Saudi Children's Viewing Interests in the Age of Globalisation: A Case Study in Jeddah

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Title:
*Saudi Children's Viewing Interests
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Abstract: This study examines the impact of new technologies (such as TV, video and videogames) on young Saudis' viewing interests. The study also contextualises the interplay among media, culture and identity, in a predominantly conservative country such as Saudi Arabia, which is regarded as the guardian of Islam. This is done through reflecting on the internal structure of Saudi Arabia in terms of the social, political, economic, cultural and media milieus. The study also engages, critically, with debates on the external factors of the globalisation processes, such as modernisation, dependency and development.

Two methodologies are applied: firstly, a survey of 300 children, representing genders and social classes from the city of Jeddah, was carried out to explore the factors that influence the visual media materials' consumption of Saudi children, the sorts of gratifications obtained and the impact of media cultivation on the image children have of foreign, Arab and Saudi peoples. Secondly, interviews were conducted with top policy-makers in the media industry and socialisation agencies. This aimed to investigate the Saudi media for children, levels of activity, cultural imperialism and their impact on the Muslim Saudi child.

The findings show that policy-makers have contrasting views regarding these issues. Also, their views are different and isolated from those of the children. The children in general display obvious disinterest in Saudi TV. They watch media materials mainly for entertainment and pleasure, which are of foreign and Arab origins. Socialisation backgrounds of genders and social classes are found to be significant in media viewing interests of children. Notably, females and elite class children show less interest in national media when compared to males and other classes. These findings have deep implications for the interplay of media, culture and identity in Saudi Arabia. Finally, some suggestions are offered for improving children's experiences with the media.

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To my beloved father – the source of my success.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

INTRODUCTION

Background Information & External/internal factors: The Saudi Debate

The popularity of the electronic visual media among old and young people in the Saudi Kingdom has flourished with the inauguration of national television (Saudi TV) in the 1960s. In the 1970s, it was highlighted with the introduction of video which decentralised and personalised visual media usage, shifting control from the hands of the authority to the hands of the audience. The trend continued with the arrival of videogames during the 1980s and reached its peak during the 1990s, after the Gulf War, which brought a media storm to the desert land with the dissemination of countless uncontrolled displays of Direct Broadcast Satellite (DBS) channels. This condition, however, provoked questions about the socialisation of children in a conservative and developing Kingdom, beheld as the guardian of Islam.

The situation began when the *'nouveaux rich'* Saudi State wanted to provide its people with recreation by providing an innovation that was at least symbolically modern to enhance the traditional Saudi image abroad. The government also wanted to technically update a primitive communication sector to analogue the swiftly growing economy. Likewise, it aimed to provide an attractive alternative to the hostile[1] broadcasts from Egyptian radio stations as well as to distract access to foreign radio broadcasts which became possible (Boyd, 1999). It further sought to provide a means for transmitting news and development planning to promote basic health and literacy training in addition to

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[1] Under Nasser's leadership, *Voice of the Arabs* and *Radio Cairo* started offending the Saudi Royal Family and proposing a revolution.

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support classroom teaching. In addition, the Saudi government wanted the domestic visual media (Saudi TV) to help provide a sense of national unity. It intended to build up a Saudi national identity, particularly among those living in the desert and in rural and urban areas, and to attract wealthy Saudis who were already enamoured with the visual media through exposure whilst outside the country (Merdad, 1993).

However, internally, visual media introduction was another matter altogether in comparison to audio media (Boyd, 1999). Since their introduction there was mostly anxiety that visual media would bring non-Islamic and non-traditional Western influences to the Saudi culture (Rampal, 1994). Therefore, the visual media confronted stronger opposition from theologians and conservatives, particularly because of their visual elements as compared to radio (Boyd, 1999, Merdad, 1993). In the case of national television, the Saudi government resorted to exercising its authority to establish what it viewed as necessary for the nation's best interest and modernisation (Al-garni, 2000). As a matter of fact, since its inception, Saudi television has been used primarily as an entertainment and government propaganda medium while its potential, especially for national development, is considered unfulfilled. Little concern is given to educational and informational aspects of content, while substantial emphasis has been placed on entertainment. In his study of Saudi Television, Douglas Boyd (1982) found,

> 'the programming on Saudi Arabian television is essentially entertainment oriented. Little attempt was made to provide viewers with programmes of an educational nature, for various reasons: the lack of production, personnel and facilities, the absence of a programming philosophy by those who were responsible for programming, and the ease with which outside entertainment programming could be purchased' (Boyd, 1982, 120).

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Nevertheless, the status of Saudi Arabia as the guardian of the Muslim holy cities has obligated the Saudi government to be observant of Islamic teachings. It has become the centre of attention by spectators both in and outside the country to be seen as strict and reliable guardians of Islam. Alcohol is thus prohibited, as well as night clubs and cinemas (Merdad, 1993). Consequently, young Saudis perceive the private visual media to be the predominant source of entertainment and information (Al-garni, 2000). Media viewing is the principal leisure activity for children in Saudi families because they are not socialised to read or exercise other activities (Baharith, 1994).

Today, in spite of the state-sponsored desire to attract young viewers to the domestic visual media (Saudi TV), there is a more enticing variety of Western and Arab programmes available on DBS Channels in particular as well as videotapes and videogames. As a result of the penetrating power of the new technologies that have marked the age of globalisation, the state-run media have lost their dominance over young people (Yamani, 2000).

The situation has led to the accusation of globalisation of imperialism. Many Anti-globalists state that the communications revolution of the globalisation era, which has dissolved boundaries and censorship whilst disseminating either 'un-Islamic' or unconventional values and lifestyle in Saudi Arabia, is considered the highest form of imperialism (Yaseen, 2000, Balegzaiz, 2000). Visual media as tools of globalisation market the culture of entertainment and consumption (Al-hamad, 1999, Al-marzuki, 1999). According to Al-azm (1996), globalisation is the sharp diversion of capitalism to include all humanity under the dominance of the core, through imbalanced economic and communication systems (Al-azm, 1996). The new technologies of globalisation do not lead to modernisation and development but rather to dependency and invasion which in

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turn remove state hegemony and sovereignty (Amin, 2000). Furthermore, the cultural penetration through the new media has not stopped at the periphery/core relationship, as in the case of Saudi Arabia, but it goes beyond that to sharpen the division of people's national identity. This is done through unequal access to new technologies and their contents between genders and among classes (Balegazaiz, 2000). However, the problem is not that linear. The viewing interests of Saudi children go far beyond external forces alone. In fact, Al-shabaili (1992) argues that the political, economic, cultural, constitutional and technical systems, and their development, represent the core problem. The one-way flow of information reflects the internal structure of developing countries. The broadcasting media industry of Saudi Arabia is heavily dependent on imported materials (Al-shabaili, 1992). Al-garni (2000) explains that this is a result of Saudi media policy and practice, which have both led to suppressed and constrained nationalistic media production industry in the country which, in return, has increased dependence on imports (Al-garni, 2000). Tash (2002) contends that there is a widespread assumption that the excessive importation of cultural products, in this case visual media programmes, can harm or even destroy identities (Tash, 2002). The heavy diet of foreign and Arab programmes since the inception of Saudi TV was as a result of many of the inadequate production facilities, and proficient Saudi technical staff were not then available. Also, issues such as independence from government censorship, freedom of expression as well as control over media facilities, which are imperative to an active production industry, tend to be ignored. The local production system is weak and handicapped by precisely these kinds of obstacles. The broadcast media has suffered from the absence of an information and communication policy up until 1982 (Al-garni, 2000). Yet different socialisation agencies argue that Saudi television performance is still inconsistent with

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and deviates from, declared Saudi communication and information policy, especially with respect to cultural aspects of media performance. This will be discussed in detail in chapter 12. The policy should be translated into action where children's programmes should be designed and produced with Saudi children in mind (Mishmishi, 1995). Yet, local children's programmes face major failings. They contain either dull propagandistic reports about government developmental achievements or rerun cartoons full of exaggerated fiction, myth and polytheism contrary to the teaching of Islam (Al-garni, 2000).

Islam emphasises that life and human interaction should be subject to *Sharia* (Divine Law) based on the Quran and the teaching of Prophet Muhammad, and not on man-made law (Bali, 2000, Lamb 1987). Consequently, the entertainment contents of Saudi Television should be geared towards fulfilling educational functions and disseminating the values of Islam. Saudi TV should be exploited in the development plans and used as a tool to promote the Islamic cultural identity (Alharithi, 1983, Tash, 2002).

The majority of Western and Arab[1] programmes inevitably depict values, ideas and lifestyles, which religious scholars believe conflict with the principles of Islam and are irrelevant to Saudi culture. This problem of un-Islamic or unsuitable messages is considered a result of Saudi Television's dependence on imported entertainment, produced in other cultures with different character and values. This dependence is reinforced by a lack of local productions with which to fill airtime. Saudi Television is, therefore, denounced both by the Islamists and the conservatives. They accuse imported Arab and Western programmes and, to a lesser extent, locally produced programmes of

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[1] Among foreigners there exists the incorrect supposition that all Arabs belong to the same culture. Nevertheless, there are huge differences in terms of the degree of social values and faith in Islam held by each country.

violating policy standards. Yet, for the liberals who aspire to Western culture, the censorious content of Saudi Television is a cause of antagonism which invites them to turn to DBS and other forms of entertainment (Al-garni, 2000).

Religious Saudi programmes restrict themselves to explaining religious duties to Saudi audience, without indulging in any contemporary issues. In their limited form, they are not conducive to the innovation of new ideas. The majority of these programmes are very boring with poor production values (Al-oofy, 1990).

Also, according to Al-garni (2000), the domestic arena is entirely absent or out of focus (Al-garni, 2000). Audiences are dissatisfied with both the amount and quality of regional, national and local news reporting (Merdad, 1993). Women's issues, for example, are rarely addressed by Saudi Television. Hence, there is little chance for women to communicate (Al-jammal, 2001).

Regarding educational programmes, Saudi Television does not provide good enlightening programming. Even though Saudi TV officials regard television as an important tutorial tool for society, the system's lack of a professional fabric to undertake the production of effective educational materials makes Saudi Television primarily a vehicle for the dissemination of low quality entertainment programmes and government news (Merdad, 1993). Many educational programmes broadcast are made cheaply, based on little creative effort and are incapable of enhancing the viewers' knowledge. They often rely on out-of-date production (Al-garni, 2002). The drab presentation and limited scope of issues covered mean that Saudi TV has increasingly been rejected and attention has also been drawn to the issue of censorship of Saudi TV materials which is not beneficial in terms of securing Saudi values; instead it only contributes to evading the facts (Yamani,

2000). These factors regarding the national visual media, among other reasons, are driving young Saudis to seek other visual media alternatives.

In addition to the media problem, most important are the goals of socialisation of young people which have never been strategically and sincerely implemented by the family in particular and society as a whole. Although it is strongly advised that a child receives the correct socialisation by exploring questions and satisfying curiosity, Saudi parents are nevertheless inattentive in ensuring that the child has these rights (Algami, 2000). Consequently, the family has lost its position as a reference to more challenging sources such as visual media materials (Al-jabri, 2000). The child searches for models that are socially and psychologically compensating, in other contexts (Al-gareeb, 2001). Also, the educational system in Saudi Arabia in its current form is part of a total socio-political order that is adjusted to produce and reproduce a traditional social structure in which minimal changes can be seen. Schools as a second institution, reinforce the status quo and do not mediate or aspire to change the fabric of society or the characteristics of individuals (Al-baker, 1990). The curriculum largely creates dependency, an inability to innovate or think and incompetence to satisfy curiosity and the epistemological aspirations of the children (Al-jabri, 2000).

Moreover, another internal problem is that socialisation is influenced by the child's gender and social class. Saudi Arabia is a patriarchal society, which prepares males and females for different roles in the future. In such a society, having boys is a source of respect to the family while girls are less valued (Al-khateeb, 1990, Al-saif, 1997). Hence, through the socialisation process, male and female children are treated differently. Boys are always encouraged to be confident and not to show their emotions. A male is brought up having a positive view of himself and his ability. On the other hand, a female is

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brought up to have a negative attitude towards herself. Female children are not expected to be outspoken like male children. Women and children are always put on the same level. They are not treated or regarded as rational. They should always be guarded and guided (Al-torki, 1986). Differences in socialisation between males and females can be crucial in their interests in the visual media and materials which could be challenging to the social structure. Likewise, the influx of wealth from oil in Saudi society has created many contradictions. The Saudi society has become one of the most consumer-oriented societies in the world. Almost all commodities are imported from abroad. All family members are encouraged to be consumer men, women and children. However, there are still huge divisions among people in terms of income, education, modernity, and adherence to tradition or to Islam (Al-khateeb, 1990). The upper class detaches itself from local culture, whilst the lower classes have no choice but to reconcile with it. Caught in between is the middle class. This in return would influence the way the various classes approach the electronic visual media.

Saudis in general encounter contradictory positions. Their Islamic identity has become static consisting of empty rituals and traditions instead of being a source of trust and intellect. This split between the spirit of Islam and performance, the detachment of the teaching of the religion from life and human interaction have weakened the Islamic cultural identity and integrity of young people. In return, this would make them open to non-Islamic culture flowing from Western or Arab countries (Tash, 2002). The situation could lead to the formation of an identity crisis that calls for the creation of a fragmented society; one which practices a superficial conformity to an Islamic way of life but which aspires intrinsically to an imported non-Islamic lifestyle.

The attention that a nation gives to its children has become a marker for the quality of its civilisation. Nations that position children second or third can not hope for a future (Al-ayyar, 1994). The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989), which is compatible with the Islamic perspective, states in Article 17 "that the child has access to information and materials from a diversity of national and international sources." Also Article 13 of the Convention emphasises this notion by stating that "the child shall have the right to freedom of expression. This right shall include freedom to seek, receive and impart information and ideas of all kinds regardless of frontiers ...through any ... media of the child choice." However, this is without endangering the national security, public health and morals of the child and without risking his or her social, spiritual and moral well-being or jeopardising his or her physical and mental health while acquiring or pursuing such information (UNESCO, cited in Hammarberg, 1997, 5).

In this study, I will examine the interplay between media and culture and the impact of new technologies and their contents on the young Saudi audience. In order to cover such objectives, an understanding of the ideological factors of the dynamic global and local contexts which form the particularity of the political, religious, cultural, economic, social as well as the visual media outlook in Saudi society are crucial if a meaningful conclusion is to be expected. Focusing on the electronic visual media does not mean much if it is not considered in relation to the internal local and external global factors.

Rationale of the Study

In general, audience research in Saudi Arabia has received little attention from government officials and scholars, particularly with regard to young Saudis' involvement and interaction with different visual media materials. It is worth noting that visual media

as relatively new technologies, are a less-known field and there is a global need for factual data together with theorisation. Having gone through some of the theoretical arguments, this study will deal with Saudi children's experiences with visual media. Yet, the relative global shortage of academic work on electronic visual media requires a broad and less-restricted research approach. This does not indicate that the present research is less organised or carelessly structured. Lack of research data on the one hand and the diversity and depth of issues related to visual media and children on the other, necessitated a broad strategy. Consequently, it seems logical to suggest that more than one theoretical approach should be adopted and more than one method should be used in collecting data. This is for a panoramic exploratory and explanatory contextualisation. Hence, the aims and objectives of the study are articulated into the core research questions to develop structured and planned instruments to facilitate easy data collection.

The aims and objectives of the research

-What factors influence the media consumption of Saudi children?

-What sorts of gratifications are obtained from the children's consumption of media materials?

-What is the impact of media cultivation on the notion Saudi children have of foreign, Arab and Saudi people?

-What is the media context for children in Saudi Arabia from policy-makers' perspectives?

It seems reasonable to use quantitative methods for data collection, along with qualitative techniques (interviews) to create a more reliable description of the phenomenon under

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investigation. Such a procedure becomes more than a simple requirement when administering multidimensional interactive relationships amongst the subject matter.

As far as this study is concerned, young viewers are dealt with as if they were under the influence of other social institutions and not only media materials. As a consequence, communication should be seen in conjunction with other non-media factors which mediate, and therefore determine, their actual effect. The factors in this study include gender and social class. Messages are not received in isolation; they are received by individuals who are members of some groups and have affiliations with others. Therefore, it is reasonable to assume that there is constant interplay between individuals and groups. The use of media messages is related to the ideas, values and experiences associated with the group concerned. However, mass communications are not only received in terms of the group but also in terms of the large social structure on which these groups exist and are indeed a part of it (Halloran, 1974, Tayie, 1989).

Although it is a common practice to separate the uses and gratification tradition from the cultivation's, the present study puts both traditions alongside each other. This is to give a comprehensive view of young Saudis interests in various visual media materials as well as to adding further meaning to the interaction between media and culture, grounded in active viewing which could be triggered by social and psychological factors. This is to go beyond the uses and gratification model which usually does not include the effects of communications and beyond also the cultivation model that does not acknowledge significant intervening variables. Any attempt to formulate an impartial explanation of the children's reflections on the media would indeed demand that both traditions be used.

Also, the present study tackles media materials with regards to their ideological structure rather than their manifest content. Analogous to other institutions, media materials serve to reinforce the prevailing structure. Therefore, the study presents a panoramic view of the existing structure of media context for children which would also provide more insight into young people's viewing interests. In fact, it is not sensible to separate the media from other institutions in society. Visual media are social institutions within the overall socio-politico-religio-economic structure. The potential of socialising Saudi children is governed by such a structure.

Structure of the Research

In chapter 1, I will discuss the role of the media and culture in developing and Islamic countries in relation to the global structure, in order to understand the role of external factors in the development process of communication and local structure. This is done by examining the models of development that are popular and relevant for developing and Islamic countries, particularly for Saudi Arabia. In chapter 2, I will investigate the structure of Saudi Arabia which influences the operation of media in the country. Reference to local background information is important. This is done by investigating the religio-political, economic and socio-cultural structure. In return, this will explain the evolution of the electronic visual media in Saudi society and their current condition. It will also examine Saudi TV materials and the government's censorship guidelines in relation to the dynamics of the non-governmental media in the area. In chapter 3, I will examine the theoretical framework through two popular yet contrasting approaches in audience studies. These are the uses and gratification approach and the cultivation approach, which are interesting for the interplay between media and culture. In chapter 4,

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I will review a number of studies that have been carried out in the field of children and media uses and effects. I will focus, as far as possible, on children's viewing interests in the electronic visual media. I will categorise my review of literatures in this area first to Saudi Arabia and then to the Arab region as well as foreign countries, both Western and non-Western. In chapter 5, I will describe the methodological procedures of data collection regarding this study. The chapter also states the aims and objectives of the research. As a quantitative/qualitative piece of research, I have employed two methods for gathering information, surveys and interviews. In the chapter, I will also describe the difficulties encountered in the process of collecting the data. Chapters 6-11 will examine the children's experiences with media materials. This is in terms of ownership, utilisation, preferences, judgement, gratifications and cultivation of perceptions about lifestyle images. Also in the chapters, I will investigate how gender and social class provide important insights into contexts of different media materials in relation to Saudi culture. In chapter 12, I will investigate the media context for children in Saudi Arabia. This is by interviewing policy-makers regarding Saudi media for children, levels of activity of the children and cultural imperialism and its impact on the values of Islam. At the end, I will discuss the main findings, conclusions and recommendations of this thesis in chapter 13. In this conclusion, I will summarise findings of the survey conducted on Saudi children about their experiences with media materials as well as outcomes of the interviews with policy makers regarding the media context in the Kingdom for children. I will also examine the contextualisation of the media situation in relation to the children's reports. This is done with regard to the external and internal factors. Further, I will suggest some ideas for improving young Saudi viewer's experiences with the media.

CHAPTER 1

Communications for Development: Theories and Paradigms

Although development scholars differ greatly concerning the role of the media in developing and Islamic countries, they do agree that media are substantial for society building (Schramm, 1964, Rogers, 1983). Accordingly, they have introduced several models for communication and development, some of which I wish to discuss for they have relevance and interest for a developing Islamic country such as Saudi Arabia. Setting the modernisation and development paradigm in juxtaposition to dependency and underdevelopment one will gain a better understanding of the role of communication and culture in the development process. While the modernisation paradigm is concerned with Westernisation, dependency theory concerns imperialism. However, debates over both have led to the emergence of a new paradigm that I would label as the Comprehensive Welfare Model. Unlike former models, it points to many of the normative principles, which have either been overlooked or neglected, as I will discuss later in this section.

The Modernisation Westernisation Paradigm

The Western industrial revolution was the most crucial transformational phenomenon experienced by human society in the modern age. Interest in and reflection on this transformation can be traced back to 19th century philosophical writings (Etzioni-Halevy, 1981, Kunczik, 1993). The sociological establishment in the early stages of modernisation was deeply concerned with the transition of society from a pre-modern to a modern one (Etzioni-Halevy, 1981). Early Western voices such as Karl Marx

believed that all Western and non-Western societies must follow the same stages of evolution. No society could reach one level before experiencing the previous one. Marx confirmed this notion most strongly, " the country that is more developed industrially only shows, to the less developed, the image of its own future" (Marx, 1939, 12-13). Thus, whilst Marx outlined a pattern of evolution for the progress of Western society, he perceived the Oriental (Islamic) society as something absent of its own dynamics of social evolution. He envisaged a progressive role for imperialism in the developing and Islamic world. This was despite his acknowledgement of what he considered the evil nature of imperialism. Marx argued that only imperialist penetration would be able to break the retarded pattern and take Oriental society to the stage of capitalism. He confirmed that, in the end, both the Western and Oriental societies would come together at some point in history (Marx, 1939). In general, like Marx, the early Western modernists such as August Comte, Herbert Spencer, Emile Durkheim and Max Weber affirmed progress, science and reason as integral characteristics of modernisation, promising that change was natural, imminent, continuous and directional (Nisbet, 1969).

After World War II a new development in the modernisation paradigm was developed, where the neo-evolutionists of the war era such as Talcott Parsons, W. Rostow and David McClelland attempted to set up a more complex conceptualisation for modernisation. Thus development became a series of transitions from one point on a scale to another (Etzioni-Halevy, 1981, Kunczik, 1993). Parsons (1951), for example, argued that social progress proceeds through a framework of successive differentiation of social sub-systems. Within this process, he identified five dichotomous pairs of key patterns. He attributed it to a traditional society particularism in which there is a tendency to give members of one's family or tribe

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particularly favourable treatment where kinship duties take priority over obligations to public interest, fairness and universalism. He also attributed to the non-modern society a diffuseness characterised by the utilisation of law and regulations unspecific in nature. Another attribute is affectivity which is the tendency of traditional individuals to view others in the light of personal and emotional terms, highly tinted by subjective values unlike those in modern societies which are characterised by affective neutrality, unbiased and fair-minded view of individuals and institutions. Parsons also labelled traditional societies with individualism, which entails the sacrifice of group interest for the welfare of personal or family interest. By contrast, the collective modern society exemplifies the application of general rules and the sacrifice of personal values and interests for the welfare of the community. Finally he perceived a conventional society as an ascriptive one where jobs are ascribed to individuals on the grounds of family affiliations rather than achievements (Parsons, 1951). Rostow's stages towards modernisation were economically orientated, beginning as an agricultural society and ending up with a heavy consumer society. Looking at modernisation from a sociopsychological perspective, McClelland stated that economic development was the outcome of the exigency for accomplishment (Etzioni-Halevy, 1981).

Whilst the previous sociological theorists of modernisation attributed to communication some important roles in the process of development, communication theorists of modernisation ascribed to communications a supreme role in the process. "Mass media were seen both as instruments in this evolution and as symptomatic of its most troubling tendencies" (Hall, 1994, 57). This is due to the explosive growth and the huge popularity of the mass media as a result of their invasion into all spheres of everyday life. Therefore, the mass media were perceived as a robust force for

change in the Islamic developing countries since they tend to stimulate Islamic societies' desires to increase their consumption along with their desires to break down traditional values that are inimical to development and obstacles to the formation of modern Islamic society (Kazan, 1999). According to the communications theorists, the mass media are also expected to promote the processes of social solidarity and cultural identity and to disseminate scientific and technical skills. This is in addition to their role in accelerating the expansion and improvement of formal education (Boyd-Barret, 1994). Daniel Lerner, amongst other researchers such as Wilbur Schramm, Everett Rogers, and Marshall McLuhan maintained that the media have great potential as promoters of modernisation and as instruments of progress.

In the *Passing of Traditional Society*, Lerner (1958) viewed modernisation as a multifaceted setting for social change, transformational in its effects, advancing in its impact, extensive in its range and systemic in its nature. All societies thus start at the same evolutionary point (Pye, 1979). For Lerner traditional society subsequently came to be a modern society at the other end of the development process. Lerner, as Kazan argued, treated the way in which people viewed the mass media as one of the key factors in categorising them as either traditional or modern (Kazan, 1999). Lerner (1958) stated that the mass media were distinctive indicators of the participant society that could not perform efficiently without an advanced mass communications system (Lerner, 1958). He affirmed that his thesis was not ethnocentric. Yet according to Kazan (1999), Lerner confirmed that Western modernisation had global importance, converging in this regard with that of Marx (Kazan, 1999). For Lerner (1958), the escalation of urbanisation was analogous to increasing education, considered to be both an agent and an index of modernity, which in turn, encourages greater exposure to the mass media. Consequently, this made possible wider mass participation in

politics and greater consumption of capitalist merchandise. This scheme is processed through what Lerner called 'empathy' which is the capacity to see oneself in the other's situation. This is an imperative skill for a community moving out of a traditional setting. "... high empathic capacity is the predominant personal style only in modern society, which is distinctively industrial, urban, literate and participant". Lerner considered this critical for the acceptance of new political opinion, to identify with new attitudes, to take over new social roles and to prefer international-national news. The unempathetic society in contrast is locked in a web of established religion, tradition and costumes (Lerner, 1958, 50). Schramm (1979) also held that the key factor in national development was the rapid expansion of economic productivity founded in industrialisation and urbanisation within an autonomous enterprise market economy. Within this model, the role of the media was pushing market mechanisms into full sway (Schramm, 1979). He also argues that the mass media perform at least three functions for change and modernisation; they are 'watchdogs', 'policy-makers', and 'teachers' (Schramm, 1964, 263).

Rogers (1976), another key figure related to the modernisation paradigm, introduced the diffusion theory in the context of development. Modernisation, he argues, is a process of diffusion whereby individuals move from a traditional way of life. Rogers stressed the systematic adoption and diffusion processes of cultural innovations. He contended that the role of the mass media is concentrated on the adoption stage of the process. He further argued that foreign objects and ideas exert greater influence on a culture than do indigenous cultural factors (Rogers, 1976). Another technologically deterministic approach to modernisation sees technology as a value-free and politically neutral asset that can be used in every social and historical context, and regards technology as an inexorable, irresistible overwhelming force in development.

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As Marshall McLuhan states: 'Any technology gradually creates a totally new human environment' (McLuhan, 1964: iii).

As a result of contact with Western developed countries, the Islamic and developing countries, according to Al-sayyid (1998) and Huntington (1996), were culturally shocked and amazed at the Western industrial phenomenon and their level of modernisation. From the beginning of the 20th century, voices of some leaders, together with those of the nationalist bourgeoisie in the Islamic and developing world, called for 'jumping on the bandwagon' of Westernisation as the only alternative to attaining modernisation. An example in the Middle East were the Kamalists of Turkey, who destroyed the country's Islamic past while pursuing both Westernisation and modernisation. Such people and their supporters in the Islamic and developing world, however, did not provide a paradigm for Western modernisation. Nevertheless, they argued that the only way to reach modernisation was through pursuing a policy of mass emulation of western culture (Al-sayyid, 1998, Huntington, 1996).

As the 21st century approached and communism in the Soviet Union declined, Fukuyama (1989) stated, "(this is) the end of history ... that is, the end point of mankind's ideological evolution and the universalisation of Western liberal democracy" (Fukuyama, 1989, 3). He affirmed that the 20th century which began full of self-confidence in the absolute triumph of Western liberal democracy seemed at its close to be returning full circle to where it began: not to an end of ideology or unification between capitalism and socialism as previously predicted, but to a clean-cut victory for economic and political liberalism. He saw also the spread of consumerist Western culture in such diverse contexts as colour television sets, co-operative restaurants, clothing stores and rock music enjoyed all over the world. He concluded that the make-up of the universal homogenous state as liberal democracy in

the political sphere coupled with easy access to media in the economic system (Fukuyama, 1989).

Assessments of the Westernisation Modernisation Paradigm

The crucial criticism of the paradigm is that it starts from basic liberalistic, behaviouristic, positivistic and functionalistic positions, which presume a linear, rational sequence of events, programmed in advance and with a criteria of rationality determined externally. It was also criticised for being ethnocentric, ahistorical, tempocentric, deterministic, reductionist, mechanistic and internalistic (Merril,1974, Etzioni-Halevy, 1981). The reality of Western interaction with the Islamic and developing countries shows that Marx's thesis about the convergence of the West and the 'rest' is untenable (Huntington, 1996, Kazan, 1999). In fact, Western views such as Huntington's predict that instead of convergence, a clash between the West and the Islamic world would be more feasible (Huntington, 1996). Modernisation theorists not only failed to display a series of progressive stages in the transformation of a single social entity but were also unable to submit evidence for development stages from various societies and from a variety of historical eras (Zeitlin, 1981). The chances of the societies to regress are almost equal to their chances to progress.

"Sometimes certain societies lose the capacity for renewal, innovation, response to challenges and adjustment to new circumstances. Hence, they lose their ability to modernise because they were very successful in their adjustment to the past and because they are strongly attached to and even sanctify what they regarded the glorious days of the past as exemplified in many of the considered Muslim societies" (Kazan, 1999, 49).

The sequential stages claim of the early theorists neither materialised in Islamic society in general nor in Saudi Arabia in particular. What is predominant in many of the Islamic countries and especially in the case of Saudi Arabia is the coexistence of

some Western technologies with what are perhaps the most strict traditions, which are not compliant with modernisation and development (Pilkington, 2002, Kazan, 1999). Those traditions in these developing and Islamic societies include a lack of true political participation, lack of social democracy, the deprivation of women of many of their basic human rights and many levels of gender discrimination (Doumato, 1999). Moreover, according to Kazan (1999) the Marxist theme regarding the advancing role of imperialism as a modernising potential does not stand the least in light of the history of Western intervention in Islamic countries. This is despite its claims about aiming to promote democracy and economic advancement in Islamic and developing countries (Kazan, 1999). Besides the internal factors that made it impossible to apply the paradigm to the situation in Saudi Arabia, there are other factors that are externally driven. To Parenti (1993) and Qaban (1996), the United States of America's true aims have been to ensure the process of capital accumulation and to obstruct the rise of alternative political systems that would affect the class composition of Islamic and developing countries which would enable them to place their economic systems in the aid of their modernising goals and the social requirement of their subjects (Parenti, 1993, Qaban, 1996). The US achieves this, according to Huntington (1996) and Kazan (1999), by overthrowing democratic regimes in the Muslim and developing world, making the world secure for economic exploitation by American corporations through the support of the *status quo* power against the desire for change in Islamic countries and *'the rest'* of the developing world (Huntington, 1996, Kazan, 1999). Huntington (1996) further argued that Western countries turn a blind eye to atrocities in these countries yet start to wave a moralising flag about freedom, human rights principles of international law when it suits their interests (Huntington, 1996). Furthermore throughout history, Western

governments have taken advantage of disputes among Islamic or developing countries. The West and America specifically have greatly contributed to the failure of development, democracy and peace. The West had chosen to support oppressive regimes and the *status quo* in the Islamic world and developing countries (Qaban, 1996, Kazan, 1999).

Another failure of the early modernisation theorists lies in their assumptions that the process of social transformation is fundamentally an endogenous, one wherein societies are considered closed systems triggered off internally. However, direct contact with external forces can also trigger social transformations, as in the case of rich developing Islamic countries (Roxborough, 1979). Lerner neglected the importance of external causes for change by overlooking the structural mechanisms of communications between cultures (Turner, 1978). The post-war theorists also overlooked external factors which can speed up social change through cross-cultural communication. Therefore, Islamic and developing countries are unlikely to duplicate the stages and the style of Western modernisation and development. The whole process of modernisation can be distinct for each society (Kazan, 1999).

The modernist conceptualisation theorists are accused of dichotomy decisiveness between modernisation and traditionalism (Frank, 1969, Kunczik, 1993). They are criticised for a narrow-minded framework with no mechanism to link the different stages. They view underdevelopment as being some sort of low-level equilibrium trap as a result of the scarcity of capital (Rostow, 1971). Modernisation, according to Sinai, cannot be explained in terms of a unilinear, predetermined process of sociological evolution because there is neither a single type of modern society nor a finite end to the sociological process (Sinai, 1976). Furthermore, economic development as an outcome of the need for accomplishment scarcely features in

Islamic and developing countries as a result of the degeneration of socio-political structures where family affiliations such as that practised in Saudi Arabia rather than proficiency, is the gateway to achievement. Indeed, materialistic welfare in these rich developing and Islamic countries may tend to inhibit the urgency for achievement (Kazan, 1999). Principally, post-war modernists failed to recognise the multiplicity and differences of traditions among Islamic developing countries. They can be huge in comparison to a Western modern one (Huntington, 1996). Moreover, the characteristics of modernity and traditionality do not certainly appear as a package. Attributes of both may be adopted selectively. Not only that, but modernisation itself may also strengthen the *status quo* in Islamic developing societies (Tipps, 1976). In the case of Saudi Arabia, the use of modern technology is applied to strengthen gender and class differentiation as will be discussed in the following chapters.

Also the Modernisation Theory is ethnocentric, where it implicitly equates modernisation with westernisation without considering that non-Western social structures might be more beneficial for advancement in Islamic and developing countries (Al-imam, 1995, Etzioni-Halevy, 1981, Kunczik, 1993). Lerner's thoery is based on the naïve assumption that the Western model of capitalism development is a suitable and an ultimate end for all of humanity. This assumption caused Lerner to disregard the merits of many non-Western development models (Turner, 1978). Lerner's theory on modernisation in the Middle East does not seem plausible. Turkey, the most determined country of those which he studied to embrace Westernisation for modernisation, is very far from achieving any form of self-sustaining economic and political welfare (Kazan, 1999).

