



# The relationship between gender segregation in schools, self-esteem, spiritual values/religion, and peer relations in Kuwait

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## ABSTRACT

Public schools at all levels in Kuwait are gender-segregated due to conservative traditional values, but such segregation is not practiced in private schools. In the past decade, a series of laws were passed to impose gender segregation in private universities as well. A concern about the psychological and social impact of gender segregation on students is a topic of ongoing debate in Kuwait. Research into the effects of gender segregation on social aspects such as peer relations remains an area to be explored. The purpose of this study is to assess whether there is a difference in peer relations with the opposite or same gender among individuals who have attended Kuwaiti schools across different school settings, and to explore which factors such as physical appearance, general esteem, parental relations, and spiritual values/religion might influence this difference. Seventy-six participants (57% female; 43% male) in Kuwait aged between 18 and 39 years filled out an online questionnaire incorporating scales related to the variables of interest taken from Marsh's Self-Description Questionnaire III. The results showed that participants who attended a mixed-gender school, as opposed to a segregated school, in Kuwait scored significantly higher on the peer relations with the opposite gender criteria, meaning that they believed they had good relationships with peers of the opposite gender ( $M = 44.1$ ;  $P < 0.05$ ). The results showed that school setting was a significant predictor of peer relations with the opposite gender ( $\beta = 0.251$ ,  $P < 0.05$ ); however, when additional factors such as self-esteem, parental relations, physical appearance, and spiritual values/religion were controlled for, schooling was not found to be a significant predictor of peer relations, and self-esteem had the highest significant relationship with peer relations of the same and opposite gender as well ( $\beta = 0.461$ ,  $P < 0.01$ ;  $\beta = 0.623$ ,  $P < 0.001$ ). Spiritual values/religion had a significant relationship with peer relations of the same gender only and not the opposite gender, meaning the more religious the individuals believed they were, the less they thought that they had good relationships with peers of the same gender ( $\beta = -0.295$ ,  $P < 0.01$ ). Self-esteem scores were highly significantly correlated with parental relations scores and physical appearance scores ( $r = 0.605$ ;  $r = 0.577$ ;  $P < 0.01$ ). The implications of the data on educational policy as well as the importance of spreading awareness about the significant relationship that self-esteem and spiritual values/religion can have with peer relations in Kuwait are discussed.

**Keywords:** segregation, Kuwait, self-esteem, religion, parents, peers

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## BACKGROUND

Kuwait is located in the northwest of the Arabian Gulf, with Saudi Arabia and Iraq as neighbors (Algharabali, 2010). Kuwait has a high national reserve of oil, is one of the major oil-producing countries, and has one of the world's highest per capita incomes; therefore, the state welfare system provides free housing, education, and health care to its citizens (Algharabali, 2010). Gender segregation is imposed in public areas such as mosques, most health clubs, and beauty salons (Algharabali, 2010). It is also enforced in governmental institutions and public transportation (Algharabali, 2010). Furthermore, gender segregation is imposed in public schools at all levels, public universities, and private universities. Since the 1970s, Kuwait University, a public university, had been a co-educational institution. However, in the 1990s, the Islamist-leaning parliament introduced policies to enforce segregation in the university (Foley, 2010). While Kuwait University became gender-segregated in 2001, the private universities became segregated in 2008 (as cited in Algharabali, 2010). However, the private schools are not currently gender-segregated. A wider debate is ongoing in Kuwait favoring and opposing gender segregation. Although religion is believed to be the reason behind gender segregation, scholars argue that Islam does not enforce segregation, but controls the interaction of the two genders (Dinkha, Mobasher & El-Shamsy, 2010).

The Kuwaiti society is small, comprising 30% of local nationals in a population of 3.3 million (State of Kuwait Central Statistical Bureau, 2005). It is gender-segregated due to conservative Kuwaiti traditions. A very high importance is attached to protecting a woman's reputation at all times in this society (Algharabali, 2010). Although mixed-gender environments have been introduced recently in hotels, health clubs, private spaces, and bachelor apartments, women are still anxious to be seen in a mixed setting, as it is generally frowned upon (Algharabali, 2010). Men and women in Kuwait generally practice separate lifestyles, and boys and girls do not play with each other in the neighborhoods (Algharabali, 2010). Men mostly socialize in Diwanis, which are men-only gatherings, typically located outside the main house (Algharabali, 2010).

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### Gender segregation and academic outcomes

The debate for and against segregated schools has been a topic of study for many researchers, who are interested in its effect on academic outcomes. Brown (2004) shows that segregated schools produce higher grades because each gender is able to focus on studies, without being attracted to the opposite gender (as cited in Dinkha, Mobasher & El-Shamsy, 2010). However, Smithers & Robinson (2006) argue that academic benefits of segregated schools are exaggerated and that although the majority of the schools in Belgium are segregated, the mixed-gender schools produced the best academic results (as cited Dinkha, Mobasher & El-Shamsy, 2010). Some researchers argue that in segregated schools, each gender is able to focus on learning without worrying about bullying from the opposite gender (Dinkha, Mobasher & El-Shamsy, 2010). This is, however, contradicted by Simmons (2003) who found a high level of bullying among girls in her studies (as cited in Dinkha, Mobasher & El-Shamsy, 2010). Wiseman (2008) states that most of the evidence relating to the effects of segregated schools comes from the studies done in Western countries rather than Muslim countries where most of the segregated schooling is mandatory; therefore, his study includes 45 nations incorporating Muslim countries. He studied the extent of experience the teachers have, the length of their lectures, and curriculum coverage, and claims that in Saudi Arabia and some other nations, boys-only schools have more experienced teachers than girls-only schools, highlighting the imbalance of resources in segregated schools (Wiseman, 2008).

A study in Kuwait looking at the psychological impact of gender segregation has measured the attitudes of university students toward gender segregation and hypothesized, using Albert Ellis' ABC model, how a dysfunctional feeling about an event causes emotional problems, rather than the event itself (Dinkha, Mobasher & El-Shamsy, 2010). They found that a majority of the male students are supportive of gender segregation because they believe that Islamic beliefs and moral values endorse gender segregation (Dinkha, Mobasher & El-Shamsy, 2010). Therefore, if they are supportive of gender segregation but are present in a mixed-gender classroom, this would lead to discomfort and affect learning in the classroom (Dinkha, Mobasher & El-Shamsy, 2010). In contrast, the majority of the females were against gender segregation; therefore, if they were placed in a gender-segregated class,

then this would lead to feelings of anger, anxiety, and depression and could have an impact on learning in the classroom (Dinkha, Mobasher & El-Shamsy, 2010).

