process, they are more engaged with the activity, with each other, and with shared goals" (Hur et al., 2013, p. 304).

In Islam, both the Quran and the Sunnah encourage people to use group work as a strategy that positively affects their lives. Therefore, Muslims' lives depends on cooperative work such as prayer and pilgrimage. The prophet Mohammed supported cooperative work and learning among both Muslim men and women. There are a lot of Hadiths that encourage people to work in groups. For example, the prophet Mohammed said, "a believer to another believer is like a wall of bricks supporting each other." Also, he said, "the believers are like one body in their love, mercy, and compassion for each other" (Daily Hadith Online, 2012, para. 1). In the Quran, there are many verses that invite people to join a group, such as "and cooperate in righteousness and piety, but do not cooperate in sin and aggression" (Quran, n.d., Al-Maaida, Verse 2, p. 106). Additionally, this strategy existed through the past educational institutions, such as mosques, Katateeb (a traditional school where people learn basic knowledge such as religion, mathematics, or Arabic language), and scholars' homes where people learned with each other as groups. Through these places, learners discussed many issues about their lives and they helped each other to understand the discussions (Metwally, 2004). In short, both Islamic and Western cultures have a similar notion about the collaborative learning strategy.

Equality

Equality is considered one of the key elements in democratic education that many teachers seek to achieve in their classrooms because equality is an essential requirement for successful learning. According to Dewey (1916) "Only through education can equality of opportunity be anything more than a phrase" (p. 138). For progressive educators, the term "equal educational opportunity" is a new, explicit aim which does not mean that students should receive the same educational experiences. It means that students would receive different types of education, however, all students should have an equal opportunity to gain the appropriate education for them (Tozer et al., 2009). Kesici (2008) confirmed that treating students the same way does not mean equality. The equality is achieved when the teacher gives equal opportunity for education to all students and meets their needs. For example, if some students need more help or special help, the teacher must assist those students in order to meet their needs and for them to become successful learners.

Both Freire and Shor believed that equality is necessary for all democratic values. To illustrate, in *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (1970), Freire confirmed that when respect, dialogue, and love exist, they will overcome inequality. According to Gibson (2007), Freire suggested that the utilization of his "see-judge-act" student-centered methods could lead to critical consciousness which is an awareness of the necessity to continuously remove a veil designed to protect injustice. Then, critical consciousness works as the basis for action toward equality and democracy. Also, Freire (1974) invited the teacher to give students equal opportunity in the classroom by encouraging them to freely generate topics about a specific problem. According to Kesici (2008), the findings of his study about the equality of opportunity provided by teachers in a democratic classroom include five categories: providing equal treatment, activating students,

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providing the right to choose, providing education according to individual differences, and motivating. When teachers offer equal opportunities for education to their students, students perceive themselves as valuable and as members of the classroom community. Then, students will interact with their classmates more easily and will voluntarily participate in classroom activities.

In Islam, the Quran and the Sunnah emphasize equality among people, in general, and between man and women, in particular. This equality is not absolute; it is equal justice which takes individual differences into account. Islam respects all human beings, so there is no difference among races, cultures, sex, groups, or colors. All people are considered as one human race. People have equal opportunity in all aspects of their lives. There are many verses that indicate the equality; for instance, "O mankind, fear your Lord, who created you from one soul and created from it its mate and dispersed from both of them many men and women" (Quran, n.d., An-Nisa, Verse 1, p. 77). According to Metwally (2004), in Islamic education, teachers must use equal treatment and justice for all students, without regard to social status or race. Teachers must consider students' motives, needs, and preferences as well as individual differences in abilities and preparations. In sum, Islamic and Western cultures have similar ideas about equality, and they consider equality a key concept in a democratic classroom.

Critique

Critique is one of the essential methods used in democratic classrooms and is not found in the traditional methods of education. According to Wolk (1996), the main task of democratic classrooms and critical pedagogy was to help students to become critical about knowledge and surface realities. Freire (1996) rejected traditional teaching and claimed to consciousness where people would think critically and create a critical consciousness. He argued:

The more students work at storing the deposits entrusted to them, the less they develop

the critical consciousness which would result from their intervention in the world as

transformers of that world. The more completely they accept the passive role imposed on

them, the more they tend simply to adapt to the world as it is and to the fragmented view

of reality deposited in them. (p. 54)

Both Freire (1973) and Shor (1992) offered some stages of critical consciousness. For

Freire, there are three stages of consciousness: semi-intransitive, transitive, and critical

transitivity. With the first stage, semi-intransitive consciousness, the sphere of individuals'

consciousness is limited, and individuals' interests center almost totally on survival. In the

second stage, transitive consciousness, which is known as naïve transitivity, individuals are able

to reflect on themselves as well as their roles and responsibilities. The final stage, critical

transitivity, is characterized by

depth in the interpretation of problems; by the substitution of causal principles for magical

explanations; by the testing of one's "findings" and by openness to revision; by the attempt

to avoid distortion when perceiving problems and to avoid preconceived notions when

analyzing them; by refusing to transfer responsibility; by rejecting passive positions; by

soundness of argumentation; by the practice of dialogue rather than polemics; by

receptivity to the new for reasons beyond mere novelty and by the good sense not to reject

the old just because it is old — by accepting what is valid in both old and new. (Freire,

1973, p. 18)

On other hand, Shor (1992) emphasized critical consciousness and summarized it with four

qualities:

1. Power awareness; an understanding that any structures created through individual effort can be transformed by individuals' collective effort.

2. Critical literacy; an understanding that goes beneath surface meaning into deep meaning, root causes, social context, ideology, and personal consequences.

3. Permanent desocialization; a questioning of the status quo with regard to power and inequality.

4. Self-education; the knowledge that helps individuals to know how to learn critically and to organize transformative educational projects with others.

According to Freire (1973), critical consciousness not only comes through intellectual effort, but also through praxis (action and reflection), so critique requires praxis. There are many critical teaching methods that help students to be aware, such as critical reflection, critical thinking, dialogue, and problem posing. These methods are connected to each other. For example, true dialogue cannot exist without critical thinking, which is generated by dialogue. In addition, there is no communication, which is essential for true education, without dialogue. Critical thinking is realized as transformation, rather than as a static entity, and it cannot separate itself from action. To apply this critical thinking, Shor (1992) suggested the problem-posing method where the teacher is responsible for using the students' thought and speech as the base for developing a critical understanding of personal experience, so the teacher poses knowledge in any form as a problem for mutual inquiry.

Dewey claimed that the thinking process, such as problem solving, and all learning should be taught so that students become independent thinkers who are able to solve problems and to think critically (Berube, 2008). With his theory of inquiry, Dewey believed that education is a problem-solving process which he called the process of inquiry, critical or reflective

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thinking, or a complete act of thought. This problem solving, also known as the Dewey sequence, is the familiar scientific method and includes five steps: (1) identify the problem, (2) analyze the problem, (3) suggest possible solutions, (4) suggest the best possible solutions by indicating the reason, and (5) test and implement the solution (Dewey, 1991; Mina, Omidvar, & Knott, 2003). According to Kolb and Stuart (2005), reflection helps students to think critically and to generalize problem-solving skills. If students solve the problem, that strategy may give them a sense of empowerment. However, even if students do not think that they solved the problem, they should share what happened and the solution that did not work with their classmates. The classmates thus benefit from learning about successful and unsuccessful attempts at problem solving.

Dewey (1933) suggested reflective thinking and defined it as an "active, persistent, and careful consideration of any belief or supposed form of knowledge in the light of the grounds that support [that knowledge] and the further conclusions to which [knowledge] tends" (p. 118). Mezirow (2000) defined critical reflection as "becoming critically reflective of assumptions underlying content, process, or premise (of problem-solving) [a process that] is common in both instrumental and communicative learning" (p. 21). Through critical reflection, students are conscious of and in control of their learning; for example, they assess what they already know and what they need to know. After that, students evaluate how to apply newly acquired knowledge to make a beneficial decision for a situation or to come to a conclusion or reassessment of a problem (Dewey, 1933). Therefore, according to Fawbert (2008), reflection must be the link between theory and action. Reflection that is designed well impacts significant learning, including problem-solving skills, higher-order reasoning, integrative thinking, goal clarification, openness to new ideas, the ability to adopt new perspectives, and systemic thinking.

Critical reflection includes many activities such as journal entries, online chat sessions, poster presentations, worksheets, or discussion sessions (Ash & Clayton, 2009). Overall, critique is an effective strategy that helps students to be critical learners.

In Islamic teaching, both the Quran and the Sunnah support critique and meditation. For example, the Quran focuses on the mind, consciousness, and thinking. The Quran calls people by using many words that relate to critical thinking and questioning assumptions; "say, travel through the earth and observe how Allah did originate creation" (Quran, n.d., Al-Ankaboot, Verse 20, p. 398). This verse is an explicit call to think and see the universe and to meditate about various cosmic phenomena. Additionally, the Quran not only urges human thinking and scientific research about natural phenomena, but also encourages people to think for themselves and how they are created. For instance, "so let people observe from what they were created. They were created from a fluid, ejected" (Quran, n.d., At-Taariq, Verse 5-6, p. 591). The Quran also clarifies the importance of thinking about human life and raises the value of humans; for example, "Say, are those who know equal to those who do not know" (Quran, n.d., Az-Zumar, Verse 9, p. 459).

Moreover, there are many Muslim scholars, such as Ibn Khaldun, who encourage the development of scientific, critical, and creative thinking. He focused on consciousness and growth in students' understanding, so Ibn Khaldun urged students to be observers, thinkers, researchers, and interpreters. Ibn Khaldun "rebuked scholars who simply transmit received wisdom without examining in the light of new information," (Sonn, 2010, p. 61) and to understand social, political, and historical developments, he stated that "we must understand how the people in question make their living, their level of education, their religious beliefs and customs, whether they live in rural or urban conditions, and how they govern themselves" (Sonn,

2010, p. 61). This statement explains the importance of critical thinking for Muslim scholars and also clarifies the similarities between Islamic and Western cultures' thoughts about critical consciousness.

Disempowerment with A Traditional Classroom

The term "disempowerment" is the opposite of the word "empowerment," and usually the term disempowerment is found in the traditional classroom where elements of a democratic classroom, such as freedom, dialogue, collaborative learning, equality, and critique, are not applied. Therefore, teachers, as Shor (1996) described, use power over and authoritarianism on their students, leading students to feel disempowered. Students express their disempowerment in many ways; for example, they become silent, marginalized, and dependent, which are measures in this study. According to Botas (2004), teachers who enhance their students' passivity in the classroom push the students to feel disempowered. However, if teachers encourage their students' participation in the classroom, some students feel empowered while others may feel patronized by the teachers' pedagogical style.

Wolk (1998) pointed out that controlling students by having them sit at a desk, remain silent, and do what they are asked does not help them to learn what their teacher thinks they should. Shor (1996) also agreed with this view when he stated that students rely on authority-dependence, so "they wait to be told what to do and what things mean" (p. 148). Thus, students became passive in the learning process, and they continued to be silenced and subverted in the classroom, which both Freire and Dewey also rejected. Freire (1996) indicated that, through the banking concept of education, teachers considered students as marginal, ignorant, and resource-less; hence, students' skills, abilities, thoughts, and experiences were marginalized. In addition,

Freire viewed that people who live in the culture of silence, where they do what are told without explanation or complaint, are marginalized.

Silence can be seen through two views: either as a powerful strategy or a form of disempowerment. As a powerful strategy, according to Botas (2004), "listening empowers students with the tools to formulate and express their voice" (p. 26). As an illustration, merely because students are silent and listening does not mean that they are less involved in an intellectual way with the teacher and the subject; some students prefer to listen to people's thoughts. Then, students build their own thoughts by using a critical understanding and evaluating their own and other's perspectives. As a form of disempowerment, Botas (2004) indicated that "the students' silence is resistance to the teacher's authority or coercive powers in the classroom" (p. 26). Thus, some students feel powerless and insecure with the teacher's coercive power, and others feel that their opinions and thoughts do not count and do not have value. Also, in primarily lecture based an academic setting, students scarcely experience each other as sources of formal knowledge; therefore, they have a lack of listening carefully to others and a lack of thinking together in the classroom, "where the words that count and grade-giving power that matters have routinely belonged only to the teacher" (Shor, 1996, p. 175). Wolk (1998) stated that "a democratic nation cannot embrace silent classrooms" (p. 202). In this study, this kind of silence as a form of disempowerment is utilized.

The elements of disempowerment in this study, silence, marginalization, and dependence, are connected to each other. To illustrate, if students practice silence in the classroom, they may feel marginalized, leading them to rely on authority-dependence. Therefore, Islamic critical pedagogy focuses on active learning which encourages students to be effective and successful learners in their community; as a result, students feel empowered. For example, Shor (1998)

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stated that, when students turn from a disempowered passive role into a full consideration of what they already know and then toward their own potential, they will create new meaning and self-management, not only in the classroom, but also in their community.

Conclusion

The purpose of this study is to describe female graduate students' perceptions about the degree of which they experience their democratic empowerment in their classrooms at King Saud University. Critical pedagogy is used as the theoretical framework for this study, and the conceptualization of the study is built through Dewey, Freire, and Shor's perceptions about critical pedagogy. These critical pedagogues rejected the traditional classroom and invited a democratic classroom, so this study focuses on five concepts of democratic empowerment: freedom, dialogue, collaborative learning, equality, and critique. These five concepts are similar to Islamic principles, such as Shura, an Islamic democracy, which depends on discussion and dialogue in a subject matter. Also, Shura concerns both the individual and the public and emphasizes freedom, equality, justice, and group work (Al-Ghannouchi, 1993; Al-Mahdi, 2006). On the other hand, disempowerment, which is as a result of using conventional teaching methods and missing the democratic teaching methods, is measured. Traditional teaching methods are described as teaching styles that make students passive learners in the classroom; the students practice silence, feel marginalized, and become dependent on others. Thus traditional teaching methods is rejected by an Islamic critical pedagogy.

Through the literature review, the status of women and their education in an Islamic culture as well as the educational college at King Saud University were reviewed. Also, critical pedagogy, democracy and education, empowerment with a democratic classroom, and disempowerment with a traditional classroom were discussed. Reviewing the Islamic context

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concluded that both women and men were equal in education, that a woman had the right to study what she preferred, and that people encouraged women to obtain and contribute knowledge. Moreover, reviewing the educational college at King Saud University showed that the vision, mission, and principal values were derived from Islamic teaching. The principle of Islamic teaching agreed with critical pedagogy; for example, both of them refused traditional education that made students ineffective learners in their classroom and society. Islamic teaching and critical pedagogy also demanded the elements of democratic education, so this demand lead to theorize an Islamic critical pedagogy.

In many discussions about democracy and education, democracy is related to a way of life. According to Wolk (1998), "[Democracy] is something that each of us, working together, needs to strive for, needs to continuously question. It is never finished or complete, but rather like learning itself, it is an endless evolution" (p.10). In this view, teachers are responsible for creating democratic classrooms by empowering their students through democratic teaching methods, such as freedom, dialogue, collaborative learning, equality, and critique. These five concepts were explained individually, and each concept described the Western and Islamic perspectives which were similar to each other. Finally, disempowerment that is a result of using traditional teaching methods was discussed, including: silence, marginalization, and dependence. These elements of disempowerment were considered a consequence of using traditional teaching methods. Through this study, female graduate students' perceptions about the democratic classroom at King Saud University in the lens of critical pedagogy are discovered. Also, Figure 2 shows the summary of the literature review. This figure divides into two with and without democracy. If female students have democratic empowerment, it may give them freedom, dialogue, the ability to work with a group, equality, and critique in the classroom. This

democratic empowerment is derived from Dewey, Freire, and Shor's perspective on critical

pedagogy. The democratic approach is similar to Shura approach which is an Islamic concept.