After World War II, the dynamic advocacy of the West for pro-Western modes of development in the Islamic-developing countries led to an optimistic acceptance of

the Western paradigm of modernisation and a rush for the adoption of media technology. Yet, practicality revealed that the communication modernisation paradigm has failed to deal with many of the elementary development problems faced by these societies. Not only that, but development through that model boosted many difficulties in the Islamic and developing countries (Boyd-Barret, 1994). Because of its pro-Western bias the western model of development has led to a growing reliance of the Islamic and developing countries upon the West and has resulted in ecological damage and income inequality as a result of focus on endless materialism, economic expansion and high consumption (Rogers, 1976). By contrast, Islamic and developing countries require development that will fulfil the basic human needs of food, shelter, health, work and literacy. Moreover, they should pursue self –actualisation via ecologically-responsible, culturally-sensitive, economically-viable and life-enhancing development. They should also emphasise values of political involvement, respect for human rights, a fair and even distribution of wealth, self-control and self-reliance where commodities and services may be perceived as human utilities rather than as goods for sale (Al-imam, 1995, Hedebro, 1982). While the Western model of modernisation stresses ethnocentrsim, materialism and consumerism, it undervalues natural resources supplied by the ecosystems and the non-monetary benefits that are fundamental for the prosperity of family relations and other social orders (Amin, 1995, Kazan, 1999).

Urbanisation according to Turner (1974) can also be a disruptive and negative force and can also damage the ecosystems upon which society's equilibrium depends (Turner, 1974). In fact, the Western modernisation paradigm is wasteful and destructive to the environment. A Western state such as the US with an estimated 5% of the world's population nevertheless devours 25% of the world's resources whilst

producing an equal amount of pollution. Unfortunately, in order to secure an undisturbed supply of natural resources, it has carried out a series of wars in several Islamic and developing countries (Ramphal, 1992, Said, 1993). Turner (1974) confirmed that Lerner's conception of *'empathy'* was extremely secular and uni-dimensional (Turner, 1974). It ignores the distinct cultural features of the Islamic developing countries and overlooks the philosophical religious foundations upon which those cultural features try to rest. The idea of *'empathy'* might also have a destructive effect on society, too, by creating a critical approach to authority which might in the end lead to frustration with restraints imposed on the public by the development process (Kazan, 1999). Based on internal factors, the modernisation that has occurred in Islamic and developing countries has been selective at best. Modernisation of infrastructures has taken priority over development of societal and mental outlooks. The mass media do not create psychic mobility or empathy as Lerner claimed; rather they intensify it (Kazan, 1999, Turner, 1974). However, the notion that no model can possibly apply to all countries gained wide spread popularity during the 1970s and led to a transformation in Rogers' conceptualisations about progress and diffusion. Rogers became conscious of the shortcomings and deficiencies of the diffusionist paradigm and the defects on the *'dominant model'* of development on which the diffusionist approach was established (Rogers, 1976). Schramm (1979) later admitted the limitation of the mass media role in development, suggesting the use of a tailored paradigm that would suit the ecosystem of each developing country. He stated that no single model for development is appropriate to fit every Islamic and developing society. "There are a number of models, and every country has the right and responsibility to adopt the kind of development it wants. The measure of success should be whatever the country wants to make it" (Schramm,

1979, 8).

The communication modernists have a view of the communication revolution as an instrument for bringing people of the world together and enforcing understanding by creating McLuhan's utopian fantasy of a *global village*. Their "blend of idealism, technological determinism and sociological naivete led to a monocausal media/ technology emphasis which in turn encouraged an unquestioning faith in the benefits of technological progress" (Halloran, 1997, 43).

Also, the modernisation model tends to view national development in terms of the position of the media in society for they are assumed to yield with them changes in attitudes and values conducive to the regulation of a participant modern society. The public are perceived as homogeneous atomistic groups, independent of their socio-economic and political environment, ready to be transformed by whatever is communicated to them by the media and thereby overlooking the communication make-up of their groups, their stratification and many of the socio-psychological factors which might determine the failure or success of the media message (Boyd-Barrett, 1994, Hedebro, 1982, Rogers, 1976, Kazan, 1999). Media availability was inaccurately equated with modernisation and development. Mass effects were taken for granted, confusing in this regard the medium with the message. They were naïvely presumed to assist in breaking down traditional values that are believed to be averse to development. They are expected to automatically introduce new perspectives and values more advantageous to development (Huntington, 1996, Rogers, 1976). Another criticism is that the paradigm assumed that governments in Islamic and developing countries would employ the media to accomplish the preceding objectives. However, these authoritative powers intruded into media activities for security claims.

Naïvely, the process of communication through the media is equated with interpersonal communications activity, with both a beginning and an end. This impression, which is directly derived from mechanistic information theory, is unfeasible for conveying the processes of human interaction (Merril, 1974). The social context in which communication takes place is absent, and hardly any attention is given to contextual and sociological factors except for ideological and commercial reasons. The media are presumed to drive individuals to aspire to social upward mobility and higher standards of living shown by media content (Servaes, 1989).

Most media messages have rules, recommendations or orders for the masses to think and act on in a certain fashion. This Western research model tends to perpetuate the *status quo* interests of the dominant structure. (Beltran, 1976). The preoccupation of the media with economic expansion through the stimulation of materialistic demands has led to rising anticipation and, hence, rising frustrations (Kanzan 1999). The top-down flow of information which elevates neither discussion nor participation, as advocated by the centralised planning principle of the Western communication model, has actually led to indifference, apathy and lack of concern in what was being disseminated via the centralised media (Hedebro, 1982).

To summarise, for Huntington (1996, 1996a), Westernisation is not the end of history as Fukuyama argues. Modernisation does not necessarily mean Westernisation. Non-western societies can modernise and indeed have modernised without relinquishing their cultures and embracing wholesale Western institutions, values and practices. The mainstream in the Muslim and developing world also want to be modernised without being Westernised. The globe is becoming more modern and less Western (Huntington, 1996, 1996a).

The Cultural Imperialism and Dependency Theory

While the level of analysis of the modernisation paradigm is microsociological that of dependency theory is macrosociological. However, like the modernisation theory, the cultural dependency/ imperialism theory views economics as the *'magic gate'* to development (Bernstein, 1979). The terms *'cultural imperialism'*, *'cultural dependency'* and *'media imperialism'* have been compatibly utilised to refer to the cultural scopes of the imbalance-of–power relations prevailing within the global capitalist system (Boyd-Barrett, 1977, Boyd-Barrett, 1998).

Historically, the imperialism/dependency perspective is not completely new. It was first used by Marx in his description of the crucial significance of imperialism for the progress of capitalism. However, Marx did not truly develop a systematic framework of the effects of Western capitalism on the Islamic and developing countries (Etzioni-Halevy, 1981). Later, Western Marxists (neo-Marxists) have reached the conclusion that Western capitalism cannot be investigated and understood in isolation and must be seen in the wider context of a global system. While classical Marxism viewed imperialism from the vantage-point of the centre, neo-Marxists see imperialism from the periphery (Taylor, 1979). The key question that political economists such as Paul Baran, Andre Frank, Samir Amin and Immanuel Wallerstein posed is: are the developing countries objects of progress in the grip of others or in their own hands? Responses to this basic question gave rise to dependency/imperialism theory. Dependency/imperialism theorists argued that the modernisation theorists' greatest fallacy has been their prejudice to view underdevelopment in the developing world and progress in the western capitalist world in isolation. (Etzioni-Halevy, 1981, Kazan, 1999). Dependency/imperialism theorists insist instead that "these two

phenomena must be seen in conjunction with each other. For dependency/imperialism theorists, it is the contact between the West and the developing world that has brought development to the former and underdevelopment to the latter" (Etzioni-Halevy, 1981, 64). They are two sides of the same coin. In other words, backward countries became retarded not because of the archaic form of their institutions and the persistence of their traditional practices, but because these societies were embedded in the global capitalist order. The present world order, controlled by Western industrial countries on the basis of their scientific, technological and economic advantages; thus, world order relationships of dominance between the industrial and the Islamic developing countries are unsymmetrical and characterised by the control of the former over the latter. "The concept of the 'free flow of information' actually means the flow of biased, deceptive and distorted information from one side by means of modern and powerful technologies" (Kazan, 1999, 127). This notion is also reflected among Islamist thinkers who borrow the same terminology, jargon and concepts of the dependency/imperialism theorists to criticise Western cultural penetration in Islamic and developing countries (Al-sayyid, 1998, Huntington, 1996). Furthermore, dependency/imperialism theorists, along with the Islamists, emphasise that the developed countries which are considered as *the ruling class* did not develop only through exploitation and the extraction of surplus values from their own workers' production, but also through the expropriation of economic surplus from the exploited underdeveloped countries' agricultural and mineral resources, the abuse of cheap labour and the restructuring of peripheral countries' economies according to the requirements of the Western economies (Etzioni-Halevy, 1981, Khalid, 1995, Said, 1993). Dependency/imperialism theorists and Islamic thinkers argued in the same way as their Western counterparts, that national bourgeoisies became vehicles in extracting

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surplus from its own-subjected classes. (Said, 1993). However, these bourgeoisies were themselves exploited by the metropolis. As a consequence they became reactionary, wasteful and dependent on the Western bourgeoisies. Therefore, none of the societies with pre-capitalist modes of production have attained the stage of independent and self-sustained growth as conceived by the modernisation theory in general (Amin, 1977). The West endorsed the development of certain elements of capitalism in the peripheral world, but hindered it elsewhere with similar zeal. They trapped the Islamic and developing countries who fell for the strategy of industrialisation for exportation. Products produced in Islamic and developing countries on behalf of the developed countries are usually the superficial or ecologically harmful ones that those developed countries refrain from producing. This strategy of production for exportation increases dependency on the economics of the centre. It does not allow the periphery to escape from the spiral of fulfilling the centre's desires. In addition, these products are confronted with such high taxation and protection tariffs by the centre that they are hardly marketable (Khalid, 1995). For example, Saudi Arabia is heavily dependent on the production of oil, and 75% of its national income is based on unstable oil prices (Pilkington, 2002). In order to stabilise and diversify its income, the country started exporting refined petrochemicals to Western countries, mainly the United States. However, these products are confronted by Western countries with heavy and protective tariffs that restrain their marketing. Thus, according to the dependency/imperialism theorists in general, and the Islamists in particular, the crucial precondition for the economic growth of underdeveloped and Islamic societies is the elimination of industrial capitalist dominance through cultural dissociation (Al-sayyid, 1998, Hamelink, 1998, Tayler, 1979). The Islamic and developing countries dependence on the West, their aspiration to the Western

paradigm of development and their rush to implementation have actually led to new problems such as migration from rural and nomadic areas to rabidly growing cities, a greater unequal distribution of wealth, unemployment, contamination of the environment, widespread use of drugs, crime, turmoil and social disintegration. These ills necessitate preparation of new and costly infrastructures and more consumption of superficial goods which are socially and ecologically very expensive (Henderson, 1996, Khalid, 1995). Because the class struggle is grounded in economic antagonisms, the role of mass communication becomes that of misrepresenting these enmities through the circulation and reproduction of hegemonic definitions of social relations which promote the interests of the ruling class (Hall, 1994). As the media promote cohesion amongst people, they influence the subordinate groups in society to accept the *status quo* through the reproduction of the dominant ideology. The media operate primarily through ideology (Curran *et al*, 1994). They are, according to Gerbner *et al* (1979), capable of projecting certain images through which socio-political reality is perceived by passing potential neutralising factors and engulfing the audience in a new symbolic environment. They are ideological state gears. (Gerbner *et al*, 1979). In fact, the power of the media lies not in their imposition of false consciousness, nor in their ability to change attitudes, but in the diffusion of unconscious intellectual structures and categories through which environment is represented and experienced (Curran *et al*, 1994). According to Boyd-Barrett (1977) media imperialism refers to " the process whereby the ownership structure, distribution or content of the media in any one country are singly or collectively subject to substantial pressure from the media interests of any other country or countries without proportionate reciprocation of influence by the country so affected" (Boyd-Barrett, 1977, 11-12). He considered media imperialism, or what he defined as colonisation of the communication space, as

a determined outcome of the imbalance of the hegemony of the West over the countries of the developing world (Boyd-Barrett, 1977, Boyd-Barrett, 1998). For Schiller (1969) media imperialism was a process subsequent from domestic and international commercial dynamics in operation within the global market economy. Media imperialism or cultural imperialism emerged from the asymmetrical power relationships that were established between the strong multinational corporations and the powerless developing countries within the global market economy. He pointed out that American television programmes viewed abroad tend to force American culture upon the developing societies and to create capitalistic values that are inconsistent with real development. In *Mass communication and the American Empire,* Schiller (1969) argued that every new electronic media technology development widens the parameters of American power and promotes the interests of the military along with those of the multinational corporations thus enhancing even greater expansion (Schiller, 1969). He further stated,

> "The elaboration and implementation of national development designs are imperilled by the extent to which incompatible value systems or inappropriate institutional forces are permitted to intrude themselves on the developing economy. The new cultural-ideological structures of an emergent nation are no less vulnerable to the glittering socio-cultural products of the already-developed world than the new industries of the aspiring states are to the established giant corporations of the industrialised west." (Schiller, 1969, 80).

The problems that Islamic/developing countries encounter in establishing and running their own broadcasting facilities are many. First, the broadcasting equipment and the qualified crew to run these facilities usually need to be imported. Generally, programmes cannot be made locally considering the lack of satisfactory local talent and resources. Even with cut-rate foreign programmes, Islamic and developing countries are forced to permit advertisement because they cannot sustain commercial-free broadcasting (Schiller, 1979, Schiller, 1998). Thus, for Schiller, the effects

become very critical because what is broadcast may decide to a large extent the cultural outlook and the social path of the nations for generations. This process of cultural invasion, Schiller (1998) argued might also lead to the abandonment of local and traditional values of the Islamic and developing countries and to the birth of a global cultural homogenisation founded on Western materialistic values (Schiller, 1998). There is an artificial stimulation of demand for Western commodities, he commented. Schiller (1969) also asserted, "programmes are designed carefully in the same sense as other commodities to satisfy artificially stimulated wants", which in turn increase frustrations in the Islamic and developing countries, particularly. when they are unable to obtain what they view, promoted on western media (Schiller, 1969, 20).

Smythe (1981) viewed the media as a systemic organised design of Western capitalist systems to market consumer goods and services. He perceived the media as a principal formation among the transitional corporation that have replaced cultural imperialism to the advantage of the capitalist core of earlier empires, where American power rested on cultural domination rather than a military one. The fundamental aim of the mass media is to set daily agendas of issues to create mass audiences and institutions of monopoly capitalism. The agendas set by the mass media are ideologically loaded to advocate consumerism and expansionism with the capitalist system as Smythe confirmed. He argued further that the audience is a commodity. It is produced, sold and consumed. The audience as a commodity operates at its own ideological production and reproduction, under the power of media content. Media technology is a conveyor of the ideology and divisional structure of capitalism. Thus, progress is split by the capitalist system through technology and agendas that are set

by the consciousness industry in which the Western media are the leading components. However, it must be stated that social relations determine what type of messages and effects will be sent, as well as the means by which they are communicated (Smythe, 1981). Smythe suggested that imported Western technology as being deterministic that must certainly carry and reproduce the Western capitalist system in the Islamic and developing world (Kazan, 1999).

The New World Economic and Communications Order

It is unrealistic to discuss cultural dependency/imperialism theory without mentioning the call for the new world economic and communications order, and without referring to *The McBride Report*. All were proposals for changing the equilibrium in the current world order to appease the West. All were initiated as a direct consequence of the continued failure of Islamic and developing countries to accomplish any progress in their developmental structure. All were political and economic responses to theories formed with the purpose of looking at development from a holistic perspective (Ibrahim, 1991, Masmoudi, 1979). The dependency/imperialism theory, advocated underdevelopment as not simply failure to develop, but as an active process of exploitation (Etzioni-Halevy, 1981). The calls for a New World Economic and Information Order in addition to *The McBride Report*, which were initiated in the 1970's, were outcries by Islamic and developing countries and their proponents as a response to the dependency/imperialism theory, via the United Nations and its various agencies, to break their autonomy on western information and trade. Three decades after their conception, the calls remain a repeated concern for UNESCO (Hamelink, 1998, Masmoudi, 1998). The aims are to give the Islamic and developing countries complete control of their own means, increasing their exports to the West, increasing

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the levels of transfer of hi-tech, imposing strict regulations over multinational corporations (Mowlana, 1996, Pavelic & Hamelink, 1985), changing the linear direction of the flow of information and decreasing the hegemony on news-flow exercised by the West. The new world orders and *The McBride Report* attempted to examine the structure of the information communication system on both international and national levels, to give more local coverage and calls for structural change to equalise and balance the communications structure (Masmoudi, 1979, Nordenstreng & Varis, 1974). However, despite all the conferences, recommendations, reports and demands concerning the New World Information Order (NWIO), no concrete results have yet emerged. In fact, Boyd-Barrett (1998) argues that the imbalance continues. The influence of international corporations is still dominant. "There is little evidence to suggest that major imbalances with respect to distribution of resources or attention to the application of Western news values, have grown weaker. They may have grown stronger" (Boyd-Barrett, 1998, 171).

Assessment of the Dependency/Imperialism Theory

The theory has positive elements as it assists comprehension of the major problems of progress within any society which cannot be conceived without an understanding of that society's relationships with other societies (Etzioni-Halevy, 1981). The neo-Marxist dependency/imperialism theorists and their proponents were very helpful in advancing our awareness of modernisation in the Islamic Gulf countries, which mainly live off their oil income. The level of petroleum consumption in the West decides the demand for oil from those Islamic developing countries, who turn to Western markets for secure investment of their oil assets. This has increased the dependence of Islamic Gulf developing states on the West (Kazan, 1999).

Nevertheless, according to Etzioni-Halevy (1981) and Tunstall (1977), although the Anglo-American media were associated with imperialism, dependency/imperialism theorists and their supporters have tried to limit the explanation of the relationship between Western developed countries and developing and Islamic countries to the exploitation thesis which attributed much of the world's evils to television. Dependency/imperialism theorists and their proponents had failed to substantiate empirically claims that foreign technology and investment have caused underdevelopment in Islamic developing countries. Theorists have used unilinear social determinism, in which all non-economic factors are analysed, merely as defects of capitalist invasion which have universally blocked development in the invaded society. As a result of the theory being totally committed to a world-system perspective, it has exempted the whole display of internal factors in hindering modernisation in the Islamic developing world (Etzioni-Halevy, 1981, Tunstall, 1977). There is huge doubt as to whether the media or other cultural factors can truly play on a national basis in sustaining certain political regimes unless the internal social milieu accommodates such support. The emotional defence of a new economic order, a new communication order and a new technological order is, in fact, a convenient mask for continuing an unchanged internal situation. One cannot escape the fact that the existence of dictatorial regimes, as a result of the retardation of the social welfare, is primarily attributed to the internal dynamics of the domestic environment of the Islamic states. "Many of the Islamic Gulf institutions openly discriminate among their staff without any respect for 'the equal pay for equal work' principal" (Kazan, 1999, 103). Non-Western expatriates, are for the most part, detested and exploited. People in Islamic and developing societies indulge in various forms of extravagant consumption, mostly of Western commodities. This

consumption results in a substantial transfer of funds to Western countries, which, as a matter of fact, is another aspect of the Islamic and the developing countries' dependency upon the West. The disastrous random developments that have taken place in these countries are due to the lack of social and political democracy and the absence of respect for human rights, the low salaries and low status of journalists, and the vulnerability of media systems to bribery, corruption and unjustified censorship. Lack of social and political democracy has permitted absolute rulers who circle themselves with 'yes-men' to risk lives, destiny and future. Lack of social responsibility, democracy and political development cultivate fear in both people and regime. The insecurity of a regime prompts it to use coercive measures to maintain its rule. Under such circumstances, these regimes tend to seek foreign help in order to maintain power (Huntington, 1996, Kazan, 1999, Khalid, 1995). This, in turn, intensifies dependency, and dependency fosters further dependency. This condition leads to the maintenance of the *status quo* and hinders resistance to change whereas development is structured on change (Tunstall, 1977). Participation in decision-making, which has to be established at macro levels such as the media and the political institutions, needs primarily to be established at the micro-levels of the family, the school, and religious institutions. People have to be socialised for political participation by internalising and applying the values, attitudes and behavioural patterns of modernity. Social development rather than superficial materialistic development will secure these generations and empower them to outline their identity structure (Al-imam, 1995, Kazan, 1999).

For Ithel de Sola Pool (1979), the danger of foreign cultural invasion is overstated. He states that although cultural differences are significant, human universals are also significant. He affirms likewise that there has always been a give and take among

cultures and that new ways and practices have often arisen as a consequence of interaction between a specific culture and foreign influences. He argues that foreign media could offer Islamic and developing countries pedagogical experience and technical information that can assist them to compete with the Western developed world whenever economic conditions endorses them (Pool, 1979). There can be no question that the inter-cultural media impact has made some positive contributions to social change in many Islamic and developing countries (Boyd-Barrat, 1998). The national media of Islamic and developing countries could compete with Western media if they tried to fulfil their people's aspirations in spite of their restricted resources (Pool, 1979).

It is not accepted by any means, according to Ibrahim, (1991) that capitalist expansion ruins viable patterns of desirable or indigenous forms of welfare. In fact, absorption of Western urban culture rests on the ethnic situation of each country. Furthermore, the mechanisms of cultural adoption, absorption, or rejection, has usually come about fundamentally by consent rather than by coercion. Not all cultural encounters are associated with invasion and not all cultural influences brought by force have succeeded in wiping out local cultures (Ibrahim, 1991). The call for dissociation from foreign culture is rather naïve. In fact, there are many cultures within single countries in the Islamic world that might be harmful to the development than foreign culture such as the Arab culture in the Middle East.

Tunstall (1977) elaborated further by suggesting that western media would probably be more inclined to guard the status quo in those Islamic developing countries. This is because only the relatively affluent would be exposed to them. It is a fact that a section of the population, closely linked to foreign power, will remain a source of foreign cultural influence within each country. Nevertheless, its influence would

remain restricted to those groups of society who closely interact with it. Still, one would find people in many Islamic and developing countries who would wish to preserve their traditional cultural attitudes and traditional costume (Tanstall, 1977).

In fact, dependency/imperialism theorists and their supporters have at present been of little help in the creation of any pragmatic political and economic strategy that facilitates the attainment of true independence. This is because no order whether currently capitalist or non-capitalist can be independent of the world economy, although some systems are in fact more dependent or independent than others (Frank, 1993).

The dependency/imperialism theorists denaturalised themselves by becoming naively deterministic and ahistoric (Hall, 1994, Taylor, 1979). The dependency/imperialism theorists of communication and their proponents focused on a macro analysis of multinational structures and the media while neglecting the processes by which individuals and groups interact with the media and reflect on them. Cultural dependency/imperialism theorists seemed to give little if any regard to the people of the Islamic and developing countries. They perceived them as easy prey to Western culture as passive, inert and incapable of deciding for themselves (Sharabi, 1996).

Kazan argues that dependency/imperialism theorists are ecologically blind. They believe in infinite growth without recognising the fact that growth cannot be infinite on a limited planet (Kazan, 1999). "One must realise that the importance of culture and goals of society for development are not just economic but a stage in the unfolding of each society's cultural potential" (Mowlana & Wilson, 1990, 76). Stagnation and underdevelopment in Islamic societies has been the outcome of stagnation and underdevelopment of prevailing Islamic ideological formation. This

has stopped the Muslim mind from adapting to and benefiting from the modern ideas and concepts that are required for development because they are in conflict with the existing formation (Al-bitar, 1964, Kazan 1999). Mowlana & Wilson, (1990) and Al-imam (1995) called for a new multi-dimensional communication model that would promote the attitude of self-reliance. (Al-imam, 1995, Mowlana & Wilson, 1990).

Consequently, Latin American and Muslim development concepts called for massive involvement and mobilisation to achieve growth within a framework of social justice and independence. These concepts came into being as a result of the failure of the existing regimes to achieve progress.

> "These ideologies of Latin America and Muslim countries stress that an understanding of religious faith only makes sense when it derives from and speaks to the actual situation of people, their needs, their lived experience and their aspirations. A movement that fails to address the plight of the people is meaningless and empty."

A feeling of greater awareness and concern in Islamic developing countries has risen to call for a monistic/emancipatory model (Kazan, 1999, 115).

The Comprehensive Welfare Paradigm:

In contrast to the more economic and politically oriented grounds of the modernisation and dependency/imperialism paradigms, the core idea of the comprehensive welfare paradigm is that there is no universal development model. Development is a comprehensively dialectical and multidimensional process that can differ from society to society. This indicates that the development problem is a particular one and that no nation can claim that it is 'developed' in all respects. Every society must outline development for itself and pursue its own strategies (Al-garni, 2000, Al-imam, 1995, Al-rashdan, 1998, Servaes, 1989). This does not mean, however, that it is not feasible to define the broad principles and priorities on which a

development scheme can be based. Servaes (1989) and Al-imam (1995) together cited nine criteria, which are particularly relevant in the case of Saudi Arabia. The normative reforming principles of Servaes (1989) and Al-imam (1995) can be outlined as follows:

Basic needs: These should be harnessed to encounter human, material and non-material needs. The starting point should be to confront complacent views on the basic needs of the oppressed and the abused, who make up the majority of the world's inhabitants. At the same time it will be important to try to promote dignity and self-respect in people by the gratification of their needs for expression, equality, creativity and conviviality and to enable them to understand and accomplish their own destiny (Servaes, 1989). This pattern would improve the social and economic condition of the disadvantaged groups in Islamic developing countries (Al-imam, 1995) and give rise to issues of equality and freedom of expression. Hence, the media should be the voice of the people (Servaes, 1989).

Endogency: Because progress is not linear, there may not be a universal model, and only the plurality of development design can answer to the particulars of each situation, stemming from the core of every society's values along with its vision for future. In the case of Islamic countries, and Saudi Arabia in particular, development could be attained without the need to reject Islamic values. These values are, in actuality, a safeguard for a balanced growth embodying equality and justice: two of the primary principles of Islam. The 1986 Comprehensive Plan for Arab Culture aims to assert an Islamic identity and to develop and revive it as a container of authentic culture which makes the heritage as a dynamic reality, an inspiring force, a source of trust and not as a static dragging past of empty rituals and traditions (Comprehensive Plan for Arab Culture, 1986). The main priority of all Islamic developing countries is

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to foster the cultivation of spiritual Islamic values which are never taken into account (Al-kawari, 1986). This could be achieved, I believe, by reconciling the crack between the spirit of Islam and actuality.

Self-reliance: This indicates that each society relies essentially on its own potency and resources in terms of its members' dynamism and its natural and cultural conditions. Self-reliance fulfills its full meaning only if affirmed at the local level of every community (Servaes, 1989). The devastating dependency tendencies, which have been practised and sustained by the Saudi government, have made Saudis passive, recipients of economic development schemes executed by millions of foreign expatriates – a circumstance not without its repercussions for Saudi social life.

Group-reliance: should stress solidarity, interdependency and co-operation among Islamic and developing regions to the benefit of pan region of self-reliance rather than be dependent on only partial regional or foreign conglomerates or cartels. There is a need for Islamic countries to have a civilised communications alliance with neighbouring countries in Africa and Asia (Al-imam, 1995). Saudi Arabia, for example, should break from isolation. It should seek ties with neighbouring countries in Africa and Asia which go beyond employment relationships to a more social and humane relationship based on the conception of serving and contribution through first hand encounters and second hand (mass media) experiences.

Ecology: apply rationally resources of the atmosphere in full mindfulness of the potentiality on local ecosystems, as well as the global limits imposed today and for future generations. It suggests fair access to resources all together with careful and socially relevant technologies (Servaes, 1989). We should not reject traditional social organisations that were successful in the past in the naïve belief that modern Western societies can produce goods and we do not. It is self-defeating to believe that they are

more advanced and we are 'backward'. Even if technology is used it should be modified to suit the local context and not just be merely imitated. Unfortunately what we see today is a desire to integrate with the new world order; consequently, giving priorities to exportation sectors above those directed to the gratification of basic human development as a result of an inferiority complex (Al-imam, 1995).

Participative Democracy ('Shura'): as an actual form of democracy and not just a government of and for the people, but also and more essentially by the people at all levels of society (Servaes, 1989). This should include a perspective wider than individual and societal rights to, and going beyond, economic and social dimensions to also include political and organisational dimensions (Al-imam, 1995). Sadly today, Islamic and developing societies are drawn into their social and economic problems and therefore internal security and stability are prioritised over political freedom and human rights (Amin, 1995).

Structural Change: This should be obligatory in social relations, in economic operations and their spatial distribution, in the power structure, along with decision-making by those affected by it (Servaes, 1989).

Research promotion: most development experiments in Islamic developing countries and Saudi Arabia have no long-run clear perspectives. Correspondingly, the process of development is disorganised, hasty and haphazard. The lack of surveys and research make it difficult to solve issues of mutual benefits on national levels. There is a need to spread specialised local research centres across Islamic and developing regions (Al-imam, 1995). Countries should study the effects of new technologies not only on their economic structure but on human resources and the quality of life. The technology has to be modified to encourage the standard of life rather than the standard of living. Islamic and developing countries rushed at economic materialistic

development to improve standards of living, whilst social development and quality of life in terms of conduct, education, research and intellectual creativity were allowed to lag behind.

Serving and contribution: human development means the ability to serve and contribute. Social welfare is not the materialistic benefit of the national budget. The ability of every nation to serve and contribute in human progress is bound to its ability for self-determination based upon the integration of its *esprit de corps* with actuality (Al-bustani, 1995). There is a need for changing the image of Islamic and developing countries as only a source of raw material, extravagant consumer or fanatics to a civilised developed entity that would contribute in the development of the 21st century (Al-imam, 1995).

In fact, according to Amin (1995) the United Nations identified that the problem of underdeveloped countries is not economic development as it is not enough for social and cultural development. What human beings need is content and not outgrowth. "Human waste does not mean not utilising people's potentials for the increase of goods and services but it means the aggressive denial of their basic needs and depriving human beings of self respect" (Amin, 1995, 385).

Development is an entire dynamic programme looking for quality of life that makes room for a creative human contribution through social organisations and not just through economic restructuring. Economic development pursues work and materialistic production whilst social development aspires to creative human resources (Al-imam, 1995). Another meaning of development by the UN is that progress should create the context that enables individuals and groups to promote their abilities to an extent and to have a reasonable chance to live a productive

creative life that accords with their needs, interest and cultural heritage. Unless development is balanced between increasing peoples' aptitudes and employing them, frustration will be the end (Human Development Report, 1990).

What is new in the comprehensive welfare development discussion is the *'eco-system approach'* which differs at almost every point from the Westernisation modernisation paradigm. From the ecological social perspective, a country must not measure up itself against other nations in developing its policies. These must arise from its own ecology and culture (Al-garni, 2000). Also what is different in this approach is the encouragement of contribution in which social benefit and glorification of social welfare go beyond materialistic production, self-interest and glorification of wealth. Development from the current paradigm rejects the idea that because human recourses are granted, it therefore becomes a priority to *'elaborate'* rather than *'allocate'* (Al-imam, 1995). Another significance of the approach is that it gives consideration to group-reliance among Islamic and developing countries. There is a need for pan Islamic media that would cater for Muslims around the world. By 2020, the number of Muslims will increase to reach 30% of the world's population (Huntington, 1996). Yet at the moment, there is hardly any international satellite channel that caters for their aspirations (Tash, 2002 forthcoming). There is a need for interdependency and co-operation among Islamic countries for the production of professional Islamic materials. Also, there is a need for Islamic countries to share with other developing countries their distinctive culture heritage and experiences.

The important aspect about the approach is the concept of a self-reliance which is multi-dimensional and open to many interpretations. In this context, self-reliance is used as a counterpart to dependency, as a sovereign and autocentric scheme for development at the level of a community's own aptitude and needs. Moreover, it must

have the ability to set its own targets and make its own decisions (Servaes, 1989). The social, cultural, political and communicative aspects of the strategy should be stressed on local, national and regional levels to acquire a strategy based on this principle of self-reliance. However, the social reforms necessary for the movement from dependency to self-sufficient development raise the problems of participation, decentralisation and autonomy. Therefore, the paradigm stresses the importance of participative democracy (Al-garni, 2000) for the relationship between individuals (entrepreneurs), society and the state (authority) should reach an equilibrium in which neither the state nor the individual role exceeds that of the society (Al-imam, 1995). Into this context, the idea of selective participation has been introduced; a participation that is structured on equality and sovereignty. As Green (1991) puts it:

> "Media develop and are developed by, changing public and needs. In
> this then media (are viewed) ... as cultural forms in which groups,
> communities, and societies articulate their diversity" (Green, 1991,
> 216-217).

This investigation contends that the comprehensive welfare model can provide a useful backdrop against which to assess the current utilisation of broadcast media in Saudi Arabia. By recognising that progress is a multidimensional process which is particular in nature to each society, the comprehensive welfare paradigm, in a more pertinent and eclectic rationale, serves some of the characteristics of Saudi Arabian society and its need to gear the media to help preserve the country's individual profile throughout the modernisation process. I believe that Islamic teachings which advocate free-will and dialogue can be referred to in conducting and endorsing changes on all fronts in Saudi society in the quest for improved welfare. In executing comprehensive welfare, factors such as societal alertness, political accountability, devotion and mobilisation of the people are prerequisite for genuine development. Yet, they are

what have been absent in Saudi development. The mass media, geared wisely, can help to solve obstacles such as these (Al-harithi, 1983). Ironically, the Saudi media themselves have been part of the enigma because of their purposeless dependence on imported programmes and the manner in which they escape addressing pressing issues of interest to the Saudis. Therefore, what is needed today, is a creative force, a critically participant audience and qualified officials who will communicate cultural production, whilst bearing in mind a social environment that will boost freedom of expression (Al-imam, 1995).

However, more studies are required as the traditional systems are unable to cope as a result of their closed paradigm. Also, the comprehensive model has not progressed enough to allow for critical and thorough evaluation (Kazan, 1999). The new model is in the infancy stage and requires further development. Its applicability is still inconclusive and probably will continue to be so as long as the traditional systems stand in resistance, or at least there is a gap between knowing and doing both on micro and macro levels. Yet, despite its limitations, it is a step in the right direction.