### **Gender segregation and non-academic outcomes**

There are only a few studies investigating the effect of gender segregation in schools and its non-academic outcomes. Signorella and Bigler's (2013) review outlines studies that have attempted to measure the effect of gender segregation on non-academic outcomes. Oetzel (2001) states that the social comparison and peer interactions in gender-segregated schools differ than those in mixed-gender schools, and lack of both genders in segregated schools increases competition between peers (as cited in Signorella & Bigler, 2013). Drury et al.'s (2012) study measures gender role conformation and peer victimization in segregated and mixed schools in Columbia and reports that gender role conformity is higher in segregated schools than in the mixed ones, and if conformation is low, it leads to peer victimization (as cited in Signorella & Bigler, 2013). Erarslan and Rankin's (2013) study of gender role attitudes in mixed and segregated schools in Turkey highlights that there are equal attitudes between the two types of schooling when it comes to family; however, different attitudes exist when it comes to work and social aspects (as cited in Signorella & Bigler, 2013). Spencer et al.'s (2012) study measuring body perception in mixed and segregated universities in the United States indicates that segregated schools endorse higher ideal bodies than mixed schools (as cited in Signorella & Bigler, 2013). Hurtado, Milem, Clayton-Pederston & Allen (1998) believe that school settings are social settings as well, and when diverse individuals are present, such a situation contributes to their growth and development in the school (as cited in Dinkha, Mobasher & El-Shamsy, 2010).

### **Peer relations and self-esteem**

Factors other than schooling could have a relationship with peer relations (of both the same and opposite gender), one of which is self-esteem, which Rosenberg (1965) defines as the positive or negative attitude one has toward the self (as cited in Birkeland, Breivik & Wold, 2014). Bishop's (1995) study investigates the relationship between self-esteem and peer relations in adolescents in the United States. Sullivan (1953) divides peer relations into two aspects: peer acceptance and friendship, in which peer acceptance relates to the popularity of the individual, whereas friendships are defined as same-gender reciprocal relationships, regardless of popularity (as cited in Bishop, 1995). Bishop (1995) hypothesizes that friendships are more important during adolescence than peer acceptance, and results, indeed, showed that the presence of one reciprocal friend led to a higher self-esteem score than those who had no reciprocal friends, and self-esteem did not relate to peer acceptance. Abu-Saad's (1999) study examines self-esteem and its relationship to family and peer relations among Palestinian adolescents living in Israel, who are a minority when compared with Jewish Israelis. Positive family and peer relationships resulted in significantly higher self-esteem scores (Abu-Saad, 1999).

### **Parental relations and self-esteem**

Parental influence, in addition to peer relations, is related to self-esteem as was evident in the study by Birkeland, Breivik and Wold (2014), which measured the relationship between parental relations, peer acceptance, and self-esteem in Norwegian adolescents. Bowlby's (1969) attachment theory states that closer relationships and loving parent-child attachments influence the way the child perceives the world, himself or herself, and others (as cited in Birkeland, Breivik & Wold, 2014). The close parental attachment also influences the way one perceives himself or herself in adolescence as self-esteem becomes more positive and stabilizes in young adulthood (Birkeland, Breivik & Wold, 2014). Therefore, the absence of parenting could increase the risk of negative self-esteem among children (Birkeland, Breivik & Wold, 2014). Georgiou and Meins's (2010) study measures the effect of peer relations and parental relations between two nationalities: Greek Cypriots and British. The culture in Cyprus is similar to the Kuwaiti culture in the sense that it is traditional, the family is considered an important unit in society, and parents are caring but overprotective, especially of daughters (Georgiou & Meins, 2010). The British society is more individualistic and less traditional in the sense that adolescents receive greater autonomy, and the individual rather than the family is considered the most important unit of the British society (Georgiou & Meins, 2010). The authors assessed whether overprotective parenting in Cyprus, due to culture, hinders the development of peer relations, and also measured the effect of parental relations and peer relations on self-esteem in both cultures (Georgiou & Meins, 2010).

The results showed that Greek Cypriots perceived parents to be overprotective and they were more likely to report insecure attachment styles with peers than the British (Georgiou & Meins, 2010). In both cultures, maternal care was the highest predictor of self-esteem followed by peer attachment style (Georgiou & Meins, 2010).

Ahmed, Rohner, Khaleque and Gielen's (2011) review includes 500 studies in the Arab world that assessed the parental acceptance-rejection theory (PAR theory) and highlighted PAR theory's application in the Arab world as well. PAR theory states that whether a parent is caring and accepts the child or whether the parent is cold and neglects the child has an effect on the child's personality, coping skills, and future behavior and beliefs (Ahmed, Rohner, Khaleque & Gielen, 2011). Most of the studies in the Arab world have assessed the perceived parental acceptance–rejection attitudes in adolescents and adults and its relation to academics, peer rejection, personality traits, formation of ego-identity and identity disorders, and internalizing or externalizing problems (Ahmed, Rohner, Khaleque & Gielen, 2011). All of these studies identify a significant correlation between parental rejection and peer rejection, the formation of negative personality traits, and internalizing or externalizing problems (Ahmed, Rohner, Khaleque & Gielen, 2011). The internalizing problems include anxiety, depression, and neuroticism, while the externalizing problems consist of aggression, hostility, and delinquency (Ahmed, Rohner, Khaleque & Gielen, 2011).

### Peer relations and religion

There is not much research related to the effect of spirituality and religion on peer relations. Looking at theories of religion and spiritual development and the effect it has on human development, many theorists hold different views about religion. Rizzuto (1979) believes that religion is comforting, gives life a meaning, and that through each new phase of an identity cycle brings along with it a religious cycle (as cited in Roehlkepartain, King, Wagener & Benson, 2005). Erikson (1964) believes that spirituality brings about hope, which transforms into faith, which later transforms into behavioral norms (as cited in Roehlkepartain, King, Wagener & Benson, 2005). Hill et al.'s (2000) study summarizes the negative outcomes of religion on human development, and states that it could lead to pathological outcomes, authoritarian qualities, and could be used as a defense mechanism by an individual in order to reject and hide from reality (as cited in Roehlkepartain, King, Wagener & Benson, 2005).

### INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this study is to assess whether a difference exists in peer relations with the opposite or same gender among individuals who have attended Kuwaiti schools across different school settings, and to explore which factors such as physical appearance, general esteem, parental relations, and spiritual values/religion might influence this difference.

