

An Autoethnographic Navigation of a Muslim Woman's Transitioning Professional Identity

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Abstract

This paper is to understand the transitioning professional identity of a Muslim woman. This qualitative paper focused on the navigation of a Muslim woman's transitioning profession identity. The purpose of this paper was viewing my experiences as a Muslim woman through my educational journey from religious education to secular higher education identifying a professional identity shift. I therefore, recognize a gap, where my comfort zone was my Islamic environment and not an environment for professional growth. An interpretivist paradigm was used for my epistemological stance and my ontological stance was a realism. This paper was embedded in a conceptual framework, where I merge possible selves' theory and the Johari Window Model. The research design of the paper employed an auto-ethnographic design where the data was generated mainly from, personal narratives, artefacts, memory work and my research journal. For trustworthiness of the paper, co-constructors were identified and asked to verify my personal narratives. A thematic analysis approach was used to analyze my data to identify appropriate themes to answer my research questions. The findings of this paper focus on how my professional identity developed and all influences there after influence my professional identity especially from cultural and religious background and past experience. I was required to adapt and accept the internal external factors for developing my professional identity continuously in various context.

1. Introduction

This paper discusses the identity of myself as a 27-year-old Muslim woman from the Indian culture and Sufi Sunni belief. My belief system is completely Islamic and with this Islamic background, I created a "narrow-minded bubble" [1] where I understood this to be my comfort zone. The "narrow-minded bubble" [1] is explained as my "own people" which is Indian Muslim people. After matriculating from an Islamic school, I went back to complete my teaching practical. Instead of being treated as an equal by my teachers who taught me, I was still treated like this student. Through the experience, it is where the title of the paper developing: and autographic navigation of a Muslim woman's transitioning professional identity.

Conducting this autography, I was able to identify the way my beginning teacher identity developed and

how it shifted from an educational student to a postgraduate student and thereafter a part-time lecturer in higher education post-apartheid. This paper will also discuss my schooling journey which was a religious school that coincided with my family context being fully Islamic. Therefore, I will discuss how this context influenced my professional identity by changing between religious and secular context in education. The context of this paper was embedded in my professional journey transitioning from religious and secular educational environment to a lecturer in higher education.

2. Research Questions

- i. How did I, as a Muslim woman navigate my transitioning professional identity?
- ii. Why did I navigate my transition professional identity the way I did?

3. Literature Review

The literature capsulated for main themes, these themes consisted of multiple identities, professional identity is the main concept of this paper, identity stressors, Islam as the main concept of the paper and the important concepts of higher education. Through the synthesis of the literature review the following findings were highlighted,

3.1. Identities as a concept

According to Hardy, Nadal and Schwartz (2017) identities are interconnected and cannot exist independently. Professional identity is associated with professional self-concept [2], and identity is associated with self-concept [1]. The friction between professional identities is discussed as well. The workplace and personal context are two examples of professional identity issues [3], morals, values, and beliefs are directly related to personal identity [4]. Racial and social categories are included in this [1]. Understanding one's personal identity precedes developing one's professional identity [2]. Due to prejudice variables like race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, disability, health, mental health, and many other traits, stigmas affect both personal and professional identity [5]. One's professional identity is

always evolving and being built. A shifting experience of being, becoming, and belonging as they relate to a profession is associated with a transitioning professional identity. Since technology and curriculum change are essential to teaching and learning, changing one's professional identity is a crucial idea in education. Culture, not religion, determines a Muslim woman's identity, and these cultures deny Muslim women their rights [1].

3.2. The religion of Islam shaping my professional identity

The Quran and Sunnah serve as the foundation for Muslim belief [6]. Ladies should cover their complete body except for their hands, feet, and face, while men should cover their navel to their knee [1]. Eid al-Fitr, Eid al-Adha, and Eid Mawlid al-Nabi are the three major holidays observed [7]. The Quran and Sunnah provide guidelines for marriage, divorce, and diet [8]. The five pillars of Islam are the Hajj (the pilgrimage to Mecca), Zakah (the obligatory prayer), Sawm (the fasting during Ramadan), Salah (the obligatory prayer), and Shahadah (the declaration of faith) [9].