In conclusion, previous analysis of development theories and models emphasised that the newly-born comprehensive welfare paradigm , despite its shortcomings, may best help to explain some of the economic, political, and social development dynamics which in turn may explain the present media context and exposure in Saudi Arabia. However, what is essentially required is more Saudi-based investigation. Purely secular models fail to recognise the particularity of an Islamic society and the contexts of religion and culture in the process of development. Both the Westernisation modernisation and the dependency/imperialism models tend to either ignore internal factors or underestimate external ones which create the prevailing situations of

dependency. These models, therefore, should be regarded as unsuitable. Models rooted in political or economic theory do not have a capacious perspective and are often immobile. Seriously, most theories declined to consider internal social factors, which create the situation of media dependency and their impact on Saudi society. Double causes of both internal and external factors that are interdependent create this periphery-core relationship. Rationally and practically speaking, internal blocking factors should be the focus of examination and the axis for transformation after a comprehensive assessment of the Saudi media context and its related structures.

CHAPTER 2

Saudi Arabia: National Context and the Development of Electronic Mass Media

Before discussing the evolution of the electronic visual media and its implications in Saudi Arabia, reference to background information about the national context is essential. The mass media do not operate in isolation from societal contexts. Therefore, Davison, Boylan, & Yu (1976) have suggested that the mass media in general perform within and are deeply shaped by, the political, economic and cultural parameters of the nation, where the media themselves are institutionalised as an indispensable part of the whole order (Davison, Boylan & Yu, 1976). Furthermore, Howell (1986) confirmed that the mass media, and broadcasting in particular, are a clear image of a nation's political and economic system.

> "To understand broadcasting properly as it occurs in a given county one must begin by acquiring reliable information about the nation's location, size, climate, geography, polity, degree of freedom economy, educational level, literacy rate ....and geopolitical alignment in the world" (Howell, 1986,15).

In order to study the mass media and their impact on children in Saudi Arabia, it is necessary to understand the societal indicators that influence the operation of the Kingdom's media. Taking this into consideration this chapter has two objectives: to investigate contexts of the Saudi religio-political, economic and socio-cultural structure; to concentrate on the introduction of electronic media in Saudi society and their current condition, the examination of Saudi TV materials and the Saudi government' s censorship guidelines in relation to the dynamics of non-governmental media in this area.

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The Strategic Importance of Saudi Arabia

Saudi Arabia is located in the strategically and geo-politically important Middle East. The region is at the junction of the continents of Asia, Africa and Europe. It is also the birthplace of many of the world's religions and civilisations. Throughout history *'superpowers'* have set out to dominate the region (Al-makaty, 1995). However, Saudi Arabia has never been colonised or dominated by a foreign power. Even the Ottomans were not able to seize the whole of Arabia on a continuous basis. The area's recent history began when Abdul Aziz Ibn Saud occupied the old walled city of Riyadh from the Rashid family in 1902. Over the next 30 years of civil war, Ibn Saud conquered various sections of the country, which encompasses most of the Arabian Peninsula and the boundaries of Jordan and Iraq in the north; Kuwait, Qatar and the United Arab Emirates in the east; Oman and Yemen in the south and the Red Sea in the West. In 1932, the territory was proclaimed Saudi Arabia (Boyd, 1999). The Kingdom is spread over an area of around 830,000 square miles, around four-fifths of the Arabian Peninsula (Rampal, 1994).

Today, the country is home to about 22 million people, of whom 16 million are Saudi nationals. The rest are foreign or other Arab nationals (UNESCO Statistical Yearbook, 2001). At least 50% of the Saudi population is below the age of 15. "The number of Saudis is expected to nearly double ...to 29.7 million in the next two decades". Saudi Arabia's biggest problems are connected with the rapid increase of its population (Knipe, 2000, 13).

Administratively, the country is composed of five main provinces each of which is governed by an appointed member of the royal family. Major cities include the

political capital – Riyadh – in the middle province; the commercial capital, Jeddah, and the religious capital, Makkah, with the city of the prophet Mohammad, Medinah, are all located in the Western Province; while in the Eastern Province the huge oil reserves lie at Dammam (The Middle East and North Africa, 2001).

"The two factors that have most influenced Saudi (Arabia) are religion and oil" (Boyd, 1999,143). In recent years, Saudi Arabia has been the centre of attention in international politics and economics. Essentially this has stemmed from the fact that Saudi Arabia "dominates the world's oil market. The country has 262 billion barrels of oil reserves - a quarter of the global total" (The Week, 2001, 11).

Political and Religious Significance & Development

According to Al-makaty (1995), Saudi Arabia is perhaps the only country in the Arab world where religion, Islam, plays a significant role in the political scene. Historically, the position of the area can be traced back to the building of the Kaaba. The history and significance of the city of Makkah began, and with the prophecy of Mohammed in 610 C. E., the Arabian Peninsula and the Arab nation started to take on global importance, for the history of Arabia is the history of Islam (Al-makaty, 1995). However the seeds of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia were planted in 1744, when the founder of the Al-Saud dynasty, Mohammed Ibn Saud, formed an alliance with a distinguished religious reformer, Mohammed Ibn Abd al Wahhab. Both leaders were determined to support each other in their fight to filter Islam away from non-Islamic practices such as idolatry, heretical innovations and superstitions that had spread among the people of Arabia. Between them they planned a war to conquer Arabia (Al-garni, 2000).

Basically the compromise, which was signed in a small town called Daraiah north of Riyadh in Najad, was that Ibn Abdul-Wahhab as a religious chief would endorse the Al-Saud family as the legitimate political command in Arabia and, in return, the Saud clan would support Ibn Abdul-Wahhab's newly born religious reform movement. The relationship between the two Najdi families was cemented through inter-marriages. Since then, the Saud family leadership of Arabia has endured through three periods. The first period began in 1744, during which the Saudi State spread to cover almost all of the Arabian Peninsula and even parts of Iraq. Seizure from the Turks of the Muslim holy places in Makkah and Madinah by Muhammed Ibn Saud brought the Saudi State into open conflict with the Ottoman Empire, which held itself as the guardian of the Islamic faith (Al-hamed, 1987). This first period ended in 1818 when a Turkish Army, headed by Muhammed Ali of Egypt, occupied the holy places and destroyed the Saudi State capital, Diriyah, arrested Abdullah Ibn Saud, the Prince of Diriyah, and executed him in Istanbul (Al-makaty, 1995). Thus, the second period began in 1824 when the Saudi family returned to re-establish a new Saudi State in the central and eastern parts of the Arabian Peninsula where they then established Riyadh as the capital. However, the Ottomans recaptured the eastern part of Arabia and the Al-rashid family, opponents of the Sauds, captured Riyadh. In 1891 they forced Abdul Rahman Ibn Saud to flee to Kuwait which was a British Colony (Al-ahmed, 1987, Al-makay, 1995). The third and current period began 100 years ago in 1902. According to Merdad (1993) this is when the founder of modern Saudi Arabia, Abdul Aziz Ibn Saud, the son of Abdul Rahman, started to assemble the various components of Arabia under his rule. He ultimately seized the greatest opportunity in modern times for Arabia's deeply divided tribes. He united them under one flag and one leadership, initially with the help of the Islamic conservative tribal men known as the *Ikhwan*

(Religious Brethren) (Medrdad, 1993). Ibn Saud, as he used to call himself, initiated the political struggle by capturing his ancestors capital of Riyadh in 1902, and the Hijaz Province (where the holy cities of Makkah and Medinah are located) in 1926. In the 1920s, the *Ikhwan*, who wanted to exclude any new Western innovations such as cars, planes radio and non-religious studies, challenged Ibn Saud's efforts to modernise the country. But in 1929, Ibn Saud defeated them. In 1932, and 30 years from its beginning, he declared himself King of the newly united Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. Nevertheless, the Kingdom continued to use Islamic teaching as the basis for its constitution, law and its main resource for all decisions, even after King Abdul Aziz was succeeded by his sons Saud, Faisal, Khalid and Fahad respectively. After the death of his father in 1953, Saud took over, but under the influence of the royal family, he delegated control to his younger brother Faisal in 1958, who began a modernisation programme, abolished slavery, curbed royal extravagance and adopted sound fiscal policies (*Political Handbook of the World*, 1999). In 1975, King Faisal was assassinated by one of his own nephews. The reason for this, as Boyd (1999) claims, is that he was killed over an incident involving the introduction of television to the Kingdom when his nephew took revenge for the death of his brother over the clash (Boyd, 1999). Four years after King Faisal's death in 1979, a group of 225 well-armed Saudi religious extremists, who were subsequently caught and later executed, took over the most holy place for Muslims, the Grand Mosque in Makkah (Boyd, 2000). King Khalid died in 1982 and was succeeded by his brother who has been in office for the past 20 years. However, the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait in 1990 placed the Saudi desert Kingdom in the forefront of the minds of the West. King Fahad accepted the US proposal and invited foreign forces to defend Saudi Arabia's borders against the threat of Iraqi invasion (Boyd, 1999).

The Constitution

Islam influences the style of decision-making, domestic and foreign political, economic and social goals, and consequently the mass media. Unlike most countries in the world, Saudi Arabia has no written constitution; instead, since its unification in 1932, its leaders have asserted that the Islamic holy book (Quran) is the country's constitution. However, following the Gulf War, and in response to a highly publicised letter from religious leaders in 1991 to activate an independent consultative council (Political Handbook of the World, 1999), King Fahad issued a royal decree in March 1992 instituting the basic law, which is referred to as the constitution, which defined the system of the government and set up a Consultative Council (Majlis Al-shura). He also announced the creation of a provincial consultative council and defined the government structure, the means of succession of future rulers and domestic and foreign policy. The decree declared that Saudi Arabia is an Arab and Islamic sovereign state, that its religion is Islam, that its constitution is the Holy Quran and the teaching of God's prophet, Muhammad, and that its language is Arabic (Al-garni, 2000, Merdad, 1993). The following is a summary of the decree's basic articles.

1- The monarchy will remain and the country will be ruled by the best man among only the sons and grandsons of the founder of Saudi Arabia Abdul Aziz Al-Saud;

2- Human rights will be preserved in accordance with Islamic teaching;

3- All facilities that help business activities and promote a free market economy will be provided;

4- The government strongly pledges to preserve the culture of the Saudi family;

5- The security of all citizens and others who are living within its territory will be guaranteed;

6- There will be no constraints, detention, or arrest of any individual except under the provision of rules if violations of rules are committed;

7- People's homes have legal privacy and will not be entered without the approval of their residents;

8- Punishment shall be imposed only as defined by the law;

9- Means of communication, such as the telephone, telegraph and post are guaranteed and will not be seized, delayed or tapped except in cases defined by the rules;

10- Persons residing in the Kingdom must obey its rules and respect its people's values, traditions and norms;

11- The judiciary is independent and no one has any power over judges;

12- Quran and Sunnah (teaching of the prophet) are the sources of ruling in the Kingdom and the Supreme council of *Ulama* (Islamic religious leaders) and the Department of Islamic research define these rules;

13- The King shall rule according to Shariah (Islamic teaching and direct the fulfillment of its rules. He is the Prime Minister and is assisted by a member of the Council of Ministers (Al-kharaiji, 1992, Al-makaty, 1995);

The government structure is based on the following:

Government Structure

The King and the Royal Family

As Saudi Arabia is an absolute monarchy with centralised power, the King, who is appointed by the Royal Family Council, combines both religious and political power (Political Handbook of the World, 1999). He is the Head of State, the Prime Minister, Head of the Royal Family and Commander-in-Chief of security and military forces. His power is legitimate as long as he acts according to the *Shariah* (Algarni, 2000).

Another significant element in Saudi politics and society is the Royal Family. Members of the Al-Saud family hold key positions in the Saudi government hierarchy, such as at the Ministries of Defence, Interior Foreign Affair, Housing and Public Works, and the Saudi Intelligence. In addition, positions in regional government are held by members of the Royal Family and its branches. Maternal lines are significant in the distribution of power and responsibility (Merdad, 1993, Ziring 1984).

The *Ulama*

The *Ulama* (religious leaders) are the religious and political backbone of the Saudi government and have a very strong role and high status within society. They form the second of three major elements in the country: the Royal Family, the *Ulama* and the military establishment (Al-garni, 2000, Al-makaty, 1995). They can be defined according to Al-najai (1982) "as a religious and conservative group, traditionally conceived by the government as the guardians of Islamic orthodoxy in governmental political decision" (Al-najai, 1982, 34). Consisting of non-hierarchical groups of religious men, they exercise their power in the following areas:

1- Responsible for Judicial system of Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

2- The fulfillment of *Shariah*;

3- Religious guidance, with affiliated offices all over Saudi Arabia;

4- Religious education , that is Islamic legal education and theology at all levels in the country;

5- Religious jurisprudence;

6- Preaching and guidance;

7- Supervision of girls' education;

8- Religious supervision of all mosques inside Saudi Arabia;

9- Preaching for Islam abroad;

10- Continuing Islamic and scientific research;

11- Notaries public;

12- Handling of legal cases in courts according to Islamic legislation (Bashir, 1991, pp. 47-48 in Al-makaty, 1995);

13- Issuing of Fatwa (legal judgement) (Al-garni, 2000).

While the country's leaders advocate obedience to the *Ulama*, the *Ulama* upholds allegiance to them in return. This alliance has ensured political and social stability during times of crisis, such as the Gulf War when the *Ulama* issued a Fatwa which gave the King authority to appeal for Western non-muslim military assistance. With the aid of the *Ulama*, the King was able to obtain a consensus (Al-makaty, 1995).

The Council of Ministers (Majlis Al-wuzara)

An important political body in the Saudi government structure is the Council of Ministers (Majlis Al-wuzara). Headed by the King, the Council of Ministers is the highest authority in the country. Established in 1953, the Council currently consists of 28 members. All ministers are appointed and dismissed by the King. It has responsibility in both legislative and executive affairs. However, its function is mainly an advisory one to the King, who has the sole authority to introduce and enact laws. At present the Council is headed by King Fahad while his brother, Crown Prince Abdullah, acts as First Deputy Prime Minister, and their brother, Prince Sultan, is second Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Defence (Al-farsi,1990, Merdad, 1993).

The Consultative Council (Majlis Al-shura)

The consultative Council in Saudi Arabia was originally established by King Abdul Aziz (the father) in Makkah a year after capturing the Province of Hijaz consisting of 13 members, but it was suspended some years later. In 1993, developing historical circumstances and the need for a degree of political participation necessitated the re-establishment of the Council in a new form (Al-garni, 2000). In 2001, King Fahad declared an increase to 120 members plus a chairman from 1997s increase to 90 members. The council decisions are valid unless approved by the majority. The council includes retired senior officers from the armed forces, retired senior civil servants, dignitaries, academics, administrators, journalists and writers, representative of the Shia minority, religious conservatives and religious progressives. These members, according to Al-garni (2000), were chosen by the King for their wisdom, specialisation and expertise in issues important to Saudi Arabia. This is in the belief that a Western-style democracy is inappropriate for the Saudi people. King Fahad stated: "The free vote system is not suitable to our country because the Kingdom is the symbol of Islam and the two holy mosques (in Makkah and Madinah). Democracy may be suitable to the West but not the whole world" (Al-kheraiji, 1992, 74). However, the *Shura* Council reflects a governmental desire for improving the political system in a manner acceptable to the religious people. It serves as an advisory body to the King on various issues related to domestic and foreign affairs and carries out an inspectorate function with government agencies and departments. According to the Saudi Basic Law of Government, new members will be added every four years with half the previous members remaining (Al-garni, 2000, Al-makaty, 1995).

Saudi Arabia is a traditional monarchy with all authority ultimately vested in the King, who is also the country's supreme religious leader. No national voting has been

held. There are no political groups and legislation is by royal edict (Political Handbook of the World, 1999).

External affairs

In general, the Saudi Kingdom's external politics can be put into three categories inter-Arab, Islamic and international (Mclachlan, 1985). Since unification in 1932, Saudi Arabia has played an important role in Arab politics. The Kingdom through its history has played an important role in the Arab-Israeli conflict and wars in 1948, 1956, 1967 and 1973. One can argue that the climax of Saudi political activities in the Arab world was reached during the reigns of King Faisal and King Khalid. For instance, when Faisal (1964 – 1975) became King, Saudi Arabia was perceived as a political moderator between Arab radicals and moderates. Saudi Arabia was a leading mediator helping to end the Lebanese civil war (The Middle East and North Africa, 2001). Using its petro dollars to achieve political ends and to gain influence, Saudi Arabia countered revolutionary ideology in both poor and rich Arab states, including Egypt, Syria, the Sudan, Yemen, Iraq, and the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO). However, during the Gulf War, this strategy of buying influence proved to be inadequate, and some Arab states and the PLO sided with Iraq against Saudi Arabia. Saudi Arabia's Islamic dimension stems from its role as custodian of the Muslim holy shrines at Makkah and Medinah. This setting has provided Saudi Arabia with a clear status and responsibilities towards other Islamic countries and pilgrims. Thus the Saudis feel obliged to participate in international Islamic institutions to help bridge ideological differences among the Islamic states (Merdad, 1993). Indeed this mission is facilitated through financial assistance to other Islamic countries. One of the thorny issues with which the Saudis have been confronted is the challenge to their Islamic

leadership by the Islamic Republic of Iran. Essentially Iran (a Shia Muslim nation) has expressed its defiance of the right of the Organisation of Islamic Conference (OIC) and its committees to deal with Muslim issues, particularly regarding orthodox interpretations of Sunni Islam, as practiced in Saudi Arabia and other Arab states. Moreover Iran has challenged the decision by the OIC and Saudi Arabia to impose a quota on the number of pilgrims during the *Hajj* (pilgrimage) season. Ultimately, Iran, which follows an aggressive Islamic republicanism, challenged the legitimacy of the monarchy not only in Saudi Arabia but also in many other Gulf states (McLechlan 1985, Merdad, 1993). Nevertheless, after the Gulf War, diplomatic relationships with Iran were restored (*Political Handbook of the World*, 1999).

In the international arena, Saudi Arabia has established a dominant role *vis-à-vis* its oil policy and relationship with the West, particularly the United States. Through this role the Kingdom has transcended the relatively insignificant part it once performed in inter Arab politics and the Islamic world (Merdad, 1993).

Once contemplated in inter-Arab politics and the Islamic world, the Saudi-American relationship is historical and complex. Since the 1930's, American industrial oil companies have been involved in Saudi oil development and exploration. As a result the American government has established a solid foothold for an extremely close relationship – politically, economically and militarily – with the Saudi government. Until very recently, the Americans have seen Saudi Arabia as a moderating influence within the Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC), an ally against communism in the Middle East and, above all, a political stabiliser in the Arabian Peninsula (Abir, 1988; McLachlan 1985 Quandt, 1981).

The unwritten agreement between Saudi Arabia and the United States reached its peak with the Iran/Iraq war and later the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait. Nevertheless, according to The Middle East and North Africa (2001) a degree of tension developed in Saudi-US relations after the bombing in 1995 on Riyadh and in 1996 in Dahran where a number of Americans died in the blast and over disagreement how investigations were handled. In 1998, the Kingdom criticised the new US bombing campaign against Iraqi targets and withdrew permission for US warplanes to be stationed in Saudi Arabia. Moreover, the situation became further strained with the failure of the Palestinian-Israeli peace negotiations and the unlimited support of the US for Israel (The Middle East and North Africa, 2001).

Economic Development

Prior to unification in 1932, the territory that would become Saudi Arabia was on the verge of poverty (Long, 1997). During the early years of the twentieth century, the Saudi economy was dependent on British and Ottoman subsidies. When Ibn Saud captured Hijaz in 1926, the main source of income came from the annual pilgrimage season (Hajj) to Makkah. However this source of income soon decreased due not only to the Great Depression and the outbreak of War World II, both of which affected international travel, but later to the economic crisis that the country faced during the period 1955-57. (Gross overspending by the government led to a large borrowing requirement from the Saudi Arabian Monetary Agency [SAMA]. The deficit led to inflation and a fall in the exchange rate of the Riyal [Saudi Currency]. The country then ran up debts with American banks to the sum of US $92 m, resulting in a widespread lack of confidence in the economy. Businessmen preferred not to deal with the local currency). These events required radical rethinking by the Saudi

government to establish modern planning. According to Al-mallakh (1982), "Ideas about planning in Saudi Arabia date back to 1958 when it was found necessary to inject rationality into the economy after the crisis which occurred in 1955-57" (Al-mallakh, 1982, 141). In 1958, Crown Prince Faisal adopted more protective and corrective actions. He cut back extra government expenditure and financial aid to other countries, introduced the first national budget and persuaded ARAMCO to act as an advocate and succeeded to delay the debt payment (*Political Handbook of the World*, 1999). He also formed an economic development committee, which paved the way for the economic development phases (Al-mallakh, 1982, Al-garni, 2000).

Many of the developing countries in the 1970s rushed to these so called *"development plans"* which had their inspiration in the West in the post World War II period. (Al-kharaiji, 1992). However, the economic limitations in these developing countries and their political instabilities contributed to the plan's failure. In contrast, Saudi Arabia, supported by oil-derived wealth and political stability, was considered to be different. The model chosen for economic development was The Five Year Plan (Al-garni, 2000).

The First Five-Year Development Plan (1970-1975)

The First Five-Year Plan (1970-1975) was a relatively modest programme of budgets of 56 million Saudi Riyals allotted to economic and social development. The primary objectives were to improve the country's infrastructure. Roads, airports , education, health and social services were given attention to improve the quantity of these desperately needed provisions. The aims were to endorse cultural and religious conservation, improve living standards, promote economic and social stability and increase the productive capacity of the economy (Al-garni, 2000, *The Middle East*

and North Africa, 2001). The plan received mixed reviews from those following Saudi Arabia's path toward development. *The Wall Street Journal* pointed out that even though not all development projects had been fully implemented, the achievement should be considered *"great"* (Al-Farsi 1990).

The Second Five-Year Development Plan, (1975-1980)

After the increase of oil revenues in 1973-74, the government found itself in possession of huge financial resources and embarked on massive programmes in agriculture, industrialisation, modernisation and economic social development (Merdad, 1993, *The Middle East and North Africa*, 2001). The overall objectives of this plan were to expand defence power and secure internal stability, to decrease petroleum dependency, to raise the living standard and to advance the country's visible infrastructure (*The Economist Intelligence Unit*, 1990).

The financial magnitude of the plan reached nearly 500 billion Saudi Riyals (US $1.5 billion) approximately a tenfold increase over the First Plan. Nevertheless, a severe scarcity of Saudi manpower in technical and administrative professions created a development bottleneck for the Saudi economy.

The private sector remained in the shadow of the public sector, which was and still is the commanding force in economic activity. The role of the private sector was limited to bidding for government projects or representing foreign companies that were pursuing offers (Merdad, 1993).

Although the Saudi government invested in the oil-related petrochemical, refinery steel, iron and aluminium industries, it was recognised that this industrialisation approach still might not free the country from its oil dependency. McLachlan (1986) argued that the multibillion pound industrial complexes, built in Jubail and Yanbu on

the Gulf coast and the Red Sea are constructed on a hydrocarbon foundation dependent on the petroleum sector (McLachlan, 1986, *The Middle East and North Africa*, 2001).

The Third Five-Year Development plan (1980-1985)

In the third development phase, the Saudi government shifted emphasis from the infrastructure projects to such productive sectors as agriculture, mining, and industry. Al-farsi (1990) stated that human resource development was the focus of the plan. Vocational education and training centres were instituted to provide severely needed Saudi manpower and, at the same time, to restrict reliance on foreign labour (Al-farsi, 1990). The Third Plan's financial allocations were even larger than those of the Second Plan, set at SR 782,700 million (US $235,000 million) not including defence spending (*The Middle East and North Africa*, 2001).

During the third plan, the government was determined to convince the private sector to transform from trade and bidding for government contracts towards an industrial and producing economy. To make this shift more profitable, the government arranged to provide feasibility studies for many investment projects, to build essential infrastructure facilities and to secure loans for such projects. However given the modest size of the local market and the private sector's reliance on government contracts and subsidies this goal according to Merdad (1993) may not be achieved in the near future (Merdad, 1993).

The Fourth Five-Year Development plan (1985-1990)

This Plan underlined four essential themes for government policy and economic development efficiency and productivity. Emphasis was placed on encouraging the

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private sector to play a bigger role in economic development, cutting the number of foreign unskilled and manual labours, maintaining fiscal balance and achieving economic and social integration between Saudi Arabia and the Gulf states and the expansion of health services (*The Middle East and North Africa*, 2001).

Overall expenditure for the Fourth Plan was SR1000,000 million (US $267.000 million) half of which was allocated for development (Al-Farsi, 1990, *The Economist Intelligence Unit* 1990).

However, neither Saudi planners nor the government had foreseen the steep decline in oil revenues following the collapse in oil prices in 1986. It was a situation best described as an *"economic recession"*. Consequently, many development projects were placed on hold and the private sector suffered great hardships (Al-farsi, 1990, Merdad, 1993).

The Fifth Five-Year Development Plan (1990-1995)

Due to the dramatic crisis in the Gulf following the invasion of Kuwait by Iraq, Saudi Arabia increased military spending, and about 34% (SR 225,000 million) of the total expenditure of SR 753,000 million, was to be designated to defence. Nevertheless, the six major themes of the Plan were: the increase of government revenue, in particular from non-petroleum sources; growth dependence on the private sector; further vocation opportunities and training for the Saudi Arabian labour force; import substitution and the encouragement of exports; the diversification of economic activities into non-petroleum areas; and a balanced progression of the different regions in the Kingdom. This was based on completion of the infrastructural foundation as well as of the industrial and agricultural schemes. Because of the country's expansion and population increases, Saudi planners recognised the need for

more facilities in education, health services, roads, water, telecommunications, agriculture and electricity. In addition, the private sector became the focal point of the plan. One of the strategic ideologies of the plan stressed that a development policy should be adopted via which the private sector should handle many of the roles of government, while the government would not involve itself in any economic investment undertaken by the private sector. Despite these concessions, the private sector sought government assurances of stability and minimal interference (confidence-building measures). Still this was not feasible at this stage as the Saudi experience in economic development and planning has shown that building a modern and productive economy does not depend on economic capability *per se*, but rather demands the ongoing development of human resources in all relevant sectors. Although Saudi planners have emphasised human resources advancement, the country continued to be highly dependent on expertise and foreign labour in many fields (Merdad, 1993, *The Middle East and North Africa*, 2001).

The Sixth Five-Year Development Plan (1995-2000)

This plan tried to place emphasis on developing the private sector and increasing its participation in the infrastructure and other development projects aimed at increasing the number of Saudi nationals working in the private sector workforce. It attempted further to develop privatisation of the public sector and to balance the budget by the end of the planning period by reducing direct and indirect price subsidies. However, the Plan was based on over-optimistic oil prices. The sharp decline of oil prices in 1998, followed by an increase of oil production the following year, resulted in lower than predicted revenues and fluctuating oil prices. Consequently, plans for expenditure were disrupted (*The Europa World Year Book*, 2000).

The Current Five-Year Development Plan (2000-2005)

This seventh plan is aimed at creating additional jobs for Saudi workers, mainly in the private sector. It envisages increased private investment and increased growth for the private non-oil sectors. The Plan is reliant upon the success of economic reforms which encourage the participation of both the domestic private sector and international corporations through liberalisation, administrative and economic reforms (*The Middle East and North Africa*, 2001). However, according to Al-maimani, (2001) "the Saudi economy face challenges that would stop growth." He cites steep fluctuations in oil prices, a national debt of SR 650 billions, the need for spending on infrastructure, the lack of diversification of investment, unemployment of Saudi nationals, a poorly skilled workforce and marketing challenges facing Saudi products in the global market (Al-maimani, 2001, 12).

Education and Its Implications

Today there are about 5.314 million school students in the Kingdom (Okaz, 2002). According to Al-awad (2002), Deputy Minister of Education, Saudi Arabia's total estimated literacy rate is 90%. The illiterate are mostly the elderly (Al-awad, 2002). By 2005, more than 3000 public schools will be added to cope with the rapid increase of the population (Knipe, 2000). The education system is free of charge in public schools with free books and health care. But it is not compulsory. The standard practice is for a child to be admitted to primary school for six years, followed by three years at intermediate school and then three more at secondary school before proceeding to college or university. There are two types of secondary schools: one offering arts or science subjects; the other offers vocational preparation. Females are

educated separately from males (Al-gamdi, 1994, *The Middle East and North Africa*, 2001), There are 2.8 million enrolled female students and 2.6 million registered male students under the Ministry of Education (Al-syrai & al-yami, 2002). Higher education is managed by a separate body under the Ministry of Higher Education. This was instituted in 1975 to take over responsibility for higher education which had been administered prior to this by the Ministry of Education. The Ministry is responsible for the coordination, supervision and follow-up of higher programmes. It also supervises fellowships, scholarships and academic relations (Al-gamdi, 1994).

Prior to unification in 1932, with the exception of the Hijaz area, education had been concentrated in Katatib (seminar style pedagogy where students sat together on the floor in a semi-circle) and lesson content revolved around the *sharia* Law. In Hijaz, however, there were schools where mathematics, geometry, sociology, astronomy and similar subjects were also taught: the Indian School (1868), the Saulatia· School (1872) (named after a woman, Saulat, who paid for its establishment) and Al-falah (success) School (1911) in Makkah city. The Al-falah branch in Jeddah city started earlier in 1905 and is still running today (Gazaz, 1994). Exposure of this area to the outside world during the *Hajj* seasons and the settlement of many of scholars nearby, before its inclusion under Saudi rule, made these schools possible and exceptional in Arabia. In fact, according to Al-hamad (1987) when the first King of Saudi Arabia came to power, great numbers of his people were uneducated, but when the government started to earn income from petrol it began to spend on education and people bgan to realise the importance of education in improving their employment, financial and social status (Al-hamad, 1987). At the beginning there were strong objections from Islamic traditionalists to the introduction of a Western form of

education in the boys' schools. They were especially opposed to the establishment of girls' schools, believing that this would divert them from their traditional roles as wives and mothers. There was further argument that if women were allowed to attend school, this would be the first step toward a non-segregated society, which according to them, is discouraged by the Islamic faith (Al-garni, 2000). Nevertheless, women gained the right to attend schools by royal decree in 1959 (Yamani, 2000). Schools for females first opened in Makkah and Jeddah in the Western Province (Hijaz) which is considered more liberal than the other provinces. According to Al-hamad (1987), in one of the Central Province cities, police forces had to be used to keep the girls school open and to protect staff and students from those who opposed female education (Al-hamad, 1987). Today four decades after this decree, the number of schools open to females is 13,941 while the number of schools for males is 13,000 (Al-syrai, & Al-yami, 2002). This disparity is interesting; however, investigation into the reasons for it is beyond the scope of this research. Nevertheless, there is a growing consciousness of a dichotomy between the education that young females receive and the roles they are expected to play in society according to Yamani (2000). The educational system in Saudi Arabia in its current structure is part of a total socio-political order that is adjusted to produce and reproduce a traditional social structure in which the ideal female fulfils a depicted conventional role in which minimal changes can be seen. The schools reinforce the *status quo* by maintaining class and gender favouritism. The argument states that educational institutions do not mediate or aspire to change the fabric of society or the characteristics of individuals who persue positions of status, wealth and power. The schools are static because they are microcosms of the society, rather than agents for change. The problem for Saudi females is that their access to higher education is restricted to certain specialities (Al-baker, 1990). There is a small

range of academic and training courses and career paths open to them (Yamani, 2000). It is estimated that female participation in the labour market is only 6% of the national workforce (Al-baker, 1990, Al-hodiathi, 1993).

Nevertheless, Al-gosaibi (1982) pointed out that the Saudi education system as a whole is (still) a copy of the Egyptian education system which, though it might be suitable for Egyptian society, is not suitable for Saudi society. He argues that Egyptian education strategy prepares the student to be a 'white collar worker' rather than a 'blue collar worker' (Al-gosibi, 1982) and the curriculum largely creates dependency, an inability to innovate or think. Despite increasing economic pressure for higher scientific and technological training, the school curriculum still emphasises the arts and humanities rather than science and technical subjects (Al-hodiathi, 1993). The Saudi society needs more blue collar workers if it is to build the Kingdom with the hands of its own people rather than those of expatriates. Because educated Saudis are mostly white collar workers, as a result of the educational system, the country relies massively on blue collar workers who come from all over the world. If the non-Saudis left the Kingdom for one purpose or another, there would be no-one to work in the factories, in agriculture, communications, and other enterprises and services (Al-gosaibi, 1982). The foreign and Arab presence is particularly troubling. On the one hand it threatens unemployment, on the other it exposes the inadequacies of the Saudi labour sector (Yamani, 2000). However, Al-hamad (1987) attributes the country's dependence on non-Saudi labour to more than the educational system alone. The reason lies very deep in the culture of Saudi society. For example, attitudes to status and what is seen as 'menial' work may incline some men to unemployment rather than blue collar work. Clearly to Al-hamad, "the cause of this attitude lies not only in the education system but also in a mixture of political, economic and cultural factors"

(Al-hamad, 1987, 89). Access to jobs is also still usually affected by family affiliations and the individual's social contacts in government offices (Al-khateeb, 1990, Yamani, 2000).

Cultural and Social Structure

Before 1932, Saudi society, particularly Central Arabia (Najd), was more isolated than the Western Province where there were only three urban centres Jeddah, Makkah and Madinah could be classified as cities, and they were small (Al-Shalhoub, 1995). After unification, and until recently, Jeddah was the biggest city under Saudi rule and for that reason was the actual capital, if not the official capital, for it is the gateway to the desert inside.

With the exception of Jeddah, Makkah and Madinah whose societies are heterogeneous as a result of exposure to pilgrims during the *Hajj* seasons whose nationality ranges from Pacific Ocean Indonesians to Atlantic Ocean Moroccans (Al-torki, 1987), the majority of the people of this peninsula are, as Al-gosaibi describes them, *"indigenous tribal stock"* (Al-gosaibi, 1982). Thus, before unification, society followed tribal or clan structures in which the Sheikh was at the head and all of his followers (subjects) had to submit to his decisions without dissent (Merdad, 1993). However, rapid economic modernisation that has been achieved in Saudi Arabia as a result of the oil revenues has had a strong impact on the structure of society . Philip (1984) described what he called the "jump from a camel's back into a Cadillac" in the modernisation process. Surprisingly, he asserted that many Saudis made the jump without problems (Philip, 1984, xiii). As a result, the extended family encouraged by this tribal life has become unnecessary.