Studies on the effects of gender segregation in the Arab world are limited, yet very important, as a majority of the schools in the Arab region are gender-segregated due to conservative beliefs. Professionals have debated for and against gender segregation and the academic effects of gender segregation have been the focus of many research studies; however, the non-academic effects such as the interaction with peers and the formation of peer relationships (or, in this case, the lack thereof) between the two opposite genders is an important area that needs to be studied. The majority of research examining the relationship between peer relations and self-esteem measures how peer relations predict self-esteem. In this study, the reverse relationship will be measured, that is, how self-esteem could predict peer relationships. Previous research has investigated the relationship between parental relations and peer relations, and how these relationships differ in Western and Eastern societies. This study also intends to measure whether parental relations are related to peer relations in a society such as Kuwait. Previous research has not assessed the relationship between spiritual values/religion and peer relations, which is an important aspect in Kuwait, as religion plays an important role in the average individual's life. Previous research has assessed how an individual perceives his or her own physical appearance in different school settings, while this study will test whether perceived physical appearance is related to peer relations. This study addresses the gaps in past research by attempting to assess the difference in peer relations across different school settings and exploring the relationship of various factors such as self-esteem, parental relations, spiritual values/religion, and physical appearance with peer relations in Kuwait. This study could help shed light

on which of these factors are most important in order to better inform educational policymakers in Kuwait as well as the wider public who are debating gender segregation issues.

It is hypothesized that if an individual has attended a gender-segregated school setting in Kuwait and lived in a mostly gender-segregated society such as Kuwait, the individual would be less comfortable interacting and forming friendships with the opposite gender. Past research has argued that parental relations also predict peer relations. It is hypothesized that parental relations would be related to peer relations in a society like Kuwait, where similar to the Greek Cypriot society, in [Georgiou and Meins's \(2010\)](#) study, parents are characterized as overprotective and the family is considered very important. It is also hypothesized that spiritual values/religion would be related to peer relations with the opposite gender in a conservative society such as Kuwait where most religious individuals disapprove of peer relations with the opposite gender.

Studies of self-concept, such as [Marsh \(1989a\)](#), have provided evidence for self-concepts decreasing from early adolescence to middle adolescence, and then increasing into adulthood. Marsh's Self-Description Questionnaire III (SDQIII) was designed to measure self-concept for late adolescents and young adults based on the Shavelson model of self-concept, which has been used to explain behaviors in different situations and how positive self-concept relates to education and personality development ([Marsh, 1989b](#)). The instrument has been widely used and research relating to its validity and reliability is widely available ([Marsh, 1989b](#)). The questionnaire contains four areas of academic self-concept, eight areas of non-academic self-concept, and a general self-scale derived from Rosenberg's (1965) self-esteem scale ([Marsh, 1989b](#)). The physical appearance, same gender peer relations, opposite gender peer relations, parental relations, spiritual values/religion, and general esteem scales will be used as the variables of interest to be measured in this study. Although a few studies have assessed the use of Marsh's SDQ in the Arab region, [Stocker's \(2015\)](#) study adapted some scales from the SDQIII to high school students in the UAE, revealing good internal consistency for the parental relations scale, with Cronbach's alpha of 0.85. [Stocker's \(2015\)](#) study also used the peer relations scale from Marsh's SDQI, showing a good internal consistency for the scale, with Cronbach's alpha of 0.89.

## METHOD

### Design

This study was a cross-sectional study using anonymous online questionnaires that contained questions selected from Marsh's SDQIII to achieve quantitative scores for the variables of interest such as opposite gender peer relations, same gender peer relations, physical appearance, parental relations, spiritual values/religion, and general esteem. The questionnaires were targeted at adults aged between 20 and 35 years who have either attended a gender-segregated school or a mixed-gender school in Kuwait in order to compare the variables of interest between the two groups of adults.

### Procedure

An email was sent to invite a total of 11 participants to the pilot study. Of these individuals, six showed up and filled out the questionnaire. In addition to the current aim of the study, it aimed to measure whether segregated schooling not only relates to peer relations, but to homosexual interactions as well. The purpose of the pilot study was to assess whether individuals in Kuwait would be comfortable answering questions related to their sexual experiences given the sensitivity of the topic in a conservative society like Kuwait. The result of the pilot study indicated that the study participants displayed a large discomfort in answering questions related to their sexual experiences; therefore, this variable was removed from the study in order to focus on the current aim of the study: to assess whether there is a difference in peer relations with the opposite or same gender among individuals who have attended Kuwaiti schools across different school settings, and to explore which factors such as physical appearance, general esteem, parental relations, and spiritual values/religion might influence this difference. The feedback from the majority of the participants in the pilot study was also useful, in which they stated that the vocabulary of the questionnaire was understandable for Kuwaiti nationals of different educational backgrounds.

An invitation letter was sent to complete the online questionnaire along with the link to the questionnaire through personal networks using social media and email. The participants were also asked to forward the link to the participants who fulfilled the study criteria in order to create a snowball

effect. Two professors in Kuwait University, a professor in the American University of Kuwait and a professor in the Gulf University for Science and Technology, were contacted, and the invitation letter along with the link to the online questionnaire was passed on to their students.

### Participants

The sample consisted of 76 participants, six of whom were part of the pilot study, and the rest of the participants completed the online questionnaire. The age of the participants ranged from 18 to 39 years with most participants (77%) being in the range of 22–29 years ( $M = 27$ ,  $SD = 3.43$ ). The sample consisted of 57% females and 43% males. The perceived financial status of the participants was mainly (93%) rated at moderate to high, and 86% were single. The participants were Kuwaitis and Arab-Kuwaiti citizens who were raised in Kuwait. The first language in Kuwait is Arabic, but the curriculum for all schools in Kuwait contains both English and Arabic; therefore, the questionnaires were in English and were not translated to Arabic due to time and budget constraints. The sample was divided into two groups: the first group consisted of participants who had attended the majority of their primary and secondary schooling years (a cut-off was set at  $>50\%$  of schooling years) in segregated schools and the second group of participants had attended mixed-gender schools in Kuwait. The segregated group consisted of 16 participants and the mixed group consisted of 60 participants.

### Ethical considerations

Ethical approval for the study was obtained from the Institute of Education's Ethics Committee and the British Psychological Society.

### Materials and apparatus

The questionnaire was designed and developed using Marsh's SDQIII, which measures self-concept for late adolescents and young adults in the age range of 16–25 years, and is also appropriate for older respondents (Marsh, 1989b). The questionnaire contains various academic, problem solving, and personal criteria. Questions from the physical appearance, same gender peer relations, opposite gender peer relations, parental relations, spiritual values/religion, and general esteem criteria, which are part of Marsh's SDQIII, were selected to design the questionnaire as they measured the most relevant variables of interest. Marsh's (1989b) internal consistency estimates of reliability for these six items range from 0.87 to 0.95, which are considered to be a very good benchmark. Participants were asked to rate statements such as "I am a spiritual/religious person" or "I am comfortable talking to members of the opposite gender" on a six-point scale ranging from "Definitely False", "False", "Mostly False", "Mostly True", "True", and "Definitely True" based on how they currently feel about the statement. The eight-point scale used in Marsh's SDQIII for each participant to rate the extent to which certain statements from each criterion are true or false was reduced to a simpler six-point scale in our study. The order of the questions was structured to be similar to the order in the original questionnaire so that questions from each criterion are spread out throughout the questionnaire.