Shura is derived from Islamic views (the Quran, the Sunnah, and Muslim scholars). However, if

female students do not have democratic empowerment in the classroom, it may cause silence,
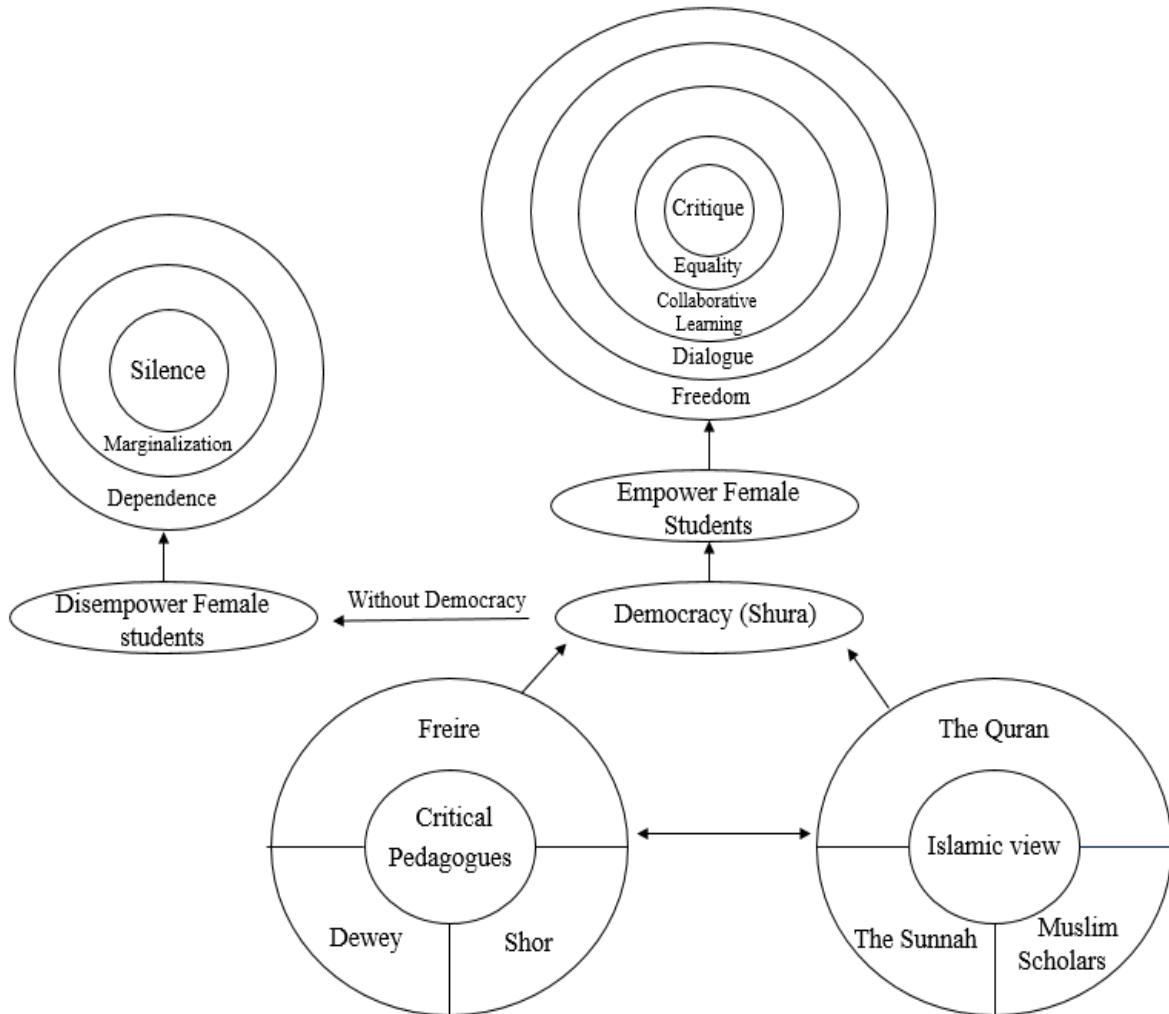
marginalization, and dependence.

Figure 2. The Summary of the Literature Review

CHAPTER 3. METHODOLOGY

The aim of this study is to describe female graduate students' perceptions about their democratic empowerment in a classroom at King Saud University. Their perceptions are compared based on female students' majors. This chapter contains the explanation of the research design, sampling design, instrumentation and measures, including: variables, sources of the instrument, instrument translation, and reliability and validity, procedure, and data analysis.

Research Design and Hypotheses

In this study, quantitative methods are used to gather and analyze the data. According to Babbie (2010), in quantitative methods, researchers seek to collect numerical data and to generalize the data across groups of people or to explain a particular phenomenon. Also, in quantitative methods, the questions are narrow, quantifiable data is collected from participants, and the data analysis depends on statistics and conducts the inquiry in an unbiased, objective manner (Creswell, 2008). The design of this study is a survey method which aims to produce statistical descriptions of attitudes or opinions of a population by studying a sample of that population (Fowler, 2009; Creswell, 2008). A survey design is appropriate for the study purposes of seeking female students' perspectives about their democratic empowerment in a classroom. The questions of this study are:

1. What are female students' perceptions about their democratic empowerment in the classroom at King Saud University?

2. Are there statistically significant differences among female students' perceptions about their democratic empowerment in a classroom at King Saud University based on their study tracks (Adult Education, Foundations of Education, and Education and Kindergartens)?

3. What are the obstacles for democratic empowerment that female students face in the classroom at King Saud University?

The hypotheses of this study are:

Null Hypothesis 1

Female students' perceptions about their democratic empowerment in the classroom at King Saud University will not be significantly different than the neutral target value at the midpoint of the Likert scale on the survey.

Alternative Hypothesis 1

Female students' perceptions about their democratic empowerment in the classroom at King Saud University will show they experience democratic empowerment in their classrooms.

Null Hypothesis 2

There are no statistically significant differences among female students' perceptions about their democratic empowerment in a classroom at King Saud University based on their study tracks.

Alternative Hypothesis 2

There are statistically significant differences among female students' perceptions about their democratic empowerment in a classroom at King Saud University based on their study tracks.

Sampling Design

The population for this study is female graduate students who study at the College of Education in the Department of Educational Policies. The Department of Educational Policies include three tracks: Adult Education, Foundations of Education, and Education and Kindergartens. These tracks are available for female graduate students. The number of female

graduate students who currently studying in the Department of Educational Policies is 155. Table 1 shows the number of female graduate students based on their study degree.

Table 1

The Number of Female Graduate Students in the Department of Educational Policies

Track's name	Doctoral Degree	Master Degree
Adult Education	7	27
Foundations of Education	19	61
Education and Kindergartens	–	41
Total	26	129
	155	

Instrumentation and Measures

This study used a survey method for quantitative research which depends on a self-administered questionnaire as the instrument. An English version of this questionnaire (Appendix A) consists of three parts; the first part is demographic information, the second part is about female students' perceptions about their democratic empowerment in a classroom at King Saud University, and the third part is an open-ended question. The demographic section asks about study tracks (Adult Education, Foundations of Education, and Education and Kindergartens).

The second part has two types. The first type which is about female graduate students' perceptions about the practices and importance of democratic empowerment in a classroom at King Saud University, has sections for five constructs: freedom (12 statements), dialogue (14 statements), collaborative learning (16 statements), equality (10 statements), and critique (13

statements). These statements are used a 4-point Likert scale (often =4, occasionally =3, infrequently =2, and never =1) to describes students' practices in their classroom. Also, a 4-point Likert scale (very important =4, important =3, somewhat important =2, and not important =1) is utilized to describes the importance of these practices for students. The last type of the second part is disempowerment (15 statements). The disempowerment section measures silence, marginalization, and dependence. The statements are used a 4-point Likert scale (often =4, occasionally =3, infrequently =2, and never =1).The third part of the questionnaire, which is the open-ended question, is about the obstacles that hinders the practice of freedom, dialogue, collaborative learning, equality, and critique in the classroom at King Saud University.

The independent variables for this study is students' tracks (Adult Education, Foundations of Education, and Education and Kindergartens). The dependent variable for this study is the results of empowerment level, which is about female students' perceptions about their democratic empowerment in a classroom at King Saud University (the six constructs: freedom, dialogue, collaborative learning, equality, critique, and disempowerment).

Sources of the Instrument

In this study, the items of the questionnaire are developed from the literature review that focuses on critical pedagogy, which create democratic classrooms. These items are the second part of the questionnaire: female students' perceptions about their democratic empowerment in a classroom at King Saud University which includes six constructs. These constructs are based on the results of the comprehensive literature review; as the following:

Table 2

Sources for the Construct Freedom

Statement	Citation
1- Students engage in shared decision making about course content.	Abdelmalak & Trespalacios, (2013); Freire, (1996); Shor, (1996)
2- Students are responsible for the consequences of their decisions.	Fishman & McCarthy, (1998); Freire, (1996); Shor, (1996); Wolk, (1996)
3- The teacher (s) allows students to choose their own textbooks.	Shor, (1996); Wolk, (1996)
4- The teacher(s) allows students to choose their own assignments.	Shor, (1996); Wolk, (1996)
5- The teacher(s) allows students to choose the teaching materials.	Shor, (1996); Wolk, (1996)
6- The teacher(s) allows students to negotiate the syllabus.	Shor, (1996); Wolk, (1996)
7- Students can ask about the meaning of what they learn.	Freire, (1996); Shor, (1996); Wolk, (1996)
8- Students can express their opinions and thoughts.	Dewey, (1991); Daher, (2012)
9- The teacher(s) provides forums for discussing or resolving classroom problems.	Davis, (2010)

Table 2. Sources for the Construct Freedom (continued)

Statement	Citation
10- Students involved in planning classroom events.	Davis, (2010)
11- The teacher(s) promotes positive social relationships.	Davis, (2010); Freire, (1996); Shor, (1996); Wolk, (1996)
12- The teacher(s) promotes a sense of community.	Davis, (2010); Freire, (1996); Shor, (1996); Wolk, (1996)

Table 3

Sources for the Construct Dialogue

Statement	Citation
1- Students can suggest topics for discussion.	Daher, (2012); Shor, (1996); Wolk, (1996)
2- Students have a clear view about the subject matter before engaging in a dialogue.	Dewey, (1991); Daher, (2012); Freire, (1996); Shor, (1996); Wolk, (1996)
3- Students listen to each other's thoughts.	Daher, (2012); Freire, (1996); Shor, (1996); Wolk, (1996)
4- Students do not neglect any one's ideas.	

Table 3. Sources for the Construct Dialogue (continued)

Statement	Citation
5- Every idea that evolves in the class underwent argument.	Daher, (2012)
6- The teacher(s) encourages open dialogue.	Daher, (2012); Freire, (1996); Shor, (1996)
7- The teacher(s) encourages students to justify their claims.	Darwish, (2009); Daher, (2012)
8- The teacher(s) poses different problems.	Daher, (2012); Freire, (1996); Shor, (1996)
9- The teacher(s) encourages students to involve in a dialogue in order to solve these problems.	Daher, (2012); Freire, (1996); Shor, (1996)
10- In the classroom, dialogue is characterized by caring and respect.	Freire, (1996)
11- Each student in the group has enough time to speak.	Shor, (1996)
12- The dialogue is connected to social context	Freire, (1996)
13- The dialogue can transform your conception of knowledge	Freire, (1996); Shor, (1996)
14- The dialogue can alter your consciousness	Freire, (1996); Shor, (1996)

Table 4

Sources for the Construct Collaborative Learning

Statement	Citation
1- Collaborative learning changes the responsibility of learning to students.	Dooly (2008); Dewey, (1916); Shor and Freire, (1987); Wolk, (1996)
2- Collaborative learning relies more on friendship than competition.	Dooly (2008); Hur et al. (2013); Wolk, (1996)
3- Students become self-directed learners	Dooly (2008)
4- The teacher(s) encourages students' sense of belonging to a social group.	Fishman & McCarthy, (1998)
5- The teacher(s) gives students an opportunity to participate with others to discover common projects and concerns.	Shor (1996); Wolk (1996)
6- Students help each other to understand and learn.	Dooly (2008)
7- I can work well with classmates to achieve a goal	Dooly (2008); Hur et al. (2013)
8- Collaborative learning allows me to contribute to my group.	Hur et al. (2013); Wolk, (1996)
9- Students are responsible for one another's learning.	Hur et al. (2013)

Table 4. Sources for the Construct Collaborative Learning (continued)

Statement	Citation
10- I tend to trust my classmates when we work together on a project	Hur et al. (2013)
11- The teacher(s) usually changes the group members.	Dooly (2008)

Table 5

Sources for the Construct Equality

Statement	Citation
1- The teacher(s) provides students equal opportunity for participation.	Tozer et al. (2009)
2- The teacher(s) rotate students' roles and responsibilities.	Davis, (2010)
3- The teacher(s) changes composition of groups and group leaders	Davis, (2010)
4- The teacher(s) provides students opportunities to choose work partners/teams	Davis, (2010)
5- The teacher(s) meets students' needs	Freire, (1996); Kesici, (2008); Shor, (1996)

Table 5. Sources for the Construct Equality (continued)

Statement	Citation
6- The teacher(s) helps students if they need more help or special help	Kesici, (2008)
7- The teacher(s) gives students the equal opportunity in the classroom by encouraging them to freely generate topics about a specific problem	Freire, (1974)
8- Students perceive themselves a member of the classroom community	Kesici, (2008)
9- Students participate in classroom activities voluntarily	Kesici, (2008)
10- Students perceive themselves as valuable	Kesici, (2008)

Table 6

Sources for the Construct Critique

Statement	Citation
1- The teacher(s) promotes expression of various viewpoints.	Davis, (2010)
2- Students respect different opinions.	Davis, (2010)
3- The teacher(s) encourages to engage in activities that depend on brain-based learning.	Freire, (1973)
4- The activities that depend on brain-based learning help you to be an independent thinker.	Dewey (1991); Freire, (1973)
5- I am able to solve problems	Dewey, (1991); Freire, (1996); Shor, (1996)
6- I am able to identify the problem.	Dewey, (1991)
7- I can suggest the best possible solutions to problems by indicating the reason.	Dewey, (1991)
8- I test and implement the solutions.	Dewey, (1991)
9- I feel a sense of empowerment when I solve a problem.	Kolb & Stuart (2005)

Table 6. Sources for the Construct Critique (continued)

Statement	Citation
10- I share what happened and the solution that did not work if I think that I did not solved the problem.	Kolb & Stuart (2005)
11- The teacher(s) encourages students to use reflective journals that connect their experiences with reflections.	Mezirow (2000)
12- The teacher(s) fosters students to examine the underlying beliefs and assumptions of their experience.	Mezirow (2000)

Table 7

Sources for the Construct Disempowerment

Statement	Citation
1- The teacher(s) encourages students' passivity in the classroom.	Botas (2004); Shor (1996)
2- The teacher(s) uses power over and authoritarianism on students.	Shor (1996)
3- Students remain silent while the teacher teaches.	Wolk (1996)
4- Students wait to be told what to do.	Shor (1996); Wolk (1996)

Table 7. Sources for the Construct Disempowerment (continued)

Statement	Citation
5- Students wait to be told what things mean.	Shor (1996); Wolk (1996)
6- The teacher(s) does not care about your ability.	Freire, (1996)
7- The teacher(s) does not care about your experience.	Freire, (1996)
8- The teacher(s) does not care about your thought.	Freire, (1996)
9- The teacher(s) consider students as marginal.	Freire, (1996)
10- The teacher(s) consider students as ignorant.	Freire, (1996)
11- The teacher(s) consider students as resource-less.	Freire, (1996)
12- Students consider their classroom environment as a culture of silence.	Freire, (1996)
13- The teacher(s) is the only source for knowledge.	Botas (2004)
14- Students have a lack of listening carefully to others.	Botas (2004)

Table 7. Sources for the Construct Disempowerment (continued)

Statement	Citation
15- Students have a lack of thinking together in class.	Botas (2004)

Instrument Translation

The original survey instrument was translated from English into Arabic version by translators who are mastered both languages. The researcher also completed a copy of the Arabic translation to compare each item of the Arabic copies with the original English version. Then, the final Arabic version was reviewed to make sure the questionnaire is consistent and accurate. Both English and Arabic versions of the survey are included (Appendix A and B).

Reliability and Validity

According to Creswell (2008), reliability means that scores from an instrument are stable and consistent. When researchers administer the instrument multiple times at different times, scores should be nearly the same. In this study, the type of reliability that was used was test-retest reliability which "procedure examines the extent to which scores from one sample are stable over time from one test administration to another . . . the researcher administers the test two different times to the same participants at a sufficient time interval" (Creswell, 2008, p. 169). Therefore, the pilot test was conducted two times with a same small group of pilot participants who have characteristics similar to study participants. The instrument was distributed to female graduate students who graduated from the Department of Educational Policies to ensure the clarity of items and computing the reliability of the instrument. Their number was around 10. The pilot test produced a face validity coefficient with a mean of .90.

The time interval between uses was 10 days. After participants were finished taking the

instrument, they were asked to comment on the clarity and format of the survey. From the pilot

test responses, small corrections were made.

Both the practices and importance of democratic empowerment items as well as the

practices of disempowerment items have a value of internal consistency by using Cronbach

Alpha's coefficient to determine the instruments' reliability. The resulting coefficients of

Cronbach's alpha are 90 or higher, indicating high values of instrument reliability. Tables 8

illustrates the value of the reliability in Cronbach's alpha for both the practices and importance of

democratic empowerment as well as the practices of disempowerment items in each subscale.