With the influx of wealth, modern houses tended to be bigger in size with more rooms. Many Saudi families in cities tend to live in houses instead of flats because it gives them greater levels of privacy. Furniture has become more Westernised, and more household appliances have come to be regarded today as necessities in life. Saudi society has become one of the most consumers-oriented societies in the world. Almost all commodities are imported from abroad. All family members are encouraged to be consumers: men, women and children alike (Al-khateeb, 1990). Moreover, oil revenue has financed the advanced communications network which has in turn, helped to create a national culture (Al-hamad, 1987).

Another Saudi demographic characteristic is the massive influx of unskilled, skilled labour and expatriates to modernise the country. There are about seven million of them. They constitute 30% of the present population (*The Middle East and North Africa*, 2001). However, many of them have little contact with the locals on a social level (Al-khariaji, 1993).

In a study entitled *Expatriate Labour in the Gulf*, Al-salem and Dhaher (1983) indicated that 43.9% of Saudi citizens had a *"normal"* relationship with resident foreigners and 56.1% did not want to have a social relationship with expatriates. An overwhelming majority of Saudis (89.7%) said they would like to have a social (visiting) relationship with other Saudis. On the other hand, the authors stated that 60% of foreign workers did not have a friendly relationship with local citizens because of cultural, social and traditional differences with natives (Al-salem and Dhaher, 1983). In fact in recent years, Saudis feel themselves to be in direct competition with imported workers, especially with those who are better qualified and

have stronger language skills. This has fuelled resentment and social tensions towards non-Saudi labour especially when demography dictates a rising indigenous demand for employment (Yamani, 2000). According to Pilkington (2002) the unemployment rate is 30% among men. "Every year 400,000 more young men graduate into immediate joblessness" (Pilkington, 2002, 2).

The status of Saudi Arabia as the guardian of the Muslim holy cities of Makkah and Medinah has obliged the Saudi government to be observant of Islamic teachings, for it has become the focus of attention by observers both in and outside the country to be seen as strict reliable guardians of Islam. Alcohol is thus prohibited as well as nightclubs and cinemas (Merdad, 1993).

Although Saudi nationals are 100% Muslims, they are not 100% devoted for there are equally if not stronger references that affect their behaviours and attitudes such as traditions and customs. Saudis sometimes find themselves in contradictory positions. There are many conflicts between what they say and what they do. For example, Al-torki (1987) in her anthropological observational study found that Saudis believe that praying is a duty of every Muslim, whether male or female, yet not all of them are actually observant of this duty (Al-torki, 1987). Islam emphasises that all people are equal and that there is no distinction between one person and another except in *al-taqwa* (God fearing). In reality, most people give more emphasis to wealth, social prestige, physical appearance, race prejudice and gender superiority than to adherence to Islamic teachings (Al-khateeb, 1990).

For example, according to Al-torki (1987), when the government established school education for females it proclaimed it for the purpose of Islamic upbringing of the females. However, fathers who were interested in educating their daughters at that

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time did not interpret this step in this way. "No doubt that they accepted this claim. However in their minds education was a source of prestige for the family" (Al-torki, 1986, 123). Furthermore, many women worry more about the disgrace and shame that they cause in Saudi society when they remove their veil, more than they do about Divine principles. It is noteworthy that women in Jeddah are less observant in wearing the veil than in Riyadh. However, in the last few years, some elite women from Riyadh, who have studied abroad, are not so attentive about the veil especially when they have the support of their guardians (Al-khateeb, 1990, Al-torki, 1986).

Gender Socialisation and the Segregation Enigma

Socialisation in Saudi Arabia prepares males and females for different roles in the future. Saudi society is a matrilineally ordered society, and having male children confers prestige on the father and his family since a son expands and reinforces the father's line. Male and female children are received differently. Having a baby boy is a source of respect to the family. A baby girl, on the other hand, is less enthusiastically received (Al-khateeb, 1990, Al-saif, 1997).

The Islamic view holds that masculinity is an extra load on a man that requires him to serve harder, yet masculinity in traditional Saudi society is considered as an auxiliary honour bestowed on a man who is to be served and who is to dominate. Man, it is assumed, is by nature superior to woman (Al-Baker, 1990).

According to Saudi male ideology, men are assumed to be mentally and physically superior to women who are assumed to be weak, emotional creatures. They do not have the ability to make the 'right' decisions. Women and children are always put on the same level. They are to be neither regarded nor treated as rationales. They should always be guarded and guided (Al-torki, 1986).

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Hence, through the socialisation process male and female children are treated differently. Female children are not expected to be outspoken as male children are. Also, they are encouraged to show respect and obedience to their brothers, even if these are younger. Boys are always encouraged to be confident and not to show their emotions. When a little boy cries, it is assumed that a person usually cries when he or she is powerless. But since he is a boy, he should not be powerless and let problems beat him; he should beat them. In this way a male is brought up having a positive view of himself and his ability. He is strong, reliable and has self-control. When a girl cries, she is weak and helpless (Al-khateeb, 1990). She has no power aside from her tears and it is a relief for her to cry. In this manner, a female is brought up to have a negative attitude towards herself. She is emotional and undependable (Yamani, 2000). Regarding the Saudi norms, shyness, obedience, decency, quietness and modesty are synonymous with femininity. To be masculine means to be outspoken, brave, sociable and reliable. But, above all, a man has to be the breadwinner of his family. Masculinity is related to a man's financial ability to provide for his family's needs. A man's inability to sustain his household weakens his status and demeans his manhood. A Saudi proverb says 'Nothing disgraces a man as much as his empty pocket' (Al-khateeb, 1990).

In fact, from interviews, Al-kahteeb (1990) found that Saudi mothers like their daughters to take care of their appearances and clothes, their hair styles, their dress, and to wear make-up properly. On the other hand, they want their sons to have powerful personalities, to be outspoken and to be able to work and support their families (Al-khateeb, 1990). Parents of males use an easy-going approach towards their sons' outings while they tend to be very strict towards their daughter visits.

Sometimes, girls are forbidden from visiting their school friends until they are married. Parents feel that females' ambitions should be limited and restricted. They are not entitled to have the same rights as their brothers (Al-torki, 1986).

This is different from the Islamic early era, where men's involvement in cooking, cleaning, sewing and so forth was considered a duty, a sign of piety and good character. At present, however, according to Saudi tradition, males are discouraged from housework for it is regarded as a sign of disgrace. "Males are always scolded and forbidden to do housework", stated Al-khateeb (1990). They are told "what a disgrace for you to do women's work, you should not do that." Females, conversely, are always encouraged and praised for doing housework. Thus, a male grows up having a refusal attitude towards housework. It is feminine work and not suitable for men to perform. (Al-khateeb, 1990, 144). Another obvious fact in Saudi Arabia is sex segregation. The concept of segregation is very ambiguous in practice. Ideally, men and women are secluded from each other except for necessity. There is a clear distinction between the world of a man and the world of a woman in Saudi Arabia. Every Saudi house should have separate rooms for entertaining male and female guests. Men's 'majlis' is usually near the outside door. It is observable that mixing between genders within the private sphere is practiced more in Jeddah than in Riyadh, even though Jeddah is nearer to the holy cities of Makkah and Madinah (Al-torki,1986).

In general, sex segregation dominates most aspects of public life. There is strict separation between the sexes at schools and colleges, and leisure activities. Moreover, in workplaces, all government offices are managed by men, except a few, which have separate offices for women. Private companies, factories, shops, and supermarkets are staffed by men (Al-kharaigi, 1993, Yamani, 2000). Since most government offices are

only staffed by men, Saudi women do not have the same access to these offices as men do, which hinders their opportunities to enjoy their rights. Therefore, females are obliged to be dependent on males in order to deal with such government services. For example, if a woman wants to establish a business or wants to pay electricity or telephone bills, or wishes to go to court, she needs to have a man to undertake these procedures for her. Social restrictions make women feel paralysed whenever they lack their male guardian or a driver to drive them from place to place. Some of them indicate that to have a driver nowadays has become more important than their male guardians since most of them are reluctant to drive their families at any time or to any place they want to go (Al-khateeb, 1990, Al-shamari, 2002).

Recent urban expansion and the fading of the extended family with the easy availability of domestic servants and household appliances, women now have more time to spare, and since women are not allowed to drive their own cars, they feel restricted to their homes. Many suffer from boredom. However, it is difficult for a female to move from house to house without a car or unaccompanied by a man. Least of all, she is subject to the aggressive attentions of men in public places. The customary male approach of the 'Muakasa' sexual flirt to establish a relationship is a means of establishing male power and dominance in the public sphere. (Al-khateeb, 1990, Yamani, 2000). Nevertheless, the double standard traditional Saudi society keeps a lenient attitude towards males' behaviours and places strict conditions on the chastity and purity of its female members (Al-saif, 1997). Taking into account the restricted social mobility of Saudi females, their restrained participation in the public sphere, the ban on driving and the unavailability of public transportation, "females in reality are left with the agony of isolation, frustration and a deep feeling of worthlessness" (Al-baker, 1990, 183).

At the same time in the private sphere, many of the contradictory Saudi males are rigid in showing love and affection to their family. It is always believed that if a man is well off financially and provides for all his family's financial needs, the family does not have the right to ask for more. Feelings and emotions are regarded as something trivial next to financial matters (Al-khateeb, 1990, Al-torki, 1986). Exposure to Western and Arab stereotypes of romance through TV series and video films make females tend to expect more love and affection than Saudi men are traditionally socialised to give (Yamani, 2000). This is why, later in the study, the findings show that females perceived foreigners in real life and in foreign TV and videotape materials and also Arabs in real life and Arab TV materials as more "romantic" than the Saudis in real life and in Saudi materials. This is despite the fact that females' exposure to foreign TV, video, and Arab TV materials is more highly controlled by the family members than for males. This will be discussed later in chapter 7. At the same time, men inauspiciously assert that TV and video programmes have negatively affected women's attitudes (Al-hamaidi, 1992, Yamani, 2000).

Socio-economic Classes and Characteristics

Before the discovery of oil, the gap between the classes was narrow as Saudi Arabia was on the verge of poverty (Long, 1997). During the early years of the twentieth century, the Saudi economy was dependent on outside subsidies from the British and the Ottomans, as mentioned earlier. The main source of income was the annual pilgrimage season (Hajj) to Makkah. Today, some Saudi merchants are among the richest businessmen in the world (Al-khateeb, 1990). In his book entitled *"To be a Saudi"* Yamani (1998), a Saudi businessman, states

"We are amongst the ten highest spending nations on foreign tourism although our population is a fraction of that of other countries ranked. We have the largest number of executive aircraft and yachts per capita, and the opulence of our houses puts to shame Beverly Hills. Our supermarkets are astonishing department stores of necessary and luxury foods and our jewellery shops exceed in stock value those in many industrialised nations. There is no question that we are a nation that spends extravagantly and in proportions only made possible by the wealth derived from oil. There is also no question that our spending can influence fashions, attract envy worldwide, and provide us with some of the best service available anywhere" (Yamani, 1998, 35).

The influx of wealth in Saudi society has created many contradictions. There are great differences between people in terms of income, education, modernity, adherence to tradition or to Islamic teachings (Al-khateeb, 1990). While state-of-the-art palaces, villas, cars, entertainment facilities, extravagant parties, food and travelling, as Yamani describes, are enjoyed by the *nouveaux-riche* upper class, who constitute 25% of the population, there is another class at the other end of the social spectrum which constitutes 40% of society. The lower class lead a very simple life and live in very simple apartments or plebeian houses in narrow alleys. They can hardly travel inside the country, never mind to neighbouring ones. They prepare mainly cheap food at home and hardly ever hold parties or go out even to low cost restaurants. They spend their time in continuous work both in and outside the house. For rare outside entertainment they visit neighbours or family. Lower class families usually have no leisure time. "Women in this class, when they become absolutely tired and lonely, go to clinics in hospitals to meet and chat with other women in the waiting rooms. This visit makes them happy. Sometimes they make this visit every week or even twice a week" (Al-khateeb, 1990, 151-152). Like the upper class they are less strict about their children's behaviour and children are more independent in their movements and less controlled. Despite their huge number, lower class families hardly spend time together for they are overloaded with work for living (Al-jasmani, 1994).

In between is the new middle class, which, through education, has escaped the lower classes. They live in small villas or big apartments. Some own property and travel sometimes both inside and outside the country especially to Arab countries. Unlike the upper class, which largely consists of the Royal Family, followed by a group of wealthy families, mainly big merchants and high-ranking officials (Al-shalhoub, 1995), the middle class consists mainly of teachers, university professors, lawyers, judges, managers, adminstrators, clerks (supervisors, inspectors), technicians, small merchants, traders, landowners and army officials. In fact, education has improved this class not only in terms of its cultural and mental life but also in the material sense raising its standards closer to that of the wealthy in the country. The energy that drives this class's upward social mobility is fundamentally education and not ownership. There are many educated people who, as a result of personal academic accomplishment, have crossed the class barrier despite their family background. Education also helps to eradicate family occupations and increase inter-family and inter-class marriages with the elite class (Alhamad, 1987). Therefore, ambitious families in this class adopt a strict lifestyle not as a religious duty but as a gateway for upward social mobility and prestige (Al-jasmani, 1994). However, the instability of oil revenue during the 1980s and 1990s affected the state budget. Opportunities for more auspicious employment have been greatly reduced because of the cutbacks imposed by the government which, through the Civil Service Bureau, is the main employer of such people (Al-garni, 2000). This aspiring class has experienced economic insecurity that has resulted in growing frustration and anxiety (Yamani, 2000).

Electronic Mass Media Development

Before 1926, Saudi Arabia had no concern for a national electronic communication system. The only territory that had a relatively organised bureaucratic and communication hierarchy was the Western Province, Hijaz. In consideration of its religious and economic status, Hijaz was under the nominal control of the Turks, who set up wire and wireless communication facilities to link Jeddah , Makkah and Medinah. When Ibn Saud captured Hijaz in 1926, he realised that this communication equipment was critical if he was to effectively administer over the vast and sporadically populated Arabia. He acquired and installed radio transmitters in various cities in the Kingdom. In addition, He purchased a mobile radio transmitter to be able to communicate with the regional administrator when he was travelling (Boyd, 1999, Philby, 1955).

The introduction of media technology to the people of Saudi Arabia, particularly in the central region (Najd) where the capital is situated, was not well received. Religious leaders in the area , the *Ulama*, resented radio broadcasting. They feared it would surely change the traditional Bedouin ways of the area and called it the *'devil's work'* (Boyd, 1999, Shobaili, 1971). However, Ibn Saud changed this attitude when he made a group of *Ulama* listen to a radio broadcast of the holy Quran and demonstrated that radio was not the devil's work. In 1927, the *Ulama* published a religious opinion (fatwa) declaring.

> "The issue of wire, wireless and telegraph communications will happen toward the end of time. Neither do we know its facts nor have we seen a written speech about it by knowledgeable people. Thus, we pause at this issue because to determine whether or not to permit it we need to understand its facts [nature]" (Al-najai, 1985, 225).

This religious viewpoint paved the way for radio development in Saudi Arabia, especially since neither women's voices nor music was allowed on the air. However by the early 1960s, initial restrictions were gradually changed and more expansion of radio stations under King Faisal rule took place. This was stepped up when Egyptian services (most notably the *Voice of the Arabs*) started attacking the Saudi Royal Family and proposing a revolution and access to foreign radio broadcasts became possible (Boyd, 1999).

Therefore, according to Merdad (1993) the Saudi government would find the introduction of television as a political opportunity

> "to prevent hostile and propaganda broadcasts by Egypt's 'Voice of the Arabs' and 'Radio Cairo' from gaining popularity among Saudis... Also, the government wanted to build up a Saudi national identity, particularly among those living in the desert and in rural and urban areas... and enhance the Saudi image abroad". (Merdad, 1993, 78)..

Moreover the government wanted to technically update a primitive communication sector to keep pace with the swiftly growing economy. It also sought to provide a symbolically modern means of transmitting news and development planning to promote education and health awareness along with controlled entertainment (Merdad, 1993).

However, internally, television introduction was entirely another matter in comparison to radio (Boyd, 1999). "There was (mainly) a fear that television would bring Western influences to the Saudi culture" (Rampal, 1994). Therefore, television faced stronger opposition. Theologians and conservatives denounced television, calling it *'blasphemous'* and as another Western influence, especially because of its visual elements in comparison to radio (Boyd, 1999, Merdad, 1993).

When King Faisal stated that his policy was determined to introduce substantial changes in the social structure in order to modernise the country and to make available *"innocent means of recreation"* for all Saudi citizens, he was asked what constituted this. He replied,

> "We do not mean of course the opening of cabarets night clubs, bars and gambling houses. The kind of recreation that we have in mind is that which does not conflict with God's religion and with moral behaviour. Such recreation we approve of and encourage" (De Guary, 1966, 155).

Although this statement did not persuade cautious and religious conservatives, sceptics and other objectors, after a number of hostile confrontations and "unsuccessful attempts to persuade (them) to accept the new medium, the Saudi government finally resorted to exercising its authority to establish what it viewed as necessary for the nation's well-being" (Al-garni, 2000, 139).

In 1964, the Saudi government signed an agreement with RCA (represented by the American ambassador) to build two television stations in Jeddah and Riyadh which began televising in July 1965 (Boyd, 1999). However, when women started to appear on the screen in 1965, there was an attack on the television station in Riyadh. King Faisal resolved the conflict by issuing a statement that Islamic morals and Saudi values would be respected in the future. As a result, women's appearances were confined to certain roles and certain types of programmes, for example, as hosts or guests in children's or women's shows. Women appearing in these programmes were required to observe the strict Muslim dress code; they had to cover their hair and wear loose clothing to ensure that their bodies were fully covered down to the wrists and ankles in order to prevent them from being exposed to viewers. From the start of

Saudi television, the issue of females, especially Arab females on the screen, has been a highly sensitive matter. But the television management became rather lax about this. As a result, the compromise was short-lived, especially when Saudi women started to appear in acting and in scenes involving flirtation.

In 1979, a second incident took place, this time at the Holy Grand Mosque in Makkah. A group of tribal armed religious extremists took over the Mosque by force, locked the gates and proclaimed their demands regarding the un-Islamic content of television programming. The extremists were arrested and later executed. However, "this incident was a turning point for the Saudi media. One of the consequences was the reduction of women's appearance on television and restrictions placed on the roles they performed and their attire" (Al-garni, 2000, 140). Mackey (1987) asserts that change must be introduced yet proceed gradually so that it will be accepted and not appear as a challenge to traditional culture and Islamic teaching which holds society together (Mackey, 1987). During the 1960s and 1970s the Saudi media had an informal communication policy that guided their functions in society. These unofficial guidelines were respected by television programmers. Nevertheless, a *"censorship policy"* was formulated officially by the Supreme Council of Mass Communication under the presidency of the Minister of the Interior in 1981.

Censorship Guidelines & Saudi Television Programming

Set out below are the limitations and prohibitions to be followed by Saudi TV:

1. Scenes that arouse sexual excitement, including women dressed indecently, love and kissing scenes, as well as female participation in sporting events except in decent attire;

2. Dancing, except traditional dancing with decent dresses;

3. Anything that opposes or offends the Islamic religion;

4. All manifestations of, and resemblance to, other religious (not Islam) evangelism and propaganda;

5. Scenes of churches, synagogues, temples, crosses, funerals, sanctuaries; synagogues or persons of both sexes of other religions;

6. Practices and rituals of other religions;

7. Gambling and betting;

8. Alcoholic drinks and consumption;

9. Assumed resemblance to, or pictures of, the prophet Mohammed, peace be upon him and his companions;

10. All religious historical stories that distort the truth;

11. All that advocates the eating of pork;

12. Sculptures and images that are religious in nature or resemble the naked human body;

13. Games that advocate believing in magic as an abnormal phenomenon;

14. Everything that contradicts the social and moral values of the society;

15. Everything that contradicts Arabian traditions, customs and norms;

16. Bars and nightclubs;

17. Illegal drugs and acts of consuming them;

18. Moral dissolution;

19. All that contradicts or offends the political system and politicians in the Kingdom;

20. All convictions, principles and political party slogans that contradict government policy;

21. Everything that offends Arabic Islamic, and *friendly* countries;

22. All kinds of Zionist propaganda, principles and Israeli slogans;

23. Everything that contradicts the laws issued by the Arabian Office for the boycott of Israel;

24. Unrest, demonstrations, insurgencies, terrorism, espionage, political conspiracies; political parties and terrorist organisations;

25. All radical and factional segregation;

26. Immoral scenes pertaining to feature discrimination in race, colour, or other forms;

27. All films and videos that are technically unfit to be show because of poor picture quality;

28. Shows of superficial stories or those that are boring;

29. Weak artistic production whether it is in acting, production or theme (Al-garni, 2000, Abuzinada, 1988, Boyd , 1999, Supreme Council of Communication, 1998, Merdad, 1993).

These official censorship guidelines regarding religious, social, political and technical issues have not changed over the last two decades. However, neither have they been religiously followed. There is a kind of double standard on Saudi TV. For example, "Western women are considered to be properly attired when their arms are covered and their skirts are not above the knees. On the other hand, Arab, (particularly Saudi) women are usually more conservatively dressed, with at least a scarf covering their hair" (Boyd, 1999, 163). In fact, Western women can nowadays be shown on Saudi television in miniskirts, Arab women with uncovered shoulders and Saudi women with a barely covered head. The question that can be asked is whether Saudi Television is desperately trying to gain back their lost audience from DBS through the portrayal of more flesh and legs. During Saudi TV's early days of broadcasting, Boyd (1999) described how Saudi Television transmission was joyfully received. He said

that by any measure Saudi Television signals were received with immense excitement by the citizens of Jeddah and Riyadh (Boyd, 1999). Al-garni (2000) explains that while some items on Saudi TV are censored, others are not, and this permits the transmission of un-Islamic ideas, values and practices to penetrate. This problem of un-Islamic or unsuitable messages is considered a result of Saudi Television's dependence on imported entertainment, produced in other cultures with different character and values. This dependence is reinforced by a lack of local productions with which to fill airtime. Saudi Television is, therefore, denounced by both the Islamists and the conservatives. They accuse imported programmes and, to a lesser extent, locally produced programmes of violating policy standards. On the other hand, for the liberals who aspire to Western culture the censorious content of Saudi Television is a cause of dissatisfaction which invites them to turn to DBS and other forms of entertainment (Al-garni, 2000). Saudi Television programmers attempts to cater for both the traditionalists and the liberals has failed (Yamani, 2000). They are somewhat bewildered by the fact that they have failed to please either, never mind both, camps.

Nevertheless, the activities of top government officials are covered extensively by television. News departments at television stations meticulously screen all internal and external reports to ensure that they comply with the policy (Merdad, 1993). With regards to authoritarianism the media are used " to informing the people of what the rulers [think] they should know and the policies the rulers [think] they should support" (Siebert, Paterson, & Schramm, 1956, 2). In fact, Macky (1987) made an interesting distinction between the clashing Western and Saudi cultures, proclaiming that

> "Unlike in Western culture where communication is a virtue, in the
> Arab world, Saudi Arabia in particular, communication is a danger, a

threat arising from prying outsiders. Security for the individual, group and nation is thought to reside in unity behind values and ideals not in divisiveness created by a free press" (Mackey, 1987, 256).

Others like Al-Saud (1989) and Merdad (1993), have realised that the Saudi media system has been shaped by the interconnected aggregated influences of politics, religion, tradition, customs and economics. This gives the media a conservative characteristic in the Arab world with regards to political ideologies and an interpretation of Islam that sometimes diverges from the mainstream. Consequently, they claim, it would be deceptive to classify the Saudi media system according to existing Western theoretical concepts (Al-Saud, 1989, Merdad, 1993).

Eventually, in 1983, television transmission was centralised in the capital Riyadh. However, centralisation has its negative aspects according to Al-garni (2000). There is a distinct lack of regional representation and competition which has stymied a dormantly creative impetus. Moreover, centralisation intensifies the concentration of government control over media operation (Al-garni, 2000). In the same year in Riyadh, the construction of the largest and most advanced television facility in the Middle East was completed. Nevertheless, as Boyd (1999) stated "it was hard to find enough qualified Saudis to fill the major management positions (which are reserved for natives) in expanding ... television services" (Boyd, 1999, 166). Despite this, a second English language television channel (Saudi TV 2) was inaugurated at that time (Al-garni, 2000) to serve the growing interest of Saudi Arabia's younger generation. The government also considered the growing number of foreign workers who wanted some form of diversion (Mackey 1987). Actually, there were several incentives behind the introduction of the second channel to Saudi Society.

First, a growing number of Saudis and non-Saudis alike had been receiving television signals from neighbouring countries (Egypt, Bahrain, UAE, etc) that were more

socially liberal than Saudi Arabia. Second, the government wanted to advocate the use of English among young Saudis and to encourage them to learn it as the second spoken language in the country. Finally, officials needed to show Saudi religious leaders that they were doing their best to spread the word of Islam among the expatriate population in the country who did not speak Arabic and could not be approached through the First Channel (Merdad, 1993).

Saudi Television Programming

There is a scarcity of research about Saudi Television especially about Channel 2. Nevertheless, the fact that Channel 2's beginnings were exclusively in English has created an atmosphere not yet experienced by Channel 1. The former is not regarded as an independent and separate entity from the latter. Materials are subject to the application of censorship practices but there are still practices depicted in these programmes which are considered inconsistent with the basic tenets of Islamic faith or tradition. Meanwhile, the continual output of such entertainment increases the reliance on imported fare. The majority of programmes on this channel are imported mainly from the United States, followed by Britain, Canada and Australia. The channel depends heavily on cheap imports, mostly reruns of children's animations, features and films most of which are Hollywood productions. Some of the Western and American adult entertainment in the form of family sagas and loves stories included: *Out of This World, The Jefferson's, Candid Camera, That's Incredible, Different Strokes, Magnum*, PI., *the Cosby Show, Hunter, Capitol News, Coach, Major Dad, Molly Dad, Roseanne, Perfect Strangers, Valerie, Win, Lose or Draw, Caroll & Co. Paul Denial Show, What a Dummy, The Judge, Full House, Phyllis, St. Elsewhere, You Asked for it, Minder, Sportsworld, Evening Shade, Believe It or Not, Rescue 911,*

Only in Hollywood and *Heroes Made in the U.S.A.* (Algarni, 2000, Merdad, 1993). However, Mackey (1987) indicated pettily that those interested in Arab culture or language might not find programmes on these topics on Saudi TV 2 (Mackey, 1987). Channel 1, on the other hand, depends mainly on Arab imports. In a content analysis of sources of drama production on Channel 1 Al-garni (2000) found that from Egypt, Saudi Arabian television purchases its 47.5% of Arabic entertainment programmes from Syria 24.4% and Kuwait 18.3%. However, Al-garni considers the Egyptian entertainment dramas are "of low budget productions which invariably revolve around the themes of love, family, feuds and class struggles in Egyptian society". A common weakness of Egyptian dramas is in the repetitiveness and redundancy of topics, which deal with the specifics of Egyptian society. In contrast, Syrian drama, which Al-garni analysed, takes full advantage of outdoor shooting opportunities. Nevertheless many of them, he found, cater for the Satellite TV market and are not shown on Saudi TV for they are not considered up to Saudi censorship standards (Al-garni, 2000, 216). Local children's programmes face major failings. They contain "obtuse propagandistic reports about one of the governments developmental achievements" (Al-garni, 2000, 193). These broadcasts are boring and unaccompanied by footage or visual aid materials, rendering their content inappropriate and unsuitable for children (Mishmishi, 1995). They also tend to ignore age differences among their viewers. Stimulating and thought–provoking subject matter of factual and drama programmes is squeezed out for heavy use of rerun cartoons made during the 1980s. These cartoons are almost always screened in their original language (English) without translation, dubbing or comment on Channel 1, which is supposed to be dedicated to Arabic. Young viewers are still regularly treated to banal condescending programmes. The older children are left as easy prey for some of the satellite channels producing

programmes that convey un-Islamic messages. Pre-schoolers also tend be neglected by Saudi Television. Until Saudi Television is able to offer informative and educationally exciting programmes in accordance with the media policy , foreign imported programmes will continue to be more appealing. (Al-garni, 2000). At present, the STV 1 daily schedule consists of 20 to 22 hours between 10:00 am. and 6:00 am. (Media & Communication, 2002).

Religious programmes constitute about 8% of transmission time. Such programmes include reading from the Quran, talk shows, lectures, and question and answer programmes. Apart from the live coverage of prayers from the Grand Mosques in Makkah and Madinah, the majority of Saudi Television religious productions are of a studio-based nature.

> "These religious programmes restrict themselves to explaining religious duties to Muslims, without indulging in any philosophical, economic or contemporary issues. In their limited form, they are not conductive to the innovation of new ideas or interpretations" (Al-garni, 2000, 181).

The majority of these programmes are very boring and have poor production value (Al-oofy, 1990). Nevertheless, all religious programmes are produced locally which shows the sensitivity of this type of programming for Saudi officials (Al-Uamani 1984).

The news bulletin presentation far from being punchy and dynamic in its style, is often inherently official and po-faced (Al-garni, 2000). An unchanging feature of Saudi Television programmes is their authoritarian official tone, and top-to-bottom disposition of discourse. No attention is given to viewer interaction whatsoever, nor to feedback. There are no interviews with people who could voice their concerns or

address their opinions regarding issues which influence their lives. Nor are there any serious programmes on Saudi Television that survey the views and opinions of average people on subjects such as television programme content, agenda, popular topics or trends (Al-garni, 2002). "In fact the domestic arena as a whole is noticeably absent or out of focus" (Al-garni, 2000, 226). Even when Saudi Television tries to boost local tourism, their tourist programmes are based on interviews with administrators in their offices, welcoming the holiday patrons and assuring them that all services they demand are available, followed by another interview or two with holiday customers praising the efforts by authorities and central government. These shots are accompanied by relatively old videos displaying some scenic footage of the vicinity and the region. A general deficit in Saudi Television programmes is that they seem to be compiled hastily and unprofessionally and are often lacking in proper research regarding the topic in hand (Al-garni, 2000). Little, if anything, is discussed on Saudi Television about problems in the health service, education quality in a competitive global market and unemployment. When the unemployment figures were rising every year, little was seen being done to set this problem at the forefront of the national agenda. There are distinct segments of the Saudi viewing population who are under represented in Saudi Television scheduling and programming. Women's issues, for example, have not been addressed by Saudi Television and there is little chance for them to communicate. The so-called 'women's programmes' consist of a 30-minute show broadcast three times a week. Their highest concern is with the urban housewife and her interests while the content is limited to housekeeping chores and cookery. Saudi Television does not consider the fact that female viewers may have other interests. It fails to sustain a broad view of women's interests as a whole (Al-garni, 2000, Al-garni, 2002, Al-jammal, 2001).

News oriented programmes occupy more than 15% of television time (Al-oofy 1990). The priority of news items to be broadcast depends largely on an individual's prestige or rank in the government and coverage is based on official seniority. News involving the King is invariably transmitted first, followed by items about the Crown Prince and then the Second Deputy and the Minister of Defence and Aviation. Together they constitute 40% of local news stories. Saudi Television has an obligation to protect the *status quo*, which explains why ceremonial news about members of the Saudi Royal Family and governmental officials take priority over local news. The King's speeches and inauguration ceremonies are broadcast in their entirety. Negative news regarding economic problems, crimes other than those involving punishment, accidents, fires, inflation, declining oil prices and failed government policies are not reported (Al-garni, 2000, Al-makaty, 1993, Al-Saud, 1989). Political ideology is another element that determines *"newsworthiness"*. Television newscasts, such as news contained in the Saudi press are more akin to bulletin boards or showcases of local and international events. They report more heavily on the comings and goings of top government officials, than on actual sources of information (Mackey, 1987).

Other television information programmes include political magazine type shows such as *World Events in a Week, the Week Conference, the Photographic Magazine* and *the Press Review* (Al-Saud 1989). Researchers have indicated that the commentaries included in these programmes all favour the government's point of view, regardless of what the audience believes (Al-garni, 2002). The head of the news department at Saudi TV has asserted that "What is good for the government is good for the citizens (audiences)" (Al-Aamoudi, 1984, p.19).

Audiences are dissatisfied with both the amount and quality of regional, national and local news coverage. Therefore, the newscast format and the newscasters fail to

motivate most of the viewers. There are many more Saudi viewers who are dissatisfied than satisfied with the nature of national news coverage. (Merdad, 1993). A prime example in the local domestic arena concerned events at the Makkah Mosque in 1979. The 15 day-take-over of this huge mosque on the day corresponding to the end of the Islamic 14th century took the Saudi government by surprise. For many days, Ministry of Information authorities withheld broadcasting information about the incident, while the Saudi people listened in on foreign radio reports. Even when the government decided to release specific data about the extent of the fighting, Saudi Television was unable to react promptly. Footage of what was actually happening was hard to obtain because no qualified trained Saudi national was available to get the wanted news shots (Boyd, 1999). This situation was then repeated during the invasion of Kuwait in 1991. It took Saudi Television three days to announce the event and even then it merely focussed on CNN's coverage. Saudi media at that time barely played a role in informing and explaining to Saudi viewers what was happening within their own borders (Mustafa, 1997, Yamani, 1995). Saudi TV is not only barred from broadcasting local news about accidents and crimes, but forbidden to report any damage or loss produced by natural calamities. There have been many occasions when torrential rain and flooding have caused huge devastation to regions of the country, where villages and huge parts of cities have been isolated and bridges and roads swept away, but Saudi Television crews have not been permitted by local officials to provide either details of the Civil Defence rescue procedures or show the devastation of the aftermath (Al-garni, 2000). Programmes always refrain from the undelayed burning topics and deal with safe issues or noncontroversial local topics. This habit has helped promote a false impression that Saudi society is a 'faultless' one with no addressable issues, thus "leaving the Saudi audience easy prey for foreign

news media which can be accused of sugar-coating its propaganda and presenting it as 'objective' news reporting" (Ashobali, 1992,45)

Regarding educational programmes, Saudi Television does not provide good enlightening programming. Even though Saudi TV officials regard television as an important tutorial tool for society, the system's lack of a professional fabric to undertake production of effective educational materials makes Saudi television primarily a vehicle for entertainment and dissemination of government news (Merdad, 1993). Many programmes are made cheaply, based on little creative effort and are incapable of enhancing the viewers' knowledge. There is a serious dearth of scholarly programmes; the few that are broadcast are Western imports and poorly, if at all, dubbed. They often bear no relevance to the specific situation in Saudi Arabia. Those programmes that deal with scientific or neutral issues that add to the viewers' understanding and knowledge of the natural sciences rely on out-of-date films which deal with irrelevant issues (Al-garni, 2002). These factors are driving Saudis to seek other visual media.