Based on feedback from colleagues and professors, the questionnaire was also amended to simplify some words such as "inadequacy" and "affectionate" to "inability" and "loving/caring", respectively, for ease of understanding of the questions as English is a second language in Kuwait. "Self-concept" was also changed to "self-identity" because it might be difficult for a typical person without a background in psychology to understand this term.

### Scoring

Based on Marsh's SDQIII Manual, each participant's responses were downloaded and were manually scored on the six-point scale, and questions including statements with negatively worded items were reverse scored, and the scores for each variable of interest were summed up. Each individual ended up with a raw score for physical appearance, same gender peer relations, opposite gender peer relations, parental relations, spiritual values/religion, and general esteem. A high physical appearance score indicates that an individual perceives the statement "I am physically attractive/good looking" as being true about him or her. A high peer relations with the same or opposite gender score indicates that an individual perceives the statement "I have good interactions/relationships with members of the same/opposite gender" as being true about himself or herself. A high parental relations score indicates that an individual perceives the statement "I have good interactions/relationships with my parents" as

being true about himself or herself. A high spiritual values/religion score indicates that an individual perceives the statement “I am a religious/spiritual person” as being true about himself or herself. A high general esteem score indicates that an individual perceives the statement “I have self-respect/self-confidence/self-acceptance/positive self-feelings and a good self-concept” as being true about himself or herself. All the raw scores for these variables as well as the rest of the responses regarding schooling, gender, and others were then transferred to statistical software (SPSS) in order to conduct statistical analyses. An independent sample *t* test was used to assess whether there was a difference in peer relations with the opposite gender score based on school setting, and a hierarchical multiple regression analysis was used to explore which factors account for this difference. Correlational analyses were also carried out to explore the relationship between the six variables of interest.

## RESULTS

### Reliability measures

Measures of reliability, such as Cronbach’s alpha, were computed for the sample using the six items selected from Marsh’s SDQIII (physical appearance, same gender peer relations, opposite gender peer relations, parental relations, spiritual values/religion, and general esteem), with Cronbach’s alpha of 0.660 (post-vocabulary amendment), which was considered to be an adequate benchmark according to Tolmie, Muijs and McAteer (2011). However, it is important to note that the overall Cronbach’s alpha increased significantly when items from the spiritual values/religion criteria were excluded from measurement, indicating that this item might be unreliable and should be revised (Tolmie, Muijs & McAteer, 2011).

### Summary statistics and distribution tests

Both the Kolmogorov–Smirnov test of normality and the Shapiro–Wilk tests of normality revealed that the data for the four variables—opposite gender peer relations, general esteem, parental relations, and physical appearance—were not normally distributed ( $P < 0.001$ ). The data for the variables spiritual values/religion and same gender peer relations were normally distributed ( $P > 0.05$ ) (see Table 1 for means and SD). Although the majority of the data in this sample were not normally distributed, parametric statistical tests were conducted in this study because of a sample size  $> 30$ , which is considered as a limitation in the study.

### Group means and correlations

To assess whether there is a difference in peer relations scores across school settings, a parametric independent sample *t* test was conducted, resulting in a significantly higher opposite gender peer relations mean score ( $M = 44.1$ ;  $P < 0.05$ ) for those who had attended mixed-gender schools ( $N = 60$ ) as opposed to those who had attended segregated schools ( $N = 16$ ) ( $t(74) = 2.23$ ,  $P = 0.029$ ,  $d = 0.62$ ).

Additional correlational analyses were conducted to explore the relationship between the variables of interest. Strong positive correlations were found between the general esteem score and physical appearance score ( $r = 0.674$ ;  $P < 0.01$ ) as well as the general esteem score and the parental relations score ( $r = 0.631$ ;  $P < 0.01$ ) (see Table 2). Moderate positive correlations were found between the general esteem score and the same gender peer relations score ( $r = 0.495$ ;  $P < 0.01$ ), the general esteem score and the opposite gender peer relations score ( $r = 0.594$ ;  $P < 0.01$ ), and the parental relations score and the same gender peer relations score ( $r = 0.425$ ;  $P < 0.01$ ).

**Table 1. Descriptive statistics for the variable scores.**

Variable	Mean	SD	N
Opposite gender peer relations	43.3	6.70	76
Same gender peer relations	43.9	6.81	76
General esteem	58.2	8.79	76
Parental relations	45.9	8.75	76
Physical appearance	42.8	8.10	76
Spiritual values/religion	44.9	11.9	76

**Table 2. Correlations between six self-concept variables.**

Variable	1	2	3	4	5
1. Physical appearance	—				
2. Same gender peer relations	0.249*	—			
3. Opposite gender peer relations	0.384**	0.484**	—		
4. Parental relations	0.423**	0.425**	0.332**	—	
5. Spiritual values/religion	0.002	− 0.251*	− 0.169	0.130	—
6. General esteem	0.674**	0.495**	0.594**	0.631**	0.030

\* $P < 0.05$ , \*\* $P < 0.01$ , \*\*\* $P < 0.001$  (two-tailed).

### Regression models

To explore various factors that could account for the difference in the peer relations score, a hierarchical multiple regression analysis was performed with opposite gender peer relations score as the dependent variable, controlling for the variable schooling in the first step to understand the predictive power of the rest of the variables in the second step (see model 1 in Table 3). Schooling was significantly related to peer relations with the opposite gender, accounting for 6.3% of the variance ( $\beta = 0.251$ ,  $P < 0.05$ ). However, after controlling for other factors, such as physical appearance, parental relations, spiritual values/religion, and general esteem, schooling no longer influenced much of the variance ( $P > 0.05$ ). Analyzing the beta scores, the only variable that had the strongest relationship to peer relations with the opposite gender score was general esteem ( $\beta = 0.623$ ,  $P < 0.001$ ). Therefore, a higher general esteem score was related to a higher opposite gender peer relations score.

A second hierarchical multiple regression analysis was performed with the same gender peer relations score as the dependent variable, controlling for the variable schooling in the first step to understand the predictive power of the rest of the variables in the second step (see model 2 in Table 3). Schooling was not significantly related to the peer relations with the same gender score ( $P > 0.05$ ). After controlling for other variables, such as physical appearance, parental relations, spiritual values, and general esteem, the variables general esteem and spiritual values/religion were significantly related to peer relations with the same gender ( $P < 0.01$ ). General esteem had a strong relationship with the same gender peer relations, suggesting that a higher general esteem score was related to a higher same gender peer relations score ( $\beta = 0.461$ ,  $P < 0.01$ ). Another variable significantly related to peer relations with the same gender was spiritual values/religion ( $\beta = -0.295$ ,  $P < 0.01$ ). Therefore, a higher spiritual values/religion score was related to a lower same gender peer relations score.