Table 8

Cronbach Alpha for Reliability Assessments

Practice section	Cronbach Alpha
1- Freedom	0.84
2- Dialogue	0.88
3- Collaborative learning	0.86
4- Equality	0.87
5- Critique	0.90
The total of practice	0.96
Importance section	Cronbach Alpha
1- Freedom	0.80
2- Dialogue	0.89
3- Collaborative learning	0.88
4- Equality	0.78
5- Critique	0.82
The total of importance	0.95
Disempowerment section	Cronbach Alpha
The practice of disempowerment items	0.90

On the other hand, validity means that the individual's scores from an instrument make

sense, are meaningful, and enable a researcher to draw good conclusions from the sample of the

study to the population. In this study, the type of validity is content validity which "is the extent

to which the question on the instrument and the scores from these questions are representative of

all the possible questions that a researcher could ask about the content or skills" (Creswell, 2008, p. 172). To achieve the content validity, the questionnaire is developed from the review of literature which cares about critical pedagogy through Dewey, Freire, and Shor's perspective. Also, the survey instrument was reviewed by an expert panel consisting of doctoral committee members.

Procedure

This study relies on quantitative research which utilized a survey. The questionnaire was prepared using Qualtrics Survey. After getting the IRB approval letter (Appendix C), the researcher collected the data electronically from female graduate students who study at the College of Education in the Department of Educational Policies at King Saud University. The Department of Educational Policies includes: Adult Education, Foundations of Education, and Education and Kindergartens. The link of the questionnaire was distributed to students through a text message by Deanship of e-Transaction and Communication at King Saud University (Appendix D). Then, followed-up with a paper questionnaire which was handed out to respondents. The survey was distributed during the summer of 2015. The expected amount of time to complete the questionnaire was around 15 minutes. Participation was voluntary and their information is anonymous.

Data Analysis

The data was downloaded from the electronic questionnaire. To answer the first research question, SPSS was used to do descriptive analysis including means, and standard deviations. Additionally, to answer the second question, one-way ANOVA was utilized to understand whether there are a significant differences between the means of the independent groups,

students' study majors. To compare differences between all pairs of means, Scheffé Post-Hoc Comparisons was used.

The third question is qualitative data. According to Creswell (2008), "qualitative researchers first collect data and then prepare it for data analysis. This analysis initially consists of developing a general sense of the data, and then coding description and themes about the central phenomenon" (p.244). Therefore, to answer this question, a matrix table was used to help code the data, so the meaning of words was focused. Then, the text was categorized by grouping codes to important themes. After categorizing the information according to the topics, the data was copied and pasted into a matrix table, and then analyzed and interpreted.

Summary

In this chapter, the overall research methodology for the study is presented. This methodology focuses on the research design which includes the research method, questions, and hypotheses. Also, the sampling design, which is female graduate students who study at the college of education at King Saud University. Instrumentation and measures are dissected including the reliability and validity of the study. The instrument is a survey for this study. Finally, the procedure and data analysis are explained. The following chapter is about the results from the data analysis of the research questions.

CHAPTER 4. DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

The aim of this study is to describe female graduate students' perceptions about their democratic empowerment in a classroom at King Saud University. Their perceptions are compared based on female students' majors. In this chapter, the results of both quantitative and qualitative data obtained from the questionnaire are presented into two sections. The first section is about the demographic information of the participants of the study. The second section is about the descriptive analysis of the data that answer the research questions. This chapter concludes with a summary of the data analysis.

The study was guided by the following research questions:

1. What are female students' perceptions about their democratic empowerment in the classroom at King Saud University?

2. Are there statistically significant differences among female students' perceptions about their democratic empowerment in a classroom at King Saud University based on their study tracks (Adult Education, Foundations of Education, and Education and Kindergartens)?

3. What are the obstacles for democratic empowerment that female students face in the classroom at King Saud University?

The hypotheses of this study are:

Null Hypothesis 1

Female students' perceptions about their democratic empowerment in the classroom at King Saud University will not be significantly different than the neutral target value at the midpoint of the Likert scale on the survey.

Alternative Hypothesis 1

Female students' perceptions about their democratic empowerment in the classroom at King Saud University will show they experience democratic empowerment in their classrooms.

Null Hypothesis 2

There are no statistically significant differences among female students' perceptions about their democratic empowerment in a classroom at King Saud University based on their study tracks.

Alternative Hypothesis 2

There are statistically significant differences among female students' perceptions about their democratic empowerment in a classroom at King Saud University based on their study tracks.

Demographic Information Results

The questionnaire was issued to 155 participants, and a total of 98 female graduate students who study at the College of Education in the Department of Educational Policies responded, representing approximately 63% of the possible respondents. This questionnaire was electronically recorded in Qualtrics Survey and followed-up with a paper questionnaire which was handed out to respondents during the summer of 2015. The results of the demographic section which asks about study tracks (Adult Education, Foundations of Education, and Education and Kindergartens) included 30 (30.6%) Adult Education students, 42 (42.9%) Foundations of Education students, and 26 (26.5%) Education and Kindergartens students. Table 9 represents the demographic information of participants in this study.

Table 9

The Demographic Information of Participants in this Study

Track's name	Frequency Responses	Percentage Responses
Adult Education	30	30.6%
Foundations of Education	42	42.9%
Education and Kindergartens	26	26.5%
Total	98	100%

Research Question Results

This study includes three questions: two questions are quantitative data and one question qualitative data. The results of the first question consists of four parts: female students' perceptions about the practices of democratic empowerment, female students' perceptions about the importance of democratic empowerment, female students' perceptions about the practices of disempowerment in the classroom, and a research hypothesis. The results of the second question consists of female students' perceptions about the practices and importance of democratic empowerment and about the practices of disempowerment in the classroom. The results of the third question consist of two themes: pedagogical methods of teaching and obstacle courses.

Research Question One: Part One: Female Students' Perceptions about the Practices of Democratic Empowerment in the Classroom

What are female students' perceptions about their democratic empowerment in the classroom at King Saud University? Descriptive analysis including means, and standard deviations were used to understand female students' perceptions about their practices of democratic empowerment in the classroom at King Saud University. To describes students'

practices in their classroom, a 4-point Likert scale (often =4, occasionally =3, infrequently =2, and never =1) was used. According to the means, collaborative learning was the highest ranked that students practiced in their classroom and its mean was 3.12. Freedom was the lowest ranked students practiced in their classroom and its mean was 2.55. Overall, the results of students' practices show that the mean total for all five sections (freedom, dialogue, collaborative learning, equality, and critique) was 2.92, and the standard deviation was 0.405. Therefore, the respondents were positive about the five sections, and the level of experience was "occasionally." In descending order of means, Table 10 represents the total for the mean and standard deviation for female students' perceptions about their practices of democratic empowerment in the classroom at King Saud University.

Table 10

The Total for the Mean and Standard Deviation for Female Students' Perceptions about Their Practices of Democratic Empowerment

Rank	Section	Mean	Std. Deviation
1	Collaborative Learning	3.12	.454
2	Dialogue	3.04	.431
3	Critique	3.00	.469
4	Equality	2.90	.493
5	Freedom	2.55	.435
Total		2.92	.405

Additionally, for female students' perceptions about their practices of democratic empowerment in the classroom, the means and standard deviation were described in each section according to descending order of means as the following tables:

Table 11

The Mean and Standard Deviation for Female Students' Perceptions about the Practice of Freedom

Rank	Statement	M	SD
1	Students are responsible for the consequences of their decisions.	3.59	.716
2	The teacher(s) promotes positive social relationships.	3.31	.738
3	Students can ask about the meaning of what they learn.	3.07	.460
4	The teacher(s) promotes a sense of community.	2.95	.615
5	Students can express their opinions and thoughts.	2.85	.632
6	Students are involved in planning classroom events.	2.65	.644
7	The teacher(s) allows students to choose the teaching materials.	2.61	.727
8	The teacher(s) allows students to choose their own assignments	2.58	.672
9	The teacher(s) provides forums for discussing or resolving classroom problems.	1.94	.784
10	Students engage in shared decision making about course content.	1.92	.668

Table 11. The Mean and Standard Deviation for Female Students' Perceptions about the Practice of Freedom (continued)

Rank	Statement	M	SD
11	The teacher (s) allows students to choose their own textbooks.	1.60	.809
12	The teacher(s) allows students to negotiate the syllabus.	1.50	.955
Total		2.55	.435

Table 11 shows that the mean of freedom section was between 1.50- 3.59. The respondents indicated that they were responsible for the consequences of their decisions, and the mean for this statement was 3.59 which was the highest ranking among freedom section. The lowest ranked that students practiced in this section was that teachers allow students to negotiate the syllabus. The mean for this statement was 1.50. In general, the mean total for freedom section was 2.55, and the standard deviation was 0.435.

Table 12

The Mean and Standard Deviation for Female Students' Perceptions about the Practice of Dialogue

Rank	Statement	M	SD
1	In the classroom, dialogue is characterized by caring and respect.	3.77	.606
2	Students do not neglect any one's ideas.	3.76	.557
3	The dialogue can alter your consciousness.	3.61	.603
4	The dialogue can transform your conception of knowledge.	3.49	.646
5	Students listen to each other's thoughts.	3.45	.660
6	Students can suggest topics for discussion.	3.12	.693
7	The dialogue is connected to social context.	3.10	.547
8	The teacher(s) encourages students to involve in a dialogue in order to solve these problems.	3.00	.626
9	The teacher(s) encourages open dialogue.	2.77	.715
10	Every idea that evolves in the class underwent argument.	2.72	.729
11	The teacher(s) poses different problems.	2.53	.749
12	The teacher(s) encourages students to justify their claims.	2.50	.736
13	Students have a clear view about the subject matter before engaging in a dialogue.	2.41	.771
14	Each student in the group has enough time to speak.	2.30	.749
Total		3.04	.431

Table 12 indicates that the mean of dialogue section was between 2.30- 3.77. The

highest-ranking among dialogue section was that dialogue is characterized by caring and respect.

The mean of this statement was 3.77. The lowest ranked that students practiced in this section

was that each student in the group has enough time to speak. The mean for this statement was

2.30. Overall, the mean total for dialogue section was 3.04, and the standard deviation was 0.431.

Therefore, respondents highly practiced dialogue in their classroom.

Table 13

The Mean and Standard Deviation for Female Students' Perceptions about the Practice of Collaborative Learning

Rank	Statement	M	SD
1	Collaborative learning changes the responsibility of learning to students.	3.78	.618
2	Collaborative learning allows me to contribute to my group.	3.74	.631
3	Students become self-directed learners.	3.43	.718
4	I can work well with classmates to achieve a goal.	3.43	.825
5	Collaborative learning relies more on friendship than competition.	3.35	.719
6	The teacher(s) encourages students' sense of belonging to a social group.	3.30	.707
7	I tend to trust my classmates when we work together on a project.	2.96	.702
8	Students help each other to understand and learn.	2.91	.594
9	The teacher(s) gives students an opportunity to participate with other to discover common projects and concerns.	2.79	.646
10	The teacher(s) usually change the group members.	2.44	.838
11	Students are responsible for one another's learning.	2.24	.643
Total		3.12	.454

Table 13 shows that the mean of collaborative learning section was between 2.24- 3.78. Respondents agreed that "collaborative learning changes the responsibility of learning to students," and the mean of this statement was 3.78. The lowest ranked that students practiced in collaborative learning section was "students are responsible for one another's learning." The mean for this statement was 2.24. Totally, the mean total for this section was 3.12, and the standard deviation was 0.454.

Table 14

The Mean and Standard Deviation for Female Students' Perceptions about the Practice of Equality

Rank	Statement	M	SD
1	Students perceive themselves as valuable.	3.55	.748
2	Students participate in classroom activities voluntarily.	3.35	.748
3	Students perceive themselves a member of the classroom community.	3.30	.815
4	The teacher(s) provides students opportunities to choose work partners/teams.	3.24	.674
5	The teacher(s) helps students if they need more help or special help.	3.02	.609
6	The teacher(s) meets students' needs.	2.89	.731
7	The teacher(s) provides students equal opportunity for participation.	2.78	.682

Table 14. The Mean and Standard Deviation for Female Students' Perceptions about the Practice of Equality (continued)

Rank	Statement	M	SD
8	The teacher(s) gives students the equal opportunity in the classroom by encouraging them to freely generate topics about a specific problem.	2.74	.722
9	The teacher(s) rotate students' roles and responsibilities.	2.06	.715
10	The teacher(s) changes composition of groups and group leaders.	2.04	.687
Total		2.90	.493

Table 14 represents that the mean of equality section was between 2.04- 3.55. Respondents highly indicated that they perceive themselves as valuable, and the mean of this statement was 3.55. The lowest ranked that students practiced in this section was that "the teacher(s) changes composition of groups and group leaders." The mean for this statement was 2.04. The mean total for equality section was 2.90, and the standard deviation was .493.

Table 15

The Mean and Standard Deviation for Female Students' Perceptions about the Practice of Critique

Rank	Statement	M	SD
1	I feel a sense of empowerment when I solve a problem.	3.86	.497
2	The activities that depend on brain-based learning help me to be an independent thinker.	3.60	.685
3	Students respect different opinions.	3.59	.655
4	The teacher(s) promotes expression of various viewpoints.	3.06	.589
5	I test and implement the solutions.	3.03	.617
6	I am able to identify the problem.	3.00	.642
7	I am able to solve problems.	2.97	.649
8	I can suggest the best possible solutions to problems by indicating the reason.	2.97	.633
9	The teacher(s) encourages to engage in activities that depend on brain-based learning.	2.93	.596
10	I share what happened and the solution that did not work if you think that you did not solved the problem.	2.86	.703
11	The teacher(s) fosters students to examine the underlying beliefs and assumptions of their experience.	2.10	.793
12	The teacher(s) encourages students to use reflective journals that connect their experiences with reflections.	2.03	.831
Total		3.00	.469

Table 15 shows that the mean of critique section was between 2.03- 3.86. The highest ranking among this section was that students feel a sense of empowerment when they solve a problem, and the mean of this statement was 3.86. The lowest ranked was that "the teacher(s) encourages students to use reflective journals that connect their experiences with reflections." The mean for this statement was 2.03. The mean total for critique section was 3.00, and the standard deviation was .469.

Research Question One: Part Two: Female Students' Perceptions about the Importance of Democratic Empowerment in the Classroom

Descriptive analysis including means, and standard deviations were used to understand female students' perceptions about the importance of democratic empowerment in the classroom at King Saud University. A 4-point Likert scale (very important =4, important =3, somewhat important =2, and not important =1) was used. According to the means, critique was the highest ranked that students indicated as the most important strategy in their classroom, and its mean was 3.61. However, collaborative learning was the lowest ranked that students pointed out as the less important strategy in their classroom, and its mean was 3.45. Generally, the results of female students' perceptions about the importance of democratic empowerment show that the mean total for all five sections (freedom, dialogue, collaborative learning, equality, and critique) was 3.45, and the standard deviation was 0.337. Therefore, the respondents saw that all the five sections are very important for them to practice in their classroom. In descending order of means, Table 16 represents the total for the mean and standard deviation for female students' perceptions about the importance of democratic empowerment in the classroom at King Saud University.

Table 16

The Total for the Mean and Standard Deviation for Female Students' Perceptions about the Importance of Democratic Empowerment

Rank	Section	Mean	Std. Deviation
1	Critique	3.61	.320
2	Dialogue	3.51	.403
3	Equality	3.46	.365
4	Freedom	3.38	.338
5	Collaborative Learning	3.24	.472
Total		3.45	.337

Moreover, for female students' perceptions about the importance of democratic empowerment in the classroom, the means and standard deviation were described in each section according to descending order of means as the following tables:

Table 17

The Mean and Standard Deviation for Female Students' Perceptions about the Importance of Freedom

Rank	Statement	M	SD
1	The teacher(s) allows students to negotiate the syllabus.	3.78	.566
2	The teacher(s) allows students to choose their own assignments.	3.71	.518
3	The teacher(s) provides forums for discussing or resolving classroom problems.	3.64	.542
4	Students can ask about the meaning of what they learn.	3.48	.630
5	Students can express their opinions and thoughts.	3.46	.577
6	The teacher(s) promotes positive social relationships.	3.42	.717
7	The teacher(s) promotes a sense of community.	3.40	.654
8	The teacher (s) allows students to choose their own textbooks.	3.39	.586
9	The teacher(s) allows students to choose the teaching materials.	3.30	.613
10	Students are responsible for the consequences of their decisions.	3.14	.497
11	Students are involved in planning classroom events.	3.00	.556
12	Students engage in shared decision making about course content.	2.89	.716
Total		3.38	.338

Table 17 shows that the mean of freedom section was between 2.89- 3.78. The respondents indicated that allowing them to negotiate the syllabus is the most important to them, and the mean for this statement was 3.78 which was the highest ranking among freedom section. The less important statement to respondents was that engaging them in shared decision making about course content. The mean for this statement was 2.89. In general, the mean total for freedom section was 3.38, and the standard deviation was 0.338.