Videocassettes Development

Boyd (1999) stated that "from their travels in Europe, the United States and other Arab countries, upper-and middle-income Saudis had become accustomed to a diverse film and television diet". In comparison, entertainment on Saudi Television was considered incompetent (Boyd, 1999, 170). The videocassette recorder allows viewers to choose their viewing time, to skim through materials regarded as uninteresting, or to substitute pre-recorded programmes that are rented, borrowed or purchased. This takes power over programme selection out of the control of the broadcasters and places it in the hands of the audience (Abuzinada, 1988, Boyd & Straubhaar, 1985).

Also, despite the non-existence of official public cinemas, there were private cinema entrepreneurs who have been allowed to operate, projecting uncensored Egyptian and Western films for home showing (Boyd, 1999). For the above reasons, Saudi Arabia offered a ready market for the expansion of the video industry (Abuzinada, 1988). In fact, the videocassette business started in Saudi Arabia as early as the beginning of the 1970s with the sale of the Sony U-Matic (Boyd, 1999). However, this business was limited to the wealthy while the vast majority of the public could not afford one. This was due to the high cost of the U-Matic machine, which at that time cost £5,000 and was further handicapped by the unavailability of regular local distributors. Consequently, the wealthy early adapters had to depend on their personal connections of private sources to obtain these pre-recorded video programmes (Abuzinada, 1988). In the early 1980s, the smaller in size and less expensive Sony (Beta) and VHS home video recorders became available in the Kingdom and the business of providing equipment for home video recorders and cassette programming in Saudi Arabia became a major industry. By the mid-1980s the videocassette software business had become more active in Saudi Arabia and the other Gulf States. At that period, the Gulf area was considered the biggest home video market in the world. No longer did Saudis need to completely rely on Saudi Television for entertainment. Indeed, the censored Western programming presented on the national Saudi channels was available in uncensored forms on video tapes in the local markets (Boyd, 1999).

Yet, Saudi society at large and the authorities consider the business of video distribution an indecent profession. Legislation was brought into effect by the Ministry of Information in the 1980s with the following guidelines: first, video tape rental and retail outlet owners had to be over 18, not enrolled in school and have no criminal record. Second, the shop must be located away from a mosque and on a main

road. Third, women were forbidden from entering video shops. (Al-garni, 2000). In addition, the rules of censorship criteria for Saudi Television were applied to video sales and rental. However, despite the licensing of video store owners, most of the codes relating to copyright protection and illegal video content remain unenforced, or rather unenforceable. Several difficulties were encountered in enforcing the content-related aspect of the law. The first difficulty related to the time at which the law was issued, which was already after the dissemination of video-recorded programmes of all kinds in the Saudi market. In addition, there was a lack of manpower and resources to check and censor each and every tape in every store in all cities. Furthermore, the advancement of video software technology that could store hours of programming on small-sized tapes, could easily and comfortably be smuggled in a pocket. Once a videocassette passed customs, there was no limitation to where it could go or who would see it (Boyd, 1999). Surprisingly however, some who officially worked for Saudi Television themselves established leading businesses in videocassette production and distribution in the Kingdom (Abuzinada, 1988). It is probably for these reasons that the videocassette industry circumvented government control over the type of visual materials viewed in the Kingdom. Today, according to Boyd (1999), videocassette rental shops still exist, yet the software industry faces major challenges from satellite television which are quickly killing it off. Therefore, for him, most of the video tape recorders are now used to record satellite-delivered programmes (Boyd, 1999).

Direct Broadcasting Satellite (DBS)

Although Saudi Arabia has used satellite communication since 1972, this communication was filtered through its ground stations in Jeddah and Riyadh (Al-garni, 2000). The real start of DBS has become a highly attractive alternative to state-

run television and videocassette recorders during the 1990s (Boyd, 1999). Satellite dishes were never officially allowed in Saudi Arabia, but they began to enter the country in small numbers in the early 1980s. According to Asgie (1992), it was an American who was the first to install a satellite dish in Riyadh in 1980. During the 1980s members of the Royal Family and prominent high class figures were the only Saudis who could install satellite dishes. Nevertheless, their popularity rocketed dramatically with Iraq's invasion of Kuwait, as Saudis sought television news updates on the Gulf crisis and its aftermath. After 1990, satellite dishes became available in the Saudi market. Although not displayed in most electronic stores, they were openly sold until 1994 when the official Saudi ban was issued. The decree banned the importation of satellite dishes and other devices such as decoders and receivers that could pick up international channels. It also prohibited the local manufacture of satellite dishes or their parts in an effort to regulate what could be watched inside the Kingdom. Violators were warned of a penalty of up to £100,000 (Al-makaty, 1995). Also, according to this decree, the Saudi Ministry of Information was authorised to establish cable television which will filter international satellite channels and distribute them in the Kingdom and ensure that what is being represented is in accordance with the country's religious and social values (Saudi Ministers Council, 1994). The ban was never enforced and satellite equipment has always remained widely available. In fact, possession of a satellite dish "gave its owners some degree of kudos" (Al-garni, 2000, 164). Furthermore, the government abandoned the idea of establishing an official cable television project as unfeasible. Analysing the threat to Saudi Television, Ali Al-najai, Assistant Deputy Minister of Information for Television Affairs, claimed that Saudi television does not fear competition from satellite television channels because of Saudi Television's unique approaches and

objectives - it represents Saudi society and Islamic values. "There are many people inside... the Kingdom who regularly watch Saudi Television channels because they like its conservative approach" (Al-najai 1997, cited in Al-garni, 2000,). On the other hand, according to Al-garni (2002), given the choice, most viewers with access to satellite programmes do not regularly watch Saudi Television services. This is strongly related to the policy applied to entertainment programmes and news and the dearth of programmes for Saudi nationals especially related to women and children in addition to the over dependence on imported production mainly from the West and other Arab countries. (Al-garni, 2002).

According to a personal interview, M. Brakah (2002), a DBS maintenance technician, states that currently the Kingdom receives a vast array of stations reaching over 500 channels both coded and decoded. Satellite channels are mutant, dynamic and challenging. The number of satellite channels is expanding rapidly. Indeed, many satellite channels may appear on different networks and organisations. Some satellite channels may also appear on a bouquet of satellite networks for a short period of time and then disappear only to reappear on other satellite networks. Some of these channels would be received coded on one satellite network while at the same time they could be received decoded on other networks. Next is list of some of the most current and popular satellite channels, satellite organisations, channel providers and corporations among viewers in Saudi Arabia:

Satellites:

ARABSAT

The primary satellite carrier in the Arab world is ARABSAT, an Arab League-sponsored consortium of Arab states (with Saudi Arabia as the major shareholder) that owns and operates communication satellites. The first ARABSAT generation, known as the Series-I, had technical problems and a limited number of transponders. The new Series-II generation, starting with II-A, has 22 medium-and high-powered C-band and 12 KU-band transponders (Boyd, 2000). Today, ARABSAT II A is "dedicated primarily to direct-to-home digital television and special discounts have been granted for multiple transponders and long-term leasing." (Algarni, 2000, 159). It provides DBS services both of Arab governments and private companies, both Arab and international. Channels presented on it are Saudi Channels 1 & 2 the private Saudi channels Middle East Broadcasting Centre (MBC), ART Iqraa (recite), Promotional Orbit, Kuwait, Bahrain, UAE, Abu Dhabi, Alshariqa , Ajaman, Dubai Sports, Dubai Economics, Dubai Local, Oman, Qatar, Iran, Iraq, the Lebanese Broadcasting Corporation (LBC), Future of Lebanon, Syria, Jordan, Palestine, Yemen, Egypt Satellite, Egypt News, Dream (Egypt), Sudan, Djibouti, Libya, Tunis, Algeria, Morocco, Mauritania, The Arab States Broadcasting Union (ASBU), Zin (Lebanon), Al-manar, Al-musawar, BBC, NBN, News TV, TV5, CFI, TNBC, Euronews, Aljazeera, Arab News Network (ANN).

NILESAT

Another major competitor in the Arab world is NILESAT, an Egyptian-owned communications satellite company (Boyd, 2000). There are 60 decoded channels on NILESAT which was launched in 1998: Egyptian 1, Egyptian 2, Egyptian 3, Egyptian

5, Egyptian Satellite, Egyptian 8, Educational Curriculum 1, Educational Curriculum 2, Educational Curriculum 3, Educational Curriculum 4, Educational Curriculum 5, Educational Curriculum 6, Educational Curriculum 7, Dream Movies, Dream Music, Al-musawer, Almanar, Al mustaqila (Independent), Univ 1 (Higher Education), Hor 1 (scientific Egyptian), Family Health, Altanweer (Enlightenment), Nile News, Nile Family, Nile Variety, Nile Drama, Nile Sports, Nile Culture, Egyptian for Tourism (MTC), Jordan, Kuwait experimental, Kuwait, Amman, Palestine, Iraq, Andalus, ANN (news), Syria, Sudan, DW-TV, Almajd (Glory), TV5 (France), Hia (She), Video Cairo, Dubai Sports, Dubai Economics, Euronews, Aljazeera, Ajman, Tamima (Egyptian films), Space Toon for Children from Bahrain, ART Iqraa.

HOTBIRT

Diffusion of channels on this European Satellite to the Saudi market started at the beginning of the year 2000. Although it was on the Saudi market before this, its spread was limited due to its high cost. Four years before, its receiver's cost was around £1500. The price has dropped drastically since, to £150 in 2002. HOTBIRT carries to the Arab world more than 200 decoded and coded channels most of which are European. Some of the decoded channels are: Camera (Italian), Rainews 24 (Italian), Fashion, Tramoda (Italian), Cavallo, Ch 11 (Italian), Sat 2000 (Italian), Promo, R4, R8, R9, R10 (Italian), Muzzik, Mad TV, Countdown, Magic, ONYX (Musics), SFI, SF (2), TSR (1), TSR (2) (France), TV Romaina, Vox, ZDF (German) (Al-ahram Al-arabi TV, 2002, Baraka, 2002).

Although there are also other satellite networks and organisations that beam to the Middle East such as Astra, Sesat, Turksat EurAsia, Sirius, Eutelsat etc., they are less popular in Saudi society (Baraka, 2002). (for more details see *Al-ahram Al-arabi TV*).

Satellite Channels Service Providers and Corporations:

Arab Radio and Television Network (ART)- Alawaeel (Firstnet)

ART was established in 1993 by the Dallah company owned by the Saudi entrepreneur, Sheikh Saleh Kamel, who broke up from MBC to establish his own network, stating that

> "the ART network would not enter into any competition with other Arab space channels, but it would work as a complementary source of television services to those channels. He added that ART would do its best to strengthen the brotherly bonds that link all parts of the Arab world together, preserve Arab social values and defend Arabs and Muslims against all the ferocious attacks waged against them by some foreign mass media" (ART, 1993, 5).

There are today 14 ART channels; 11 are directed to the Arab world. They are: ART Global (for Middleeast), reports on Arabs who live around the world; ART Teenz, a new replacement for ART Children. It is dedicated to both children and teenagers and consists of the latest cartoons and adventure dramas; ART Manahij (Educational Curriculum); Iqraa (Read) ART Aflam (movies); ART Music (new songs); ART Tarab (old songs); ART Hekayat (Serials); ART Sport; ART Sport 2.

The ART package was unable to survive in competitive market on its own without some enlivening Western *'spices'*. Consequently, according to Boyd, (2000) "in 1997, ART decided to go into partnership with the London based outlet for Viacom's Showtime services" (Boyd, 2000, 54). ART started to market international satellite

channels along with their private ART channels under the bouquet of Al-awael, which today includes Star Movies, Star World (Celebrities), MCM (Music), TCM, Fox news, Fox Kids, Fox Sports, Bloomberg, Film Channel, MUTV (Manchester United), Realmadrid, Al-ryadiah, Eurosport News, Sky News, B4U, B4 U Music (Indian), Drama, (Egypt), Wow (Lebanese variety youth channel) Cartoon Network, CNN, Reality TV, F (Fashion), Animal Planet (world of nature and animal kingdom), the History Channel, Discovery Sci Trek, UK TV, CNBC-Europe, V Channel (music), 0A1, Variety (Egypt) and Now (youth channel). These coded satellite channels are broadcast both on Arabsat and Nilesat (ART, 2002).

Orbit

Orbit satellite channels are presented by the Saudi company, Al-mawarid Group. "The network is geared to an audience of educated, well-travelled and affluent professionals for whom culture, entertainment and up-to-date information have become a necessity" (Orbit, 2002). Orbit's most recent channels are America Plus, Animal Planet, BBC Prime, Bloomberg, Cinema City, CNBC-US, CNN International, Orbit Express Shop, F (Fashion TV), Orbit News (Coverage from major US networks), Orbit ESPN (Sports), Sky News, Super Movies, the Disney Channel, Fun Channel, the Hollywood Channel in addition to such Arabic flavoured Channels as Aloula (First: Arabic films), Althania (Second: Arabic entertainment), Althalitha (Third: Entertainment and lifestyle for Youth), Series Channel and Music Now (Orbit, 2002). These channels are received coded on Arabsat (Baraka, 2002).

Showtime

Showtime is presented by a Kuwaiti company to the Arab world and broadcast by Arabsat. It covers 25 satellite coded channels such as the Movie Channel, the Movie Channel 2, Turner Classic Movies (TCM), Hallmark, Showtime Sport, Eurosport News, Abudabi Sport, Extreme (sports Channel), Style, TV Land, Paramount Comedy Channel, E! (Entertainment TV), Sony Entertainment (Indian), Discovery Channel, Discovery Civilization, CNN International, CNNfn (financial), Bloomberg, Disney Channel, Nickelodeon, MTV, HV-1 (Music) and Music Choice (Showtime, 2002). According to Boyd (2000), "DBS is too new to assess adequately its impact on viewers. However, …the most potent disincentive for viewing DBS was the fact that most DBS channels available to Saudis have a Western flavor that clashes with the tenets of Islam" (Boyd, 2000, 55).

Videogames

In a telephone interview, S. Al-khalagi (2002), Senior Editor of Videogames at *Computer Games* Magazine in Saudi Arabia, said that the introduction of videogames to the Saudi Arabian market started two decades ago in 1982. The explosion began with the Atari generation of products followed by those from Spectrum and Mega. The introduction of second generation in videogames was in 1984 with Sakher (MSX), a Kuwaiti company which sold more than one million consoles. This console was very close to a PC as it included the operation system 'Basic'. The CPU that operated the machine was made by the Japanese company Yamaha. In the same year appeared the third generation, marked by the Nintendo Entertainment System (NES). This was considered the most advanced console at that time for graphics. Many of the games on that console are today considered classics e.g. Mario games. In 1986 Sega's

Mega Drive was inaugurated. Through this console the world was introduced to the famous charming character of Sonic the Hedgehog. The Sega console was very popular in the Arab world, Al-khalaqi commented. In 1989, the Super Nintendo Entertainment System (SNES) was introduced to the Arab market. This second generation Nintendo received huge popularity in the United States; however, this was not the case in the Arab world. In 1991, unlike the previous consoles that used cartridges, this console introduced by the American company 3DO was the first to use CDs. The company invited Philips, Panasonic and Goldstar to assemble the 3DO console. It was able to store films on Video CD and to read mpeg files, which are used in film production. However, the duration of 3DO was short as a result of the competition from Sega Saturn in 1993 which was the strongest during that time for it had the capacity to project drawings that were impossible before. However, in 1995 the Sony Playstation (PSX) was highly marketed in Saudi Arabia due to its hi-tech competence with games. In 1996 the third generation Nintendo was introduced. The Nintendo 64 was considered the best console in the United States and the last to use cartridges.

In 1998, Sega tried to compensate for its loss by introducing the Dreamcast. This console was the strongest at the time because it was the only one that could be used on the internet. Again, however, Sony responded by introducing Sony Playstation 2 in 1999. This made Sega completely withdraw from console production and limit itself to game programming. In 2000, Nintendo introduced its first CD consoles characterised by the hi-tech Nintendo Gamecube. In 2001, Microsoft entered the video games global market for the first time with its XBox. This is considered the state-of-the-art in the videogames industry, allowing virtual characters to be incredibly presented as real-life characters. Unlike the games of the past, videogames

today, according to Al-khalagi, "are commercial and lack a story line". Their content is weak, probably due to carelessness and rushing by their producers. Today there are hundreds of games, yet only a very few are of good content and structure despite the use of more sophisticated high technology and quality graphics. In the past, creative amateurs supervised the videogames industry while at present the field is full of businessmen who are interested in profit over content. Present prices of videogames range from £1 to £30, depending on novelty and gimmickry. (Personal Communication, Al-khalagi, 2002).

Al-kafari (2002), Head of the Bureau of Propagating Virtue and Forbidding Vice, proclaimed in a television programme *"Islam and Life"* on Channel 1 that in Saudi Arabia, immoral visual materials and games are very rare and this is due to supervision of the Ministry of Commerce in addition to raids on stores and shops by vigilant officers of the Ministry of Information and the Bureau of Propagating Virtue and Forbidding Vice (Al-kafari, 2002, 3/3). Vice games to the Bureau seems to be mainly those involving pornography or overt love scenes. Nevertheless, the culture of videogames in Saudi Arabia has not escaped the appearance of characters obscenely dressed from an Islamic perspective. Furthermore, there are other forms of immorality such as violence etc., which are marginalised. Some of the current popular videogames in the Saudi market are: *'Grand Theft Auto III'*, *'Wreckless'*, *'Agent Under Fire'*, *'Ace Combat'* and *'Burnout'* (Ahmed, 2002).

It can be concluded from examination of the Saudi context that the development of infrastructure has not gone hand-in-hand with human development. The rush for economic development has superseded the development of other equally important

social, political and media structures-a situation not without its problems to the Saudi society quality of life in terms of equal rights and opportunities. This in turn has influenced young Saudi's experiences with the media

CHAPTER 3

Theoretical Framework: Uses, Gratifications & Cultivation Approach

Introduction

In the domain of audience studies, it is a customary practice to split cultivation studies and uses and gratifications studies. Yet any claim to establish a balanced conclusion of viewers' contemplations on the mass media would require that more than one approach be used. The uses and gratifications approach, in combination with the cultivations approach, are therefore essential for any meaningful understanding of the interplay between culture and media.

The Uses & Gratification Approach

The uses and gratification approach is an interesting area of audience studies in mass communications. It has received much attention from many scholars. Its roots go back more than half a century to the 1940s, with radio and newspaper readings. In this early phase, the approach was basically simple, descriptive and straightforward in nature. It was an attempt to record the responses of the individuals and classify them into meaningful categories. The next phase, which began in the late 1950s and continued through the 1960s, was considered a watershed in the development of the uses and gratification approach (McQuail, 1998, Wimmer & Dominick, 1997). This was the time when Elihu Katz stated that "less attention (must be paid) to what media do to people and more to what people do with the media....mass media content cannot ordinarily influence

an individual who has no 'use' for it in the social and psychological context in which he lives". The 'uses' approach assumes that people's values, their interests, their associations, their social roles, are pre-potent and that people selectively 'fashion' what they see and hear to these interests (Katz, 1959, 2). The reasons for this turning point are due to the development in the circumstances particularly after the Second World War and the tremendous investigations about the media and their effect, as well as the introduction of television as a new appealing medium. In this stage, operationalising and identifying the many psychological and social variables that were hypothetically to be the antecedents of various patterns of consumption were the main emphasis of that decade (McQuail, 1998, Wimmer & Dominick, 1997). The third phase developed in the 1970s' and established five fundamental conceptions about the approach. First, the audience member is perceived to be active and goal-directed in the communication process. Second, individuals select and use the medium and the content that satisfies their needs. The individuals are the ones who use the medium and not vice-versa. Third, need is an important factor in the communication process and it varies according to social and psychological factors. Fourth, audience members are aware of their motives and interests. Fifth, value judgements about the culture should be made from audience utilisation and not from media content.

In its fourth phase in the 1980s, the uses and gratification approach could be said to have matured both theoretically and conceptually as researchers used data to explain the correlation among individuals' motives, media gratifications and outcome variables (Wimmer & Dominick, 1997).

In the present phase, five suppositional views of the uses and gratifications approach based on Palmgreen (1984), Palmgreen, Wenner, Rosengren (1985), and Rubin, (1986), have been re-introduced by Rubin (1993) who argues :

First, communication behaviours are goal-directed. Second, individuals selection and utilisation of communication are to satisfy felt wants. Third, socio-psychological factors filter communication behaviour. Fourth, media contest with other systems of communication for discrimination, attention, and utilisation. Finally, individuals are generally more effective than media in media/person relationships. As can be deduced from these assumptions, the uses and gratification foundation is still breathing, emphasising the role of selection and personal differences as individuals are viably and absolutely active in the process of communication.

Therefore, when over a quarter of a century ago the uses and gratification approach was widely criticised, much of these criticisms are still around today. In fact, these criticisms have been repeated word for word over the past several decades. Hence, critiques from the early years are recalled in this argument. A major critic of the uses and gratification approach was Elliott (1974) who stated that the use and meaning of principal terms and concepts have resulted in some confusion about the objectives such as motives, uses, gratifications and needs (Elliott, 1974). Because there are no fixed definitions for these basic concepts this may lead to different outcomes as a result (Misbah 1991).

The uses and gratification tradition considers individuals as purposive in pursuing their needs. But there is no proof to demonstrate that individuals are alert of their needs. Because the uses and gratification approach investigates only one element in the communication process, which is the viewer's needs and expectations, the approach is

only able to preserve the *status quo* rather than energise social change (Elliott, 1974). "The emphasis on needs has been much reduced, since the concept has proved theoretically and methodologically slippery and, to a certain extent, redundant" (McQuail, 1994, 319). In addition, the uses and gratifications tradition is viewed by many analysts as an underdeveloped approach that requires a relevant theory of psychological and social needs and a satisfactory conceptualisation of how environmental and cultural factors add to gratifying needs and selecting communication sources (Misbah, 1991). Various psychological and sociological needs may not be directly media oriented. Also, the need idea alone is usually too broad to be practical in explaining particular cases of uses and gratification because what suits one culture does not necessarily suit another (Mendelshon, 1974). Social factors may also contribute in the formation of media-related need, yet still acknowledge how complex it is to visualise a comprehensive theory that might explain the different processes that form specific relationships (Blumler, 1979).

In short, the approach embraces a notion of media consumption as a rational and sequential process of need – gratification and tension – release, relating to the psychological-social environment to media utilisation; a set of presumptions about the audience's activity, rationality, immunity to influence and ability for self-reporting (McQuail, 1998). In fact however, there is no confirmation that viewing behaviour is rationalised by affection for programme types. Basically, It can be done for joining the mass audience in viewing popular programmes (Elliott, 1974.) Televiewers do not always watch programmes for satisfaction purposes as they might view a programme either because it precedes their programme or because their partners want to watch it

(Cazeneuve, 1974). An individual who is looking for either instant or future gratification to fulfil his/her immediate desires considers his/her use of the media as an action of free choice. However, the investigator makes no presumption about the motive behind the behaviours on either a situational or personal level. (McQuail, 1974). There is an increasing distinction between actual and reported media consumption responses, as television consumption is a matter of availability rather than selectivity (Elliot, 1974). Research on uses and gratifications hardly distinguishes "between the particularities and the generalities and between expectations and satisfactions. The routine of taking into consideration the motive formed by the viewer has become victim of a restricted policy of selecting the individuals' points of view" (McQuail, 1998, 161) For example, the concept of the active viewer who is purposively selective and consciously active is in fact more optimistic and is applicable only among a minority who is utilising a *specialised media'*. (Elliott, 1974). Moreover, Mendelson (1974) rejected the ability of the viewers to decide for themselves what serves them best.

As a matter of fact, "No longer do uses and gratifications researchers regard audience members to be universally active. They assume a variably active media audience. In short, all audience members are not equally active at all times" (Rubin, 1994, 426-427). Levy and Windahl (1984) argued that while viewers actively pursue news to obtain information they do not actively seek entertainment and diversion. People vary in their utilities, intentions and selections to be influenced. They also differ in their media comprehension, concentration and involvement that affect whether or not messages have the chance to influence an individual's cognition, attitudes and behaviour (Levy & Windahl, 1984).

As a result of uses and gratifications' lack of theory, the empirical method has been misused and, if there is a theory, according to analysts, it is absolute tautology shifting from measured gratification back to an imputed need or forwards from a need to a use and satisfaction, with no autonomous way of measuring need, or even any coherent theory of needs, and certainly no way of determining the direction of influence between measured 'need' and media use. This is because the 'mainroad' of the uses and gratification approach has inclined in the direction of determinism and utilitarianism, dealing with consumption of all types as if they are having a purpose in greater schemes of audience need gratification. But since much of the uses and gratification theory embraces basically the same model for every kind of imputed need with media utilisation without making a distinction between cultural types of content and informational ones, between cognitive and imaginative spheres; the main drive of "the uses and gratifications tradition has been towards the construction of major highway which serves to link all four purposes (culture, people, behaviour and society) in one investigative enterprise" rather than using 'byway' for closer contact with the field (McQuail 1998, 163). The introduction of new technologies (such as VCRs, video text and video games) requires new definitions to be able to understand the relationship between the masses and the electronic screen (Mohammed, 1993). Consequently, as society progresses, needs increase to be more complex so it would be more difficult to catalogue both micro and macro needs (Mendelshon, 1974). Critics have also encountered the problem that the conceptual establishments of uses and gratifications are ambiguous and that suitable theoretical connections have not been provided among the perspective's primary

components: background and environment, motives, needs, communication behaviour, attitudes and consequences. (Rubin, 1986).

The tradition is primarily mentalistic, depending on intermediary mental condition and processing, which means that the viewers' assessments are indirect (Elliott, 1974). This is an argument which was also supported by McQuail, (1979). Furthermore, the approach is also too individualistic in its method of data collection and conception so it cannot be converted in any useful way into the social structure (Elliott, 1974, McQuail 1979, 1998). The uses and gratifications paradigm is also empiricist because it is usually forced upon the subjects, where they have to tick a list of items provided by the researcher (Elliott, 1974). This results in a "narrowing of vision and a submission to the ever-growing machine of data-collection and elaborate statistical analysis of numbers formed from much less substantial qualities" (McQuail, 1998, 157). In fact, the approach's static-concept is responsible for the approaches' low explanatory ability because the mass communication process is segregated from many other social processes. (Elliott, 1974). While the aspects of human behaviour are dynamic, complex and undergo mutation, the utilisation to which persons place viewing and the satisfactions obtained from them, are static, simplistic, and constant (Mendelson, 1974).

The tradition of uses and gratifications still lacks a typology of mass media content, completely widely acknowledged, based on subjective and objective taxonomies that can be expressed as a differentiation between connotative and denotative meaning to make study comparison possible (Rosengren, 1974). The cognitive content should be treated separately from the affective imaginative content as the arousal-involvement element is

either irrelevant or of different category; therefore, the arousal factor has to be secluded on another level and maybe the escape factor should be treated separately on another level as well (McQuail 1998). The tradition of uses and gratification does not take into consideration the television content purpose equally as the one structured by the viewer (McQuail 1998).

Studies into viewers' gratifications have shown that a pressing disagreement repeatedly exists between the purpose of the source and what truly occurs as outputs of different correlating processes. (Mendelshon,1974). In fact, while utilisations are measured, satisfactions are assumed as "extremely difficult to measure" (Rosengren, 1974, 281)

Advantages of the Uses and Gratification Approach

In spite of the limitations of the approach, it is nevertheless appropriate for investigation for many reasons. Some proponents regard the individualistic orientation of uses and gratifications as a powerful perspective because it is geared to consider individualistic differences in media utilisation. Moreover, confirming findings over separate samples and researches implies a degree of generalisability with investigation data beyond the individual (Rubin, 1986).

Also, the ambiguity of the active viewer concept can be avoided if it is operationally well defined and measured on an accurately structured basis (Misbah, 1991). It is probably best to treat audience activity as a variable in its own right, instead of as a descriptive and prescriptive condition of audience behaviour (Rubin 1986). In addition, the methodological problem of measuring attitudes and behaviours can be ruled out by

employing the requirement of reliability and validity (Misbah, 1991). In fact, a lot of evidence was introduced for the validity of the self-report procedures of avoidances and uses and gratifications (McLeod, Backer, 1974). If television consumption is a matter of availability, then it may possibly lead to selectivity from the learning theory perspective as availability is a pre-conditioned and pre-requisite to selectivity (Misbah, 1991). Uses and gratifications research can become a strong mechanism for developing media policies that do not appease the gratification of actual media-related wants, needs, and expectations (Mohammed, 1993). Further uses and gratifications research can stimulate the generation of imaginative modes for meeting wants, needs and expectations that the media have neglected (Mendelshon 1974).

The uses and gratifications investigators "have provided sufficient empirical evidence to begin to make sense out of the confusion." (McLeod, Becker, 1981, 68). Uses and gratifications researchers have tended to overlook a process and focus on relevant parts and connections, which is remarkably suitable in empirical practices. Obviously, empirical investigators frequently identify the complication of their methodologies, yet fortunately have not neglected the necessity to try to clarify the role and effects of mass communication in spite of these limitations (Rubin 1986). It is conceivable that the uses and gratifications tradition could be serving the *status quo*. Nevertheless, an understanding of gratifications obtained from media consumption may be utilised as a stepping stone to endeavour change. Consequently, the inconsistency between gratifications sought and those obtained could constrain changes in the media's consumption behaviour which, as a result, may lead to changes in media content and

structure (Misbah, 1991). In fact, these changes can result from the diversity of cultural and social situations and their progression (Mohammed, 1993).

The Cultivation Approach

Another equally interesting approach in audience research, and attractively compatible to the uses and gratification approach, is the cultivation of perception approach developed from the cultural indicators paradigm. Since its introduction by George Gerbner in 1968, the cultivation theory has passed through several trends and diverged into many stages as a result of the introduction of new information. Fundamentally, the theory refers to the long–term accumulation of perceptions, beliefs and values about the world as a result of exposure to the media (Gerbner, 1969). Consequently, "heavier viewers of television, those more exposed than light viewers to its messages, are more likely to understand social reality in terms of the 'facts of life' they see on television" (Gerbner *et al.*, 1978, 194).

In the initial stage, Gerbner, in his article *'Toward 'cultural indicators''*, argued for the significance of shifting beyond examining short-term effects of the media to investigating how the media exert subtle accumulative effects over a long period of time (Gerbner, 1969). Therefore, he called for a systematic examination of television content. "We need to know what general terms of collective cultivation about existence, priorities, values, and relationships are given in collectively shared public message systems before we can reliably interpret facts of individual and social response" (Gerbner 1969, 141).

According to Gerbner and Gross (1976), cultivation analysis was not thoroughly investigated in its early stage. The exploration of the theory began in 1967-68 and continued through 1972 as an important content analysis scheme, with no step to measure audience perceptions. The project was funded by the National Institute of Mental Health, (NIMH).

Since 1967, the concept of 'cultural indicators' had been constructed on an annual prime-time sample-week content analysis centred on violence. Every year, scholars at the Annenberg School, earlier headed by Gerbner, quantified the violent depositions in the sample-week of programmes in a longitudinal diagram. In other words, the project tried to count the frequency of violent acts, as well as violent characters on the screen. These frequencies of violence in the television programmes were determined to form an index in a series of profiles. Hence at this level, only television messages (the independent variable), were measured, but no investigations were made to measure viewers perceptions of social reality (the dependent variable).

In 1976, a decade after the initial indexing of violent messages on television, Gerbner and his associates geared their research to fully test the cultivation hypothesis by conducting the first of their empirical surveys. The study attempted to test the differential effects of television network drama on the conceptions of relevant aspects of social reality among low-level and high-level television audiences. This was recommended in the 1972 NIMH Conference to enhance the research design by taking into consideration "social relationships and viewers conceptions" (Gerbner and Gross, 1976, 174).

Gerbner and his associates argued that heavy television viewing cultivates conceptions of reality in televiewers which are consistent with the view of the world represented in television dramas. They suggested that individuals who spend long hours every day viewing television programmes are subjected to such a heavy bombardment of violence that they come to picture the world as more vicious and more dominated by criminals than it really is. In effect, such persons will be inclined to have distorted perceptions about the number and types of violence committed in the real world, to inaccurately calculate the number of persons engaged in law enforcement, to be alienated, to mistrust others, and to experience an ill grounded generalised fear of a mean world, which will be reflected by them adopting excessive precautions. (Gerbner and Gross, 1976; Gerbner, *et al* 1977; Hughes, 1980)

Gerbner claims that television viewers largely watch non-selectively and by the clock rather than by the programme. For them, television viewing is a ritual, almost similar to religion, except that it is attended to more regularly where *'viewers watch by the clock.'* He even argues that the introduction of new technologies does not modify the content of exposure. New-fashioned delivery techniques accommodate the appearance of wider and more attractive choices but in actuality promote higher concentration. Therefore, despite the proliferation of VCRs and an expansion of penetration, the audience views whatever is presented to them. That was why for Gerbner and his colleagues a measure of total exposure rather than particular selection was the most efficient for aims of cultivation analysis (Gerbner and Gross, 1976, Gerbner 1994). He argues that when "the messages are so stable, the medium is so ubiquitous, and accumulated total exposure is what

counts, then almost everyone should be affected" (Gerbner *et al*, 1986, 21). Hence, if subsequent analysis indicates that television viewing is positively connected to giving the *'television answer'* which is similar to things in the world of television rather than closer to the way things are in the observable world, then proof of cultivation is established. (Gerbner, 1994).