The variance of the variables uniquely accounting for in the second step of the hierarchical multiple regression models was moderate ( $R^2 = 40\%$  in model 1;  $R^2 = 37\%$  in model 2). This is because the variables were substantially related to each other, given that their zero-order correlations were  $> 0.45$  (see Table 2), indicating shared variance.

Based on the fit statistics for the regression models, the analysis of variance determines whether the model helps predict the outcome better than using the mean as a “best guess” (Field, 2009). Since the

**Table 3. Relationships between schooling, physical appearance, parental relations, spiritual values/religion, general esteem, and opposite/same gender peer relations.**

	Model 1			Model 2		
	B	SE B	$\beta$	B	SE B	$\beta$
Step 1						
Constant	35.9	3.35		40.3	3.49	
Schooling	4.07	1.83	0.251*	2.00	1.91	0.121
Step 2						
Constant	19.0	5.18		27.7	5.45	
Schooling	2.10	1.53	0.130	0.202	1.61	0.012
Physical appearance	− 0.031	0.103	− 0.038	− 0.139	0.109	− 0.165
Parental relations	− 0.028	0.092	− 0.037	0.188	0.097	0.241
Spiritual values/religion	− 0.100	0.053	− 0.177	− 0.170	0.055	− 0.295**
General esteem	− 0.474	0.112	0.623***	0.357	0.118	0.461**
$R^2$ for step 1	0.063			0.015		
$\Delta R^2$ for step 2	0.343			0.350		

\* $P < 0.05$ , \*\* $P < 0.01$ , \*\*\* $P < 0.001$ .

$F$  ratio in step 1 was not significant, meaning it could have been obtained by chance, step 1 was not a good fit for both the models. However, after controlling for the other variables in the models in step 2, the model's fit improved significantly for both the models ( $P < 0.001$ ).

## DISCUSSION

The purpose of this study was to assess whether there is a difference in peer relations with the opposite or same gender among individuals who had attended Kuwaiti schools across different school settings, and to explore which factors such as physical appearance, general esteem, parental relations, and spiritual values/religion might influence this difference.

It was hypothesized that if an individual has attended a gender-segregated school in Kuwait and lived in a mostly gender-segregated society such as Kuwait, the individual would be less comfortable interacting and forming friendships with the opposite gender. The  $t$  test showed that participants who had attended a mixed-gender school scored significantly higher ( $M = 44.1$ ,  $P < 0.05$ ) on the peer relations with the opposite gender criteria as opposed to those attending a segregated school in Kuwait, meaning that they believed they had good relationships with peers of the opposite gender more than individuals who had attended a segregated school in Kuwait, suggesting that the hypothesis was supported.

When measuring which factors might influence the difference in peer relations scores using hierarchical multiple regression models, it was hypothesized that parental relations would be related to peer relations in a society like Kuwait where parents are characterized as overprotective and the family is considered as the most important unit of a collective society. It was also hypothesized that spiritual values/religion would be related to peer relations with the opposite gender in a conservative society such as Kuwait where most religious individuals disapprove of peer relations with the opposite gender. The results showed that school setting was a significant predictor of peer relations with the opposite gender ( $\beta = 0.251$ ,  $P < 0.05$ ); however, after controlling for additional factors such as self-esteem, parental relations, physical appearance, and spiritual values/religion, schooling was not found to be a significant predictor of peer relations, and self-esteem had the highest significant relationship with peer relations, with the same gender as well as the opposite gender ( $\beta = 0.461$ ;  $\beta = 0.623$ ;  $P < 0.01$ ). Spiritual values/religion also had a significant relationship with peer relations with the same gender only and not the opposite gender, meaning that the more religious the individuals were, the less they thought that they had good relationships with peers of the same gender ( $\beta = -0.295$ ,  $P < 0.01$ ). Self-esteem was correlated with parental relations and physical appearance ( $r = 0.605$ ;  $r = 0.577$ ;  $P < 0.01$ ).

No previous research has attempted to measure the effect of gender segregation on non-academic outcomes such as peer relations. It seems that individuals who had attended a mixed-gender school would more likely believe that they had good relationships with the opposite gender than those who had attended a segregated school. This implies that the data could better inform educational policymakers in Kuwait who are enforcing gender segregation in schools that the segregated environment influences an individual's relationships with the opposite gender. An individual's relationships with the opposite gender are important because once schooling years come to an end, an individual cannot escape the fact that the workplace and societies abroad consist of a mixed-gender environment where individuals interact with the opposite gender on a daily basis. The data could better inform the wider members of the public who are debating the issues for and against gender segregation in schools from a social perspective. This significant relationship did diminish after controlling for other factors, and general esteem was found to be a significant predictor of peer relations. This suggests that the individuals with high self-esteem are more likely to believe they have good peer relationships with both genders. Therefore, this implies that concerns about the well-being of an individual's self-esteem are important as well when peer relations are the focus of interest.

Self-esteem has a strong relationship with both peer relations, i.e., with the opposite gender as well as with the same gender. Previous studies have measured and highlighted that healthy peer relations are associated with higher self-esteem (Abu-Saad, 1999; Bishop, 1995; Georgiou & Meins, 2010), and this study has also established that higher self-esteem could also be related to healthy peer relations. Although most previous studies have assessed how peer relations relate to self-esteem in younger participants, it was interesting to see that self-esteem could also be related to peer relations with older participants.

Although previous research has highlighted that parental relations predict peer relations, especially in Eastern societies (Ahmed, Rohner, Khaleque & Gielen, 2011; Georgiou & Meins, 2010), this study did not find that parental relations have a significant relationship with peer relations. There was, however, a

moderate positive correlation between parental relations and same gender peer relations. In addition, there was a strong correlation between self-esteem and parental relations in this study, which is in line with previous research relating to the effect of parental relations on self-esteem among Arab Israelis (Abu-Saad, 1999), Norwegians (Birkeland, Breivik & Wold, 2014), Greek Cypriots (Georgiou & Meins, 2010), and those in the GCC region (Ahmed, Rohner, Khaleque & Gielen, 2011). This means that parental relations in Kuwait are highly associated with self-esteem, which is, in turn, strongly related to peer relations. Theories such as Bowlby's (1969) attachment theory could help explain why parental relations have an effect on self-esteem by relating secure parent–child attachments to more secure views of the world, self, and others. Another theory, the parental acceptance–rejection theory tested in most of the Arab studies in Ahmed, Rohner, Khaleque and Gielen's (2011) review, indicates that parental rejection could affect a child's personality, coping skills, and beliefs and behavior based on childhood experiences. This implies that parental interventions should be designed for Arab parents in Kuwait in order to raise awareness about the importance of parental relations on self-esteem. Educational psychologists employed at schools, who are familiar with social psychological theories relating to self-esteem, can better inform parents and should take part in designing these interventions since most schools already interact with parents on a regular basis.