3.3. Important concepts of higher education

Teaching and learning are conceptualized in higher education [1]. Secondary or tertiary education are terms used to describe higher education [10]. Universities are negatively impacted by neoliberalism [11]. Multiculturalism is the core of diversity, and institutions welcome students from a variety of racial and cultural backgrounds [1]. Since it is believed that further education will corrupt them and postpone marriage, Muslim women are under-represented in higher education [12]. However, Prophet Muhammad SAW's wife was a prosperous businesswoman and a symbol of Islam in Islamic history [13].

In the twenty-first century, education is significantly impacted by the fourth industrial revolution. ICTs were the first technological advancements, and this had an impact on educational costs [1]. The blended learning approach is the most often used teaching and learning strategy in HEIs [1].

4. Conceptual Framework

The possible self's theory and the Johari Window Model are combined in the purple-coloured region of the above diagram. I examine the idea of professional identity in this paper by examining the concept of the self in order to comprehend how I navigated my changing professional identity as a Muslim woman. Every person can be comprehended and transformed into the ideal person according to the Possible Selves philosophy.

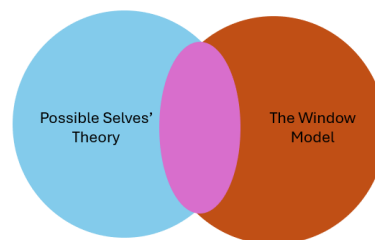


Figure 1. Merging of Possible Selves' Theory and The Window Model [1]

In this paper, navigating my evolving professional identity will be made easier by maintaining open lines of communication with coworkers. Through advice and support from academic experts, I will be able to develop a personal relationship that will strengthen my professional identity. Since the Possible Selves hypothesis is about self-knowledge, block two is referred to as the open region that corresponds to it. Reflecting and getting feedback might help you better understand and know yourself. In order to better understand myself in regard to my professional identity and my lecture style, I have used data from this paper, including video reflections of myself. Because I have a blindside with regard to my lecturing style, block two of the Johari Window Model is relevant to my research. I may evaluate my lectures using my video reflections, apply the knowledge I've learnt, and improve my teaching techniques to help me negotiate my changing professional identity.

As Marcus and Nurius [14] discuss the "dreaded possible selves", which are all the negativity and worries that one thinks of oneself, block three, also referred to as the concealed area, relates to the Possible Selves hypothesis. I may have personal secrets and unspoken beliefs that could harm my reputation in the workplace. These concerns and sensitivities will prevent me from navigating my evolving professional identity and will cause me to make choices that could cost me several chances to advance my career. I employ self-reflective narratives in my research, exposing my anxieties and unpleasant experiences that have influenced the fluidity of my identities.

Since self-knowledge is a process of discovery, the Possible Selves hypothesis is pertinent to the understanding of block four, also referred to as the unknown area. Grid Four is where my team members and I will be making discoveries together as we navigate the process of my changing professional identity for my paper. Johari's Window Model and the Possible Selves hypothesis can be used to illustrate my research because they both address the self and self-knowledge, which helps me navigate my professional identity through autoethnography. The Johari Window Model and the Possible Selves theory are related because they both deal with the idea of the self.

The Johari Window Model and the Possible Selves hypothesis were used as the conceptual foundation for this paper since they help me constantly understand who I am in a professional setting. I was able to comprehend how I managed my shifting professional identity as a Muslim woman by comprehending the several identities I own and connecting them to the fundamental idea of professional identity. I was able to learn more about myself through self-knowledge by applying the Johari Window Model and the Possible Selves Theory [14]. After that, I was able to modify the self-awareness found in the four Johari Window Model blocks and connect it to the paper's central idea of professional identity.