Table 18

The Mean and Standard Deviation for Female Students' Perceptions about the Importance of Dialogue

Rank	Statement	M	SD
1	Students have a clear view about the subject matter before engaging in a dialogue.	3.84	.470
2	The teacher(s) encourages open dialogue.	3.82	.462
3	In the classroom, dialogue is characterized by caring and respect. The dialogue can alter your consciousness.	3.81	.490
4	Students do not neglect any one's ideas.	3.77	.623
5	The teacher(s) poses different problems.	3.70	.629
6	Each student in the group has enough time to speak.	3.60	.605
7	The teacher(s) encourages students to justify their claims.	3.57	.574
8	The teacher(s) encourages students to involve in a dialogue in order to	3.53	.629
9	solve these problems.	3.52	.646

Table 18. The Mean and Standard Deviation for Female Students' Perceptions about the
Importance of Dialogue (continued)

Rank	Statement	M	SD
10	Students can suggest topics for discussion.	3.40	.638
11	The dialogue can transform your conception of knowledge.	3.39	.668
12	Students listen to each other's thoughts.	3.29	.773
13	The dialogue is connected to social context.	3.11	.745
14	Every idea that evolves in the class underwent argument.	2.87	.698
Total		3.51	.403

Table 18 represents that the mean of dialogue section was between 2.87- 3.84. The most
important statement among dialogue section was that students have a clear view about the
subject matter before engaging in a dialogue. The mean of this statement was 3.84. However, the
less important statement to respondents was that every idea that evolves in the class underwent
argument. The mean for this statement was 2.87. Overall, the mean total for dialogue section was
3.51, and the standard deviation was 0.403.

Table 19

The Mean and Standard Deviation for Female Students' Perceptions about the Importance of Collaborative Learning

Rank	Statement	M	SD
1	Students become self-directed learners.	3.73	.651
2	I can work well with classmates to achieve a goal.	3.53	.706
3	Collaborative learning changes the responsibility of learning to students.	3.49	.692
4	Collaborative learning allows me to contribute to my group.	3.49	.662
5	Students help each other to understand and learn.	3.23	.639
6	The teacher(s) encourages students' sense of belonging to a social group.	3.12	.707
7	I tend to trust my classmates when we work together on a project.	3.12	.614
8	The teacher(s) gives students an opportunity to participate with other to discover common projects and concerns.	3.10	.725
9	Collaborative learning relies more on friendship than competition.	3.05	.679
10	Students are responsible for one another's learning.	2.91	.813
11	The teacher(s) usually change the group members.	2.83	.704
Total		3.24	.472

Table 19 shows that the mean of collaborative learning section was between 2.83- 3.73. Respondents saw that the very important practice to them was that they become self-directed learners. The mean of this statement was 3.73. In other hand, respondents saw that the less important practice to them was that changing the group members. The mean for this statement was 2.83. Totally, the mean total for collaborative learning section was 3.24, and the standard deviation was 0.472.

Table 20

The Mean and Standard Deviation for Female Students' Perceptions about the Importance of Equality

Rank	Statement	M	SD
1	Students perceive themselves as valuable.	3.71	.518
2	The teacher(s) helps students if they need more help or special help.	3.64	.561
3	Students perceive themselves a member of the classroom community.	3.62	.618
4	The teacher(s) provides students equal opportunity for participation.	3.58	.573
5	The teacher(s) meets students' needs.	3.57	.592
6	The teacher(s) gives students the equal opportunity in the classroom by encouraging them to freely generate topics about a specific problem.	3.56	.643
7	The teacher(s) provides students opportunities to choose work partners/teams.	3.50	.677
8	Students participate in classroom activities voluntarily.	3.34	.759
9	The teacher(s) rotate students' roles and responsibilities.	3.09	.594
10	The teacher(s) changes composition of groups and group leaders.	2.93	.677
Total		3.46	.365

Table 20 represents that the mean of equality section was between 2.93- 3.71.

Respondents highly pointed out that they perceive themselves as valuable, and the mean of this

statement was 3.71. However, the less important practice to respondents was that changing

composition of groups and group leaders. The mean for this statement was 2.93. The mean total

for equality section was 3.46, and the standard deviation was .365.

Table 21

The Mean and Standard Deviation for Female Students' Perceptions about the Importance of Critique

Rank	Statement	M	SD
1	The teacher(s) fosters students to examine the underlying beliefs and assumptions of their experience.	3.84	.491
2	The teacher(s) encourages students to use reflective journals that connect their experiences with reflections.	3.83	.538
3	I test and implement the solutions.	3.70	.502
4	I feel a sense of empowerment when I solve a problem.	3.70	.522
5	I am able to solve problems.	3.68	.489
6	The activities that depend on brain-based learning help me to be an independent thinker.	3.67	.513
7	The teacher(s) encourages to engage in activities that depend on brain-based learning.	3.63	.599
8	The teacher(s) promotes expression of various viewpoints.	3.61	.568
9	Students respect different opinions.	3.61	.603

Table 21. The Mean and Standard Deviation for Female Students' Perceptions about the
Importance of Critique (continued)

Rank	Statement	M	SD
10	I am able to identify the problem.	3.52	.522
11	I can suggest the best possible solutions to problems by indicating the reason.	3.48	.502
12	I share what happened and the solution that did not work if I think that I did not solved the problem.	3.01	.725
Total		3.61	.320

Table 21 shows that the mean of critique section was between 3.01- 3.84. The most

important practice to respondents was that fostering students to examine the underlying beliefs

and assumptions of their experience. The mean of this statement was 3.84. In other hand, the less

important practice to respondents was that "I share what happened and the solution that did not

work if I think that I did not solved the problem." The mean for this statement was 3.01.

Generally, the mean total for critique section was 3.61, and the standard deviation was .320.

Research Question One: Part Three: Female Students' Perceptions about the Practices of

Disempowerment in the Classroom

Descriptive analysis including means, and standard deviations were used to understand

female students' perceptions about their practices of disempowerment in the classroom at King

Saud University. A 4-point Likert scale (often =4, occasionally =3, infrequently =2, and never

=1) was used. The result of this section shows that the mean was between 1.35- 3.41.

Respondents indicated that the highest practice of disempowerment in the classroom was that

they remain silent while the teacher teaches. The mean of this statement was 3.41. However, the

lowest practice of disempowerment was that "students have a lack of listening carefully to others." The mean of this statement was 1.35. Generally, the mean total for this section was 2.01, and the standard deviation was .552. In descending order of means, Table 22 represents the total for the mean and standard deviation for female students' perceptions about their practices of disempowerment in the classroom at King Saud University.

Table 22

The Mean and Standard Deviation for Female Students' Perceptions about Their Practices of Disempowerment

Rank	Statement	M	SD
1	Students remain silent while the teacher teaches.	3.41	.797
2	Students wait to be told what to do.	2.87	.668
3	Students wait to be told what things mean.	2.81	.698
4	Students consider their classroom environment as a culture of silence.	2.47	.749
5	The teacher(s) is the only source for knowledge.	2.43	.825
6	The teacher(s) encourages students' passivity in the classroom.	2.30	.776
7	The teacher(s) does not care about your experience.	1.88	.911
8	The teacher(s) does not care about your thought.	1.84	.882
9	The teacher(s) consider students as resource-less.	1.62	.070

Table 22. The Mean and Standard Deviation for Female Students' Perceptions about Their Practices of Disempowerment (continued)

Rank	Statement	M	SD
10	The teacher(s) uses power over and authoritarianism on students.	1.61	.981
11	The teacher(s) does not care about your ability.	1.49	.966
12	The teacher(s) consider students as ignorant.	1.40	.846
13	The teacher(s) consider students as marginal.	1.38	.780
14	Students have a lack of thinking together in class.	1.36	.815
15	Students have a lack of listening carefully to others.	1.35	.775
Total		2.01	.552

Research Question One: Part Four: Research Hypotheses

The hypotheses of the first question are:

1. Null hypothesis is that female students' perceptions about their democratic empowerment in the classroom at King Saud University will not be significantly different than the neutral target value at the midpoint of the Likert scale on the survey.

2. Alternative hypothesis is that female students' perceptions about their democratic empowerment in the classroom at King Saud University will show they experience democratic empowerment in their classrooms.

In term of female students' perceptions about their practices of democratic empowerment in the classroom, the means total for the practices and each section show that there was significantly different than the neutral target value at the midpoint of the Likert scale on the survey. Therefore, the null hypothesis was rejected, and the alternative hypothesis was accepted,

meaning that female students experience democratic empowerment in their classrooms. Also, in term of female students' perceptions about the importance of democratic empowerment in the classroom, the means total for the importance and each section show that there was significantly different than the neutral target value at the midpoint of the Likert scale on the survey. Therefore, the null hypothesis was rejected, and the alternative hypothesis was accepted. This statement means that female students saw the importance of experience democratic empowerment in their classrooms. About female students' perceptions about their practices of disempowerment in the classroom, the mean total shows that there was significantly different than the neutral target value at the midpoint of the Likert scale on the survey. Therefore, the null hypothesis was rejected, and the alternative hypothesis was accepted, meaning that female students have not been disempowered in their classroom.

Research Question Two

Are there statistically significant differences among female students' perceptions about their democratic empowerment in a classroom at King Saud University based on their study tracks (Adult Education, Foundations of Education, and Education and Kindergartens)? For this question, the null hypothesis is that there are no statistically significant differences among female students' perceptions about their democratic empowerment in a classroom at King Saud University based on their study tracks. The alternative hypothesis is that there are statistically significant differences among female students' perceptions about their democratic empowerment in a classroom at King Saud University based on their study tracks. Descriptive analysis including means, and standard deviations were used for the three parts: practices, importance, and disempowerment due to track's name (Adult Education, Foundations of Education, and Education and Kindergartens).

Table 23

The Mean and Standard Deviation for Practices, Importance, and Disempowerment Due to Track's Name

	Track's name	N	M	SD
Freedom (practices)	Adult Education	30	2.73	.570
	Foundations of Education	42	2.43	.343
	Education and Kindergartens	26	2.53	.321
	Total	98	2.55	.435
Dialogue (practices)	Adult Education	30	3.16	.527
	Foundations of Education	42	2.93	.437
	Education and Kindergartens	26	3.08	.210
	Total	98	3.04	.431
Collaborative Learning (practices)	Adult Education	30	3.17	.561
	Foundations of Education	42	3.06	.463
	Education and Kindergartens	26	3.18	.262
	Total	98	3.12	.454
Equality (practices)	Adult Education	30	3.00	.663
	Foundations of Education	42	2.81	.447
	Education and Kindergartens	26	2.92	.258
	Total	98	2.90	.493

Table 23. The Mean and Standard Deviation for Practices, Importance, and Disempowerment
Due to Track's Name (continued)

	Track's name	N	M	SD
Critique (practices)	Adult Education	30	3.23	.540
	Foundations of Education	42	2.88	.464
	Education and Kindergartens	26	2.93	.256
	Total	98	3.00	.469
Total practices	Adult Education	30	3.06	.521
	Foundations of Education	42	2.82	.379
	Education and Kindergartens	26	2.93	.214
	Total	98	2.92	.405
Freedom (importance)	Adult Education	30	3.36	.443
	Foundations of Education	42	3.43	.297
	Education and Kindergartens	26	3.33	.252
	Total	98	3.38	.338
Dialogue (importance)	Adult Education	30	3.49	.537
	Foundations of Education	42	3.55	.354
	Education and Kindergartens	26	3.49	.297
	Total	98	3.51	.403

Table 23. The Mean and Standard Deviation for Practices, Importance, and Disempowerment Due to Track's Name (continued)

	Track's name	N	M	SD
Collaborative Learning (importance)	Adult Education	30	3.09	.683
	Foundations of Education	42	3.34	.338
	Education and Kindergartens	26	3.24	.303
	Total	98	3.24	.472
Equality (importance)	Adult Education	30	3.49	.462
	Foundations of Education	42	3.49	.292
	Education and Kindergartens	26	3.36	.342
	Total	98	3.46	.365
Critique (importance)	Adult Education	30	3.67	.420
	Foundations of Education	42	3.63	.264
	Education and Kindergartens	26	3.50	.247
	Total	98	3.61	.320
Total Importance	Adult Education	30	3.43	.464
	Foundations of Education	42	3.49	.269
	Education and Kindergartens	26	3.39	.257
	Total	98	3.45	.337
Disempowerment	Adult Education	30	2.09	.581
	Foundations of Education	42	2.06	.612
	Education and Kindergartens	26	1.85	.371
	Total	98	2.01	.552

Table 23 shows that there were virtual variation between the means and standard deviations for practices, importance, and disempowerment due to track's variable. Therefore, one-way of Variance (ANOVA) was utilized to clarify if there were statistically significant differences among female students' perceptions about their democratic empowerment in a classroom at King Saud University based on their study tracks (Adult Education, Foundations of Education, and Education and Kindergartens).

Table 24

The Results of One-Way of Variance (ANOVA) Related to Students' Track

Section's Name		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Squares	F	P
Freedom (practices)	Between Groups	1.526	2	.763		
	Within Groups	16.835	95	.177	4.305	.016
	Total	18.361	97			
Dialogue (practices)	Between Groups	1.006	2	.503		
	Within Groups	16.976	95	.179	2.814	.065
	Total	17.982	97			
Collaborative Learning (practices)	Between Groups	.332	2	.166		
	Within Groups	19.639	95	.207	.803	.451
	Total	19.971	97			
Equality (practices)	Between Groups	.631	2	.316		
	Within Groups	22.958	95	.242	1.306	.276
	Total	23.589	97			

Table 24. The Results of One-Way of Variance (ANOVA) Related to Students' Track (continued)

Section's Name		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Squares	f	p
Critique (practices)	Between Groups	2.407	2	1.204		
	Within Groups	18.898	95	.199	6.051	.003
	Total	21.306	97			
Total Practices	Between Groups	1.017	2	.508		
	Within Groups	14.919	95	.157	3.237	.044
	Total	15.936	97			
Freedom (importance)	Between Groups	.173	2	.087		
	Within Groups	10.878	95	.115	.757	.472
	Total	11.052	97			
Dialogue (importance)	Between Groups	.073	2	.036		
	Within Groups	15.692	95	.165	.220	.803
	Total	15.765	97			
Collaborative Learning (importance)	Between Groups	1.131	2	.565		
	Within Groups	20.516	95	.216	2.617	.078
	Total	21.647	97			

Table 24. The Results of One-Way of Variance (ANOVA) Related to Students' Track
(continued)

	Section's Name	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Squares	f	p
Equality (importance)	Between Groups	.336	2	.168		
	Within Groups	12.607	95	.133	1.265	.287
	Total	12.942	97			
Critique (importance)	Between Groups	.467	2	.234		
	Within Groups	9.494	95	.100	2.338	.102
	Total	9.961	97			
Total Importance	Between Groups	.179	2	.090		
	Within Groups	10.869	95	.114	.783	.460
	Total	11.048	97			
Disempower ment	Between Groups	.918	2	.459		
	Within Groups	28.590	95	.301	1.525	.223
	Total	29.508	97			

Table 24 represents the results of One-Way of Variance (ANOVA) in three parts. The

first part is about the practices of democratic empowerment, including freedom, dialogue,

collaborative learning, equality, critique, and the total of practices. About dialogue, collaborative

learning, and equality, the results showed that the p-value was greater than ($\alpha = 0.05$), so the null

hypothesis was accepted. It means that there was no statistically significant differences at ($\alpha =$

0.05) among female students' perceptions about their practices of democratic empowerment in a

classroom at King Saud University based on their study tracks. About freedom, critique, and the

total of practices, the p-value was less than ($\alpha = 0.05$); therefore, the null hypothesis was rejected. It means that there was statistically significant differences at ($\alpha = 0.05$) among female students' perceptions about their democratic empowerment in a classroom based on their study tracks. In order to compare differences between all pairs of means, Scheffé Post-Hoc Comparisons was used in table 25.

The second part of the results of One-Way ANOVA is about the importance of democratic empowerment, including freedom, dialogue, collaborative learning, equality, critique, and the total of importance. The p-value was greater than ($\alpha = 0.05$), so the null hypothesis was accepted. It means that there was no statistically significant differences at ($\alpha = 0.05$) among female students' perceptions about the importance of democratic empowerment in a classroom at King Saud University based on their study tracks. The last part of the results of One-Way ANOVA is about the practices of disempowerment in the classroom. The results of p-value was larger than ($\alpha = 0.05$); therefore, the null hypothesis was accepted. This statement means that there was no statistically significant differences at ($\alpha = 0.05$) among female students' perceptions about the practices of disempowerment in a classroom at King Saud University based on their study tracks.