The results of this study that highlight the negative relationship between religion and peer relations with the same gender could be linked to previous research relating to the negative effects of religion, such as Hill et al.'s (2000) study, which suggests that religion could be used as a defense mechanism by an individual to reject and hide from reality (as cited in Roehlkepartain, King, Wagener & Benson, 2005). Alternatively, this could suggest that religion could be related to the judgment of a person; that is, religious individuals could more likely associate themselves only with individuals of similar beliefs or values.

### Limitations

Due to limited time and budget constraints, the questionnaire was not translated into Arabic, the first language in Kuwait. Also, the sample included in the study is not representative of the national sample since the female and male percentage is 57% and 43%, respectively, and according to the State of Kuwait's Central Statistical Bureau, female and male percentage of the population in 2005 was 40% and 60%, respectively (State of Kuwait Central Statistical Bureau, 2005). The sample also included a majority (86%) of single participants while these individuals constitute only 38% of the Kuwaiti population (State of Kuwait Central Statistical Bureau, 1995). This could be due to the questionnaire being targeted at 20- to 35-year-olds who have not yet married. More importantly, the number of participants who had attended gender-segregated schools was small, that is, only 16 participants. This sample size is very small and the evidence would have been more substantial if the sample size was larger, which could have downplayed the influence of the type of schooling on peer relations, an important factor that was assessed in this study. Efforts to increase the sample size was done by sending out more links through personal networks as well as professional networks targeting individuals who had attended segregated schools. However, the number of participants was still small. The number could have been larger had the questionnaires been translated into Arabic, which is the first language in Kuwait. The varying motivation levels between the two groups could also have affected their willingness to participate and complete the questionnaire.

Another limitation was that the participants who took part in this study aged between 18 and 39 years, which is a wide range, and the participants' age could have led to the high variance observed in the models. For example, it might be that the older an individual gets, the better that individual's relationships are with the opposite gender; therefore, controlling for age could improve the study methodology.

A limitation that should be acknowledged is social desirability biases. Using online questionnaires, which were filled anonymously, could have helped control for such a bias; nonetheless, it is still possible that participants tended to respond in a socially desirable way.

Limitations also include items related to the hierarchical multiple regressions applied in the analysis of the results. Additional tests to validate additional assumptions such as whether the variables are linearly related may have been necessary. A larger sample size ( $N > 76$  participants) would have also resulted in more accurate results, given that parametric statistical tests were chosen to analyze the data that were not normally distributed.

Although the measures obtained from this study sample resulted in an adequate reliability estimate for the scales selected from Marsh's SDQIII, only a few studies have used Marsh's SDQIII in the Arab region with the exception of [Stocker's \(2015\)](#) study, which adapted the parental relations scale, revealing good internal consistency ([Stocker, 2015](#)). The results also suggested that the spiritual values/religion scale might have been unreliable and should be revised. This could have led to less substantial results since spiritual values/religion was an important factor assessed in this study. The adaptation of Marsh's SDQIII in a large number of studies conducted in the Arab region would further validate the findings of this study. Alternatively, the development of instruments similar to Marsh's SDQIII for the Arab region where such instruments are not widely available in Arabic would further validate the findings because the notion of self-concept does not even exist in the Arabic language due to the social structure and collective nature of society.

### Suggestions for further research

Since age was not controlled for in this study, a suggestion for further research is to target students who are currently in different school settings and collect data on how they currently feel about their peer relations.

Although only a few research has investigated the relationship between physical appearance and self-esteem, it would be interesting for future research to look at the differences in physical appearance self-concept between men and women and between those who attended gender-segregated schools and those who attended mixed-gender schools in Kuwait in order to compare the results with Spencer et al.'s (2012) study in the United States, indicating that women in segregated schools endorse higher ideal bodies. Physical appearance was also highly correlated with self-esteem; therefore, it is an important aspect to consider.

Research examining the effects of religion and social human development, especially in the Arab world where religion is an important aspect in society, should be explored. Research has shown that when looking at minority groups in comparison to majority groups, factors such as parental influence and peer relations have a higher impact on self-esteem in minority groups than in majority groups ([Abu-Saad, 1999](#)). It would be interesting to measure these aspects by comparing minority groups such as Shiite Muslims in Kuwait who make up 30% of the population with majority groups such as Sunni Muslims in Kuwait.

The decision to exclude the purpose of the study involving the sexual experiences of the participants in relation to the school setting does not mean that it should not be a subject of further research. The participants who took part in the pilot study mentioned the level of discomfort the questions about sexuality would cause; however, other methods should be explored in future research in order to assess the variables of interest. Interviews with a non-Arab interviewer could be suggested, as participants would be more comfortable if the interviewer was a non-Arab. This topic is highly important since same gender interactions are evident in segregated schools, as [Algharabali \(2010\)](#) states, "When I attended a governmental Arabic school after being transferred from a (coeducational) British private school, I was constantly aware of lesbian behaviours among schoolgirls" ([Algharabali, 2010, p. 30](#)).

### CONCLUSION

A key finding of this study is that a difference in how individuals perceive their relationships with peers of the opposite gender exists across individuals who have experienced different school settings. This finding should be taken into consideration when creating educational policies for schools in Kuwait and debating issues related to gender segregation. Considering factors that could influence this difference, self-esteem had a strong relationship with peer relations (of both the same and opposite gender) in Kuwait. Parental relations are also highly correlated with an individual's self-esteem. Therefore, parental interventions should be designed for Arab parents at schools in Kuwait in order to raise awareness about the importance of parental relations on self-esteem. Another key finding is that spiritual values/religion negatively correlates with peer relations with the same gender. Further research into the relationship between religion and peer relations in Kuwait should be explored.

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## APPENDIX

### Online Questionnaire Sample Questionnaire

This is not a test – there are no right and wrong answers, and everyone will have different responses. The purpose of this study is to determine how people feel about themselves and what characteristics are most important to how people feel about themselves. Below are a series of statements that are more or less true (or more or less false) descriptions of you. Please use the following options to indicate how true (or false) each item is as a description of you. Respond to the items as you now feel even if you felt differently at some other time in your life. In a few instances, an item may no longer be appropriate to you, though it was at an earlier period of your life (e.g., an item about your present relationship with your parents if they are no longer alive). In such cases, respond to the item as you would have when it was appropriate.