5. Research design and methodology

The research design and methodology sections is embedded into paradigmatic stances, where I discuss my ontological and epistemological stance, my research design as an autoethnography, types of data generation, the selection of co-constructors, a thematic data analysis approach, and the quality assurance of the study.

5.1. Paradigmatic stances

This paper entails paradigmatic stances which are, ontological stance, epistemological stance and methodological stance. "What is the reality out there?" is the question of ontology. The question of "how can we know about the reality out there?" is known as epistemology. The question of "how can we acquire the knowledge about the reality out there?" is methodology [15]. According to De Vos et al. [16], realism requires that the paper's participants represent its reality. "Knowledge arises from the understanding of symbols and meaning" is the epistemological stance of an interpretivist [16]. This paper's research methodology is qualitative. Qualitative research is "an understanding of the human condition in different contexts and a perceived situation," according to [17]. Understanding people's experiences in a particular situation is made possible by qualitative research [18].

5.2. Research design

This paper's autoethnographic research design is set up to provide answers to the research questions through the process of data collecting and analysis [19]. An autoethnography's research design follows a particular framework. This framework comprises paradigmatic attitudes, a research question, a theoretical framework, a methodological procedure, and tools for data collecting and creation [1]. Autoethnography is defined as "an approach to research and writing that seeks to describe systematically analyze (graphy) personal experience (auto) to understand cultural experience (ethno)" by

[20]. Karl Heider first used the term "autoethnography" in 1975, which helped to define the various cultures inside society [19]. This research approach was designed to provide researchers the freedom to express themselves while taking their sociocultural background into account. Ellis, Adams, and Bochner [20] goes on to say that autoethnography permits subjectivity but is not entirely introspective; it also takes into account how people interact with one another. According to Adams, Jones and Ellis [19], autoethnography is employed for personal narrative, subjectivity, and reflexivity.

Analytical autoethnography research approach is used in this paper. Research in which the researcher is a full member in the research group or setting, the researcher is visible as such a member in published texts, and the researcher is committed to developing theoretical understandings of broader social phenomena is what [21], explains as an analytical autoethnography. I gained an understanding of who I am as a Muslim woman and how I have negotiated my professional identity through the analytical autoethnography. Storytelling is the focus of an autoethnography, and I have used a variety of literary styles, such as poetry and introspective tales, to tell my story.

5.3. Data generation

According to Chang [21], when employing autoethnography as a research method, the researcher might take into account two different forms of data generation. Self-observational data and memory-retrieved data are the two approaches [21]. I go over the tools I used to create my data in this part. As this autoethnography's principal investigator, I serve as the primary instrument for data collection and analysis. I recalled short stories from a wide range of contexts and events, including my formative years, how I viewed culture in contrast to religion, and my experiences developing professionally. On my phone, I installed the Daybook app to record significant events, feelings, and emotions. These could be brand-new or recurring experiences brought on by a particular incident, image, quotation, or my kinesiology treatments. To avoid omitting any information regarding the emotions or feelings I was having, the App Daybook was utilised as an electronic journal to record the information instantly. Some of these short stories were inspired while I was working on this project, while others were created over the course of a year from memory.

5.4. Selection of co-constructors

The researcher has the option to collaborate with co-constructors or not in an autoethnography. Ellis et al. [20], state that authors have the option of conducting interviews with other people or using the

paper's documentation. I wanted to choose people who had a significant impact on my life, therefore I selected participants to serve as co-constructors for my project both in a favorable and negative way. This would make it easier to comprehend specific interactions and events that shaped my professional identity. Several friends, my parents, and my siblings co-constructed my paper. It was crucial to choose these co-constructors carefully. I had to choose whether or not to include my story's "villains." Would they read the entire tale or only the passages that didn't upset them if I did? I had to think carefully about these important choices, particularly regarding how I intended to go about selecting my co-constructors.

After selecting my co-constructors, I created a list of the stories that each co-constructor needs to receive by email. I started by sending the co-constructor a WhatsApp message to enquire about their interest in taking part. I wrote them an invitation letter and a consent letter after they said yes. I also told the co-constructor to get in touch with me if they had any issues or needed clarification on the paper or what was expected of them.