Table 25

The Results of Scheffé Post-Hoc Comparisons

	Track's name	M	Adult Education	Foundations of Education	Education and Kindergartens
Freedom	Adult Education	2.73			
	Foundations of Education	2.43	*.29		
	Education and Kindergartens	2.53	,19	.10	
Critique	Adult Education	3.23			
	Foundations of Education	2.88	*.36		
	Education and Kindergartens	2.93	*.30	.06	
Total of practices	Adult Education	3.06			
	Foundations of Education	2.82	*.24		
	Education and Kindergartens	2.93	.13	.11	

* Significant at the 0.05 level

Table 25 represents the results of Scheffé Post-Hoc Comparisons, which were between Adult Education and Foundations of Education; there was statistically significant differences at (α = 0.05) among female students' perceptions about their practices of democratic empowerment

in a classroom due to freedom section and the total of practices. The direction of the differences was a benefit for Adult Education track. Also, among Adult Education, Foundations of Education, and Education and Kindergartens, there was statistically significant differences at (α = 0.05) in female students' perceptions about their practices of democratic empowerment in a classroom due to critique section. The direction of the differences was a benefit for Adult Education track.

Research Question Three: Open-Ended Question

What are the obstacles for democratic empowerment that female students face in the classroom at King Saud University? This question was written in different way in the questionnaire that was distributed to female students to obtain more objective data. The question in the questionnaire is that what are the obstacles that hinder the practice of methods other than memorization in your classroom at King Saud University? The number of respondents who answered this question was 51 from 98 who was complete the survey questions. This number represents approximately 52% of the possible respondents. The answers to this question were translated from Arabic to English (Appendix E).

To analyze this question, the data was coded in a matrix table by focusing in the meaning of the text. Then, the coding was categorized by sharing some characteristic. After categorizing the data set, the data was copied and pasted into a matrix table, and then analyzed and interpreted. Two major themes were emerged, each theme has its categories. These themes are:

Pedagogical methods of teaching. Through the first theme, many codes emerged that related to the questionnaire items. This theme includes three categories. These categories are challenged to practice critical pedagogy in a classroom. The first category is the poor level of dialogue. The majority of participants complained about the poor level of dialogue in the

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classroom. For example, there was no plan, organization, or preparation for dialogue, so students' participation was not activity in the classroom. Also, teachers focused only on certain students to participate in a dialogue. A participant stated that she did not feel confident about the classroom dialogue when a teacher discussed only with specific students. She preferred to be silent rather than participate. Another participant said that "in the classroom, the dialogue depend on talking, and there was no critical thinking skill."

The second category focuses on quiz or test as the main assessment. Many participants claimed that these tests depend on recall information and are not appropriate for graduate students. For example, one student stated that concentrating on tests paper as a major assessment hinder to effectively use other strategies. There is no an assessment that measures the ability of the brain. Also, another participant explained that questions formulation focused on lower-level thinking skills and did not link to reality. Graduate students need critical thinking skills.

The last category is the gap between teacher-student relationships. A lot of students indicated that the gap between teacher-student relationships led to have less freedom in the classroom. For instance, participants stated that teachers did not care enough about the first day of class, so students did not know much information about their teachers or between each other. Also, students need to understand the importance of course, its objectives, its goals, and the benefits that would accrue to them when they study the course. One respondent said that "I do not feel confident when I do not know the requirements for the course." Many respondents claimed that teachers did not ask them to select or discuss assignments, textbooks, or teaching materials that are appropriate for them.

Obstacle courses. The second theme of the open-end question has two categories. These categories are challenged to practice critical pedagogy in a classroom. The first category is

technological issues. A number of participants stated that, in the classroom, technology need to periodically check and need to connect to the Internet. For example, one participant complained that

> A day, I had a presentation PowerPoint and was the first person. The computer slowed down over time, and the projector was not work. This situation made me more nervous and wasted my time. Also, my friends had similar to my experience with their presentations, so we have to bring our equipment to the classroom.

Some participants indicated that there was issues to connect with closed-circuit television (a system that allows male teachers to teach female students), and this technique needs to quality improvement such as to have voice recorder. A participant said that through closed-circuit television, sometimes, the voice and picture were not clear, as well as the microphone did not work well. Another student stated that when absent, the whole lecture was missed because there was no audio recorder.

The second category is dealing with time. A number of participants pointed out that a short period of time could not allow to discuss issues or to practice some activities. Additionally, they saw that teachers need to work on time management skills. For instance, one participant mentioned that "teachers did not manage and organize the class time, so we wasted time on talking about minor things".

Summary

This chapter presents the results from the data analysis of the research questions. The results are consisted of two parts: demographic information and research questions. The result of the demographic information showed that 98 female graduate students who study at the College of Education in the Department of Educational Policies completed the questionnaire. According

to students' track, the result were 30 (30.6%) Adult Education students, 42 (42.9%) Foundations of Education students, and 26 (26.5%) Education and Kindergartens students.

The results of the second part are consist of three research questions. To answer the first question means, and standard deviations were used. The findings of this question were divided into four parts: female students' perceptions about the practices of democratic empowerment, female students' perceptions about the importance of democratic empowerment, female students' perceptions about the practices of disempowerment in the classroom, and a research hypothesis.

In the second question, the mean and standard deviation for practices, importance, and disempowerment due to track's name (Adult Education, Foundations of Education, and Education and Kindergartens) were used. Also, one-way (ANOVA) was utilized to understand if there were statistically significant differences among female students' perceptions about their democratic empowerment in a classroom at King Saud University based on their study tracks. To compare differences between all pairs of means, Scheffé Post-Hoc Comparisons was used. The findings of the second question consisted of female students' perceptions about the practices and importance of democratic empowerment and about the practices of disempowerment in the classroom.

The third question is qualitative data. The results of this question consists of two themes: pedagogical methods of teaching and obstacle courses. The first theme has three categories: the poor level of dialogue, focusing on quiz or test as the main assessment, and the gap between teacher-student relationships. The second theme has two categories: technological issues and dealing with time. The following chapter is about discussion and recommendations of the study's results.

CHAPTER 5. DISCUSSION, CONCLUSION, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The aim of this study is to describe female graduate students' perceptions about their democratic empowerment in a classroom at King Saud University. Their perceptions are compared based on female students' tracks. The results of the study may benefit stakeholders to understand female graduate students' perceptions about the practices and importance of democratic empowerment in the classroom at King Saud University and to recognize the differences among female graduate students' perceptions based on their tracks. Additionally, the results may help teachers to improve their teaching methods and to have the optimal learning environments for their students. Through the results of this study, the obstacles for democratic empowerment that female students face in the classroom at King Saud University are identified.

In light of the previous chapter, in this chapter, the summary and discussion of the study's results are presented. Then, the conclusion of the whole study is provided. Finally, recommendations and future research are presented.

Summary and Discussion of the Results

Research Question One

What are female students' perceptions about the democratic empowerment in the classroom at King Saud University? The discussion of this question divides into three parts: female students' perceptions about the practices of democratic empowerment and the hypothesis, female students' perceptions about the importance of democratic empowerment and the hypothesis, and female students' perceptions about the practices of disempowerment and the hypothesis in the classroom. In terms of the practices, the total means of this section is 2.92, and the stander deviation is .405. According to a 4-point Likert scale divided into equal periods (1-2= low, bigger than 2-3= average, and bigger than 3-4= high), the respondents were positive about

the five sections (freedom, dialogue, collaborative learning, equality, and critique), and the practices of democratic empowerment are occasionally occurring. Therefore, because the responses were significantly different than the neutral target value at the midpoint of the Likert scale on the survey, the alternative hypothesis was accepted, meaning that female students experience democratic empowerment in their classrooms. This finding may come as a result of many Saudi studies that are encouraged to use effective methods of teaching that help students to be active learners. For example, in Flath's study (2014), she identified the effectiveness of strategies of self–questioning and reciprocal teaching on developing the academic achievement as well as reflective thinking skills with female students who are studying the course of Teaching Methodologies of Islamic Education at Umm Al- Qura University.

According to the highest means in the practices of democratic empowerment, collaborative learning (M = 3.12, SD = .454) is often practiced in the classroom. The majority of the survey participants reported that collaborative learning changes the responsibility of learning to them and allows them to contribute to their group. Johnson and Johnson (1999) stated that one of the essential elements that make collaborative learning work and successful is individual accountability. Through this element, every individual student is responsible for doing and sharing his or her work. According to participants, the lowest practices in collaborative learning are that teachers change the group members, and students are responsible for each other's learning. However, these practices occasionally occur. In Islam, the prophet Mohammed encouraged people to obtain knowledge and share this knowledge with others. For example, he said that "Whoever guides someone to virtue will be rewarded equivalent to him who practices that good action" (Daily Hadith Online, 2012, para. 1).

Dialogue (M = 3.04, SD = .431) is the second highest mean in the practices of democratic empowerment, and it is often experienced in the classroom. Findings showed that, through dialogue, the most common techniques that are used in the classroom are respect and caring. Also, students do not neglect each other's ideas. These findings agree with this verse of the Quran "Invite to the way of your Lord with wisdom and good instruction, and argue with them in a way that is best" (Quran, n.d., An-Nahl, Verse 125, p. 281). According to Freire (1996), dialogue requires some preconditions such as love, humility, and hope, and he believed that love is the foundation of dialogue. Two of the lowest ranked survey items from the dialogue section are that students have a clear view about the subject before engaging in a dialogue and that every student has enough time to speak. By looking at these items' means, they were infrequently applied in the classroom. Freire (2004) stated that "dialogue is the opportunity available to me to open up to the thinking of others and thereby not wither away in isolation" (p. 103). Therefore, to achieve this statement, students must clearly understand the topic of discussion and have enough time to talk.

Critique (M = 3.00, SD = .469) is the third highest mean in the practices of democratic empowerment, and it occasionally exercise in the classroom. In this section, the highest items was that students feel a sense of empowerment when they solve a problem. Also, the activities that depend on brain-based learning help students to be an independent thinker. According to Hassi (2008), empowering students to solve problems not only increases their knowledge and skills but also encourages them to have positive self-judgments and self-confidence. Empowering students is one objective of the educational college at King Saud University. On the other hand, the less common practices in the critique sections were that teachers encourage students to examine the underlying beliefs and assumptions of their experience and to use reflective journals that connect

their experiences with reflections. These practices were infrequently used in the classroom. Teachers must promote the reflective thinking skill because this skill is considered one of the important strategies that help students to improve their critical thinking (Dewey, 1916; Freire, 1996; Mezirow, 2000; Shor 1996).

Equality (M = 2.90, SD = .493) is the fourth mean in the practices of democratic empowerment, and it is occasionally exercised in the classroom. In this section, the highest ranked were that students perceive themselves as valuable and that they participate in classroom activities voluntarily. These items often occur in the classroom. This finding agrees with the one value of the King Saud University, which is "[the university'] holds everybody in the community accountable for respecting and upholding the values in all forms of their scholarly activities" (King Saud University, 2014, para. 3). Additionally, in Kesici's study (2008), the findings of teachers' opinions about building a democratic classroom showed that "if the student perceives him/herself valuable and a member of the classroom society, s/he will get used to his/her classmates more easily and participate in classroom activities voluntarily" (p. 197). Therefore, the findings of Kesici's study show parallelism with this study in the equality section. On the other hand, the lowest items were that teachers rotate students' roles and responsibilities and change composition of groups and group leaders. Davis (2010) stated that to the practice of democracy, it is particularly important for each student to practice and experience leadership and to experience working different roles.

Freedom (M = 2.55, SD = .435) is the last mean in the practices of democratic empowerment, and it is occasionally exercised in the classroom. The most common freedom practices in the classroom were that students are responsible for the consequences of their decisions, and teachers promoting positive social relationships. They often happen in the

classroom. For graduate students, it important to be responsible for their own works and to have good relationships with society. According to Glennon (2008), when students take responsibility for their learning, it makes the learning more meaningful. Also, he stated that "higher education is a process in which participants learn and practice the intrinsic virtues and values of freedom, responsibility, and community" (p. 39). The less common freedom practices in the classroom were that teachers allow students to choose their own textbooks and to negotiate the syllabus. Shor (1996) mentioned that "negotiating the syllabus offers students and teachers alternative social development, alternative ways of being, knowing, speaking, relating, and feeling, beyond and against traditional classroom arrangements" (p. 62). Therefore, if students share power with their teachers to select and discuss their educational method, that makes them more satisfied with their learning, and they feel empowered.

For the second part, the female students' perceptions about the importance of democratic empowerment, the total means of this section is 3.45, and the stander deviation is .337. According to a 4-point Likert scale divided into equal periods (1-2= low, bigger than 2-3= average, and bigger than 3-4= hi), the respondents were highly positive about the five sections (freedom, dialogue, collaborative learning, equality, and critique). The means total for the importance and each section show that there was a significantly difference from the neutral target value at the midpoint of the Likert scale on the survey, so the alternative hypothesis was accepted. This statement means that female students saw the importance of experience democratic empowerment in their classrooms. This finding indicated that students understand the importance of using these strategies. Also, there are many studies that focus on a democratic classroom, such as Daher, 2012; Hur, Glassman, and Kim, 2013; Kesici, 2008.

The section of critique (M = 3.61, SD = .320) obtained the highest mean. In critique, the very important strategies were that teachers encourage students to examine the underlying beliefs and assumptions of their experience and to use reflective journals that connect their experiences with reflections. Surprisingly, according to female students' prospections, these two strategies were the less common practices in the classroom. This finding shows that students really need these two strategies in their classroom. On the other hand, collaborative learning (M = 3.24, SD = .472) gets the lowest mean. The very important items were that students become self-directed learners and they can work well with classmates to achieve a goal. The respondents indicated that collaborative learning was the most practice section in their classroom. Maybe because students highly exercised the collaborative learning, they saw that it is the less important strategy among the four sections (freedom, dialogue, equality, and critique).

For the last part, female students' perceptions about the practices of disempowerment in the classroom, the total means of this section is 2.01, and the stander deviation is .552. According to a 4-point Likert scale divided into equal periods (1-2= low, bigger than 2-3= average, and bigger than 3-4= high), the respondents infrequently practiced disempowerment in the classroom. The means total for the practices of disempowerment in the classroom shows that there was a significant difference from the neutral target value at the midpoint of the Likert scale on the survey. Therefore, the alternative hypothesis was accepted, meaning that students have not been disempowered in their classroom. However, the highest practice of disempowerment was that students remain silent while the teacher teaches, and it is often exercised. The second highest practice was that students wait to be told what to do, and it is occasionally exercised. In a critical pedagogy classroom, students do not remain silent, so they have the freedom to question or discuss to improve their learning (Shor, 1996; Wolk, 1998). The lowest practice of

disempowerment was that students have a lack of listening carefully to each other. This finding shows that there indeed was caring and respect among students in the classroom.

Research Question Two

Are there statistically significant differences among female students' perceptions about their democratic empowerment in a classroom at King Saud University based on their study tracks (Adult Education, Foundations of Education, and Education and Kindergartens)? The discussion of this question divides into three parts: female students' perceptions about the practices of democratic empowerment, female students' perceptions about the importance of democratic empowerment, and female students' perceptions about the practices of disempowerment in the classroom based on students' study tracks (Adult Education, Foundations of Education, and Education and Kindergartens). About the first part, the practices, the results of One-Way ANOVA showed that there were no statistically significant differences at ($\alpha = 0.05$) among female students' perceptions about their practices in dialogue, collaborative learning, and equality, in a classroom at King Saud University based on their study tracks. The null hypothesis was accepted, so female students who study Adult Education, Foundations of Education, and Education and Kindergartens did not have different perceptions about their practices in dialogue, collaborative learning, and equality. It could be indicted that in the three tracks, teachers more focus on these three practices as a result of many Arabic studies that concentrate these practices, especially collaborative learning.

Nevertheless, in freedom, critique, and the total of practices, the results of One-Way of ANOVA showed that there were statistically significant differences at ($\alpha = 0.05$) among female students' perceptions about their practices in freedom, critique, and the total of practices in a classroom based on their study tracks. To clarify the differences, Scheffé Post-Hoc Comparisons

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were utilized. The result of Scheffé Post-Hoc Comparisons showed that between Adult Education and Foundations of Education, there were statistically significant differences at (α = 0.05) among female students' perceptions about their practices of democratic empowerment in a classroom due to freedom section and the total of practices. Adult Education track was a benefit of the differences between the two tracks. Additionally, among Adult Education, Foundations of Education, and Education and Kindergartens, there were statistically significant differences (α = 0.05) in female students' perceptions about their practices in critique section. Adult Education track also was a benefit of the differences among the three tracks. It is obvious that female students who study in Adult Education are more exercised in freedom, critique, and the total of practices. Maybe because Adult Education track is a new major not only at King Saud university but also in Saudi Universities, and the faculty members try to apply the best strategies in their classrooms.