According to Gerbner *et al* (1986), the principles of cultivation do not begin with television or come into view out of a void. Layers of demographic, personal, social and cultural contexts also establish the scope, shape and stage of the contribution television is encouraged to make. However, the meanings of these factors and contexts are aspects of the cultivation process within themselves (Gerbner *et al*, 1986). Consequently, those with certain psychological and social characteristics, dispositions, views of the world and fewer alternatives as compelling and attractive, use television as their source of information and entertainment. Continued exposure to its messages is likely to recapitulate, reinforce, and nourish – that is, cultivate – its own stereotypes, values and perspectives (Gerbner, 1994). However, Gerbner and his associates suggest that variance among individuals is insignificant in relation to what they observe as a stronger commonality in collective cultural values brought about by television (Gerbner *et al*, 1986). In the light of this argument the cultivation differential as a dependent variable can be defined as the margin of "differences in conceptions of relevant aspects of social reality that television tends to cultivate in heavy viewers compared to light viewers" (Gerbner and Gross, 1967, 191).

Essentially, the cultivation theory is based on four assumptions. Firstly, the cultivation approach hypothesised that television is the primary medium of enculturation. Secondly, televised drama represents a distorted portrayal of social reality. Thirdly, television networks presented a uniform series of messages (mainstreaming). Finally, viewers watch television ritualistically and non-selectively (Stilling, 1992).

The cultivation approach has received a huge number of criticisms on epistemological, theoretical and methodological levels. This has resulted in the evolution and ramification of cultivation theory into several sections through a group of investigations. Some of these criticism were introduced by Hughes who reexamined Gerbner's studies in (1976), (1977a), (1977b) and (1978). He found that in not one of the analyses of correlates of television watching in the studies mentioned before did Gerbner and his assistants introduce analyses that provided controls for the current variables which might adequately be expected to demonstrate spurious relationships between the dependent variables and television viewing and control for these extraneous variables. It appears from analyses of Gerbner that "the exclusion of race, hours worked and church attendance... may be a serious lapse, particularly because these variables may well be related to the dependent variables they use." It is also evident that two predictors of television viewing that Gerbner and his colleagues excluded in their analysis may also confuse the relationship between television viewing and dependent variables - income and amount of voluntary work. (Hughes, 1980, 252). Hughes also suggested somewhat indirectly that persons who view television heavily are less likely to be fearful of walking alone in their neighbourhoods at night. Yet age, sex and size of place are strong indicators

of fear of walking alone at night. This suggests that television viewing is a very weak predictor by comparison.(Hughes, 1980). Similarly, Hirsch (1980, 1981) in his heated debate with Gerbner and his associates argued that when multiple controls of the demographic data such as age, sex, education, race and so on. are simultaneously applied, the relationships between conceptions of social reality and television viewing disappear. (Hirsch, 1980, 1981). However, Gerbner's response to Hirsch's criticism about the lack of a true control group is due to the fact that television is highly popular in America, where non-viewers or extremely light viewers are most likely to be rare cases. They should not be regarded as equating with common television viewers except for their viewing patterns (Gerbner, 1981). Nevertheless, according to Hughes (1980), even with control over the entire relevant demographic and social variables, the statistically significant relationships between alienation and fear of victimisation and television viewing would not indispensably mean that fear and alienation were constructed by exposure to television. It is just as probable that individuals who are alienated and fearful are more likely to stay at home and view television (Hughes, 1980). According to Potter (1993) despite the television world embodying various violent acts, it does not mean that viewers can be assumed to conclude that the television world is a violent place, much rather to jump into a conclusion that the real world is a mean and violent place. As most of the violence committed are by protagonists against villains, in order to overpower them, then in this context heavier viewing has to lead to feelings of righteousness (Potter, 1993). Although Doob and MacDonald (1979), the first to replicate Gerbner's work, did not exclude the possibility that high television viewing may correlate with fear of victimisation, they attributed this not to cultivation effects but to the dangerous

environment of high-crime areas that heavy viewers tend to live in which keeps them indoors and away from the hazardous streets outside. Therefore, for them, Gerbner's researches only illustrated correlation and not causation. The fearful individual might also pursue information that strengthens an opinion that the world is a violent place. Such information could be gained through watching violence-loaded action-adventure programmes (Doob and Macdonald, 1979).

In addition to the issues of the control group and fear of victimisation, investigations have shown that there is also a pressing problem over the justification for what is labelled as *'the television world answer'* which cannot take all the factors in an inconclusive process. Potter (1993) found that the weakest part of Gerbner and his associates' cultivation research was not explaining how they refined the real-world answer from the television answers and which, in return, does not give clear differentiation between the cultivation of facts and that of beliefs (Potter, 1993). A similar argument was debated earlier by Hirsch (1981), who found that there was no connection between their message system content analysis and the question items designated to test the *'television answer'* (Hirsch, 1980).

Potter (1993) pointed out that the cultivation theory describes whether an effect takes place or not but offers no explanation of why and how such influences happen (Potter, 1993). Potter's remark agrees with Hirsch (1981), who stated: "the (cultivation) theory fails to predict in advance how television will affect audiences" Thus, it lacks the explanatory value to interpret virtually all the distinctions found in the attitudes of high-level versus low-level viewers (Hirsch, 1981, 87).

According to Potter (1993), cultivation is meant to justify that viewing is affected in the long run by television exposure, but no longitudinal study was conducted to ascertain whether the effect intensifies over time because causality cannot be determined without lengthy research. Moreover, a typology to lead future studies in a more parsimonious fashion is required. In addition to this, content analyses should not be limited to the issues of violence and crime (Potter, 1993). With a lack of better information, it is difficult to know exactly what these data indicate. The systematic procedures used by Gerbner and his colleagues are inadequate for exposing such an effect for heavy exposure to television does not expressly tap what viewers are exposed to. Ultimately, "cultivation theory may be a gross oversimplification of how television affects behaviour through culture." (Hughes, 1980, 300)

In spite of all the opposing criticism that the cultivation hypothesis has encountered, it remains "probably the best documented and most investigated" among the long-term effects theories (McQuail, 1994, 364). It continues to be one of the most exciting techniques for audience research for this century, especially in Islamic developing countries (such as Saudi Arabia where the audience are exposed to state-of-the-art media as seen in the previous chapter). In fact, the cultivation theory seems to enlighten our comprehension on the formulation of meanings, perception of reality, and further socialisation of the audience (DeFluer & Ball-Rokeach, 1989, McQuail, 1994).

The Cultivation Theory and Audience Activity: The Rhetorical Question

Theoretically, active viewing means executing different operations on television messages that proceed beyond simple exposure and might encompass analytical or critical processing of concepts gained from television content. (Rouner, 1984). However, empirically, Potter (1993) also considered conceptualising cultivation in global terms rather than in genre viewing as a major flaw in cultivation research (Potter, 1993). In fact, one affirmation made in almost every one of Gerbner's research pieces is that '*television is watched by the clock*' indiscriminately by reducing the relevance of genre. Counter to his idea there is a great deal of proof for the fact of "the 'active' viewer, one who selects and contributes to the meanings that is wrought from the array that is experienced." (Wober, 1998, 65). Furthermore, "it is far more difficult to defend the assumption of non-selective viewing in the 1990s (and most definitely in the 2000s) when there are so many viewing choices" (Potter, 1993, 574), especially when cognitions about television are orchestrated into a viewer's value system, active viewing has to be a substantial process (Rouner, 1984). It does not follow automatically that viewers who increase their exposure to the screen will change their opinions and beliefs for these changes might be triggered by social and psychological factors within the viewer, not by an accumulation of television viewing. However an individual who watches little television may, nevertheless, be affected by its messages, especially if she/he selects those viewpoints and attitudes in interpersonal communication. Therefore, the concept of supremacy of television is a hard one to substantiate for television can exercise an assertive influence through both indirect and direct means (Potter, 1993). In fact, Rubin (1993) found empirically that cultivation influences were more likely to be connected to viewing

realistically perceived action/adventure programmes more willingly than merely to heavy television exposure (Rubin, 1993). A method of operationalising influential active viewing could be to state a level of passionate involvement with television performers in relation to how viewers show their care about different characters (Rouner. 1984). Consequently, "selectivity, involvement, and attention to content have been linked with parasocial interaction and cultivation effects" (Rubin, 1993, 103).

In addition to the concept of involvement in television viewing as an important factor in audience activity, individual demographic variation is another significant factor. Therefore, the idea that unimportant differences among viewers in correspondence to a strong commonality of values and beliefs brought about by television counters the view of Hall (1980). He argued that television programmes have open interpretations which allow many different readings by different individuals relying on their selective exposures. (Hall, 1980).

Also, the documentation from cultivation literature advocates a conditional approach to the question of effects, perceiving that, under particular circumstances and in certain viewing contexts, television watching could be different. Hence, the effects might change according to many third variable situations that include age and intelligence quotient (IQ), or developmental level, variations that could resonate active processing mechanism as significant conditional elements to television viewing. (Rouner, 1984). Moreover, the viewing context should be examined thoroughly because while some people watch alone, others are forced/choose to view with others (e.g. a child may be forced/choose to watch with his older brother). As a result, those who view alone hardly have any structured

experiences during their viewing. Consequently, better understanding of how viewers put together their exposure repertoire is needed before diving into strong speculations about how viewers' habitual exposure patterns affect their perceptions about the social reality (Potter, 1993).

Toward Synthesising Uses, Gratifications & Cultivation

One can argue that both uses and gratification and uses as well as cultivation traditions have suffered from employing personality feature assumptions to viewing behaviour (Rouner, 1984). In addition, media viewers have frequently been delineated at extremes either being *'passive'* and expected to be affected by the communicated content, or being *'active'* and assumed to make intelligent decisions about what media messages to take or reject. (Rubin, 1993).Therefore, it is common practice to contrast cultivation studies and uses and gratifications studies. (Rosengren, 1974). The reason behind this could be because cultivation researchers usually look at content messages in the mass communication process, whereas media uses and gratifications researchers take the viewer as their starting point. (Windahl, 1981; Rosengren, 1974). However, a logical assessment of viewers behaviour lies between these extremes (Rubin, 1993). In fact, "uses and gratifications studies, in combination with effects studies (i.e. cultivation) on the individual level, seem to be a prerequisite for a deeper understanding of the interplay between society and media" (Rosengren, 1974, 283). Because any concern to establish a balanced judgement of viewers' reflections on mass communication, would definitely require that more than a single approach be utilised for assessing the potential

contributions of contrasting approaches that appear to be divergent on one level, while at

the same time complementing one another (McQuail, 1974).

Windahl (1981) also asserts that a synthesis of uses and cultivation would subdue

criticism of uses and gratifications. Investigators have started to move along that route to

achieve a better understanding of the audience as variably involved or active

communication participants (Windahl, 1981). In this way they hope to develop the link

between television messages and effects, to go beyond the uses and gratifications model

that usually does not include communications outcomes and beyond the cultivation model

that does not specify important intervening processes. (Rouner, 1984).

> " Such a transactional model could recognise the erroneousness of the
> 'content equals affect' approach to media studies as well as the inadequacy
> of the 'audience intention equals effects' position. Instead of such an
> either/or position, the transactional model would argue for inclusion of
> both exposure and orientations." (Mcleod & Becker, 1974, 141).

Building on the above argument, during the fulfilment of the viewer's gratifications,

cultivation is processed because

> "...the cumulative effects of exposure to such materials on the audiences'
> cognitive perceptions of these spheres of activity, and on the individuals
> engaged in them, might be formulated in awareness of the likely fact that
> some individuals will be viewing them primarily for purpose of escape,
> while others will be using them for reality-exploring gratifications" (Katz,
> Blumler, Gurevitch, 1974, 28).

Consequently, this particular gratification cultivation hypothesis might help scholars to

investigate the processes whereby remarkably accessible and instantaneously glamorous

entertainment types convey stereotypical conceptions of real-life characters, conflict

situations and roles, which are greatly absorbed in turn by viewers simply wanting to be

entertained, relaxed and thrilled (Blumler, 1979). Therefore, those applying the uses and gratifications tradition should combine with their study the analysis of cultivation instead of artificially separating the two fields (McLeod, Becker, 1970) because "there is a need for a more integrated approach, combining the many relevant variables rather than selecting only a few for investigation" (Livingstone, 1996, 320). This combination, in return, will alleviate the stress on the basic need factor, allowing for other sources of media utilisation as well as giving more attention to media content through audience responses (Windahl, 1981).

Advances in Media Uses, Gratifications, Cultivations & International Context

Developments increasingly blur the barriers between the combined approach of uses and gratification and cultivation and other theories of media/audience relationships, such as cultural imperialism and modernisation. This is to enrich the epistemological scope in international communications, yet without ignoring the fact of the conditional applicability of the theories in international contexts, especially in Islamic and developing countries. Therefore, an identical impact could not be expected. This is particularly true that the audience are active and continually expose themselves selectively and therefore diversify their consumption patterns. As a result, many of the uses, gratification and cultivation studies fail to replicate the findings in international contexts. The fact that US television is dominated by a certain set of images of violence, sex roles, and occupations does not necessarily mean that other countries' television systems which may or may not disseminate similar images, foster similar views (Morgan, 1990). At the same time, media gratifications are context specific: what gratifies one culture may not necessarily

gratify another. This means taking necessary modifications to enhance the applicability of the uses and gratification, and cultivation approach, to go beyond its limitations in international contexts. In this case, I will select the variables according to their relevance and interests to the culture of the Saudi child. For example, I will investigate the children's comparison of their local context against Arab and foreign cultures through their media uses, gratification and cultivated perceptions about images of lifestyle. Towards this step, the intercultural comparative representation of the images of lifestyle becomes the focus of attention. These images, which are of interest to the Saudi culture, are in the domain of role models, behaviours and leisure activities. Also, in this research, I will go beyond Gerber's 'heavy' and 'light' viewing which claims that viewers are cultivated since they are passive. Instead, I will examine respondents' own assessments of different media materials' content regarding images of lifestyle, as active viewers.

Hence, the present study will test the uses and gratification approach along with the uses and cultivation approach without losing sight on the particularities of Saudi culture. This is to give a comprehensive understanding of young Saudis' interests in different visual media materials as well as to add more meaning to the interaction between culture and media. Any effort to form an objective conclusion of the children's reflections on the media would certainly require that both approaches be utilised, rooted in active viewing while taking into consideration the cultural characteristics of the society under examination. In the section that follows, I will review literature regarding children's experience with visual media in Saudi, Arab and foreign countries.

CHAPTER 4

Literature Review of Visual Media Uses, Effects and Children

In this chapter, I have reviewed a number of studies that have been carried out in the field of children and media uses and effects. As far as possible, I paid attention to studies that focused on the children's viewing interests in electronic visual media such as television, video and videogames. In other words, I was concerned with the impact of the contents of the above-mentioned media on the child. I restricted my review of literature in this area to Saudi Arabia in the first instance, and then to the Arab region as well as foreign countries both Western and non-Western. Unlike studies conducted in foreign countries, there was fewer research studies regarding uses, gratifications and cultivations theories in the case of the Arab world. Therefore, I will present detailed coverage of the impact of the visual media on children in the Arab region. The reasons I chose the studies reviewed in this chapter are their similarities (for instance, their application of the same variables, age group or theoretical approaches), with the present study. Likewise, the main purpose of the review is to have a broad outlook on how children relate to visual media context as well as monitor changes in attitudes and preferences of the child. This, I believe, is considered appropriate to guide the planning and conceptualisation of strategies for the development of the Saudi Muslim child's culture.

Little research has examined Saudi children's viewing behaviour and activities with regards to the media and the visual media in particular. On the other hand, the number of

studies in the Arab region was impressive, and most of them were Egyptian. With respect to foreign countries, Western countries played an early and leading role in conducting research into children's interests in visual media materials. Studies that follow are reviewed chronologically.

Studies Conducted in Saudi Arabia

Despite the fact that visual media were introduced to Saudi society about four decades ago, the first study on child audiences was conducted by Al-najai in 1982. He carried out a survey in Riyadh on a sample of 600 children. The purpose of his research was to discover the cognitive and affective effects of watching television on youngsters, and to ascertain the reasons for their viewing. In analysing the results, Al-najai found that the VCR's use by the children has created a situation of 'alienation' between them and television. He found that 'affective needs,' or entertainment needs, were less sought than were 'cognitive needs' or informational needs from Saudi television. Al-najai also found that males watched television for more hours than females and did so mostly out of a desire to understand and learn.

Another study by Bayt Al-mal and Al-amoudi (1992), examined the types of exposure of Saudi children between the ages of 6-15 to mass media such as local television channels, Channel 1 and Channel 2, VCRs and videogames in Riyadh. They found that television channels were the most preferred among children compared to the other media.[1] Also the study found that boys were more exposed to television than girls.

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[1] This situation does not stand at the present, especially after the introduction of new technologies to the Kingdom such as DBS.

Al-oofy and Daniel (1992) surveyed 150 teenage children to study the impact of video viewing. A stratified sampling technique that focussed on rural areas in Saudi Arabia was adopted for this study. The study found that there were differences between males and females in their exposure to, and interest in videos. Females spent more time watching videos than males. This was because they stay more at home and home video viewing became an indoor activity. The study also found that females were more likely to express a preference for romantic films and informational programmes in comparison to males. In contrast, males favoured action-adventure and sports. The findings about the boys and girls were very much a reflection of the socialisation process in Saudi society, which encourages males to develop interest in adventure and sports activities.[1]

Al-hasan, (1993) carried out a study on 48 children aged 5-16 in Saudi Arabia regarding their relationship to Saudi TV. Half of the children reported that they liked to watch all the programmes on television all the time, whilst one quarter of them stated that they liked to watch TV after doing their homework. All the children reported that their parents did not stop them from watching a particular programme on Saudi TV. The children reported that their favoured shows were religious and cartoon programmes, followed by football programmes, foreign serials and films, and wrestling. The children ranked local and Arab children's programmes least. The children suggested that in the future programmes on Saudi TV should have different types of cartoon programmes as well as educational programmes. Further, they suggested the inclusion of religious programmes that are pictorial and easy to understand. Still, the study did not investigate the number of channels that the children were able to watch.

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[1] The results are very close to the current study as discussed in chapters 8 and 11.

Studies Conducted in the Arab World

Most studies that were conducted in the Arab region were from Egypt. Researchers in Egypt pioneered investigations on child audiences. Among them is Yaqub (1967) who carried out a study regarding the effects of television on elementary school pupils, a few years after the introduction of television[1]. Yaqub found from her interviews with children in Cairo that 88.5% watched television regularly. There were similarities and differences between males and females regarding the preference of programmes. Males and females gave close percentages regarding drama where they gave serials 17.1% and 17.7% and Egyptian films 17.1% and 17.5% respectively. However, females showed more preference for children programmes (25.6%), music and songs (18.3%) and dancing (17.7%) in comparison to males who gave 21.9%, 13.1% and 11.6% to the corresponding variables. On the other hand, the males gave sports programmes higher percentages (17.6%) than the females who gave them only 2.5%. The researcher found that children from 1st to 4th grades watched television without guidance from parents who believed that their children were spending their spare time with something amusing. The level of education of parents affected the children's length and time of exposure to the screen. Less than half the parents (44%) controlled their children's exposure during their homework. The most important people who controlled what children watched were the father (52%), followed by the mother (41%), then elder sibling, aunt and grandparent (7%).

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[1] Television was introduced to Egypt in 1960.

Jabr (1973) examined the role of television in educating Egyptian children. She found that 90% of children watched television. Also, in the investigation 60% of the sample watched with all the family, 19% with father and brother and 5.6% with father alone and 4.4% with friends. The results showed that 54.8% watched daily for an hour while 48.6% of the children watched daily for two hours and only 15.8% of them watched for three hours. The programmes preferred by the children were children's programmes (30.7%), followed by competitions and puzzles (22%), and then foreign drama (12%). However, the children ranked both religious and scientific programmes at the bottom with 4% each as well as sports and ads programmes, which they gave 3% each. Jabr found that 38% of the parents controlled what their children watch, especially sexual films (23%), horror films (17%), sexual serials (9%), and general adult programmes (6%). Parents believed that their children learned new information from watching television. More than a quarter of them (26%) felt that exposure widened their children's perceptions, yet 35% perceived that television taught bad habits to their children such as bad language and gestures, wrong role-modelling, violence, sex, and the negative effects of science fiction films.

In 1978, the General Research and Statistics Supervision in the Egyptian TV and Broadcasting Union carried out a survey on 400 children to evaluate the performance of children programmes on elementary school children aged 8-12, in some schools to the west of Cairo. Results of the research showed that 98% of the children watched television. Also, the study found that more males than females were exposed to the screen. Moreover, children who were enrolled in private schools watched slightly more than those who were enrolled in public schools. Regarding programme preference, the

children rated children's programmes first (90.8%) followed by Arabic films (78.6%) and Arabic serials (61.2%). The children reported that they benefited from watching children's programmes, to respect their parents (52.1%), to study (42%) and to be honest, courageous and cooperative (27.4%).

Al-naser and Al-bati (1973) surveyed Iraqi children's exposure to television. The study on children were from the 4th to 6th grades in Baghdad. The study found that 73% of the sample had television sets at home. The study also found that the most favoured programmes on Channel 9, the main Iraqi channel were entertainment programmes whilst informational programmes received only 10%. The most preferred children programmes for Iraqi children were cartoons. Results of the study showed that 44% of Iraqi parents advised their children to watch specific programmes. Also, they controlled their children's exposure to television during exams and bedtime.

In another study in Iraq in 1975, Saleh carried out a survey using interviews with 370 Iraqi children. Findings of the research revealed that the average exposure to television was 2.5 hours. Also the study found that the children liked to watch entertainment programmes more than informational ones. In general, Iraqi children watched programmes directed to a broad audience, more than programmes that were classified as children's shows.

In Kuwait, Abdul-Rahaman et al (1974) studied the effects of television on primary school children. The study used interviews with 1005 children. He found that Kuwaiti

children preferred watching television mainly from 7-9 p.m. (73%). The most preferred programmes were Arabic films and Western serials followed by local theatrical programmes, serials and cartoons. The study found that one third of the parents forbade their children from watching certain programmes. The parents controlled their daughters' exposure (37.3%) more than their sons (30.4%). The study found that the positive impact of television on the children was in developing general knowledge (77%), increase of religious information (62.5%), and improving foreign languages (43.5%). However, learning new hobbies got only (3.8%).

Sudanese television (1976) interviewed 569 children in the capital. The study found that 67.5% watched 6 times per week while only 1.7% watched once a week. The study also discovered that 9.2% of the children followed television daily broadcasting from start to end. The most watched programmes by Sudanese children were films (97.2%) and non-serial dramas (95.4%), followed by serials (89.6%).

In 1978, The National Centre for Social and Criminological Research carried out face-to-face interviews with a sample of 1236 elementary and primary school children from Cairo, Giza and Alexandria. The children watched television during school days for less than an hour while they watch during holidays around five hours. The findings of the study indicated that 99.3% of the children were viewing with others. The study revealed that the most preferred programmes were Egyptian films and serials while children programmes were reported to be less attractive among 50% of the elementary school children. More than three quarters of the parents (77%) switched the television set off

when the children were studying and 66.8% of them controlled the use of television by their children while they were studying. Parents also forbade their children from watching scary scenes (61.8%).

Odwan (1979) surveyed 200 Iraqi children, aged 6-14, in the city of Baghdad and its suburbs. The investigation revealed that Iraqi children spent 20 hours a week watching television during school days and 29 hours a week during holidays. The most preferred type of programmes for them were children's films and serials (82.5%), reportage conducted by children (75.0%), cartoons (71,5%), the animal kingdom (69.5%), music and documentaries (55.5%) each and sports programmes (49.5%).

Ramzi (1979) performed a representative experimental study of elementary and primary school children in Egypt. The experiment compared 613 children who regularly watched television to a control group of 102 children who did not own, or were not exposed to, a television. The results of the study showed that the difference was statistically significant between children who watched television and those who did not watch when they were asked to answer general knowledge questions. The score was in favour of those who watched television and who also said that they benefited from watching television to increase their general knowledge. The study also found that 68.4% of the parents stopped their children from watching their favourite programmes when they were studying. They also forbade them from staying up late to watch certain programmes (66%).

In 1980, The Consultancy Group for the Middle East again investigated television programmes and advertisements on a sample of 500 children from 8-12 years in five Egyptian cities, (Cairo, Alexandria, Port Said, Tanta and Asyot). The study found that 98.4% of children watched programmes regularly. Those who watched it on a daily basis were 82.8%. Children watched children's programmes in the first place and then Egyptian films, 81.6% and 81.4% respectively. They also preferred to watch Egyptian serials in second place (75.8%). They liked animal programmes in third place (68%). The children ranked general knowledge programmes at the bottom (45.2%). The study showed that 90.2% of the children watched ads 'always' while (8.4%) watched them 'sometimes'.

Sudanese Television (1981) conducted another study to measure the children's opinions about television programmes using interview methods in some of the areas of the Triangular Capital. The study found that 41.7% of children spent two hours per day watching television while only 6.3% spent three hours. The study also found that on Fridays (official holiday of the Muslims) about two thirds of the children watched television. The most suitable period was in the morning with 13.9% of the children who were primarily pre-schoolers. The children watched attentively children's programmes (36.3%) as well as Arab serials (34.6%).

Another study carried out by The Consultancy Group for the Middle East in 1983 on a sample of 6000 children found that 99.8% of them watched television. The children

watched most on weekends: Sunday (89.2%), Friday (84.6%) and Thursday (78.9%). Regarding preference of programmes, the study reached similar results to those of 1980.

In Qatar, The Ministry of Information (1985) examined the type of exposure to children's programmes by Qatari children. The findings of the study showed that 99.5% of the children watched these programmes on Qatar TV while 65.9% watched children's programmes from other Gulf States channels.

Al-abd (1986) conducted a survey on a random sample of 400 children in the 4th, 5th and 6th school grades from Cairo, Ynaious village (Alsharqia) and Kasir Nagas (Qina). He found that 94.2% of the children had television sets and 95.8% of them watched television programmes. Children watched programmes mainly during weekends. The days when children watched TV the most were Friday (85.0%), Thursday (75.7%) and Sunday (47.8%). The most preferred programmes were children's programmes (94.3%), ads (77.8%), Egyptian serials (74.2%) and Egyptian films (66.6%). The children gave news programmes the least responses (53%).

Al-shal (1987) studied Egyptian children who mainly attended foreign language schools from the age 5-15. She found that 99.5% of the children had a television at home. The majority of them (86%) watched children's programmes. Regarding the preference of television programmes, the children rated children's programmes first, followed by Egyptian serials, and then Egyptian films, foreign serials as well as films and science programmes. The researcher found that the children liked foreign music and songs

programmes more than Arabic ones. With respect to video, the study found that 32.7% of the children were exposed to the equipment at home. Results of the research showed that the children watched foreign films as much as they watched Arab films. However the children reported that the content of foreign films was much more exciting, stimulating, violent, adventurous and imaginative compared to Arab films. The researcher expressed anxiety towards the effects of foreign culture on national culture in the long run.

Salem and Hanura (1988) carried out a survey for the Department of Mass Communication at the National Centre for Social and Criminological Research on a random sample of 690 children representing the city of Cairo . The children were from the 1st to the 6th school grade (between 8-12 years old). The sample was divided into three grade levels. The study found that there was a very high percentage who owned television sets with an average of 97%. Also the average percentage of those who were exposed to television regularly was 91%. Most of the children watched television at home. Regarding the time of exposure during school days, the average was 82.1% while their exposure during holidays was 98.1%. With respect to the hours of exposure to television, the study found that the children's exposure might include all broadcasting hours from start to end during holidays while their exposure during school days was spread over the day but for very few hours. Regarding the preferred programmes by the children, they liked to watch children programmes (46%) followed by Ads (40%) then Egyptian films (33%) and next Egyptian serials (26%). The study did not really find differences between males and females except with sports and music and songs programmes. Males preferred watching sports programmes (12.6%), compared to females

(1.7%). On the other hand, females preferred music and songs programmes with a percentage of 9.1% compared to males (2%). This study reached a conclusion that was different from previous studies because the children were less controlled by their parents. It was discovered that about two thirds of the children watch television at the time they liked, whilst only one third watched at the time assigned by the parents. Also, it was found that older children were more likely to control their hour of exposure to the medium in comparison to younger children.

In the Emirates, Al-Ali (1988) studied 440 children who watched children programmes on television. More than one third of them (39.6%) said that they watched children programmes *"always"* where more than half of them (59.5%) stated that they watched these programmes *"sometimes"* while those who watched them *"rarely"* were only 3.9%.

Hassan (1989) applied himself to understanding the role of the media in increasing Egyptian children's cultural awareness. The study interviewed a sample of media policy-makers who were in charge of children's programmes and a sample of 400 children aged 9-12. The children stated that they needed more information on topics such as Egyptian history, Egyptian public figures, animals and new discoveries. The children rated TV programmes and materials on top in comparison to other media. Media officials, who were in charge of children's programmes and materials, all agreed that most of their programmes and materials were directed to children of the age 6-12. According to Hassan, results from the interviews with media officials showed that they were all qualified.

In a PhD thesis, Tayie (1989) investigated the role of the Egyptian mass media in forming young Egyptians' images of foreign people and foreign countries. He found that Saudi Arabia was most favoured as an Arab country. This was despite the fact that the country was not frequently mentioned in the Egyptian media. Also, young Egyptians chose the USA, which was portrayed in the media as a strong and advanced nation, as their most favoured Western country. Economic reasons were major motives behind young Egyptians' aspirations. In addition to the economic reasons, especially for females who favoured Saudi Arabia, was the existence of the most holy places to the Muslims such as Makkah and Madinah. On the other hand, Israel, Libya, the USSR and Iran were the least favoured countries by young Egyptians. The reasons mentioned for not wanting to live in these countries were both political and cultural. In general, Tayie found that the mass media were influenced by the government. He also stated that Egyptian media coverage of foreign news was based on four criteria. These were, first, sources of foreign news, second, foreign policy and relationships, third, cultural proximity and last, geographical proximity. Regarding ownership of media, he found that young Egyptians' ownership of television was the highest while accessibility to video was lowest. Television was also young Egyptians' most favourite medium. The middle classes were more interested in foreign materials than lower classes. Further, in his interviews with broadcasters working in Egyptian TV, Tayie found that they took the young audience into consideration. Their policy was to supply young viewers with a wide variety of programmes.

Mohammed (1992) researched Egyptian children aged 10-12 in a thesis regarding their type of exposure to foreign children programmes on Egyptian television. The size of the sample was 450 from different geographical areas such as Cairo, Sohag and Synai. The investigation found that most of the children 94% watched foreign programmes in general. All the children from Cairo (urban) watched foreign programmes followed by those children of Sohag (rural) who watched with a percentage of 96% then the lowest were the children from Sinai (Beduain) with a percentage of 72.6%. The children reported their most preferred children's programmes as follows: first *Tom and Jerry* (100%), second *Mazinger* (88%) and third *Children's Cinema* (81%). The reason for their preference of these programmes were that they included cartoons' characters (87.6%), that they were amusing (62%), that they used puppets (58%) and that their broadcast schedules were precise (46%). The titles of programmes that children did not like from children's programmes in general were *Golden Balls* and *What the Children Ask*. When the researcher asked the children to answer some questions about general knowledge, it was found that 76.5% of the children who watched television knew the answer while those who did not watch could not come up with the right answer.

Lotfy (1992) in an unpublished MA dissertation on the effects of television advertising and local serials on the Egyptian child, found that children were influenced to a great extent by television. The study was carried out on a sample of 400 children, aged 10-12. The research found that television was blamed for spreading some of the *'negative'* values and behaviours among children. Children stated that their parents controlled their viewing of television. Children from middle class were more under parents' control than

those from working class. Lotfy, in her investigation, found that children under the influence of television commercial bought things that they did not need. All-in-all, the study found that television had negative effects on children.

Also, in her unpublished MA dissertation study on the effects of ads on children, Zaki (1992) surveyed Egyptian children from age 8-12. She found that (83.6%) children were able to remember ads alone. The more children watched the ad the more they were able to remember it. Among these ads that the children remembered most were *"food and drinks"* while they reported *"services"* least. Older children were more able to remember the details of the ads than younger ones. Older children were more interested in the information presented through the ads while younger children were attracted to competition and behaviours that were displayed. Younger children were more interested in ads than older ones. There were differences between males and females with respect to interest in ads, females were interested in the use of the product while males were interested in the description of the commodity. In general, females were interested in ads more than males. Regarding the type of most favoured ads, the children preferred comic ads in the first place followed by cartoon ads and then musical ads. More than three-quarters of the children believed in the ads' credibility. Females and young children believed them more than males and older children. The percentage of the children who demanded ads' products persistently was 59.6%. The demand on buying the products was more among the children who remembered them. Younger children, lower class children and those of working mothers as well as those who watched the ads repeatedly were more

demanding than others. Yet, those who bought the product were the least nagging. This was because they did not find the product as satisfying as it was advertised.

Al-kalini (1993), in her investigation of the role of television in increasing Egyptian children's environmental awareness studied children of the 5th grade in primary schools from Cairo. Results of the study found that television played an important role in spreading awareness among children with respect to environmental issues. Still, its role in building the children's pro-environmental behaviour was absent.

Egyptian children's use of mass media was the topic of another study that Kandeel (1993) carried out on a sample of 260 children aged 8-12. The children were selected from Cairo and Giza. The children's primary motives for viewing television were first for *"entertainment"* and *"passing time"* (35%) each, second for *"rest from studies"* (29%) and third for *"information seeking"* (24%).

In Oman, Al-abd (1993) studied children views about children's programmes on Omani television. The researcher examined a random sample of 500 children. All reported watching television. More than half stated that they watched television after completing their school homework, yet 20% watched television programmes before starting their homework and 6% watched while doing their homework.