5.5. Thematic data analysis approach

The general technique for analyzing qualitative data is thematic analysis [22] Identifying, analyzing, and reporting themes within the data" is the goal of the thematic analysis approach [1]. Because it enables me to pinpoint certain themes in my dataset and provide answers to my research questions, I have decided to employ thematic analysis. I had to read my data—which included poems, short tales, and reflections—many times after I finished creating it in order to find the themes.

Ten methodologies can be used to evaluate and interpret data in an autoethnographic paper, according to Chang [23]. Finding a topic, themes, and patterns that recur, identifying cultural themes, looking for exceptional occurrences, examining inclusions and omissions, evaluating the relationships between others and the self, comparing the self with other cases, contextualizing widely, comparing with social science constructs and ideas, and framing with theories are some of these strategies. Chang [23]. I had to read my stories and reflections in order to comprehend them before I could use these techniques to my data analysis. Using Chang's [23] five techniques, I analyzed my autoethnographic data. Which were; Find a theme, topic, or pattern that keeps coming up, connect the past to the present, assess how people relate to oneself, contextualize broadly, and frame with theories.

5.6. Quality assurance

Credibility, transferability, authenticity, and verisimilitude are the quality metrics I utilize for my

autoethnography. I don't go into confirmability in this paper. Confirmability, as defined by [22], is the absence of bias in the paper's conclusions. There is a sense of bias in the paper because it is subjective and auto-ethnographical, and the short stories represent my interpretation of the event.

5.6.1. Trustworthiness: The subjective opinion of the researcher is the foundation of an autoethnography [20]. The participants and supporting documentation of specific experiences offered by the researcher are crucial when discussing the validity of an autoethnography. An autoethnography needs to be supported by documentation and interviews with research co-constructors in addition to relying on the recall of experiences in order to be considered trustworthy. I have accomplished this by including artefacts, such as screenshots of discussions, in my Annexures as proof.

5.6.2. Transferability: According to Maree [22], transferability is the capacity of the outcomes and conclusions of one paper to be applied to subsequent research in a different paper with a different setting. This might not be the case in an autoethnography as the researcher serves as the primary participant. The self-reflective narratives, which represent the researcher's actual emotions and views, contain the results and conclusions of an auto-ethnographical paper. An autoethnography's conclusions and outcomes may serve as motivation for someone else in a comparable situation.

5.6.3. Authenticity: A person's internal sense of self which may include his or her thoughts, feelings, values, and identities is how [22] explains authenticity. I achieve authenticity in this auto-ethnographic paper by sharing my self-narratives, ideas, feelings, values, and the fluidity of my numerous identities. My genuine sense of being the only participant in this paper is reflected in my thoughts, feelings, beliefs, and the fluidity of my numerous identities, all of which are described in full from memory. I have so demonstrated authenticity in this paper by being truthful in my self-reflective narratives.

5.6.4. Verisimilitude: Verisimilitude is the key to credibility in autoethnography [21]. As believability is a prerequisite for qualitative rigor in an autoethnography, this indicates that readers can identify with the stories in the autoethnography [21]. I had to ensure that my short stories were told honestly and without bias in order to be considered rigorous. Through discussions with the co-constructors of my paper and their letters of verisimilitude, I made sure that my stories were free of bias.

5.7. Ethical Considerations

As you delve deeply into painful situations, an autoethnography can be an emotional paper. This may result in "rubbing salt into closed wounds," which could be the participant's or my own. There are ethical principles that need to be followed in relation to these painful and emotional problems, including accountability, context, honesty, and community [1]. Stories that include details about other individuals are the subject of an autoethnography. Adams et al. [19] assert that the paper's co-constructors must be respected. Therefore, unless they are family members, I am employing pseudonyms for the co-constructors of this paper. I must adhere to the ethical principles of fairness and beneficence, which state that the paper's co-constructors must not suffer any damage [19]. I have said in my consent form that although the co-constructor in my short narrative may appear to be a villain, this is only my version of events and how they shaped who I am.