About the second part, importance, the results of One-Way of ANOVA showed that there were no statistically significant differences (α = 0.05) among female students' perceptions about the importance of democratic empowerment, including freedom, dialogue, collaborative learning, equality, critique, and the total of importance in a classroom at King Saud University based on their study tracks. In the last part, disempowerment, the results of One-Way of ANOVA showed that there were no statistically significant differences (α = 0.05) among female students' perceptions about the practices of disempowerment in a classroom at King Saud University based on their study tracks. Therefore, it could be concluded that female students who study Adult Education, Foundations of Education, and Education and Kindergartens understand the importance of democratic empowerment in their classrooms. Moreover, the practices of

disempowerment are not practiced in the three tracks, so this finding is considered to be a positive result for The Department of Educational Policies to include the three tracks.

Research Question Three: Open-Ended Question

What are the obstacles for democratic empowerment that female students face in the classroom at King Saud University? The discussion of this question divides into two themes. The first theme is the pedagogical methods of teaching which has three categories: the poor level of dialogue, focusing on a quiz or test as the main assessment, and the gap between teacher-student relationships. These categories are challenged to exercise critical pedagogy in a classroom. In the first category, the poor level of dialogue, the participants were dissatisfied with the level of dialogue in their classroom. They claimed that classroom dialogue needs to care more about the application to achieve the goal of dialogue. This caring includes plan, organization, and preparation for dialogue. Therefore, teachers must understand how to apply true dialogue and give each student the opportunity to participate in the dialogue. According to Freire (1996), "preoccupation with the content of dialogue is really preoccupation with the program content of education" (p. 65). If the true is dialogue practiced in classroom that may make students more satisfied and confident about their course. A participant indicated that she did not feel confident about the classroom dialogue when a teacher discussed only with specific students. She preferred to be silent rather than participate. Also, participants stated that dialogue require a critical thinking skill. Freire (1996) mentioned that "only dialogue, which requires critical thinking, is also capable of generating critical thinking. Without dialogue there is no communication, and without communication there can be no true education" (p. 65). In the Quran, dialogue is characterized by many things, such as intellectual freedom, critical thinking, and respecting others. For example, one verse explains:

And when it is said to them, follow what Allah has revealed, they say, rather, we will follow that which we found our fathers doing. Even though their fathers understood nothing, nor were they guided? (Quran, n.d., Al-Baqara, Verse 170, p. 26).

The second category focuses on a quiz or test as the main assessment. The participants complained that focusing on a quiz or test as the main assessment is not convenient for graduate students because it relies on the memorization of information. Some students believed that using test papers as a major assessment negatively effects the use of other methods and hinders the development of their own critical thinking skills. There are many studies that argue against this type of assessment. For instance, Nemrawi (2011) stated that the traditional method, the written tests are used to assess students' learning. These tests do not provide enough information on educational outcomes, ignore the diversity of students' learning, and rarely take into account the cognitive development. Recently, it has been argued that the traditional written tests restrict a teacher and learners to focus on the lower-level information and basic skills that are usually contained on the traditional test. Also, Muslim scholars, such as Ibn Khaldun, invite learners to focus on promoting their critical skills rather than just memorize information (Metwally, 2004).

The last category is the gap between teacher-student relationships. The participants claimed that the gap between teacher-student relationships is a result of less freedom in the classroom. This gap usually is created in the traditional classroom. Respondents indicated that they did not have enough information about their teachers or between themselves. Also, they did not realize the importance of the course, its objectives, its goals, and the benefits that would accrue to them when they study the course. Therefore, they want their teachers to care about the first class meeting to make them feel confident and to understand their course requirements. Also, they want to help their teachers to select or discuss assignments, textbooks, or teaching

materials that are appropriate for them. Shor (1996) argued the authoritarian teaching where a teacher uses his/her power over students, so students receive the orders from the teacher and they experience less freedom. He also suggested an alternative approach which is "to invite students to become negotiators and critical thinkers on the fateful opening day of class" (p. 41). Shor proposed to use this approach from the first day of class and continued on throughout the semester. According to Freire, this type of education "offends the freedom and autonomy of students and domesticates them since it emphasizes the transfer of existing knowledge to passive objects who must memorize and repeat this knowledge (Elias and Merriam, 2005, p. 159).

The second theme of the open-ended question is obstacle courses, and it has two categories: technological issues and dealing with time. In the first category, technological issues, respondents complained that the classroom technological device have many issues that effect on their learning. For example, the computers slowed down over time, and the projector was not working. Also, there were issues to connect to the Internet and with closed-circuit television, such as the voice and picture were not clear, and the microphone did not work well. Therefore, the classroom technology needs to be periodically checked; for instance, closed-circuit television needs quality improvement such as to have a voice recorder. One participant described missing the whole lecture when absent because there was no audio recorder. These results agree with the findings of Ramorola's study (2013) *Challenge of Effective Technology Integration into Teaching and Learning*. The major challenges affecting the effective integration of technology are "insufficient technology equipment, a lack of teachers qualified in technology integration, and maintenance and technical problems" (p. 654). Also, his study is found that "some of the computers were not functioning properly and some were not even connected to the Internet" (p.663).

In the second category, dealing with time, respondents complained that there is not enough time to discuss issues or to exercise classroom activities. Also, they suggested that teachers need to learn to manage time. For example, one respondent stated that "teachers did not mange and organize the class time, so we wasted time on talking about minor things." One of the findings of Breunig's study (2006) *Critical pedagogy as praxis* is that "every participant noted that there simply isn't enough time to fully engage in critical pedagogical praxis" (p. 261).

Conclusion

AL-Manea (2007) stated that in some Saudi universities, teaching methods still focus on the traditional style, which depends upon memorization of the practical and theoretical lessons. Also, he indicated that the most faculty members still use the blackboard and chalk, with a lack of professional development in the modern teaching methods. It is important to understand the practices of teaching in the higher education classroom through students' perceptions. According to one principal value of the college of education at King Saud University, educators are expected to achieve their mission of teaching students and educating them well. To accomplish that, they should try many methods, strategies, and techniques, and follow closely excellence criteria in all their practices. Therefore, the aim of this study is to describe female graduate students' perceptions about their democratic empowerment in a classroom at King Saud University. Their perceptions are compared based on female students' tracks.

Additionally, Islamic teachings encourage learners to be active and empowered by using critical thinking methods, and reject utilizing one method of teaching that makes learners passive recipients of knowledge and skills. This viewpoint of Islam agrees with Dewey, Freire, and Shor's perspective on critical pedagogy, who refuse traditional method of teachings and support active learning. They also suggest to create a democratic classroom. In this study, the democracy

is like Dewey's vision which "involves a way of life inside the classroom, meaning that it is a natural and interwoven part of classroom ecosystem" (Wolk, 1998, p. 79). The democratic approach is like the Shura approach, which is an Islamic term and is derived from Islamic views (the Quran, the Sunnah, and Muslim scholars). Both democratic and Shura approaches, as a way of life, organize the entire life, and both approaches require freedom, dialogue, collaborative learning, equality, and critique. These five concepts helped to create a critical thinking classroom that also encourages students to be empowered and active learners. However, without democracy (Shura), students may practice disempowerment which includes silence, marginalization, and dependence. Therefore, this theoretical framework helped to guide the study to ensure that the research stays on track, to determine specific aims, to select measures and analysis, and to refine the research questions.

In Islam, the Quran and Sunnah support both men and women without distinctions to obtain knowledge and to be lifelong learners. The community in Islam is known as the religion of knowledge and learning and is not based on race, nationality, locality, or special interests. Therefore, Muslim women have great status and can study any educational field that they prefer, so throughout the history, many educated Muslim women emerged. Those women helped to educate both men and women by using many techniques such as dialogue. Therefore, Islamic teachings agree with critical pedagogy on some aspects. For instance both encourage leaners to take responsibility for their own learning and to be affective learners.

McLaren (2003) stated that critical pedagogy represents "a way of thinking about, negotiating, and transforming the relationship among classroom teaching, the production of knowledge, the institutional structures of the school, and the social and material relations of the wider community and society" (p. 69). Critical pedagogues urge teachers to create and foster a

democratic classroom where the critical pedagogy is practiced. These practices, which help to empower graduate female students, include freedom, dialogue, collaborative learning, equality, and critique. Through the literature review, these five elements were discussed from the Western and Islamic perspectives. The result of this discussion indicated that both perspectives are similar, and that led to theorize critical Islamic pedagogy. The critical Islamic pedagogy is congruent with the stated values and goals of King Saud University and other Saudi universities. Moreover, disempowerment which is a consequence of using conventional teaching methods was explained. This disempowerment includes silence, marginalization, and dependence.

The research questions of this study are: What are female students' perceptions about their democratic empowerment in the classroom at King Saud University? Are there statistically significant differences among female students' perceptions about their democratic empowerment in a classroom at King Saud University based on their study tracks (Adult Education, Foundations of Education, and Education and Kindergartens)?; And what are the obstacles for democratic empowerment that female students face in the classroom at King Saud University? The statistical analysis that was used to answer these questions was descriptive analysis including means, and standard deviation, one-way ANOVA, and Scheffé Post-Hoc Comparisons. However, because the third question is qualitative data, emerging themes and categories of data were developed. The sample for the study consisted of 93 female graduate students who study at the College of Education in the Department of Educational Policies. This department involves three tracks: Adult Education, Foundations of Education, and Education and Kindergartens.

One of the key results of this study is that graduate female students practiced the five elements (freedom, dialogue, collaborative learning, equality, and critique) of democratic empowerment in their classrooms at King Saud University. This result is considered as a positive

finding for King Saud University because it agrees with the university's aims and values, as well as the university's effort to apply the modern methods. Collaborative learning is ranked as the highest practice while freedom is ranked as the lowest practice in the classroom. Also, graduate female students showed the importance of experiencing democratic empowerment in their classrooms. Therefore, this statement indicates that graduate female students are highly aware of the importance of practicing democratic empowerment in the classrooms. Linda Keesing-Styles (2003) represented a "call to action" for teachers who teach about critical pedagogy to continue and examine their classroom practices. When students feel a sense of importance of critical practices, that feeling may help teachers to apply these practices.

Additionally, in general, graduate female students have not been disempowered in their classroom. However, they exercised some disempowered practices; for example, students remained silent while the teacher teaches and waited to be told what to do. These practices, as Shor (1996) stated, occur in the traditional classroom. Teachers must pay attention to their students' practices in the classroom to help them become active learners. Also, the results showed that there were no statistically significant differences ($\alpha = 0.05$) among female students' perceptions about their practices in dialogue, collaborative learning, and equality, in a classroom at King Saud University based on their study tracks (Adult Education, Foundations of Education, and Education and Kindergartens). However, there were statistically significant differences ($\alpha = 0.05$) among female students' perceptions about their practices in freedom, critique, and the total of practices in a classroom based on their study tracks. Between Adult Education and Foundations of Education, the direction of the differences was a benefit for the Adult Education track in the freedom section and the total of practices. Among Adult Education, Foundations of Education, and Education and Kindergartens, the direction of the differences was a benefit for

the Adult Education track in the critique practices. It could be concluded that students who study in the Adult Education track experience more empowerment than other students who study in Foundations of Education and Education and Kindergartens tracks in freedom, critique, and the total of practices. About the importance and disempowerment parts, the findings showed that there were no statistically significant differences ($\alpha = 0.05$) among female students' perceptions. Therefore, in the three tracks, students know the importance of democratic empowerment in their classroom, and in general, did not practice disempowerment in their classrooms.

Even though students have positive perspectives about the practices of democratic empowerment, there were some obstacles of implementing democratic empowerment that female students face in the classroom at King Saud University. As students indicated, these obstacles divide into two parts: pedagogical methods of teaching and obstacle courses. These two obstacles are challenged to exercise critical pedagogy in a classroom. Through pedagogical methods of teaching, students were dissatisfied with classroom dialogue, and they described as no good preparation, no equal participation, and no critical discussion. These issues agree with what students stated in the questionnaire as the lowest items from the dialogue section. The dialogue occurred in the classroom, but it needs to improve and focus on some areas. The poor level of dialogue leads to the gap between teacher-student relationships and includes less freedom to select and discuss the course materials. Shor (1992) clarified the use of dialogue and explained it.

> The basic process of dialogue—problem-posing—actively questions schooling, society, teacher-talk, and existing knowledge. It democratically invites students to make their education, to examine critically their experience and social conditions, and to consider acting in society from the knowledge they gain. (p. 188)

Also, students complained that focusing on test papers as the main assessment reduced their ability to effectively use other methods and impede the development of their own critical thinking skills. About obstacle courses, students were dissatisfied with using technology in the classroom and the classroom time. They pointed out that the technology in their classrooms had some technical issues, so it needs ongoing maintenance, or it will lead to lost classroom time. Both the educational institution and teachers are responsible and need to reform these issues.

The Movement of Practice Democratic Classroom and Islamic Education

Through the findings of this study, it could be elicited that female graduate students in the three tracks (Adult Education, Foundations of Education, and Education and Kindergarten) saw that the democratic classroom is important for them. Also, they expected democratic empowerment in their classrooms, so there was transition from lecture to dialogue and from passive learners to active learners. Transition indicated that the movement of practice democratic classroom is the movement of Islamic education practices. Even though the instruction of democratic empowerment is applied in the classrooms, it needs more work for improvement and to be effectively practiced. For example, female graduate students stated that critique was the most important strategy in their classroom, while collaborative learning was the least important strategy in their classroom. Although critique was the most important strategy for female graduate students, it was not practiced enough in the classroom. In the classroom practices, students indicated that they infrequently examined the underlying beliefs and assumptions of their experience and used reflective journals that connect their experiences with reflections. Additionally, students pointed out that they needed to improve their own critical skills. For instance, they saw a need in the classroom dialogue and tests to develop the critical thinking skills.

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Therefore, teachers must pay attention to effectively use critique in the classroom activities which help students to have critical consciousness. The term of critical consciousness was supported by Freire, Shor, and Islamic teachings. Shor (1992) stated that "with critical consciousness, students better able to see any subject as thing in itself whose parts influence each other, as something related to and conditioned by other dimensions" (p.128). For example, in the classroom discussions, each student should be active and share his or her opinion and experience. When a teacher posits a problem to students, students should identify the social context in which those problems have expanded. Therefore, they will have soundness of argumentation and a better position to participate in actions that will address the root causes of the problem. According to Dewey (1991), the process of critical or reflective thinking to solve problem has five steps. In the first step students identify the problem by answering some questions about the problem such as: What is the specific problem? Where is the problem? When did the problem start? Who is involved in the problem? The second step is to analyze the problem by answering these questions: What is the cause of the problem? What is the result of the problem? What methods are being used now to deal with the problem? The third step in the process is to suggest solutions. This stage is a brainstorming session where students generate ideas. The fourth step is to evaluate the proposed solutions, and students examine each solution by focusing on the advantages and disadvantages and observe the short-term and long-term effects of the solution. The final step is to implement a solution. These steps will help students to have enough information to make a decision. Therefore, teachers should understand that critique is necessary in many strategies such as collaborative learning, dialogue, solving problems, and making decisions.

Recommendations

According to Goomansingh (2009), for the future direction of the university, the university classroom is a pivotal area. Through the literature of higher education, this area of study has not been thoroughly addressed. Therefore, the classroom is the most important place that helps students to develop their own skills, to feel empowered, valued, and connected to each other. Freire (1996) and Shor (1996) emphasized the need to create critical pedagogy in the classroom practices. Therefore, this study aims to describe female graduate students' perceptions about their democratic empowerment in a classroom at King Saud University. Their perceptions are compared based on female students' tracks.

The results of this study showed that female graduate students' perceptions about the practices of democratic empowerment were positive, but some practices need to be effectively used in the university classroom. Therefore, based on the results of the study, a set of recommendations were drawn. For example, because teachers are considered one of the main educational pillars to achieve the value of higher education, they must be able to promote an understanding of the concept of dialogue. Freire asserted that between a teacher and learners, dialogue and equality are important, so teachers must be students and that students also must be teachers (Elias and Merriam, 2005). Also, Goomansingh (2009) stated that the democratic education teachers utilize classroom dialogue to create relationships with their students and to attempt to understand the students' concerns, whether related to the classroom or beyond the classroom.