Regarding their most preferred programmes, the study found that all children reported animation films and children's programmes. Also, among their most preferred

programmes were Arab series (99.4%), songs (98.6%), Arab films (94.6%) and advertisements (92%). The children also mentioned sports (79.8%), varieties (79.6%) followed closely by religious programmes (75%). Regarding the children's evaluation of children's programmes, most (84%) mentioned that they were satisfied with children's programmes and 16% of them perceived these programmes as acceptable. The majority (98%) mentioned that they learned a lot from local children's programmes. In addition to Omani television, the children watched other television channels such as Dubai, Abu Dhabi, Egyptian Satellite Channel (ESC), MBC Saudi and Jordanian television. The most favoured programmes on these channels were again children's programmes (90.3%).

With respect to freedom of exposure to television programmes, it was found that in one third of the cases parents interfered with what the children watched. In fact, they prohibited their children mainly from watching some Arab films (81%), foreign programmes (68%), some Arab series and some sports programmes (31.3%).

Furthermore, in his study on Egyptian children and their exposure to media, Labib (1994) found that Egyptian television was an important medium for children. The study also found that television attracted children to watch their own programmes and those directed at adults. Parents did not control their children's exposure to television except during exams. Hence, Egyptian children were heavily exposed to foreign materials and commercials in addition to programmes on satellite channels. Yet, according to the study, these materials presented beneficial information for children in different spheres of life.

Al-hadidi et al (1994) carried out a study on Egyptian children's use of media. The study surveyed 1800 children aged 8-15 from many geographical areas. The findings indicated that the most important time children watched television was during the peak hours, 6-9 p.m. More than 99% of the children reported that they watched children programmes which they rated as the most favoured programmes ahead of Arab movies, cartoon films and commercials. The preferred programmes for children were as follows: cartoons, magic games, stories and tales, children series and puppets. The preferred adult programmes were police adventure, religious and social subjects.

In her unpublished PhD thesis, Muhsin (1994) studied the relationship between exposure to television and alienation to schoolwork by Egyptian children. She surveyed 400 Egyptians in the 3rd, 4th, and 5th grades, representing different geographical areas. In the study, she found that (87%) of the children watched television regularly. She also found that the majority of the children (69.8%) watched television for an hour. The children watched more in the evenings than in the mornings or afternoons. They ranked Egyptian films in first place (85%) followed by serials (80%) and children's programmes (71%). They rated advertisements least (5%). The study found that 84% of the children watched 'selectively' and not by the hour. The study also found that 75.5% of the children watched television attentively. The children chose television as their number one activity with a percentage of 80%. Males watched television more than females; and older children watched more than younger ones. The research found that there was a correlation between focused exposure to television and alienation towards self and studying especially among children in the capital.

In a study about children's perceptions of the personality characteristics portrayed in children's programmes, Kamel (1995) found that television was influencing children. The study was carried out on a sample of Egyptian children aged 6-9. Findings of the study indicated that there were differences between boys and girls with respect to interest of television characteristics. Girls were more affected by characteristics such as friendship and sincerity. Boys, on the other hand, were more affected by characteristics such as honesty and trust. Furthermore, boys were more affected by violence and aggression than girls.

The findings also showed that boys were more interested in the characteristics of co-operation and girls were more interested in conformity. At the same time, it was found that boys were affected by characteristics of egoism and individualism. It was also found that girls were more likely to appreciate beauty features than boys. In contrast to boys, girls were less affected by humorous characteristics.

Finally, the study concluded that the effect of television on children depended greatly on their interests and attitudes. At the same time, socialisation played a major role. In other words, children's attitudes and behaviours were influenced, to a large extent, by the children's social context.

Hassan (1995) examined a cluster sample of 540 Egyptian children aged 12-15, from urban and rural areas regarding their attitudes towards children's programmes. The study

found that children were more interested in adventures and action programmes than educational, scientific and economic programmes. Hence, they were mainly interested in fun and entertainment. The study recommended that programmes directed at older children must be introduced.

In her study on children's perceptions of the difference between screened personalities and those in real life, Al-sayed (1996) measured children's perceptions regarding this issue. The study also measured the relationship between this perception and characteristics of the medium regardless of its content. These relationships were tested according to factors such as age, gender, social background and levels of televised reality. The study was carried out on a sample of 114 (57 males and 57 females). The study used the experimental method where data was collected from children after exposing them to specific children's programmes. Results of the experiment indicated that there were no differences between girls and boys in their understanding of television and reality.

Al-khoury (1997) conducted a study regarding the effects of television on children from age 13-14. She found that all Lebanese children interviewed had at least a television set at home. More than three-quarters of the sample watched television regularly. Also, the majority of the children (91%) watched television with their parents whereas 6% watched with their friends. Only 3% of the children were exposed to television alone. The children discussed what they watch with their families and friends. The research also found that 71% of the parents controlled what their children watched on television. Also in the study, there were differences and similarities between males and females in their relation

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to television. Al-khoury found that more females were interested in religion and romance (48% and 46% respectively) in comparison to males' interest of 41% and 20% accordingly. On the other hand, more males were interested in police violence, action/adventure movies (91%, 79% and 77% respectively) than females whose ratings were 71%, (62%) and (63%) correspondingly. Al-khoury argues that physical appearances attracted Arab children in their search for a role model. The study also revealed that the children succumbed to the lure of Western physical appearance, which they obtain from Western TV characters. Two thirds of the Lebanese sample took this view while the Arabic appearances were only favoured by one third. Pointedly, the researcher found that Lebanese children were more interested in Lebanese programmes than Arab programmes such as Egyptian ones. Their attitude was contrary to the findings of this study, which indicated that Saudi children showed a dislike for local programmes in comparison to Arab ones.[1]

Hassan (1998) carried out a study on a sample of Egyptian children in the second year of primary schools, aged 7-8, about their exposure to television. The findings of the study showed children's programmes were shown at the wrong time when children were not at home. Furthermore, these programmes were shown more on school days than on weekends and holidays. Consequently, children's exposure to these programmes was very limited. The study recommended changing the schedule of children programmes to suit the children's time.

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[1] This is discussed in more detail in chapter 8.

The role of television drama in imparting children with 'social' values, was the subject of a study by Asran (1998) who investigated a sample of 340 children who left education after compulsory primary education. Results showed that all children respondents watched television. 81.6% reported that they often watch television and a percentage of 30.9% said that they watched television sometimes and only 7.3% rarely did.

With respect to children's favourite programmes, it was found that the children rated drama first (30.3%), followed by cartoons, advertisements and sports programmes, (15.4%, 13.8% and 13% respectively). The researcher also found that there was a relationship between watching particular television programmes and leaving school.

Concerning the motives for watching television drama, the study found that entertainment and fun were the most mentioned reasons. The most mentioned positive values that children learn from television drama were *"helping the needy"* (70.2%), followed by *"being faithful to parents"* and *"sticking to religion"*, (20.2% and 19% respectively). In contrast, the most mentioned negative values by the children were *"underestimation of the importance of education"* (13.9%), *"violence"* (12.4%) as well as *"favouritism"* (12.1%).

In a study conducted by Jaffar (1998) on the role of television in increasing Egyptian children's health awareness, the researcher used experimental methods for data collection. A sample of 240 children was selected and divided into 8 groups. The findings of the study indicated that there was a big difference between those who watched television and those who did not with respect to their information on health matters. The children rated television as the number one source, ahead of other media in this respect.

The study revealed that children from the middle classes had more information on health subjects than those from the working classes. There were also differences between genders with respect to exposure to health issues where females had more information on health than males.

In her PhD thesis on the role of television in simplifying science to children, Al-nemr (1998) conducted an experimental study on an Egyptian sample of 42 males, aged 12-14. The researcher found that the children watched television primarily on Fridays, Thursdays and Sundays. The peak hour of exposure was from 7-8 p.m. The children disliked watching children's programmes and stated that "these programmes are silly and naive. They think we are small children. The presenter talks too much and cuts the cartoons and songs to give us some stupid advice". Also, they disliked them because the presenter wasted time by talking and presenting names of children. The children of the study preferred watching drama and advertisements most. Contrary to expectation, the children liked science programmes in second place (90%). The type of science programmes they liked were science-fiction programmes, followed by human anatomy. The children did not like the science programmes when the presenter wasted time talking or presented lots of writings or if the materials were dully presented. They preferred the science materials to be presented in drama form and cartoons. The children who were exposed to the experimental science programmes were able to remember descriptive details in the short term more than those who received face-to-face communication. However, the children were unable to remember the information after 10 days in comparison to those who had interactive lessons with the teacher in class.

In a descriptive study on the influence of the mass media on a sample of Jordanian children, Hindy (1998), cited in Tayie (2001), found that the influence of mass media was rather accumulative. It varied from one medium to the other. Television was found to be the most influential medium on Jordanian children, followed by video. Other media were found to be less effective. The study also found that some of the media effects were positive while others were negative. The family as well as the school played a crucial role in mediating the negative and positive effects of television and video. The findings of the study indicated that people working in the fields of media production for children were not professionally qualified. The result also showed that there was a need for professional training of people working in the above areas.

Studies Conducted in Foreign Countries

The number of studies carried out in foreign non-Arab countries regarding children's experience with the media was countless. Therefore, I have reduced reviewing of the literature in this section to visual media uses, gratifications and cultivation among the children in Western and non-Western countries. Studies were carried out from the 1950s in Western countries. This means they were carried out earlier than in non-Western countries. Among early Western key studies in the subject was that of Himmelweit et al (1958). The research was conducted in England between 1955- and 1956. The main sample surveyed consisted of 946 (13-14 years olds) and 908 (10-11 years olds). Half of both samples were viewers while the other half were not.

The young viewers watched 11-13 hours per week. Three-quarters of them liked adult programmes, particularly crime thrillers while political documentaries, educational and children's programmes, as well as discussions, held little appeal. Children who did not have more than one channel had no other choice but to tune into it. Programmes had appeal to children due to easy availability, passing time, being in the know, familiarity of themes and formats, change, excitement suspense, escape, identification and friendliness.

The American study of Schramm, Lyle and Parker (1961) focused on the socio-psychological factors that led to the formation of uses and gratification. American children used television for fantasy and entertainment. The results of the study concluded that children's use of television was highly affected by their relationships with their parents and peers. Those who came to television full of aggression because of home or peer group frustration were likely to seek and remember violent content on television. The study found that intervening variables such as gender and social class determined their viewing interest. Apart from the amount of viewing, where there were no differences between genders, the females were more inclined to popular music and situation comedies while boys were more interested in Western adventure programmes. There were also differences between classes. The middle class was reality-oriented while the working class was fantasy-oriented.

Greenberg (1974) studied the gratifications obtained from watching television and their relationship to children. In his survey of 726 children in England, he found that there was a strong positive correlation between the children's age and their motivation for watching

television. He concluded that there was a harmonious structure between the viewing motivations for watching from the ages of 9-15 but at the age of 12 the child reaches the stage of transition where the exposure to television is at its peak. This exposure decreased by adolescence where he or she becomes more critical of the television programmes. Greenberg in his research defined eight motivations behind television exposure; *"to pass time"*, *"for cathartic purpose"*, *"to learn things"*, *"to know about one's self"*, *"to relax"*, *"for companionship"*, *"as a habit"* and *"for arousal"*. The study correlated these primary motives to other variables such as the medium use, aggressive behaviours, and attitudes towards television.

In fact, Rubin (1979) in his study depended on Greenberg's measurement of motivation and summarised it into six motives only; *"habit"*, *"companionship"*, *"forgetting"*, *"learning"*, *"relaxation"* and *"arousal"*. Following Greenberg's steps, Rubin interviewed groups of children and adolescents to study their motives behind their use of television and the extent of gratification received as a result. Rubin found that *"arousal"* viewers preferred dramatic programmes, while *"escapist"*, *"habitual"* and *"companionship"* viewers favoured comedies. Rubin was able to find positive correlation between television watching for the sake of learning and to perceive television content to be a more accurate reflection of life.

Lull (1980) in his research of the social use of television explained that the children were found to utilise them for sharing in the adult's conversations, discussions and to develop

intimate relationships among the family members. This is in addition to their use for

"entertainment", *"for habit"* and *"as a medium for escaping the daily routine"*.

In Sweden, Roe (1983) reported that young children's use of VCRs differed from that of using television. While television viewing was perceived as a family activity, video clearly had a peer-orientated feature. From the 15-year-old users of video, only 2% recorded that they viewed programmes with parents, whereas 77% watched programmes with friends.

Moreover, Kim, Baran and Massey (1988) interviewed 110 families who owned VCRs to identify the differences between the child and his/her parent in conceiving the use of a VCR and its relation to the demographic profile. A sample of 220 respondents was studied which parents and children equally represented. The interviews were performed separately to avoid sensitisation of any group and questions were repeated for both parents and their children. The results of the study concluded that both parents and children felt that the youngsters were able to exercise some influence on the parents in selecting VCR tapes. However, parents felt that VCRs gave them more control over their children's viewing than before. Moreover, regardless of the socio-economic status, age was related negatively to the child's control over VCR viewing. In addition, 51.8% of rented or purchased tapes were a decision taken by the parents and their children together, while 18.2% of the decisions were taken by the father alone and 15.9% were taken by the mother alone and 14.8% of the decisions were taken by the child.

Zahoori (1988) in his study compared foreign children living in the United States and their American classmates use of television in the light of cultivation, uses and gratification and acculturation theories. The researcher studied a sample of 83 foreign children from 33 different countries living in the states and 276 US counterpartners from first to fifth grade pupils in a public school in the Midwest. The results indicated that television appeared to be a very important source of education and information about the American lifestyle for foreign children as they become accultured to the American community. The findings also suggested that the television cultivation effects must have been significant among newly arriving children than those with long periods of residency. In addition, non-American children were more interested in American programmes, spending more time in front of the screen, believing highly in the social reality of television and frequently identifying more with the characters on television.

Potter (1991) attempted to analyse empirically cultivation literature to explain that the process of cultivation composed of subprocesses of learning and construction with first order and second order measures (first order asked respondents to quantify issues such as crime, affluence, affairs, divorce, health and working females while second order assessed general beliefs about the real world). The results from a representative sample of 308 children in the United States provided support for the construction subprocess but with first-order measures only. Heavy viewers seemed to be more vulnerable to cultivation effects. They displayed stronger first order construction and real world generalisation due to social and psychological factors with the viewers themselves and not due to accumulation of exposure, according to the researcher.

Signorielli and Lears (1992) in their study examined the relationship between sex-role attitudes and behaviours on one hand and television viewing from the cultivation perspective on the other. The study was set to examine whether television watching was related to boys' and girls' attitudes and behaviours towards household chores which were stereotypically viewed as *'something girls do'* or *'something boys do'.* The study examined a sample of 530 children of 4th (48.5%) and 5th (51.5%) grades. The sample was also almost evenly divided between boys and girls. In addition, fair racial representation was achieved. The findings of the study showed that boys viewed television more than girls did and there was a statistically significant relationship between television exposure and high scoring on the attitudes index to sex-stereotyped chores, which had statistically significant percentages under multiple controls condition. Children who were heavy television viewers were also most likely to say that chores were stereotypically associated with males therefore only males should do them and vice versa.

Different from the previous researches, which used quantitative methodology, Buckingham (1993) applied qualitative procedures for data collection. The research used group interviews with children aged 7-12. The core sample of 90 children contained even numbers of boys and girls. These groups were between two and five in size. The selection of the children was based on balanced representation of ethnic and social background. The study found that children's talk about television depended crucially upon the context in which it occurred and in which they perceived it. Gendered identity was noticed when boys chose to deflate what they perceived as *'girls programmes'*, for example soap

operas, while girls similarly did the same in the case of 'boys programmes' such as action adventure cartoons. Middle class children's homes were strictly more regulated than working class households. In comparison to the lower class children, middle class children showed paradoxical positions towards television programmes. They did this by criticising television programmes while dedicatedly watched them.

Livingstone, et al (1999) found that there were differences and similarities among European countries concerning children ownership, access and time spent with a range of 'old' and 'new' media. The study found that access to video was almost as high as television, only dropping to around 70-80% in Italy, Spain and Switzerland. In general, lower classes had lower access to video in comparison to the other classes. However, the lower classes as well as boys had more access to TV-linked games than other classes and females. In most of the European countries under study, boys watched television slightly more than girls.

Moving to Asia, Chan (2001) examined the cultivation hypothesis on Chinese children's perceived truthfulness, liking and attention of television advertising in Hong Kong. A quota sample of 448 children between 5-12 was interviewed. Results indicated that almost equal proportions of children perceived that television advertising was *"mostly true"* or *"mostly not true"*. The study showed that the judgement of the children was mainly derived from their perceptions of the advertising content. Also the study found that the reason for scepticism about advertising changed with age. Older children relied more on personal experiences while younger ones trusted the comments of others. Hong

Kong children liked television advertising and watched commercials now and then. Perceived truthfulness of television advertising was positively related with liking and attention. Hong Kong children reported that their parents often used commercials to teach them about bad products to avoid.

Also in Thailand, Jantarakolica et al (2002) tested the cultivation thesis on junior-high level children in Bangkok. This was by investigating how Thai children perceived the world around them. The results of the study showed that Thai children watched TV for entertainment reasons and strongly preferred entertainment-orientated programmes. The research had children watch a specific programme about a Thai family. The children who watched TV more frequently did indeed perceive both the specific show and TV in general as more realistic and more likely wanted to be members of the family in the TV programme.

In conclusion, the dearth of audience research on children, particularly in Saudi Arabia made it challenging for me to undertake a complete, systematic and objective review of the literature. This scarcity was due most probably to the failure to perceive the significance and worth of the need to know about the audience, their interests and views. In the Arab world, early studies ignored qualitative methods in data collection as well as the stratification of the children. Besides, most recent studies disingenuously failed to address the effects of visual media on children. Research on child audiences was infrequently and haphazardly produced. Likewise, studies conducted in foreign countries did not fare better. Although I have strictly reduced reviewing of the literature to media

uses gratifications and cultivations by the children in foreign countries, the inconsistencies of the findings from a vast body of researches and the dynamic development in media technology made it difficult to establish any firm conclusions. Also, most of the studies seemed to place theoretical barriers when applying media uses, gratifications and cultivations instead of treating them as complementary. Not only that but the cultural particularity in the international context also made the comparing and synthesising of results problematic. While uses, gratifications and cultivation studies were represented in Western contexts, researchers in non-Western countries were devoted to the cultivation thesis whereas the uses and gratifications argument did not seem to have much appeal to them.

All-in-all, there was a lack of standard measure and a uniform instrument. This lack of standardisation and uniformity led to complications in the interpretation of results and the application of findings. Further, despite the importance of longitudinal studies in media effects on children, there were deficiencies in this approach to collecting data. Moreover, studies that tackle children, media and policy makers were scarce. Studies of children's relations to television dominated in comparison to other televised media such as video and videogames. Also, most of the studies were descriptive. They failed to engage in critical and in depth contemplation.

Nevertheless, some pattern did exist despite the limitations. At least most of the studies examined in this chapter conformed to the following points

1. Television was the most used medium for viewing.

2. The majority of children selected what they watch despite parental control.

3. Children watched television for different motives, out of which entertainment was the most mentioned.

4. Children watched more during weekends and holidays than during school days.

5. There was a relationship between watching television and perception about social reality.

6. Gender, age and social class were very important in determining the viewing interest of children.

7. Boys liked to view adventure, sports and programmes with violence while girls prefer romance as well as music and songs.

8. Older children were more interested in adults' programmes and less interested in children's programmes than younger children.

9. Lower class children were less restricted by their parents in their viewing habits and less informed about reality than middle class children.

After reviewing the studies on children's viewing interest and their impact, some suggestions are introduced. There is a necessity for the development of theoretical approaches that would be more applicable in different cultures. There is a need for co-ordination among different institutions such as official and non-official media policy makers as well as socialisation agencies in media research on children. Also, I think that more attention should be paid to advances in new technologies and their materials in their relations to children. This is in addition to comparative studies between different media

materials. Further, there is also a need for combined quantitative and qualitative methods in data collection.

The chapters that follow will examine how the arguments and findings discussed above bear out on the findings of this study on Saudi children viewing interests. Yet, before doing so, I will discuss, first, the methods used to collect and analyse primary data.

CHAPTER 5

Research Methodology

Introduction

This chapter discusses the instruments used in carrying out the fieldwork reported in this study. Primarily, I will discuss the methodology aspects of data collection regarding Saudi children's uses, gratifications and cultivations (enculturations) of visual media materials in the city of Jeddah.[1] I will also describe the procedures used to conduct in-depth interviews with policy-makers from socialisation agencies, the Saudi TV private sector and Saudi TV officials.

As the key focus of this research deals with the children's uses, gratifications and cultivations of visual media materials, the survey method is considered the most suitable approach for primary data collection. Towards this purpose, I designed a field questionnaire to measure the consumption of media materials (television, video and video games) and their effects in gratifying Saudi children's wants, and in creating perceptions of foreigners overseas, Arab nationals in the Arab world and local Saudis.

In the design, I took into account the aims of the research by utilising the theory of uses, gratifications and cultivations. I also used open-ended, semi open-ended and closed questions. Prior to discussing the research methodology, I will state the aims of the

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[1]As mentioned before, in chapter 2, Jeddah is a dynamic port city and is considered the commercial capital of the Kingdom, situated at the crossroads of the two major Islamic holy cities in the Muslim world, namely Mekkah and Madinah.

research. Because of a dearth of research information and the relative scarcity of indigenous theoretical conceptions on relevant cultural processes in Saudi Arabia, this type of procedure seems to be the most appropriate, for it combines exploratory and explanatory perspectives. Hence, the aims of the study are articulated into core research questions to develop structured and planned instruments to facilitate easy data collection. Meanwhile, I endeavour to keep an open mind on the theoretical and methodological elements. This procedure, according to Babbie (1995) and Baker (1988), ensures a better understanding of alternative and less formulated factual relations. This does not mean that the present research is less structured or poorly planned. Still, the procedure has influenced the length and form of the questionnaire and the quantity of data gathered.

Aims and Questions of the Survey:

- What factors influence the media consumption of Saudi children?

- What sorts of gratifications are obtained from the children's consumption of media materials?

What is the impact of media cultivation on the impressions Saudi children have of foreign, Arab and Saudi people?

Procedures of Data Collection

Procedures of the Survey:

To collect data for the study, I carried out a survey on a sample of 300 children. Selection followed a procedure aimed at ensuring that variables such as gender and social class were reflected in the sample. It therefore became imperative to use a quota-sampling method. Although quota sampling is a non-probability method, its use is cost effective and timesaving (Tayie, 2000, Wimmer & Dominick, 1997).

The children selected were in the 12 -15 year age group from an intermediate school. I designed a questionnaire in English and then translated it into Arabic, Saudis' native tongue. After completing the Arabic version, it was compared with the English copy by senior lecturers in the field of media studies. For the first pilot study, I applied the questionnaire to a sample of children from my own family. As a result of this test, I modified the questions. I conducted a further pilot study, using a small sample consisting of seventeen students aged from 12 to 15 (9 females, 8 males), studying at schools, representing the three strata of society (the upper, middle and lower social classes). After this pilot study, I again modified some questions with respect to clarity and comprehension for children in this age group. I then filtered and rearranged the questions in a logical order.

Before administering the questionnaire, I obtained permission to distribute the questionnaire both from the Ministry of Education, (which supervises boys' schools) and from the General Presidency of Girls' Education, (which supervises the girls' schools). In fact, I had to submit a copy of the questionnaire to the General Presidency of Girls'

Education to secure authorisation. At the same time, I managed to obtain from the General Education Administration and the General Presidency of Girls' Education in Jeddah a list of the names of intermediate boys' and girls' schools with the approximate numbers of students at the second level (grade 8). There was no significant difference in numbers between female and male students. The total number of students was 38,000 in the second intermediate level of whom 8,000 were non-Saudis.[1]

Due to my inability to administer the questionnaires at the boys' schools, a male teacher administered them on my behalf. I relied on him to undertake this mission after training him on how to deal with the respondents, especially in answering questions about how to fill in their questionnaire forms, how to collect the questionnaires.

In order to administer the questionnaires at the girls' schools, I contacted the selected schools and reached an agreement with the principals to designate suitable dates and times to minimise disruption to the school's normal schedule, since each questionnaire might take two lessons to complete.

In total, twelve schools, (six boys' and six girls') representing the social strata of society, were selected. According to Jeddah Chamber of Commerce (1998), the upper class percentage in the Saudi society is 25%, where household earnings exceed £9,000 per month, the middle class percentage is 35% where household earnings range from £1,400 up to less than £ 9,000 per month and the lower class represents 40% of the society where

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[1] Education Administration (1999) Statistics, Jeddah, S.A.

household earnings are less than £1,400 per month.[1] The cooperation of the Ministry of Education and the General Presidency of Girls' Education was also valuable in identifying schools according to class classification. In addition, my discussions with the principals of the chosen schools about their facilities to students assured the socio-economic categorisation. Lower class schools were located in poor areas and most of their buildings were of low profile. Classrooms were small and overcrowded. Class sizes could reach 40 and above. Many of the students received private aid or donations from the school administration. On the other hand, middle class schools were located in bigger and wider streets with a superior housing environment. The number of children in classes ranged from 20-30. They were also given pocket money.[2] Upper class schools had huge five star profile modern buildings with wide classrooms that each accommodated less than 20 children with such facilities as sports courts, swimming pools and attractive landscaping. Tuition fees for these students could reach up to £5,000 annually. Indeed, classrooms in some upper class schools were even monitored with cameras.

Surprisingly, neither the Ministry of Education nor the strict General Presidency of Girls' Education commented on the nature or content of the survey questions. Yet, many of the principals of both girls' and boys' schools felt restless about some of the sensitive questions. However, they could not prevent the administration of the questionnaires since my assistant and I had obtained official permission. Next is the list of the participant schools in Jeddah categorised according to gender and socio-economic class:

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[1] Jeddah Chamber of Commerce and Industry (1998), Statistics, supplied by Prof. Nadia Baashin, consultant at Jeddah Chamber of Commerce and Industry and Former Dean of the Faculty of Economics and Business Administration at King Abdulaziz University.
[2] Some of them bought me juice and cup cakes from the school canteen as a sign of friendship and hospitality, but truly as a sign of interest in the research questionnaire.

Boys Schools:

Name of School	Social Status
Dar Al-Maarifa School	Upper Class
Pr. Sultan Compound School	Upper Class
Imam Faisal School	Middle Class
Al-Farooq School	Middle Class
Al-Hudaibia School	Lower Class
Al-Imam Al-Shaibi School	Lower Class

Girls Schools:

Name of School	Social Status
My Little House School	Upper Class
Dar Al-Fikr School	Upper Class
78th School	Middle Class
33rd School	Middle Class
46th School	Lower Class
56th School	Lower Class

I used the group administration method to administer the questionnaires. According to Wimmer & Dominick (1997) this refers to a situation where a group of respondents is gathered together and given individual copies of the questionnaire. This method has many advantages enabling the possibility of using a longer questionnaire. This is because I was present to handle problems and answer questions. As a result rates of response were quite high and fewer items were answered incorrectly or omitted (Wimmer & Dominick 1997). Another strong reason for using this method is low cost and rapidity of completion. The group administration method undoubtedly allows for the collection of more data in a shorter time period. It took only one month to collect the sample from the schools in Jeddah, starting from mid September, 1999. My assistant and I distributed the questionnaires to 12 different classes, representing the quota samples of gender and social status in a total of 300 questionnaires.

Due to the length of the questionnaire, my assistant and I presented the students with an incentive of a personalised *'thank you'* letter to encourage them to fill in the questionnaires. Students completion times ranged from 30-60 minutes.

After reviewing the questionnaires, the responses were quite encouraging. Yet I had to exclude 63 of them because they either contained incomplete information or did not fulfil the criteria for age or nationality. I excluded the questionnaires of those who were not Saudis or over 15 years of age.[1] Therefore, the number of usable questionnaires was 237. My assistant and I did not exclude students according to nationality and age before the

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[1] The explanation for this is due to the fact that around one third of the population which lives in Saudi Arabia are of non-Saudi nationals whose children may go to schools with Saudi children. Moreover, since education in the Kingdom is not compulsory, lower class families, who are usually uneducated, are not attentive to send their children to school at an early age.

distribution of the questionnaires in class. This was to ensure that students in the classes did not feel rejected.

Distribution of Sample by Gender and Social Class

Table (1) Gender* Social Class Cross tabulation

Gender/Social Class			Social Class			Total
			Upper	Middle	Lower	
Gender	Males	Count	30	40	48	118
		%with Gender	25.4%	33.9%	40.7%	100.0%
		%with Social Class	50.0%	49.4%	50.0%	49.8%
	Females	Count	30	41	48	119
		%with Gender	25.2%	34.5%	40.3%	100.0%
		%with Social Class	50.0%	50.6%	50.0%	50.2%
Total		Count	60	81	96	237
		%with Gender	25.3%	34.2%	40.5%	100.0%
		%with Social Class	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

The data in table (1) summarises the variables considered most significant in the selection of the sample. These variables were considered as they were of interest to answering the major research questions dealing with media uses, gratification and cultivation. The coming chapters will present the results of the survey.

Interviews

In order to understand the media context for children in Saudi Arabia, I had to study policy-makers' perspectives. To pursue this purpose, I carried out interviews with Saudi policy-makers from socialisation agencies, the Saudi TV private sector and Saudi TV officials. The interviews were intended to shed light on three main topics. The first topic focused on visual media policy for children in Saudi Arabia. I asked policy-makers their views one visual media policy in Saudi Arabia, as well as the factors that influenced their establishment. I also asked them to express their expectations about steps taken to

achieve the policy plans and how dedicated media staff and personnel are in fulfilling policy objectives. The second topic dealt with the viewpoints of the interviewees on the role of Saudi media industrialists in promoting Saudi children's participation and levels of activity with visual media materials and industry. Among the questions asked in this section was one about their assumptions regarding the efforts of Saudi media industrialists in the development of children's ability to critically analyse media materials. This is in addition to their opinions on how Saudi media industrialists identify children's aspirations regarding media materials and policy-makers' conceptions of involving children in media policy making was also considered. The final topic centred on cultural imperialism and techniques of resistance. The topic covered how policy-makers disclosed their thoughts about the influence of foreign and Arab materials on the values of the Muslim Saudi child. It also discussed the opinions of the interviewees on the strategies for blocking undesired cultural penetration. The issues of communication and information policy and the children's level of activity with the media industry and resistance of undesired socialisation are considered important factors. They provide a panoramic view of the media context for children in Saudi Arabia from policy-maker's points of view.

Procedures:

I conducted faxed interviews, where I presented lengthy open-ended questions to fill in for nine top figures in the media industry and socialisation agencies between 23 December 2001 and 25 February 2002. The Minister of Information, Dr. Fowad Farsi, the Director of STV Channel 1, Tariq Riri and the Director of STV Channel 2, Abdulasis

Abu-naja represented Saudi media officials, while representatives from the Saudi private media industry and socialisation agencies were Arab Radio and Television (ART) tycoon and media entrepreneur, Sheikh Saleh Kamel, the former Minister of Information and the current President of the ART Board of Directors the highly prominent public figure Prof. Muhammad Yamani, Dr Abdul-Gader Tash, a well known figure in the field of media and Islamic propagation, who works as a senior consultant in several media companies including ART where he initiated some of its channels such as "Iqraa". Official representatives of the Ministry of Education were Dr. Mohammad Al-rashid, the Minister of Education and Dr Turaifa Al-showaer, the Director of the Administration of Upbringing Supervision (considered the highest female authority in the General Presidency for Girls' Education in Jeddah). I also interviewed the General Secretary of the World Assembly of Muslim Youth in Jeddah (WAMY), Prof. Abdul-Wahab Nourwali.

Due to the nature of research in Saudi Arabia and the importance of the interviewees, the interviews were a challenging exercise in patience. According to Al-garni (2000), the present climate in Saudi Arabia is not conducive to obtaining information for research purposes. The country has solidly experienced cultural and demographic seclusion and, as a consequence, its peoples are highly protectionist. Research activities are limited by social and political circumstances. Public officials and respondents are usually reluctant to reveal information or voice their thoughts (Al-garni, 2000). High-ranking figures are largely inaccessible. Most of them hop from one place to another, in and out of the country and do not have time for academic interviews. Thus, in order to gain access, I had to rely mainly on family connections. According to Yamani (2000), it is common practice

in Saudi Arabia to have access to authority through family connections (Yamani, 2000). Despite this, questionnaires had to be faxed many times to the targets, as they might never reach their destinations. This tactic was also accompanied by persistent phone calls for follow-up purposes. After receiving the returned questionnaires, I analysed them question by question. This means, according to Blaxter *et al* (1997), having all of the interviews spread out simultaneously to compare all the answers to specific questions given by all the interviewees (Blaxter *et al*, 1997).

CHAPTER 6

Ownership of Media Equipment

This chapter discusses the most significant results concerning the ownership of the electronic visual media equipment in the city of Jeddah where the survey was conducted on 237 school children in the 12-15 year age group. Ownership of electronic visual media materials includes television sets, VCRs', videogame consoles and satellite channel decoders. The possible influence of variables such as gender and social class on the possession of these types of equipment will also be analysed.

Ownership of Electronic Visual Media Equipment

With respect to ownership of electronic visual media equipment as shown in table 1.1, the Saudi children have access to television sets more than to any other visual media equipment. The table shows that 94.1 % of respondents have TV in their homes. This finding is compatible with a study entitled *"Mass Media and the Sociology of Leisure"* conducted in the city of Jeddah, where the spread of television sets among the sample was 93.6% (Al-shal, 1998).

While it is by no means an insignificant figure, the percentage of television set ownership in Saudi Arabia is considered low for an oil rich country, especially when compared with neighbouring countries with fewer resources and lower per capita income. Having a TV set is a necessity for Egyptian and Lebanese people (Al-khoury, 1997, Tayie, 1989). For

Table (1.1) Ownership of Media Equipment at Home

Medium	Freq.	%	Rank
TV	223	94.1%	1
Video	198	83.5%	2
Video game console	190	80.1%	3
Sat TV	180	75.9%	4

*N=237

Table (1.2) Gender & Ownership of Media Equipment at Home

Medium--Gender	Male	Female	Response	N*
TV	110 93.2%	113 95.0%	223 94.1%	237 100%
Video	100 84.7%	98 82.4%	198 83.5%	237 100%
Video game console	101 85.5%	89 74.8%	190 80.1%	237 100%
Sat TV	94 79.7%	86 72.3%	180 75.9%	237 100%

Table (1.3) Social Class & Ownership of Media Equipment at Home

Medium--Class	Upper	Middle	Lower	Total response	N
TV	57 95.0%	74 91.4%	92 95.8%	223 94.1%	237 100%
Video	57 95.0%	72 88.9%	69 71.9%	198 83.5%	237 100%
Video game console	50 83.3%	68 84%	72 75%	190 80.1%	237 100%
Sat TV	57 95.0%	64 79.0%	59 61.5%	180 75.9%	237 100%

example, television ownership by households has been found to be higher in Egypt (99.5%) and Lebanon (100%) where almost all the respondents surveyed indicated that they owned television sets at home (Al-khoury,1997, Al-shal,1987).