5.8. Limitations of the paper

According to this paper, my religious environment hindered my professional development; my assumption that it was my comfort zone did not turn out as planned; a secular setting must accommodate my religious holidays, such as Eid, while lectures are still being given; and higher education's religion and culture differ from mine and must be accommodated, such as Friday prayers between 12:30 and 13:30.

6. Research Findings

An individual's understanding of their life experiences is linked to the development of their personal identity [1]. The following sub-themes were found and evaluated in connection with my data analysis under this major theme. The sub-themes that were identified were the self, my religious identity as a Muslim woman, identity stresses in my personal context, and identity stressors in my social environment.

Self-doubt and self-sabotage were one of the challenges I experiences through life. I regard this as a personal stressor as I was my own villain [1]. As an individual, I use to self-doubt t myself and lead to self-sabotage due to mental stress and stigma. These stressors allowed me to grow and become resilient. Through my life journey, I experienced many stressors within my social context. these people included family members and friends. I regard this as a personal stressor as I was my own villain. As an individual, I use to self-doubt t myself and lead to self-sabotage due to mental stress and stigma. Through my life journey, I experienced many stressors within my social context. these people included family members and friends. Social engagement fosters a favorable

self-image [1]. I struggled to have a positive self-image as I grew up. In my opinion, my father did not provide me with a strong support system. Some friends contributed to my poor self-perception by making remarks that had a psychological impact on me.

I've always liked phrases with profound meanings, and my friends used to say that I was too sentimental and introspective. I ended up suppressing my feelings because it had an adverse effect on my mental health. I discovered that my life lacked affirmation, and I had to come to terms with the fact that I needed to affirm myself rather than rely on other people to do it. Affirmation, according to Aboo [1], is about being adaptable in self-threatening circumstances. This is the negative self-image that Markus and Nurius [14] refer to as the "dreaded possible selves." The concealed region known as block three of the Johari Window Model contains self-doubt and self-sabotage. Stressors in my social and personal life affected my professional identity because I may always question my skills and talents, but I will need to go past these obstacles in order to establish a strong professional identity.

Religion has a significant role in this paper. I identify as a Muslim lady who practices Sufi Sunni Islam [1]. Religious identity is a social affiliation with a particular religion [1]. Religion is relevant to our paper for two main reasons: first, it encompasses the idea of stigma; second, it has a direct bearing on why I left religious settings for secular ones [1]. Religion and stigma are tightly intertwined, as Crewe and Guyot-Diangone [5] illustrate. During my voyage, I came into two stigmatized issues: the first was a lecturer's comment about my dress code, and the second was a test and the Eid celebration. In this paper, I also came to the realization that I required a change of scenery for my professional identity, and that my religious surroundings were endangering my Initial Professional Identity (IPI), which was my identity as a novice teacher, rather than advancing my career. I incorporate the stigma associated with religion into both the Self-knowledge of Possible Selves theory and block 4 of the Johari Window Model. I had never heard of stigma or my religious surroundings, but after learning about various life experiences, I was able to grasp my religious identity and connect it to my professional identity. My primary research question is:

How did I, as a Muslim woman navigate my transitioning professional identity?

According to the explanation of my findings above, I managed my professional identity as a Muslim woman by comprehending the pressures in my social and personal environment and integrating my religious identity into the central topic of my identity. I came to see that by being strong and

comprehending the stresses in my personal life, I can comprehend how they affect my professional identity. My secondary research question which is:

Why did I navigate my professional identity the way I did?

I examined the key ideas of stresses and religious identity in order to negotiate my professional identity inside my personal identity. I realized that in order to maintain a healthy professional identity, I needed to recognize and manage my own personal concerns. I developed my professional identity in this manner after realizing that I wanted to plan to enhance and continuously grow my professional identity in order to have a better and more productive career.