Additionally, teachers must give their students the freedom in the classroom to make and share decisions about course materials and contents. Shor's (1996) suggested power-sharing with students "to create the desire and imagination of change while also creating the experience and

skills for it" (p.176). This may give students more responsibility for their selections and more confidence about their course. According to Shor (1996), "when you have intentions, power, responsibilities, and purposes, you are more connected to what you do and focus more intelligence on your experience" (p. 75-76). Moreover, the concept of Shura invites people to participate in the general way of life in all areas. For example, Osman (2011) described Shura as "a serious and effective participation in making a decision, not merely a ceremonial procedure" (p. 10). He also stated that "freedom of expression and freedom of assembly are essential to determine the right decision among different views, and opposition is naturally indispensable for the life and efficiency of Shura" (p.11).

Also, teachers must encourage students to be critical and creative thinkers. For example, teachers should encourage students to practice critical activities that develop the critical consciousness among students, such as critical reflection, critical thinking, dialogue, and problem posing. These activities are connected to each other; to illustrate, through critical reflective writing, students use their thinking to deeply connect their thoughts about a specific subject matter. Dewey (1933) believed that the action with reflection is important to human learning and he defined reflective thought as "active, persistent, and careful consideration of any belief or supposed form of knowledge in the light of the grounds that support it and the further conclusions to which it tends" (p. 188). Teachers should not focus on the test papers as the main assessment for students and should use a variety of techniques that encourage critical and creative thinking. They also have to avoid methods that rely on memorization.

Furthermore, to effectively use the classroom activities and test papers, teachers need to have a high performance and develop their professional skills, so the educational institution should be offered training courses that focus particularly on each strategy. Teachers must be

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supported not only to attend training courses but also to apply strategies in their classroom. Also, the educational institution should be provided technical support for faculty members and fixed technology issues that hinder the practices of the democratic classroom. The educational institution should offer regular meetings between graduate students and university administrators to hear their voice and their problems, to meet their needs, and to take advantage of their views and suggestions to develop and reform graduate programs in the university. Scientific conferences that focus on the university classrooms and the teaching practices should be launched in order to increase research in this area. The critical Islamic pedagogy that is theorized in this study should be applied in the university classrooms in Saudi Arabia, especially for graduate students. The critical Islamic pedagogy is derived from the Islamic teachings which agree with the goals and values of Saudi universities.

For future research, to have comprehensive thought about the practices of democratic empowerment in a classroom, it is necessary apply similar studies at other Saudi universities and then compare the result with this study. By doing so, the result of that study may help stakeholders to understand how much graduate students are democratically empowered in their classroom. Also, it is suggested that future researchers can select undergraduate students in order to discover their practices and obstacles in a classroom.

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APPENDIX A. THE QUESTIONNAIRE FOR THIS STUDY (ENGLISH VERSION)

Qualtrics Survey Software

Default Question Block

Part one: Demographic Information

What is your study track in King Saud University?

Adult Education

Foundations of Education

Education and Kindergartens

Part two: Female students' perceptions about the practies employed in the classroom and to what extent these practices are important for them

First: for each of the following statements, please indicate the best choice that **describes practices in your classroom**. Please put in your mind that this practices are commonly used all over courses in your classroom with multiple teachers, using the following scale (often, occasionally, infrequently, and never).

Second: please also indicate the best choice that **describes the importance of these practices for you**, using the following scale (very important, important, somewhat important, and not important).

	Importance				Experienced			
	Not Important	Somewhat Important	Important	Very Important	Never	Infrequently	Occationally	Often
Students engage in shared decision making about course content	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Students are responsible for the consequences of their decisions.	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
The teacher (s) allows students to choose their own textbooks.	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
The teacher(s) allows students to choose their own assignments.	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
The teacher(s) allows students to choose the teaching materials.	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
The teacher(s) allows students to negotiate the syllabus.	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Students can ask about the meaning of what they learn.	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Students can express their opinions and thoughts	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
The teacher(s) provides forums for discussing or resolving classroom problems.	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

	Not Important	Somewhat Important	Important	Very Important	Never	Infrequently	Occasionally	Often
Students are involved in planning classroom events.	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
The teacher(s) promotes positive social relationships.	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
The teacher(s) promotes a sense of community.	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Students can suggest topics for discussion	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Students have a clear view about the subject matter before engaging in a dialogue.	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Students listen to each other's thoughts and do not neglect any one's ideas	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Students do not neglect any one's ideas	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Every idea that evolves in the class underwent argument	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
The teacher(s)encourages open dialogue	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
The teacher(s) encourages students to justify their claims	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
The teacher(s) poses different problems	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

	Not Important	Somewhat Important	Important	Very Important	Never	Infrequently	Occasionally	Often
The teacher(s) encourages students to involve in a dialogue in order to solve these problems	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
In the classroom, dialogue is characterized by caring and respect	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Each student in the group has enough time to speak	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
The dialogue is connected to social context	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
The dialogue can transform your conception of knowledge	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
The dialogue can alter your consciousness	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Collaborative learning changes the responsibility of learning to students	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Collaborative learning relies more on friendship than competition	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Students become self-directed learners	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
The teacher(s) encourages students' sense of belonging to a social group	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

	Not Important	Somewhat Important	Important	Very Important	Never	Infrequently	Occasionally	Often
The teacher(s) gives students an								

	Not Important	Somewhat Important	Important	Very Important	Never	Infrequently	Occasionally	Often
opportunity to participate with other to discover common projects and concerns	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Students help each other to understand and learn	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
I can work well with classmates to achieve a goal	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Collaborative learning allows me to contribute to my group.	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Students are responsible for one another's learning	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
I tend to trust my classmates when we work together on a project	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
The teacher(s) usually change the group members.	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
The teacher(s) provides students equal opportunity for participation	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
The teacher(s) rotate students' roles and responsibilities	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
The teacher(s) changes composition of groups and group leaders	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

	Not Important	Somewhat Important	Important	Very Important	Never	Infrequently	Occasionally	Often
The teacher(s) provides students opportunities to choose work partners/teams	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
The teacher(s) meets students' needs	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
The teacher(s) helps students if they need more help or special help	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
The teacher(s) gives students the equal opportunity in the classroom by encouraging them to freely generate topics about a specific problem	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Students perceive themselves a member of the classroom community	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Students participate in classroom activities voluntarily	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Students perceive themselves as valuable	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
The teacher(s) promotes expression of various viewpoints	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Students respect different opinions	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
The teacher(s) encourages to engage in activities that depend on brain-based learning	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

	Not Important	Somewhat Important	Important	Very Important	Never	Infrequently	Occasionally	Often
The activities that depend on brain-based learning help you to be an independent thinker	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

I am able to solve problems	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
I am able to identify the problem	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
I can suggest the best possible solutions to problems by indicating the reason	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
I test and implement the solutions	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
I feel a sense of empowerment when you solve a problem	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
I share what happened and the solution that did not work if you think that you did not solved the problem	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
The teacher(s) encourages students to use reflective journals that connect their experiences with reflections	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
The teacher(s) fosters students to examine the underlying beliefs and assumptions of their experience	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

Please complete the following statements and indicate the best choice that describes the practices employed in your classroom, using the following scale (often, occasionally, infrequently, and never).

Experienced

	Never	Infrequently	Occasionally	Often
The teacher(s) encourages students' passivity in the classroom	○	○	○	○
The teacher(s) uses power over and authoritarianism on students	○	○	○	○
Students remain silent while the teacher teaches.	○	○	○	○
Students wait to be told what to do	○	○	○	○
Students wait to be told what things mean	○	○	○	○
	Never	Infrequently	Occasionally	Often
The teacher(s) does not care about your ability	○	○	○	○
The teacher(s) does not care about your experience	○	○	○	○
The teacher(s) does not care about your thought	○	○	○	○
The teacher(s) consider students as marginal	○	○	○	○
The teacher(s) consider students as ignorant	○	○	○	○
	Never	Infrequently	Occasionally	Often

The teacher(s) consider students

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as resource-less	○	○	○	○
Students consider their classroom environment as a culture of silence	○	○	○	○
The teacher(s) is the only source for knowledge	○	○	○	○
Students have a lack of listening carefully to others	○	○	○	○
Students have a lack of thinking together in class	○	○	○	○

Part three: An open-ended question

What are the obstacles that hinder the practice of methods other than memorization in your classroom at King Saud University?

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APPENDIX B. THE QUESTIONNAIRE FOR THIS STUDY (ARABIC VERSION)

Default Question Block

الجزء الأول: المعلومات الديموغرافية

ما هو تخصصك الدراسي في جامعة الملك سعود؟

تعليم الكبار

أصول التربية

رياض الأطفال

الجزء الثاني: تصورات الطالبات حول الممارسات التي تحدث داخل الفصل الدراسي ومدى اهميتها لهن

اولاً: الرجاء وضع إشارة امام الإجابة المناسبة التي **تعبر عن الممارسات التي تحدث داخل الفصل الدراسي**، وذلك باستخدام المقياس التالي (ابداً، نادراً، احياناً، غالباً). مع الوضع في الاعتبار أن هذه الممارسات تستخدم بشكل شائع في جميع المقررات الدراسية من قبل العديد من الاستاذات.

ثانياً: كذلك يرجى وضع إشارة امام الإجابة المناسبة التي **تعبر عن مدى اهمية ممارسة هذة العبارات بالنسبة لكِ داخل الفصل الدراسي** وذلك باستخدام المقياس التالي (غير مهمة جداً، غير مهمة، مهمة، مهمة جداً).

	درجة اهمية هذة الممارسة بالنسبة لكِ				درجة الممارسة داخل الفصل الدراسي				
	مهمة جداً	مهمة	لحد ما مهمة	ليست مهمة	غالباً	احياناً	نادراً	أبداً	
أشارك في صناعة قرار مشترك حول محتوى المقرر	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	
إنني مسؤولة عن عواقب قراراتي	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	
الاستاذات يسمحن للطالبات باختيار المقررات الدراسية الخاصة بهن	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	
الاستاذات يسمحن للطالبات باختيار المهام الدراسية الخاصة بهن	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	

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العبارة		أبداً	نادراً	احياناً	غالباً		مهمة جداً	مهمة	لحد ما مهمة	ليست مهمة
الاستاذات يسمحن للطالبات باختيار المواد التعليمية (الادوات المستخدمة من قبل الاستاذات من اجل مساعدة ودعم الطالبات)		○	○	○	○		○	○	○	○
الاستاذات يسمحن للطالبات بالتفاوض حول الخطة الدراسية للمقرر		○	○	○	○		○	○	○	○
أستطيع أن أسأل عن معنى ما أتعلمه		○	○	○	○		○	○	○	○
أستطيع أن أعبر عن آرائي وأفكاري		○	○	○	○		○	○	○	○
الاستاذات يقدمن منتديات للنقاش أو لحل مشاكل القاعة الدراسية		○	○	○	○		○	○	○	○
أُشجع للمشاركة في تخطيط فعاليات القاعة الدراسية		○	○	○	○		○	○	○	○

العبارة		أبداً	نادراً	احياناً	غالباً		مهمة جداً	مهمة	لحد ما مهمة	ليست مهمة
الاستاذات يشجعن العلاقات الاجتماعية الإيجابية		○	○	○	○		○	○	○	○
الاستاذات يشجعن الإحساس بالانتماء للمجتمع		○	○	○	○		○	○	○	○
أجد التشجيع لإقتراح موضوعات للمناقشة		○	○	○	○		○	○	○	○
لديّ رؤية واضحة عن موضوع المناقشة قبل المشاركة في الحوار		○	○	○	○		○	○	○	○
أستمع لأفكار جميع الطالبات		○	○	○	○		○	○	○	○
لا أتجاهل أفكار الاخرين		○	○	○	○		○	○	○	○
كل فكرة تنشأ في الفصل تخضع للنقاش		○	○	○	○		○	○	○	○
الاستاذات يشجعن الحوار المفتوح		○	○	○	○		○	○	○	○
الاستاذات يشجعن الطالبات على تبرير مطالبهن		○	○	○	○		○	○	○	○
الاستاذات يطرحن مشكلات مختلفة		○	○	○	○		○	○	○	○

العبارة		أبداً	نادراً	احياناً	غالباً		مهمة جداً	مهمة	لحد ما مهمة	ليست مهمة
الاستاذات يشجعن الطالبات على المشاركة في الحوار من أجل حل هذه المشكلات		○	○	○	○		○	○	○	○
في القاعة الدراسية يتسم الحوار بالود والاحترام		○	○	○	○		○	○	○	○
كل طالبة في المجموعة لديها الوقت الكافي للحديث		○	○	○	○		○	○	○	○
الحوار مرتبط بسياق اجتماعي		○	○	○	○		○	○	○	○
الحوار يمكن أن يغير من تصوركِ للمعرفة		○	○	○	○		○	○	○	○
الحوار يمكن أن يغير من وعيكِ العقلي		○	○	○	○		○	○	○	○
التعلم التعاوني ينقل مسؤولية التعلم إلى الطالبات		○	○	○	○		○	○	○	○
التعلم التعاوني يعتمد على الصداقة أكثر من المنافسة		○	○	○	○		○	○	○	○

العبارة	أبداً	نادراً	احياناً	غالباً	مهمة جداً	مهمة	لحد ما مهمة	ليست مهمة
أصبحت متعلمة ذاتية التوجية	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
الاستاذات يشجعن شعور الطالبات بالانتماء كمجموعة اجتماعية	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

العبارة	أبداً	نادراً	احياناً	غالباً	مهمة جداً	مهمة	لحد ما مهمة	ليست مهمة
الاستاذات يمنحن الطالبات الفرصة للمشاركة مع الأخريات في اكتشاف مشروعات واهتمامات مشتركة	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
الطالبات يساعدن بعضهن البعض على الفهم والتعلم	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
أستطيع أن عمل بشكل جيد مع باقي الطالبات لتحقيق الهدف	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
التعلم التعاوني يسمح ليَ بالمشاركة في مجموعتي	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
إنني مسؤولة عن تعلم باقي زميلاتي	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
أثق في زميلاتي عندما نعمل معاً في مشروع	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
الاستاذات عادةً يغيرن أعضاء المجموعة	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
الاستاذات يمنحن الطالبات فرص متساوية للمشاركة	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
الاستاذات يغيرن أدوار ومسوؤليات الطالبات	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
الاستاذات يغيرن تكوين المجموعات وقيادات المجموعة	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

العبارة	أبداً	نادراً	احياناً	غالباً	مهمة جداً	مهمة	لحد ما مهمة	ليست مهمة
الاستاذات يمنحن الطالبات فرص متساوية لاختيار زميلاتهن/ فرقهن	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
الاستاذات يلبين احتياجات الطالبات	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
الاستاذات يساعدن الطالبات إذا كن بحاجة لمزيد من المساعدة أو مساعدة خاصة	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
الاستاذات يمنحن الطالبات الفرصة المتساوية في الفصل بتشجيعهن على طرح الموضوعات بحرية حول مشكلة معينة	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
أرى نفسي عضوة في قاعة الدرس	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
أشارك في أنشطة قاعة الدرس طواعيةً	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
أشعر أنني ذات قيمة	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
الاستاذات يشجعن التعبير عن وجهات النظر المختلفة	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
أحترم الآراء المختلفة	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

	أبداً	نادراً	احياناً	غالباً	مهمة جداً	مهمة	لحد ما مهمة	ليست مهمة
الاستاذات يشجعن على المشاركة في الأنشطة التي تعتمد على التعلم القائم على التفكير	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
الأنشطة التي تعتمد على التعلم القائم على التفكير تساعدني على أن اكون مفكرة مستقلة	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
إنني قادرة على حل المشكلات	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
إنني قادرة على تحديد المشكلة	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
إنني قادرة على اقتراح أفضل الحلول الممكنة للمشكلات بتوضيح السبب	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
أقوم باختبار وتنفيذ الحلول	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
أشعر بالتمكين عندما أقوم بحل مشكلة	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
عندما لا استطيع حل المشكلة اشارك زميلاتي ماحدث والحلول التي لم تنجح	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
الاستاذات يشجعن الطالبات على استخدام الانعكاسات التأملية التي ترتبط بخبراتهن	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
الاستاذات يشجعن الطالبات على تأمل المعتقدات والافتراضات الكامنة في خبراتهن	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

:أرجو استكمال الفقرات التالية لتوضيح مدى درجة ممارسة هذة العبارات داخل الفصل الدراسي

	درجة الممارسة داخل الفصل الدراسي			
	أبداً	نادراً	احياناً	غالباً
الاستاذات يشجعن سلبية الطالبات في قاعة الدرس	○	○	○	○
الاستاذات يمارسن سلطاتهن واستبدادهن على الطالبات	○	○	○	○
أظل صامتة أثناء شرح الاستاذة	○	○	○	○
أنتظر حتى يتم إخباري بما أفعله	○	○	○	○
أنتظر حتى يتم إخباري بمعاني الأمور	○	○	○	○
الاستاذات لا يكترثن بقدراتي	○	○	○	○
الاستاذات لا يكترثن بخبراتي	○	○	○	○
الاستاذات لا يكترثن بأفكاري	○	○	○	○
	أبداً	نادراً	احياناً	غالباً
الاستاذات يعتبرن الطالبات شيء هامشي	○	○	○	○
الاستاذات يعتبرن الطالبات جاهلات	○	○	○	○
الاستاذات يعتبرن الطالبات اقل دراية	○	○	○	○

أعتبر بيئة قاعتي الدراسية ثقافة الصمت	○	○	○	○
الاستاذات هن المصدر الوحيد للمعرفة	○	○	○	○
لديّ نقص في الاستماع بعناية للآخرين	○	○	○	○
لديّ نقص في التفكير الجماعي في القاعة الدراسية	○	○	○	○

الجزء الثالث: سؤال مفتوح

ما هي العقبات التي تعوق ممارسة وسائل أخرى غير الحفظ والتلقين في القاعة الدراسية بجامعة الملك سعود؟

APPENDIX C. INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD (IRB) APPROVAL

NDSU NORTH DAKOTA
STATE UNIVERSITY

June 1, 2015

Dr. Claudette Peterson
School of Education

Re: IRB Certification of Exempt Human Subjects Research:
Protocol #HE15268 , "Saudi Female Students' Perceptions of their Democratic Empowerment in the Classroom
at King Saud University"

Co-investigator(s) and research team: Sarah Alajlan, Brent Hill

Certification Date: 6/1/15   Expiration Date: 5/31/2018
Study site(s): King Saud University
Sponsor: n/a

The above referenced human subjects research project has been certified as exempt (category # 2) in accordance
with federal regulations (Code of Federal Regulations, Title 45, Part 46, Protection of Human Subjects). This
determination is based on the original protocol submission with revised consent (received 6/1/2015).

