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Riffat Munawar
University of Wollongong

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Intergenerational Cultural Differences Among Muslim Women in Wollongong

A thesis submitted in fulfillment of the requirement for
Award of the degree

MASTER of Arts (HONOURS)

From

UNIVERSITY OF WOLLONGONG

By

RIFFAT MUNAWAR, MA
University of Punjab, Pakistan

Department of Sociology
December, 1997

DECLARATION

This Thesis is an original piece of research, the main content of which has
not been previously submitted for a University Degree

Or other similar award

R. Munawar

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTERGENERATIONAL CULTURAL DIFFERENCE

AMONG MUSLIM WOMEN

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Migration, Religion and Culture	1-10
The country left behind	10-16
Aims and objectives	17
Limits of the study	18

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

19

Migration: From assimilation to settlement	20-33
The Development of Multiculturalism in Australia	33-36
Muslim Immigration to Australia	36-44
History of Pakistanis settlement in Australia	44-46
The Country of Origin, its Culture and Social Change	46-58

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

59

Pakistani Association of Wollongong	60
Data Collection Techniques	65
Case Study Method	65

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Tools of Data Collection	66
In-depth Interviewing, of, mothers and daughters	66
Observations and participant observations	67-68
CHAPTER 4	
FINDINGS OF THE RESEARCH	69
Characteristics of the sample	69
Categories of Data Collected	71
Significant Themes Of the Data	72
I - Settlement in a New Socio-Religious Environment	72-76
II- The Identity Management of Immigrant Women	76-79
III- Rearing Children in a Different Socio-Religious Environment	79-82
IV- The Daughter's Experience of Growing-up in Two Different Religo-Cultural Environment	82-86
V- The Daughter's Perception of Their Socialization	86-88
VI- The Cultural Elements Which Have Undergone Change	88-91
VII- Cultural Elements That Are Maintained	91-98
VIII- Observed Inter-Generational Cultural Differences	98-100
IX- Self-Identification Of Migrant Women & Daughters and Their Perception Regarding Social Change In Pakistan	100-102

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER 5	
DISCUSSION	103
The Pakistani Community In Australia and the Immigration Policy of Australian Government:	103-105
Social Change in the Pakistani Community in Wollongong:	105-107
Religiosity of Muslim Women :	107-108
Islam as a New Identity :	109-111
The Role of Mosques and the Presence's of the Ethnic-Community:	111-113
Perceptions Regarding the Second-Generation:	113-115
Multiple-Identities of the Second-Generation Muslim Women:	115-119
Perceptions of the First and Second Generation (mothers&daughters)Regarding Australian Society:	119-120
 CHAPTER 6	
CONCLUSION	120-125
 Areas for Further Research.	126
SUMMARY	
APPENDIX	
BIBLIOGRAPHY	

Summary

This thesis considers the interrelationship between migration and religiosity of the first and second generation Pakistani women in Wollongong, New South Wales. It addresses the question of why religious commitment becomes a more significant source of social identity for these women. There are two basic manifestations of this greater significance of religion. First, it is manifested in the nature of fundamental ideals; namely, where religious ideals reinforce ethnic allegiance, it is likely to arouse especially fervent expressions of commitment. This expression of commitment rests on the assumption that Pakistani ethnicity relates to religious identity and its people, whereas an Islamic state it has a universal relevance.

The social boundaries which encompass expressions of religious identity among Pakistani women are pervasive and clear-cut compared to relatively permeable ethnic boundaries.

In addition the overall goal of this research was to identify and describe the inter-generational cultural differences among women. Most cultural elements such as religion, language, in-group marriage and certain customs as well, were maintained by the second generation. However, there are marked changes in the attitude of first generation which are reflected in the jobs taken up by the daughters, in the way the daughters' consent are sought in the selection of the marriage partners. In terms of their own personal development, the mothers who did not want to work when their children were young, shared interest in

advancing their employability by enrolling in computer classes, secretarial courses and other similar skills based training programs.