6.1. Factors influencing my identification as a professional

In order to demonstrate my individual lecture style, my video reflections were a crucial component of my distinctive pedagogical approach. One of the primary reasons was that, while I was able to establish a relationship with my pupils, I was also able to establish boundaries with them [1]. Chapman [24] claims that this was a blind aspect of my professor persona that was discovered by critical reflection.

My early professional persona was formed while I was a student and tutored my peers. During my last year of my BEd degree, work-integrated learning strengthened my original professional identity [1]. I discovered my weak points through my self-reflective narrative, where I was unable to go from my first professional identity to a later one. Speaking in front of an audience was the only major weakness found. To ensure that I could create a better future and consistently grow my professional identity, I had to get over this anxiety.

I was able to pinpoint the ways in which my first professional identity evolved into a later one by using my self-reflective narrative. Being put in an awkward situation helped me develop my professional identity. This indicates that I was able to shift my professional identity and let it evolve over time when there was identity tension. I had identity conflicts in my work settings, which helped me advance professionally [1]. Affirmation is another idea that is emphasized in this theme. This was noted in my WIL and in my experience as a junior lecturer and senior instructor.

Being pushed headfirst into my workplace was another major concept of changing my professional identity. This was accomplished by taking training courses to become familiar with the university's online system and by beginning to serve as an academic supporter for a research module in the remote learning unit. Since I was put in an awkward situation, this is once more viewed as an identity tension [1]. I was able to consistently transition and

create a professional identity by learning about my work environment. My primary research question is:

How did I, as a Muslim woman navigate my transition-ing professional identity?

As a Muslim woman, I successfully negotiated my evolving professional identity by navigating the Johari Window Model's unknown and blind section [24]. Knowing who you are is crucial because knowing who you are requires knowing who you are [1]. I was therefore able to create the term "personal professional identity" by comprehending identity through self-awareness. I was able to pinpoint a personal and professional identity in this paper [4]. I managed my shifting professional identity by comprehending my workplace and seeing how things link to one another. *My secondary research question which is:*

Why did I navigate my professional identity the way I did?

I managed my shifting professional identity in the same way that I did as a Muslim woman because I recognized the connection between the self and the environment in which I operate professionally. Hardy et al. [4] state that the fundamental development. The setting is the evolution of a person's personal identity. In order to comprehend the context of my surroundings and consistently cultivate a changing professional identity, I had to merge the known, unknown, hidden, and blind aspects of myself [24].

6.2. The relationship between several identities in this paper

A new concept included to this paper was personal professional identity, which was covered in the prior theme. In my opinion, a person's personal identity encompasses all other identities, hence identities are interconnected. My gender identity, religious identity, and social identity are all revealed by the paper of my data, and they all eventually fit the puzzle of my professional identity. Knowing oneself is difficult, therefore I used the Johari Window model and the Possible Selves theory in my research to figure out who I am as a professional. The concept of self-knowledge from the past to the present is covered by [15]. After carefully examining my facts and past experiences, I was able to comprehend this in my paper, which helped me improve my present and make plans for a prosperous future. I was able to locate the many identities I found using the four blocks in the Johari Window model [24]. I was able to learn more about myself because to the four blocks—the open area, the concealed area, the know area, and the unknown area.

The idea of changing one's professional identity was the main emphasis of this autoethnography. I found that a certain kind of identity tension must exist before a shift in professional identity may take place. Professional identity tensions are defined as "the internal struggle of an early career teacher between the situations-as-is and the situations-as-preferred, relevant to the teacher as a person and as a professional, emerging in a specific context" by Van der Wal et al. [3]. Van der Wal et al. [3] provide an exceptional definition of a professional identity. In the workplace, identity conflicts are seen as having more of a beneficial than a negative effect on my professional identity [1].

Realizing that my religious environment was ineffective for me and that a shift was necessary was one of the biggest identity tensions I have had in my life. At this point, I made the decision to transition from a religious setting to a secular one in order to continue developing my professional identity. Block 4 is considered the unknown area in the Johari Window Model [24] and I had to figure out which setting was best for developing my individuality. My primary research question is:

How did I, as a Muslim woman navigate my transitioning professional identity?