Please also note the following:
☐ If you wish to continue the research after the expiration, submit a request for recertification several weeks prior
to the expiration.
☐ The study must be conducted as described in the approved protocol. Changes to this protocol must be
approved prior to initiating, unless the changes are necessary to eliminate an immediate hazard to subjects.
☐ Notify the IRB promptly of any adverse events, complaints, or unanticipated problems involving risks to
subjects or others related to this project.
☐ Report any significant new findings that may affect the risks and benefits to the participants and the IRB.

Research records may be subject to a random or directed audit at any time to verify compliance with IRB
standard operating procedures.

Thank you for your cooperation with NDSU IRB procedures. Best wishes for a successful study.
Sincerely,

Kristy Shirley
Digitally signed by Kristy Shirley
DN: cn=Kristy Shirley, o=NDSU,
ou=Institutional Review Board,
email=kristy.shirley@ndsu.edu, c=US
Date: 2015.06.01 15:41:55 -05'00'

Kristy Shirley, CIP, Research Compliance Administrator

For more information regarding IRB Office submissions and guidelines, please consult
http://www.ndsu.edu/research/integrity_compliance/irb/. This Institution has an approved FederalWide
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NDSU is an EO/AA university.

APPENDIX D. THE LETTER FROM THE DEANSHIP OF E-TRANSACTION AND COMMUNICATION

King Saud University | جامعة الملك سعود

عمادة التعاملات
الإلكترونية والاتصالات
Deanship of e-Transactions
& Communications

To whom it may concern

We certify that the Deanship of e-Transaction and Communication (ETC) has helped the student to distribute the questionnaire on "Saudi females students' perception of their democratic empowerment in the classroom at king Saud University" to the graduate students.

This certification is being issued upon the request of Sarah Alajlan

Hamad Nasser Alqahtani

Portal & New Media Director

Deanship of e-Transactions & Communications
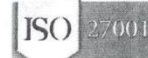
Tel : +966-1-4675724	رقم الهاتف: ٤٦٧٥٧٢٤	P O. Box : 89885	ص. ب : ٨٩٨٨٥	المملكة العربية السعودية
Fax : +966-1-4674278	رقم الفاكس : ٤٦٧٤٢٧٨	Riyadh 11692	الرياض الرمز البريدي : ١١٦٩٢	Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

APPENDIX E. OPEN-ENDED QUESTION (TRANSLATION FROM ARABIC TO ENGLISH)

Answer to Open-Ended Question in English	Answer to Open-Ended Question in Arabic
1- In the classroom, the dialogue depend on talking, and there was no critical thinking skill. Also, dialogue needs to plan and organize. As a graduate student, I view that teachers need to share topics for discussion with students and to identify closely with their students.	١- بداخل القاعة الدراسية الحوار يعتمد على التحدث. وليس هناك تفكير نقدي. ايضا الحوار يفتقر للتخطيط والتنظيم. كطالبة دراسات عليا ارى ان على الاساتذة مشاركة الطلبة بموضوعات المناقشة كذلك التعرف على الطلبة عن قرب.
2- The time for lecture does not effectively use. The relationship with lecturer is rigid.	٢- الوقت المحدد للمحاضرة لا يستغل جيداً. والعلاقة جامدة مع المحاضر.
3- The assessment depend on tests that focus on memorization which does not appropriate for graduate students.	٣- الاعتماد على الاختبارات القائمة على الحفظ في التقييم وهذا لا يتناسب مع طلبة الدراسات العليا.
4- In the classroom, the discussion is poor and needs to more pre-preparation. I view that in the discussion, some teachers focus on some students which reduce the chance to participate.	٤- المناقشة داخل القاعة الدراسية ضعيفة وتحتاج لمزيد الاعداد المسبق. الاحظ ان بعض الاساتذة يركزن على بعض الطالبات اثناء المناقشة مما يقلل فرص المشاركة في المناقشة.
5- Using some traditional methods.	٥- استخدام بعض الوسائل التقليدية.
6- Unfortunately, in the discussion, I preferred to be silent rather than participate, and some	٦- للاسف في المناقشة افضل ان اكون صامتة لا اشارك وهكذا الحال بالنسبة لبعض الطالبات عندما

students did like that when teachers focus on certain students, so I did not feel confident. I hope to share our teachers our discussion topics, homework, and everything that relates to our course.	يركزن الاساتذات على طالبات محددات. لذا لا اشعر بالراحة واتمنى ان يفتح المجال لمشاركة الاساتذة في موضوعات المناقشة والواجبات وكل ما يختص بالمادة العلمية.
7- Computers need maintenance.	7- أجهزة الكمبيوتر تحتاج لصيانة.
8- I think that we need to know more about our course in general and the course requirements in specific. As a result, I do not feel confident when I do not know the requirements for the course. I think also the classroom needs to good time management.	8- اعتقد باننا بحاجة لمعرفة المزيد عن المادة بشكل عام وعن المطلوب انجازة بشكل خاص. عدم معرفتي بالمطلوب انجازة يجعلني اشعر بعدم الراحة. اعتقد كذلك القاعة الدراسية تحتاج لادارة الوقت بشكل جيد.
9- The weak dialogue.	9- ضعف الحوار.
10- Some teachers use modern methods but they still focus on test papers as a major assessment. Therefore, teachers could not effectively use other strategies. We need an assessment that measures the ability of the brain.	10- بعض الاساتذات يستخدمن الوسائل الحديثة ولكن مازلن يركزن على الاختبار الورقي كوسيلة اساسية للتقييم ونتيجة لذلك لا يستطعن استخدام الاستراتيجيات الاخرى بفاعلية. نحن نحتاج للتقييم يقيس قدراتنا العقلية.
11- Need to care about the technology that used in the classroom. Through my experience, a day, I had a presentation PowerPoint and was the first person. The computer slowed	11- الحاجة للاهتمام بالتكنولوجيا المستخدمة في القاعة الدراسية. فمن خلال تجربتي في احد الأيام، كان لدي عرض بوربونت وكنت اول الطالبات، الكومبيوتر كان بطيئ اغلب الوقت والبروجكتر لا

down over time, and the projector was not work. This situation made me more nervous and wasted my time. Also, my friends had similar to my experience with their presentations, so we have to bring our equipment to the classroom.	يعمل. هذة الحالة جعلتني متوترة جداً واضاعة وقتي. كذلك الحال بالنسبة لصديقاتي مع عروضهن، مما جعلنا نحضر المستلزمات الخاصة بنا للقاعة الدراسية.
12- Graduate students need to practice critical thinking skills which do not exist in traditional tests. The questions of these test emphasize only lower-level thinking skills. Time! Sometime the lecture was done but there was many points that need to cover.	12- طلبة الدراسات العليا يحتاجون لممارسة التفكير النقدي وهو غير موجود في الاحتبارات التقليدية. الاسئلة في هذة الاختبارات تركز فقط على مستوى منخفض من التفكير. الوقت . . في بعض الاحيان تنتهي المحاضرة ولكن هناك الكثير من النقاط تحتاج لتغطية.
13- Nothings.	13- لا شيء.
14- Teachers centered on the test as a means of assessing. Sometimes, we exercised strategies that require high levels of thinking such as dialogue and working groups. However, these strategies did not grant high scores because the high scores placed on traditional tests which focus on rote memorization. Therefore, this traditional tests are not appropriate for graduate students.	14- الاستاذ يركز على الاختبار كوسيلة للتقييم. احياناً يتم ممارسة الاستراتجيات التي تتطلب مستوى عالي من التفكير مثل الحوار والعمل الجماعي ولكن هذة الاستراتجيات لا تمنح درجة عالية كما هو الحال في الاختبارات التقليدية التي تعتمد على الحفظ ولا تتناسب مع طلبة الدراسات العليا.

English	Arabic
15- The connection through closed-circuit television needs to repair. Also, the access to the Internet should be active.	15- الاتصال من خلال الشبكة التلفزيونية يحتاج للاصلاح وكذلك لابد من تفعيل الانترنت بداخل القاعة الدراسية.
16- Teachers keen to offer information and they did not give students the course contents. The faculty members must have an active role and share graduate students to choose teaching materials, tasks, their books.	16- حرص الاستاذات على اعطاء العلومات وعدم تسليم الطالبات جميع مفردات المقرر. لابد ان يكون لعضو هيئة التدريس دور فعال ومشاركة طلبة الدراسات العليا طرق التدريس واختيار المهمات وكذلك الكتب.
17- The assessment rely on tests that focus on memorizing. The questions formulation of these tests have one type and are not diverse. Regardless of tests, there is no assessment that measure students' skills.	17- طبيعة التقييم المعتمدة على الاختبارات المستمدة من الحفظ. طبيعة الاسئلة ذات النمط الواحد في الاختبار. عدم التنوع في صياغة الاسئلة. لا يوجد تقييم يقيس مهارة الطالب بعيداً عن الاختبارات.
18- Using traditional methods in teaching.	18- استخدام الوسائل التقليدية في التدريس.
19- There are big draws of teachers to use discussion and dialogue in the classroom. Also, teachers believe in the importance of discussion and dialogue. However, I noticed that they there was something wrong in practice. For example, there was no plan for discussion questions and no chance for students to participate.	19- هناك توجة كبير من الاستاذات لاستخدام المناقشة والحوارفي القاعة الدراسية، ويكون لديها اقتناع باهميتها لكن ما لاحظته وجود خلل في الممارسة. مثلاً لا يوجد تخطيط لاسئلة المناقشة، كذلك لا تتوفر فرصة لمشاركة جميع الطالبات.
20- Time management.	20- ادراة الوقت.

21- Teachers did not share learners about their opinions, such as discuss a syllabus. Also, teachers did not care about the first day of class.	21- عدم مشاركة الاساتذة للمتعلمين بابداء الرأي كمناقشة الخطة الدراسية. كذلك عدم الاهتمام باليوم الاول في الدراسة.
22- Some teachers did not take advantage of the lecturer's time, so the dialogue did not organize.	22- بعض الاستاذات لا يستغلون وقت المحاضرة فيكون الحوار غير منظم.
23- The majority of them was stated in the questionnaire.	23- اغلبها ذكر بالاستبيان.
24- We struggle to connect with closed-circuit television such as the voice and picture were not clear, as well as the microphone did not work well. Also, we struggle to connect to the Internet.	24- نعاني من الاتصال بالشبكة مثلا عدم وضوح الصورة والصوت والميكروفون. كذلك نعاني من صعوبة الاتصال بالانترنت.
25- We did not discuss the objectives, goals, and requirements of each class with our teacher.	25- عدم مناقشتنا للاهداف والغايات والمتطلبات لكل مادة دراسية مع اساتذتنا.
26- Lecturers need to work on two skills: time management and writing test questions that depend on memorization.	26- المحاضرين بحاجة للعمل على مهارتين ادارة الوقت وكتابة اسئلة الاختبار والتي تعتمد على الحفظ.
27- I hope to have more technology in the classroom such as audio recorder because when I absent, I missed the lecture.	27- اتمنى وجود المزيد من الوسائل التكنولوجية في القاعة الدراسية مثل التسجيل الصوتي للمحاضرة. عند غيابي عن المحاضرة لا استطيع الحصول عليها.
28- Depend on traditional tests.	28- الاعتماد على الاختبارات التقليدية.

29- Discussions did not have plan.	.29- المناقشات غير مخطط لها
30- The communication with teachers was weak and that relates to the nature of teacher.	30- ضعف التواصل مع الاساتذة وهذا يعود لطبيعة الاستاذ.
31- In the classroom, the technology needs to continually check such as projectors and closed-circuit television.	31- التكنولوجيا بداخل القاعة الدراسية بحاجة لفحص مستمر مثل البروجكتر والدائرة التلفزيونية.
32- Some teachers asked students to do assignments and did not explain these assignments. Additionally, they did not give students time to do the assignments, so students did not understand their assignments and they delayed to submit them.	32- بعض الدكتورات والاستاذات يطلبن من الطالبات بعض المهام ولا يقمن بشرحها جيداً، وكذلك لا يعطين الطالبات وقت لعمل هذه المهام، مما يجعلنا لا نفهم هذه المهام ونتأخر في تسليمها.
33- Lecture had a short period of time.	33- قصر وقت المحاضرة.
34- weakness of classroom equipment	34- ضعف تجهيزات القاعة الدراسية.
35- Dialogue applied in the classroom but it requires many important things such as the participation of all students and organization.	35- الحوار يطبق بداخل القاعة الدراسية ولكن يفتقر لاشياء مهمة مثل مشاركة جميع الطلبة وتنظيمة.
36- Using the high level of thinking in the activities, such as a working group and dialogue that was utilized in the classroom is needed.	36- نحتاج لاستخدام المستويات العليا من التفكير في الانشطة المستخدمة بداخل القاعة الدراسية مثل العمل الجماعي و الحوار.

37- Traditional tests	37- الاختبارات التقليدية
38- Some of the faculty members did not recognize the importance of these practices.	38- عدم المام بعض اعضاء هيئة التدريس بأهمية هذة الممارسات.
39- Technology needs to check. Tests need to change or to cancel.	39- التكنولوجيا تحتاج لفحص والاختبارات تحتاج لتغيير او الغاء.
40- There was no freedom to choose our teaching materials.	40- لا يوجد حرية في اختيار المواد التعليمية.
41- The lack of cooperation between teachers and students to organize and prepare the course.	41- لا يوجد تعاون بين الاساتذة والطلبة في تنظيم و اعداد المادة الدراسية.
42- I do not know.	42- لا اعلم.
43- There was no discuss about the course syllabus and objectives.	43- عدم مناقشة الخظة الدراسية للمادة واهدافها.
44- Some teachers focused on traditional methods that hindered using some effective strategies.	44- بعض الاساتذة يركزون على الوسائل التقليدية مما يعيق استخدام بعض الاستراتجيات الفعالة.
45- There was no preparation for dialogue. For example, questions were superficial and did not cover our reading.	45- لا يوجد اعداد للحوار على سبيل المثال الاسئلة سطحية ولا تغطي ماتم قراءته.
46- Time	46- الوقت
47- Teachers did not take advantage of the first day of class to discuss the importance things about the course.	47- الاساتذة لا يستغلون اليوم الدراسي الاول في مناقشة ما يهم الطلبة عن المادة الدراسية.

48- Some teaching methods that used in the classroom did not appropriate for graduate students.	48- بعض الوسائل التعليمية المستخدمة بداخل القاعة الدراسية لا تتناسب مع طلبة الدراسات العليا.
49- Closed-circuit television needs maintenance and more attention.	49- الشبكة التلفزيونية تحتاج لصيانة واهتمام اكبر.
50- Using traditional tests.	50- استخدام الاختبارات التقليدية.
51- Through the dialogue, focusing on some students impacted on students' participation.	51- التركيز على بعض الطلبة اثناء الحوار الصفية مما يعيق التفاعل.