\*Required

**1) My parents are not very spiritual/religious people.**

- ☐ Definitely False
- ☐ False
- ☐ Mostly False
- ☐ Mostly True
- ☐ True
- ☐ Definitely True

**2) Overall, I have a lot of respect for myself.**

- ☐ Definitely False
- ☐ False
- ☐ Mostly False
- ☐ Mostly True
- ☐ True
- ☐ Definitely True

**3) I get a lot of attention from members of the opposite sex.**

- ☐ Definitely False
- ☐ False
- ☐ Mostly False
- ☐ Mostly True
- ☐ True
- ☐ Definitely True

**4) I hardly ever saw things the same way as my parents when I was growing up.**

- ☐ Definitely False
- ☐ False
- ☐ Mostly False
- ☐ Mostly True
- ☐ True
- ☐ Definitely True

**5) I have a physically attractive body.**

- ☐ Definitely False
- ☐ False
- ☐ Mostly False
- ☐ Mostly True
- ☐ True
- ☐ Definitely True

**6) I have few friends of the same sex that I can really count on.**

- ☐ Definitely False
- ☐ False
- ☐ Mostly False
- ☐ Mostly True
- ☐ True
- ☐ Definitely True

**7) I am a spiritual/religious person.**

- ☐ Definitely False
- ☐ False
- ☐ Mostly False
- ☐ Mostly True
- ☐ True
- ☐ Definitely True

**8) Overall, I lack self-confidence.**

- ☐ Definitely False
- ☐ False
- ☐ Mostly False
- ☐ Mostly True
- ☐ True
- ☐ Definitely True

**9) I find it difficult to meet members of the opposite sex whom I like.**

- ☐ Definitely False
- ☐ False
- ☐ Mostly False
- ☐ Mostly True
- ☐ True
- ☐ Definitely True

**10) I would like to bring up children of my own (if I have any) like my parents raised me.**

- ☐ Definitely False
- ☐ False
- ☐ Mostly False
- ☐ Mostly True
- ☐ True
- ☐ Definitely True

**11) I think am ugly.**

- ☐ Definitely False
- ☐ False
- ☐ Mostly False
- ☐ Mostly True
- ☐ True
- ☐ Definitely True

**12) I am comfortable talking to members of the same sex.**

- ☐ Definitely False
- ☐ False
- ☐ Mostly False
- ☐ Mostly True
- ☐ True
- ☐ Definitely True

**13) Spiritual/religious beliefs have little to do with my life philosophy.**

- ☐ Definitely False
- ☐ False
- ☐ Mostly False
- ☐ Mostly True
- ☐ True
- ☐ Definitely True

**14) Overall, I am pretty accepting of myself.**

- ☐ Definitely False
- ☐ False
- ☐ Mostly False
- ☐ Mostly True
- ☐ True
- ☐ Definitely True

**15) I have lots of friends of the opposite sex.**

- ☐ Definitely False
- ☐ False
- ☐ Mostly False
- ☐ Mostly True
- ☐ True
- ☐ Definitely True

**16) I still have many unresolved conflicts with my parents.**

- ☐ Definitely False
- ☐ False
- ☐ Mostly False
- ☐ Mostly True
- ☐ True
- ☐ Definitely True

**17) I have a good body build.**

- ☐ Definitely False
- ☐ False
- ☐ Mostly False
- ☐ Mostly True
- ☐ True
- ☐ Definitely True

**18) I don't get along very well with other members of the same sex.**

- ☐ Definitely False
- ☐ False
- ☐ Mostly False
- ☐ Mostly True
- ☐ True
- ☐ Definitely True

**19) Spiritual/religious beliefs make my life better and make me a happier person.**

- ☐ Definitely False
- ☐ False
- ☐ Mostly False
- ☐ Mostly True
- ☐ True
- ☐ Definitely True

**20) Overall, I don't have much respect for myself.**

- ☐ Definitely False
- ☐ False
- ☐ Mostly False
- ☐ Mostly True
- ☐ True
- ☐ Definitely True

**21) Most of my friends are more comfortable with members of the opposite sex than I am.**

- ☐ Definitely False
- ☐ False
- ☐ Mostly False
- ☐ Mostly True
- ☐ True
- ☐ Definitely True

**22) My parents have usually been unhappy or disappointed with what I do and have done.**

- ☐ Definitely False
- ☐ False
- ☐ Mostly False
- ☐ Mostly True
- ☐ True
- ☐ Definitely True

**23) There are a lot of things about the way I look that I would like to change.**

- ☐ Definitely False
- ☐ False
- ☐ Mostly False
- ☐ Mostly True
- ☐ True
- ☐ Definitely True

**24) I make friends easily with members of the same sex.**

- ☐ Definitely False
- ☐ False
- ☐ Mostly False
- ☐ Mostly True
- ☐ True
- ☐ Definitely True

**25) My spiritual/religious beliefs provide the guidelines by which I conduct my life.**

- ☐ Definitely False
- ☐ False
- ☐ Mostly False
- ☐ Mostly True
- ☐ True
- ☐ Definitely True

**26) Overall, I have a lot of self-confidence.**

- ☐ Definitely False
- ☐ False
- ☐ Mostly False
- ☐ Mostly True
- ☐ True
- ☐ Definitely True

**27) I am comfortable talking to members of the opposite sex.**

- ☐ Definitely False
- ☐ False
- ☐ Mostly False
- ☐ Mostly True
- ☐ True
- ☐ Definitely True

**28) My values are similar to those of my parents.**

- ☐ Definitely False
- ☐ False
- ☐ Mostly False
- ☐ Mostly True
- ☐ True
- ☐ Definitely True

**29) My body weight is about right (neither too fat nor too skinny).**

- ☐ Definitely False
- ☐ False
- ☐ Mostly False
- ☐ Mostly True
- ☐ True
- ☐ Definitely True

**30) Other members of the same sex find me boring.**

- ☐ Definitely False
- ☐ False
- ☐ Mostly False
- ☐ Mostly True
- ☐ True
- ☐ Definitely True

**31) Continuous spiritual/religious growth is important to me.**

- ☐ Definitely False
- ☐ False
- ☐ Mostly False
- ☐ Mostly True
- ☐ True
- ☐ Definitely True

**32) Overall, I have a very clear self-identity.**

- ☐ Definitely False
- ☐ False
- ☐ Mostly False
- ☐ Mostly True
- ☐ True
- ☐ Definitely True

**33) I am quite shy with members of the opposite sex.**

- ☐ Definitely False
- ☐ False
- ☐ Mostly False
- ☐ Mostly True
- ☐ True
- ☐ Definitely True