Understanding that identities are interconnected and that professional identity is multifaceted helped me negotiate my changing professional identity. I also recognized that I needed to comprehend that identity tension, which permits a transition, is what keeps professional identity evolving. Last but not least, I understood that identities are malleable and that developing an identity is not a straight line [1]. My secondary research question which is:

Why did I navigate my professional identity the way I did?

My understanding of the concept of self-knowledge allowed me to negotiate my changing professional identity in the manner that I did [14]. The awareness of my surroundings for professional progress was the primary driver behind this topic of navigating my transitional professional identity. I was able to first create a professional identity and then transfer it through identity tensions by moving outside of what I thought to be my comfort zone.

6.3. My evolving professional identity in the field of higher education

Understanding the culture of higher education was crucial to this issue for me because it differs greatly from the "narrow minded bubble" I was in. One of my challenges adjusting to a higher education culture that is connected to job trajectory was my decision to

attend a private school [25]. I was able to comprehend the concept of my career by having a background in higher education [1]. The LGBTIQ community was the primary idea that I found most important in comprehending the culture of higher education.

In order to better grasp my evolving professional identity in relation to my lecturing style and how I might advance for a future career, I made good use of my video reflections. In higher education, I had to grasp and comprehend the ideas of teaching and learning components. Teaching and learning methodologies, classroom management, and time management were the three primary components that were found. Classroom and time management are seen as teacher competencies for student learning achievement and competency [1]. Activities involving teacher-centered, learner-centered, inquiry-based, cooperative, blended, and PCK learning were used to approach teaching and learning methodologies throughout my lectures and class discussions. I was able to anticipate my shortcomings, find strategies for future progress, and enable the ongoing development of my professional identity by comprehending the teaching and learning strategy. My primary research question is:

How did I, as a Muslim woman navigate my transitioning professional identity?

Through ten video reflections, I was able to navigate my evolving professional identity within this paper's theme and identify the blind and concealed aspects of my lectures [24]. Through these video reflections, I was able to better understand how I lecture and develop my delivery to improve instruction and learning [14]. My secondary research question which is:

Why did I navigate my professional identity the way I did?

After creating my reflection document (Annexure C), which allowed me to critically evaluate my lecture approach, I was able to view my lecturing videos, which allowed me to traverse my professional identity in this way. I was able to pinpoint the hidden and blind aspects of my lectures and make plans for development in order to provide more impactful lectures by critically reflecting on them [24].

7. Conclusion

I was able to comprehend how to navigate my changing professional identity in HE and as a Muslim woman thanks to the three primary themes that emerged throughout the data analysis and interpretation phase. My self-reflective narratives yielded sub-themes that helped me address my two primary research topics. How did I, as a Muslim

woman, manage my evolving professional identity? was my primary research topic. Since my identification and professional identity are strongly related, my primary three themes assisted me in responding to my initial research questions. This included my self-perception as well as how I let other people see me. Being an Indian Muslim lady usually involves cultural considerations. This was caused by opinions from my extended family and other outside factors rather than directly from within my family. My first research question was addressed by the themes of professional identity and comfort zone. After realising that what I thought was my comfort zone was not; in order to facilitate my professional development, I had to alter both my surroundings and my perspective.

Why did I manage my professional identity in the manner that I did? was my secondary research question. This relates to my primary focus, which is personal identity. My identity informed the career path I took and connected my cultural and religious identities. I've always been perplexed by my upbringing, which did not place much emphasis on education, but I was the one who was urged to pursue a career in medicine. Despite the fact that both of my parents are qualified, they did not place a strong priority on education for my siblings. Even though I didn't become a doctor, I still wanted to succeed because I always believed that education and earning a degree were vital. I seized the chance to educate myself and develop into a strong Muslim woman because I did not want Indian culture to permeate my life. I chose this path for my professional identity because I wanted to demonstrate that the world is changing and that Indian Muslim women have hope.

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