**34) My parents have never had much respect for me.**

- ☐ Definitely False
- ☐ False
- ☐ Mostly False
- ☐ Mostly True
- ☐ True
- ☐ Definitely True

**35) I dislike the way I look.**

- ☐ Definitely False
- ☐ False
- ☐ Mostly False
- ☐ Mostly True
- ☐ True
- ☐ Definitely True

**36) I share lots of activities with members of the same sex.**

- ☐ Definitely False
- ☐ False
- ☐ Mostly False
- ☐ Mostly True
- ☐ True
- ☐ Definitely True

**37) I rarely if ever spend time in spiritual meditation or religious prayer.**

- ☐ Definitely False
- ☐ False
- ☐ Mostly False
- ☐ Mostly True
- ☐ True
- ☐ Definitely True

**38) Overall, nothing I do is very important.**

- ☐ Definitely False
- ☐ False
- ☐ Mostly False
- ☐ Mostly True
- ☐ True
- ☐ Definitely True

**39) I make friends easily with members of the opposite sex.**

- ☐ Definitely False
- ☐ False
- ☐ Mostly False
- ☐ Mostly True
- ☐ True
- ☐ Definitely True

**40) My parents treated me fairly when I was young.**

- ☐ Definitely False
- ☐ False
- ☐ Mostly False
- ☐ Mostly True
- ☐ True
- ☐ Definitely True

**41) I have nice facial features.**

- ☐ Definitely False
- ☐ False
- ☐ Mostly False
- ☐ Mostly True
- ☐ True
- ☐ Definitely True

**42) Not many people of the same sex like me.**

- ☐ Definitely False
- ☐ False
- ☐ Mostly False
- ☐ Mostly True
- ☐ True
- ☐ Definitely True

**43) I am a better person as a consequence of my spiritual/religious beliefs.**

- ☐ Definitely False
- ☐ False
- ☐ Mostly False
- ☐ Mostly True
- ☐ True
- ☐ Definitely True

**44) Overall, I have pretty positive feelings about myself.**

- ☐ Definitely False
- ☐ False
- ☐ Mostly False
- ☐ Mostly True
- ☐ True
- ☐ Definitely True

**45) I have had lots of feelings of inability to relate to members of the opposite sex.**

- ☐ Definitely False
- ☐ False
- ☐ Mostly False
- ☐ Mostly True
- ☐ True
- ☐ Definitely True

**46) It has often been difficult for me to talk to my parents.**

- ☐ Definitely False
- ☐ False
- ☐ Mostly False
- ☐ Mostly True
- ☐ True
- ☐ Definitely True

**47) I wish that I were physically more attractive.**

- ☐ Definitely False
- ☐ False
- ☐ Mostly False
- ☐ Mostly True
- ☐ True
- ☐ Definitely True

**48) I am popular with other members of the same sex.**

- ☐ Definitely False
- ☐ False
- ☐ Mostly False
- ☐ Mostly True
- ☐ True
- ☐ Definitely True

**49) I am basically an atheist, and believe that there is no being higher than man.**

- ☐ Definitely False
- ☐ False
- ☐ Mostly False
- ☐ Mostly True
- ☐ True
- ☐ Definitely True

**50) Overall, I have a very unclear self-identity.**

- ☐ Definitely False
- ☐ False
- ☐ Mostly False
- ☐ Mostly True
- ☐ True
- ☐ Definitely True

**51) I am comfortable being loving/caring with members of the opposite sex.**

- ☐ Definitely False
- ☐ False
- ☐ Mostly False
- ☐ Mostly True
- ☐ True
- ☐ Definitely True

**52) My parents understand me.**

- ☐ Definitely False
- ☐ False
- ☐ Mostly False
- ☐ Mostly True
- ☐ True
- ☐ Definitely True

**53) Most of my friends are better looking than I am.**

- ☐ Definitely False
- ☐ False
- ☐ Mostly False
- ☐ Mostly True
- ☐ True
- ☐ Definitely True

**54) Most people have more friends of the same sex than I do.**

- ☐ Definitely False
- ☐ False
- ☐ Mostly False
- ☐ Mostly True
- ☐ True
- ☐ Definitely True

**55) I believe there will be some form of continuation of my spirit or soul after my death.**

- ☐ Definitely False
- ☐ False
- ☐ Mostly False
- ☐ Mostly True
- ☐ True
- ☐ Definitely True

**56) Overall, I have pretty negative feelings about myself.**

- ☐ Definitely False
- ☐ False
- ☐ Mostly False
- ☐ Mostly True
- ☐ True
- ☐ Definitely True

**57) I never seem to have much in common with members of the opposite sex.**

- ☐ Definitely False
- ☐ False
- ☐ Mostly False
- ☐ Mostly True
- ☐ True
- ☐ Definitely True

**58) I like my parents.**

- ☐ Definitely False
- ☐ False
- ☐ Mostly False
- ☐ Mostly True
- ☐ True
- ☐ Definitely True

**59) I am good looking.**

- ☐ Definitely False
- ☐ False
- ☐ Mostly False
- ☐ Mostly True
- ☐ True
- ☐ Definitely True

**60) I have lots of friends of the same sex.**

- ☐ Definitely False
- ☐ False
- ☐ Mostly False
- ☐ Mostly True
- ☐ True
- ☐ Definitely True

**61) Overall, I do lots of things that are important.**

- ☐ Definitely False
- ☐ False
- ☐ Mostly False
- ☐ Mostly True
- ☐ True
- ☐ Definitely True

**62) Spiritual/religious beliefs have little to do with the type of person I want to be.**

- ☐ Definitely False
- ☐ False
- ☐ Mostly False
- ☐ Mostly True
- ☐ True
- ☐ Definitely True

**63) Overall, I am not very accepting of myself.**

- ☐ Definitely False
- ☐ False
- ☐ Mostly False
- ☐ Mostly True
- ☐ True
- ☐ Definitely True

**64) Few, if any of my friends are very spiritual/religious.**

- ☐ Definitely False
- ☐ False
- ☐ Mostly False
- ☐ Mostly True
- ☐ True
- ☐ Definitely True

**65) Fake Name**

**66) Gender**

- ☐ Female
- ☐ Male

**67) Please enter your age:**

**68) Marital Status**

- ☐ Single
- ☐ Married
- ☐ Divorced

**69) Compared to the general Kuwaiti population, select your perceived parents' overall financial status during your schooling years.**

	1	2	3	4	5	
Low	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	High

**70) Please select the type of schooling you have attended:**

- ☐ Mixed
- ☐ Segregated
- ☐ Both

**71) If you have attended both types of schooling for middle school and high school, please specify the number of years spent in a mixed school:**

**72) If you have attended both types of schooling for middle school and high school, please specify the number of years spent in a segregated school:**