The lower figures in Saudi Arabia are most probably as a result of the stricter religious lifestyle in the country. Most influential Saudi personalities, especially in religious circles, believe that television encourages loose and immoral culture and that would therefore discourage its widespread use in the country. In his present arguments for the abolition of television, Al-mukadim (1999) supports his position by claiming that many prominent Saudi religious scholars have in the past banned television ownership for its immoral and destructive effects on Muslim family life. In less restrictive Islamic societies on the other hand, television is not seen in such a harmful light. Asran (1994) found, in his study on Egyptian mosque imams that 96% of them watched television. They do not demonise television as Saudi imams do, he explains, because Egyptians follow less strict lifestyles than Saudis (Asran, 1994).

After television, the second most commanly available visual media equipment according to the children are VCRs and videogame consoles, 83.5% and 80.1% respectively. Although the finding on VCR ownership is similar to that by Al-amoudi & Bait-almal (1992), their findings on videogame ownership was lower with a percentage of 50.7% only. These differences may reflect an increased interest in videogame consoles as a consequence of their dramatic technological developments and the aggressive marketing of the new generations of videogame. These games continue to be visually more powerful

and more complex with the conversion of 3-D. Furthermore, as observers of the industry explain, "the war on prices among the different videogame console producers makes them more accessible to young people" (*Videogame*, 1999, 6).

Only 75.9% of the respondents had satellite channels decoders in their homes. Nevertheless, the trend shows that there is a higher rate of ownership of satellite decoders in Saudi Arabia than elsewhere in the Western world, such as the UK where ownership reaches 32% at best (Social Trends, 2001). In Saudi Arabia, the actual spread of satellites among the public started in 1990. Before this, use was limited to ministries, companies and individuals who were involved in political decision-making in the country (Bait-almal, 1993, 27).Yamani (1995) argues that the Gulf War was instrumental in the rocketing interest in satellite communication. People followed the up-to-date news from organisations whose sources they found credible, such as CNN, because the local and Arab channels lagged behind (Yamani, 1995). According to Al-makaty (1995), "although not exhibited, dishes were available in Saudi, in most electronic stores, and were openly sold until the official Saudi ban decree was issued on March 10, 1994" (Al-makaty, 1995, 105). However, this ban was not effective, for as Boyd (1999) noted "The ban has not been enforced and dishes as well as satellite reception equipment are readily available in the Kingdom." Saudi media officials know that they are fighting a losing battle. Most people in Saudi Arabia have access to and watch satellite television (Boyd, 1999, 53). The use of dishes has increased further with the diffusion of satellite decoders into the Saudi market and the dramatic fall in their prices after the Gulf War (Al-shal, 1998). (For more details refer to the section on satellite in Chapter 2).

Gender & Ownership of Electronic Visual Media Equipment

A closer look at table 1.2 shows that there were similarities between males and the females with respect to television sets and VCR ownership at home. Regarding television sets, the females and the males responded with 95% and 93.2% respectively. As for VCR, the males and the females were also very close, with 84.7% and 82.4% respectively.

However, differences were noticeable with regard to videogames and satellite channel decoders. Males reported higher percentages of 85.5% for ownership of videogame consoles and 79.7% for satellite channel decoders' against 74.8% and 72.3% for females. The reason for this gap between them could be explained by sociological realities in the country. Al-kharaji (1993) explains that "Saudi society separates men and women physically and socially in almost all aspects of life. Men and women can only meet inside the family structure as kin (close relatives)" (Al-kharaji, 1993, 91). Houses are mainly designed to allow for this segregation through separated parts from the house called *"majlis"*, where unrelated male visitors are seated and entertained. As a result of fear of its immorality, "exposure to satellite programmes may be limited to males" but certainly not to women who live under stricter rules of chastity (Al-shal, 1998, 333).

Videogames, which mainly focus on masculinity, violence and adventure, are more appealing to males than to females. In general, Saudi society is less concered by male exposure to anti-social behaviour than it is by female. While boys have more laxity, "the girls are told that everything is shameful and sinful" (Yamani, 2000, 111). Even in a less conservative Arab society, such as Egypt, some programmes are restricted to male viewing only (Al-shal,1994). Equality of opportunity to benefit from media output can

not be achieved if the basic demand that all children have access to media is not realized (Feititezen, 1999).

Social Class & Ownership of Electronic Visual Media Equipment

With reference to table 1.3, the results show that there are some similarities and differences in ownership of media equipment among the social classes at home. With regard to television sets, ownership by the lower and upper classes is very similar at 95.8% and 95% respectively while the middle class response was slightly lower at 91.4%. Al jasaimi (1994) has an explanation. The middle classes are very eager to develop their children's personalities and to ensure they get into professions that will advance their upward social mobility. This then makes them lead a stricter lifestyle in comparison with the upper and lower classes (Al jasaimi, 1994).

With respect to ownership of VCRs or satellite channel decoders, the table shows that there were positive relationships between status of the social class and ownership of VCRs or satellite channel decoders. In other words, the higher the social class, the higher the ownership of VCRs or satellite channel decoders. Having access to more financial resources and influence means that the wealthy have more opportunities to break free from the local traditional social system, as Barakat puts it (Barakat, 1998). According to Boyd (2001), this includes exposure to uncensored, non-Saudi TV materials (Boyd, 2001).

In fact, according to Zilo (1994), an American *Star TV* executive and CEO of *Orbit* Television and Radio Network, "we are going after a niche market with the most potent, affluent demographics in the world ... These people travel a lot and watch Western

television when they're away. When they come home, there's nothing" (*Newsweek* magazine interview, 1994, cited in Boyd, 2001) What is happening today is that access to technology is open to some and not to others (Yamani, 2000). In fact, some European countries have a different story. Livingstone *et al* (1999) found that in France satellite ownership is equally divided among the three social strata while in Britain, satellite possession is the lowest among the upper class (Livingstone *et al* 1999). Unlike the Western bourgeoisie, the Saudi bourgeoisie undergoes 'anomie' and thus detaches itself from its original culture to pursue a more powerful one.

Turning to ownership of videogame consoles, the majority of the middle and upper classes gave very close and high percentages of 84% and 83.3% respectively in comparison to the lower class whose reported ownership percentage was 75%. These percentages are probably considered high in comparison to other countries, especially those in the West. This is because the Saudi society considers videogames safe for playing. The Ministry of Information bans pornographic videogames which are inconsistent with Islamic sharia law and makes sure that this ban is effective. An editorial of a local videogame magazine opens by stating, "We work very hard to introduce every suitable videogame that does not go beyond the boundaries of our Arab and Islamic traditions" (*Videogames*, 1998, 4). Therefore, whatever videogames are available in the market are considered clean.[1]

To summarise, ownership of television in Saudi Arabia is lower in comparison to some neighbouring countries. However, ownership of other equipment is high in comparison to

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[1] This is, at least, from an official point of view. As seen in Chapter 2, the videogame genre has developed dramatically in Saudi Arabia in the past few years.

developed countries. Gender plays an important role in media equipment ownership because it is considered part of the male public sphere. On the other hand, the middle class's ownership of television sets is less than that of the other classes for stricter socialisation reasons. Nevertheless, the higher the class, the higher the ownership of VCRs, videogame consoles and satellite channel decoders.

In conclusion, the Gulf War has changed media equipment ownership. However, questions remain as to whether this transformation will affect the children's use of media materials and whether it will influence their programme preferences. The following chapter addresses these issues.

CHAPTER 7

Utilisation of Visual Media Materials

This chapter investigates the utilisation of media materials by Saudi children by dealing with four issues: the first examines the sources of information on time schedule of television programmes. The second studies supremacy over media materials. The third discusses the type of exposure to the materials. The final issue seeks information on the average hours of exposure to media materials during schooldays and vacations. Intervening variables of gender and social class were found to be significant in media utilisation.

Sources of Information on the Television Programme Scheduling

Table 2.1 shows that only about a quarter of the Saudi children sampled were not concerned to find out TV schedules because they watch these programmes randomly and by coincidence. Relatively close to this finding, in her study on Egyptian families, Mohammed (1993) found that about one-third of the sample watched television without planning. This indicates that the majority of the audience engages in active and selective viewing. But the main question in this case is whether active exposure to media materials influences the children's perceptions about lifestyle reality.

This study shows that knowing the schedules of television programmes was done selectively and intentionally. More than half the sample found out about TV schedules from the medium in the following proportions: 58.2% for foreign TV materials, 57.4%

Table (2.1) Sources of Information on Television Programme Schedules

Materials	Foreign TV materials			Arab TV materials			Saudi TV materials		
Source	Yes	Other	Total N	Yes	Other	Total N	Yes	Other	Total N
Television	138 58.2%	99 41.8%	237 100.0%	124 52.3%	113 47.7%	237 100.0%	136 57.4%	101 42.6%	237 100.0%
I watch what-ever comes up	56 23.6%	181 76.4%	237 100.0%	57 24.1%	180 75.9%	237 100.0%	57 24.1%	180 75.9%	237 100.0%
Family member	24 10.1%	213 89.9%	237 100.0%	35 14.8%	202 85.2%	237 100.0%	30 12.7%	207 87.3%	237 100.0%
Friend	24 101.1%	213 89.9%	237 100.0%	31 13.1%	206 86.9%	237 100.0%	20 8.4%	217 91.6%	237 100.0%
Magazines/ newspapers	16 6.8%	221 93.2%	237 100.0%	23 9.7%	214 90.3%	237 100.0%	10 4.2%	227 95.8%	237 100.0%

Table (2.2) Gender & Sources of Information on Television Programme Schedules

Materials	Foreign TV materials			Arab TV materials			Saudi TV materials		
Source	Gender		Total	Gender		Total	Gender		Total
	M	F	Yes	M	F	Yes	M	F	Yes
Television	69 58.4%	69 58.0%	138 58.2%	64 54.2%	60 50.4%	124 52.3%	70 59.3%	66 55.5%	136 57.4%
I watch what-ever comes up	25 21.2%	31 26.1%	56 23.6%	21 17.8%	36 30.3%	57 24.1%	22 18.6%	35 29.4%	57 24.1%
Family member	7 5.9%	17 14.3%	24 10.1%	9 7.6%	26 21.8%	35 14.8%	7 5.9%	23 19.3%	30 12.7%
Friend	9 7.6%	15 12.6%	24 10.1%	8 6.8%	23 19.3%	31 13.1%	10 8.5%	10 8.4%	20 8.4%
Magazines/ newspapers	8 6.8%	8 6.7%	16 6.8%	13 11.0%	10 8.4%	23 9.7%	4 3.4%	6 5.0%	10 4.2%

for Saudi TV materials and 52.3% for Arab TV materials. Using television to find out about the schedule of broadcasting indicates that the children are independent of interpersonal influence, which is why lower percentages knew the schedule of the programmes through members of the family and friends. This finding is also consistent with Mohammed's (1993) study in which she reported that 57.8% of the sample knew the schedule of TV programmes from television while only 10% knew the schedule of programmes from others. It must be noted, however, that the majority of the children were least dependent on magazines and newspapers for TV programme schedules. This is probably because of the lack of specialised TV guide magazines at home which could limit their use of them.

Gender & Sources of Information on the Television Programme Scheduling

Table 2.2 shows the relationship between the TV programme scheduling and gender. Though the two genders had equal percentages in knowing foreign TV programme scheduling, there were slight differences between them in terms of their sources regarding Arab TV and Saudi TV materials. The males, more than females, knew the programme scheduling of Arab TV and Saudi TV materials from television. Moreover, males (11%) depended on magazines and newspapers to know about the schedule of Arab TV programmes more than females (8.4%). Morely (1987) indicated in his study that males planned the schedule for watching and selecting the programmes on television while females watched television more by coincidence. Being public sphere orientated, males exert hegemony and control over the media. On the other hand, the interest of females in media casts them as restricted to the private sphere and housework (Morely, 1987). That

is why, as shall be discussed in relation to table 5.2, the females say that they obtain less

escape gratifications than the males from all media materials. As stated earlier, Saudi

society does not give women as much freedom to escape as it does for males (Alsaif,

1997). "There is a 'katma' (suffocation) closing up on girls in most families" (Yamani,

2000, 111). Therefore, the females watched more unselectively, and by coincidence,

foreign TV, Arab TV, and Saudi TV programmes than the males. This is especially by

virtue of the limited and controlled outside activities for the females. They tend to stay at

home more often than the males, which facilitates their closer social relationships, and

makes them depend more on personal communication to know the time schedule of

programmes on TV in general, compared to the males. This could be the reason why they

tend to receive less *"loneliness"* gratifications and tend to receive more *"gratification for*

socialising with the family" compared to the males as shall be explained further.

Social Class & Sources of Information on the Television Programme Scheduling

Table 2.3 shows that there are differences among the three social classes in knowing the

schedules of television materials. While 71.7% of the upper class knows the schedule of

foreign programmes from television, only 59.3% of the middle class and the 48.9% of

lower class do. The upper class understands foreign programmes in the original language.

This is not surprising because this elite class knows foreign languages, especially

English, better than the other classes. Yamani (2000) explains it thus: "In a country where

wealth and access to power bring increasingly visible advantages, the ability to speak

fluent English has become yet another marker of privilege. It is flaunted to signify access

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and exposure to the West and the fruits of modern education and professionalism"
Yamani (2000, 60)

58% of the middle social class know the schedules of Arab TV material programmes
through television, compared to 46.7% of the upper social class and 51% of the lower
social class. 67.7% of the lower social class, on the other hand, know the schedule of
Saudi programmes from TV which is higher than the 60.5% of the middle social class
and 36.7% of the upper social class. As will be seen in table 5.3, the middle class receives
the highest *"information/learning gratifications"* average from Arab TV materials,
whereas the lower class receives the highest information/ learning gratifications average
from Saudi TV materials.

It has already been noted in this study that the middle and lower classes do not plan
watching foreign TV materials as much as the upper class. While 16.7% of the upper
class depends on magazines and newspapers for programme schedules, only 3.7% of the
middle social class, and 3.1% of the lower class use such references. As the upper class,
whose members have "incomes sufficient to purchase the sophisticated Scientific Atlanta
receiver" to view a variety of programme packages (Boyd, 1999, 343) gets the time
schedule of foreign TV programmes through subscribed foreign satellite channels,
subsequently, watching without planning decreased to 15% compared to the lower social
class (29.2 %) and the middle class (23.5%). This foreign lifestyle-orientated class leads a
full active life that makes it dependent on agendas to squeeze the most out of its time
(Sarhan, 1981). The opposite has been noted with Arab TV and Saudi TV programmes.
The percentage of the upper social class who watched these materials without planning

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Table (2.3) Social Class & Sources of Information on Television Programme Schedules

Materials Source	Foreign TV materials			Total Yes	Arab TV materials			Total Yes	Saudi TV materials			Total Yes
	Social class				Social class				Social class			
	UP	Mi	Lo		UP	Mi	Lo		UP	Mi	Lo	
Television	43 71.7%	48 59.3%	47 48.9%	138 58.2%	28 46.7%	47 58.0%	49 51.0%	124 52.3%	22 36.7%	49 60.5%	65 67.7%	136 57.4%
I watch whatever comes up	9 15.0%	19 23.5%	28 29.2%	56 23.6%	19 31.7%	15 18.5%	23 24.0%	57 24.1%	17 28.3%	19 23.5%	21 21.9%	57 24.1%
Family member	8 13.3%	8 9.9%	8 8.3%	24 10.1%	8 13.3%	15 18.5%	12 12.5%	35 14.8%	9 15.0%	11 13.6%	10 10.4%	30 12.7%
Friend	7 11.7%	10 12.3%	7 7.3%	24 10.1%	10 16.7%	12 14.8%	9 9.4%	31 13.1%	8 13.3%	4 4.9%	8 8.3%	20 8.4%
Magazines/ newspapers	10 16.7%	3 3.7%	3 3.1%	16 6.8%	13 21.7%	4 4.9%	6 6.3%	23 9.7%	6 10.0%	2 2.5%	2 2.1%	10 4.2%

Table (2.4) Supremacy over Media Materials

Materials Selection	Saudi TV materials			Arab TV materials			Foreign TV materials			Videotape materials			Videogame materials		
	Yes	Other	Total N	Yes	Other	Total N	Yes	Other	Total N	Yes	Other	Total N	Yes	Other	Total N
Myself	114 48.1%	123 51.9%	237 100.0%	123 51.9%	114 48.1%	237 100.0%	105 44.3%	132 55.7%	237 100.0%	104 43.9%	133 56.1%	237 100.0%	143 60.3%	94 39.7%	237 100.0%
Father	20 8.4%	217 91.6%	237 100.0%	18 7.6%	219 92.4%	237 100.0%	25 10.5%	212 89.5%	237 100.0%	38 16.0%	199 84.0%	237 100.0%	15 6.3%	222 93.7%	237 100.0%
Mother	11 4.6%	226 95.4%	237 100.0%	20 8.4%	217 91.6%	237 100.0%	28 11.8%	209 88.2%	237 100.0%	29 12.2%	208 87.8%	237 100.0%	6 2.5%	231 97.5%	237 100.0%
Sister/Brother	20 8.4%	217 91.6%	237 100.0%	23 9.7%	214 90.3%	237 100.0%	16 6.8%	221 93.2%	237 100.0%	29 12.2%	208 87.8%	237 100.0%	18 7.6%	219 92.4%	237 100.0%
Family	49 20.7%	188 79.3%	237 100.0%	40 16.9%	197 83.1%	237 100.0%	38 16.0%	199 84.0%	237 100.0%	34 14.3%	203 85.7%	237 100.0%	11 4.6%	226 95.4%	237 100.0%
Other	17 7.2%	220 92.8%	237 100.0%	10 4.2%	227 95.8%	237 100.0%	11 4.6%	226 95.4%	237 100.0%	6 2.5%	231 97.5%	237 100.0%	3 1.3%	234 98.7%	237 100.0%

has increased. Nevertheless, the percentage of the same class using magazines and newspapers to read the schedules of programmes has also increased more than the other two social classes. The high expenditure capacity of the upper social class also permits it to subscribe to various magazines and newspapers to follow the programmes in a way that saves its time. Yet the foreign-aspired children of this class coincidental viewing of these materials reflects their general disinterest in them.

All in all, the lower social class was the least dependent on personal communication such as family members or friends, to know the various schedules of foreign TV, Arab TV and Saudi TV materials. Ismail *et al* (1967) argue that the family in this class works longer hours to earn a living and their children take their share of responsibilities to satisfy the parents and to lift some of the burden from them. The children, therefore, do not have much contact on a personal level despite the large size of the family (Ismail *et al*, 1967). Also, that is why they are the most likely to watch television for the feeling of *"loneliness"* in comparison to the other classes as will be discussed in greater length in table 5.3.

Supremacy over Media Materials

With respect to who controls the selection of Saudi TV, Arab TV, foreign TV, videotape and videogame materials, table 2.4 reveals that, in general, the selection of materials watched by the children in the family for all materials were not executed cooperatively and by consensus. This indicates that Saudi children are brought up either in *laissez-faire* or in protective families. Chaffee *et al* (1973) argue that in laissez-faire families the children are neither socio-nor concept-orientated. This implies that there is hardly any

parent-child communication. On the other hand, children of protective families, where socio-oriented relations are highlighted, have little stimuli from parents to develop a broad-minded, reflective view on the world (Chaffee *et al*, 1973). 20.7% of the children who selected Saudi TV materials together with their families consider society values, were less provocative, less disputable, and suitable for socio-orientation. These characteristics, therefore, make them suitable for family gathering. On the other hand, 16.9% selected Arab TV, 16% decided on foreign TV, and 14.3% chose videotape materials with family members. As these materials are not approved by society, social tradition tends to consider them immoral, questionable and embarrassing for viewing as shall be clarified in table 2.7. However, the children's co-operative selection of videogame materials received responses of 4.6% only. This is not surprising because videogame materials suitable for parallel, rather than co-operative playing, require greater involvement and activity (Alloway & Gilbert, 1998). This reality might encourage the child's individualistic behaviour to become insensitive and inconsiderate of the audience as a characteristic of socio-orientation (Gunter & McAleer, 1997).

Children in Saudi society often make their own choices in selecting what they want to play or watch on TV. In fact, according to Gunter & McAleer (1997) child-rearing practices in modern times have ended in young people being considerably more self-governing and independent than previous generations. This is reflected in the way in which they struggle to make their own judgements about what they are exposed to (Gunter & McAleer, 1997).

A large percentage of the sample make their own choices, with highest responses of 60.3% for videogame materials, followed by Arab TV materials with 51.9%. Next, the children reported Saudi TV materials with a relatively lower percentage of 48.1% and finally they noted foreign TV and videotape materials with close figures of 44.3% and 43.9% respectively. Although the children select what to watch with a high percentage, their independent selection varies from one medium to another. The children's freedom to select videogame materials is due to the fact that videogames characters are based on cartoon figures which diminish their representation of reality. This may make parents go easy on their children because they regard such material as less threatening, whereas foreign TV and videotape materials are challenging to Saudi traditions and values, which make them hazardous to the child's socialisation, for they lead them to adapt to Western culture and lifestyle (Muhammed, 1999).

Moreover, the children might be controlled when being exposed to different media materials by other family members. The father's authority reaches its peak when it comes to videotape materials again with a percentage of 16%, followed by foreign TV materials with a percentage of 10.5%. Remarkably, the percentage decreases to 6.3% for videogame materials.

The same pattern is almost repeated on the mother's part. Her authority is at its peak with respect to videotape materials, with a percentage of 12.2%, followed closely by foreign TV materials with a percentage of 11.8%. Then her control decreases to its lowest in videogame materials with a percentage of 2.5%.

It can, however, be noted from the results that the father's authority is stronger than that of the mother. Despite the fact that parents hold equal authority over foreign TV and

Arab TV materials, the father's authority supersedes when it comes to videotape, Saudi

TV and videogame materials. This contradicts Long (1997) who claims that

> "in the traditional Islamic Saudi family, men control business and public
> affairs while women control the home.... There are few areas of the world
> where women are as domineering in the home as Saudi women are. On
> family decisions, they tend to present a solid front that men dare not
> ignore with impunity. There is generally a matriarch who rules the home"
> (Long, 1997, 17).

Yet, his claim does not hold when it comes to hegemony over the media, which is

contemplated as an extension to the macho man's public sphere.

Videotape materials are treated with maximum alert in the Saudi family as corroborated

by Abuzinada (1988). This is probably due to the family fear of immoral contents

contrary to Islamic and traditional values. His results show that children's viewing and

imitation of sexual, violent and horror videotape scenes were among the highest concerns

reported by most parents. About one-third of the parents were also concerned about their

children learning and adopting from videotape programmes behavioural habits considered

deviant in Saudi society (Abuzinada, 1988). Nevertheless, parental implementation of

authority over the media in general is low, as noted from the children's responses. As

Gunter & McAleer (1997) state, "Although parents may often claim to take care over

what they allow younger members of the family to watch, this may well be far removed

from what actually happens in practice" (Gunter & McAleer 1997, 183). This could be

because their families do not practice what they really believe. Buckingham (1994) found

that there are often discrepancies between what the parents say and what they truly do. It

could also be due to the fact that children may take the opportunity to watch restrictive

materials whenever they are not supervised.

The situation is different with brothers and sisters regarding the order of authority over the selection of materials. While this authority was powerful regarding videotape materials, with a percentage of 12.2%, it decreased in the case of foreign TV materials to a percentage of 6.8%. Siblings are more authoritarian than the parents with respect to videogame materials. To children, videogame playing is an exercise of power and hegemony, which make them susceptible to fighting among themselves (Alloway & Gilbert, 1998; Buckingham, 1994).

Gender & Supremacy over Media Materials

An examination of results in table 2.5 shows that there are the differences and similarities between males and females in their selection of materials. Both genders share similar traits in the choice of Arab TV and Saudi TV materials. However, the females are less able than the males to select these materials for themselves, especially with respect to videogames, videotapes and foreign TV materials. The percentage of males who control the selection of materials themselves is higher for videogames (66.1%), videotape materials (49.2%) and foreign TV materials (47.5%) in comparison to the females who recorded percentages of only 54.6%, 38.7% and 41.2% for the three respective material types. This is due to the nature of Saudi society, which leaves authority in the hands of the males. The Saudi family exercises double standards in its treatment of males and females. It imposes restrictive and protective supervision over the females' exposure to foreign materials while turning a blind eye and adopting a *laissez-faire* policy to what males are exposed to in foreign media materials. Nevertheless, elsewhere in the Arab

world, Abdul-Mugeeth (1998) found in his study entitled *"Exchanged Relations between Collective Exposure to Mass Media and Social Relationships"* that Egyptian male authority over electronic media was unrestricted in comparison to that exercised by females (Abdul-Mugeeth, 1998). Also in Kuwait, parents exercised more censorship over females than males with regard to some programmes (Abdul-Rahman *et al*, 1973). Even in the United States, parental regulation of TV viewing has been found to be more rigid for females than males (Gross & Walsh, 1980) and young girls have been found to be more 'protected' in their videotape viewing (Lin & Atkin,1989).

The mother's authority was even more evident on what the daughters watched, especially for videotape materials (18.5%), foreign TV materials (14.3%) and Arab TV materials (11.8%). Compare this to maternal supervision of sons 5.9%, 9.3% and 5.1% respectively for the three programme types. In a segregated society, daughters are confined to the private sphere with the mothers while sons are exposed to the public sphere with the fathers. Mothers tend to extend control over their daughters' behaviour while they tend to be less restrictive on their sons' behaviour. This conforms to societal norms, which patrol female actions while granting males lenient and lax treatment . This discrimination tends to increase the status of the male within the family over that of the female. Therefore, the family encourages the female to obey the male, surrender and disclaim her wishes to his (Al-saif, 1997). This is also why sibling control over different materials is practiced more on females than on males, especially with videotapes, videogames and Saudi TV materials although they shared responses towards Arab TV and foreign TV materials. While the females gave the mentioned variables 14.3%, 10.9% and 10.1% respectively, the males reported giving videotape materials 10.2%, Saudi TV materials

Table (2.5) Gender & Supremacy over Media Materials

Materials	Saudi TV materials			Arab TV materials			Foreign TV materials			Video materials			Videogame materials		
Selection	Gender		Total Yes	Gender		Total Yes	Gender		Total Yes	Gender		Total Yes	Gender		Total Yes
	M	F		M	F		M	F		M	F		M	F	
Myself	56 47.5%	58 48.7%	114 48.1%	60 50.8%	63 52.9%	123 51.9%	56 47.5%	49 41.2%	105 44.3%	58 49.2%	46 38.7%	104 43.9%	78 66.1%	65 54.6%	143 60.3%
Father	11 9.3%	9 7.6%	20 8.4%	7 5.9%	11 9.2%	18 7.6%	16 13.6%	9 7.6%	25 10.5%	19 16.1%	19 16.0%	38 16.0%	9 7.6%	6 5.0%	15 6.3%
Mother	5 4.2%	6 5.0%	11 4.6%	6 5.1%	14 11.8%	20 8.4%	11 9.3%	17 14.3%	28 11.8%	7 5.9%	22 18.5%	29 12.2%	4 3.4%	2 1.7%	6 2.5%
Sister/ Brother	8 6.8%	12 10.1%	20 8.4%	11 9.3%	12 10.1%	23 9.7%	6 5.1%	10 8.4%	16 6.8%	12 10.2%	17 14.3%	29 12.2%	5 4.2%	13 10.9%	18 7.6%
Family	18 15.3%	31 26.1%	49 20.7%	17 14.4%	23 19.3%	40 16.9%	13 11.0%	25 21.0%	38 16.0%	13 11.0%	21 17.6%	34 14.3%	6 5.1%	5 4.2%	11 4.6%
Other	11 9.3%	6 5.0%	17 7.2%	8 6.8%	2 1.7%	10 4.2%	9 7.6%	2 1.7%	11 4.6%	3 2.5%	3 2.5%	6 2.5%	2 1.7%	1 .8%	3 1.3%

Table (2.6) Social Class & Supremacy over Media Materials

Materials	Saudi TV materials				Arab TV materials				Foreign TV materials				Video materials				Videogame materials			
Selection	Social class			Total Yes	Social class			Total Yes	Social class			Total Yes	Social class			Total Yes	Social class			Total Yes
	UP.	Mi.	Lo.		UP.	Mi.	Lo.		UP	Mi	Lo		UP	Mi	Lo		UP	Mi	Lo	
Myself	30 50.0%	37 45.7%	47 49.0%	114 48.1%	36 60.0%	46 56.8%	41 42.7%	123 51.9%	38 63.3%	28 34.6%	39 40.6%	105 44.3%	46 76.7%	30 37.0%	28 29.2%	104 43.9%	42 70.0%	57 70.4%	44 45.8%	143 60.3%
Father	5 8.3%	9 11.1%	6 6.3%	20 8.4%	3 5.0%	9 11.1%	6 6.3%	18 7.6%	4 6.7%	11 13.6%	10 10.4%	25 10.5%	9 15.0%	15 18.5%	14 14.6%	38 16.0%	0 0.0%	10 12.3%	5 5.2%	15 6.3%
Mother	3 5.0%	3 3.7%	5 5.2%	11 4.6	3 5.0%	11 13.6%	6 6.3%	20 8.4%	6 10.0%	13 16.0%	9 9.4%	28 11.8%	8 13.3%	16 19.8%	5 5.2%	29 12.2%	0 0.0%	3 3.7%	3 3.1%	6 2.5%
Sister/ Brother	6 10.0%	7 8.6%	7 7.3%	20 8.4%	4 6.7%	6 7.4%	13 13.5%	23 9.7%	2 3.3%	9 11.1%	5 5..2%	16 6.8%	6 10.0%	10 12.3%	13 13.5%	29 12.2%	4 6.7%	5 6.2%	9 9.4%	18 7.6%
Family	6 10.0%	20 24.7%	23 24.0%	49 20.7%	5 8.3%	11 13.6%	24 25.0%	40 16.9%	5 8.3%	15 18.5%	18 18.8%	38 16.0%	5 8.3%	12 14.8%	17 17.7%	34 14.3%	1 1.7	2 2.5%	8 8.3%	11 4.6%
Other	3 5.0%	7 8.6%	7 7.3%	17 7.2%	1 1.7%	4 4.9%	5 5.2%	10 4.2%	2 3.3%	5 6.2%	4 4.2%	11 4.6%	2 3.3%	3 3.7%	1 1.0%	6 2.5%	0 0.0%	1 1.2%	2 2.1%	3 1.3%

6.8% and videogame materials 4.2% only. Therefore, cooperative family decisions to watch programmes were reported less by males because the males have more capability of selecting than the females. To a small degree, this is also practiced in Western societies, such as in Britain, where it is said that "male parents and to (a lesser extent) male children were more likely to be named than female parents or children" to have control over the media (Buckingham, 1993, 114).

The Saudi male's power within the family, however, is absolute in its control over female's mobility and action, for women are considered the repository of their family's respectability. There is a strong belief in society that females are those affected by media (Al-hamaidi, 1992). This belief also holds that "foreign media especially focus on women to make them revolt against their societal values and sex role socialisation" (Bali, 2000, 27).

Social Class & Supremacy over Media Materials

Dealing with the authority over Saudi TV, Arab TV, foreign TV, videotape, and videogame materials, table 2.6 shows differences among the social classes. The upper social class is more capable of selecting the materials, especially videotapes, foreign TV and Arab TV materials than the other social classes. There is a relationship between the status of a social class and the possession of personal TV sets by the child and the ability to select materials. Sarhan (1981) argues that the freedom of the elite class is reflected in its ability to select which other classes cannot afford as a result of economic factors (Sahran, 1981). The same economic factors also influence the ability of the middle social class to purchase, and hence select, videotape and videogame materials, compared to the

lower class. Parental control is powerful in the middle social class in comparison to the lower and upper classes, even in a Western context. According to Buckingham (1994) "the attempt to impose 'viewing rules' and the banning of particular programmes would appear to be more prevalent in middle-class homes... the concern with cultural values and the view of television as anti-educational were more characteristic of the middle-class children" (Buckingham, 1994, 118). On the other hand, for economic reasons, sibling dominance is the stronger in lower social class selection of materials for these families may not be capable of purchasing more than one videogames device. Therefore, the co-operative family decisions would also be powerful in this social class, most probably marked by force not by choice.

Type of Exposure to Media Materials

On the type of exposure, table 2.7 shows that about two-thirds of the sample were exposed to different media materials with others. In a similar study on a sample of Saudi children, Baghdadi (1991) found that 80% of his sample watched media with others. The higher responses in Baghdadi's sample in comparison to the results in my study is due to the fact that many of the children in Baghdadi's sample were younger than those of the present sample. Gunter (1997) and Buckingham (1994) argue that the older children are more likely to cling on solitary viewing than younger ones. This is probably because older children's viewing is resistant to parental restrictions. Nevertheless, there is an underlying notion that exposure to media is 'properly' a collective aggregated activity. Much of the pleasure of media use, according to Buckingham (1994), "lies in this relationship between text and context" (Buckingham, 1994,112). The percentage of

Table (2.7) Type of Exposure to Media Materials

Materials	Saudi TV materials			Arab TV materials			Foreign TV materials			Videotape materials			Videogame materials		
Type of exposure	Yes	Other	Total N	Yes	Other	Total N	Yes	Other	Total N	Yes	Other	Total N	Yes	Other	Total N
Alone	60 25.3%	177 74.7%	237 100.0%	69 29.1%	168 70.9%	237 100.0%	69 29.1%	168 70.9%	237 100.0%	78 32.9%	159 67.1%	237 100.0%	82 34.6%	155 65.4%	237 100.0%
Brother/Sister	97 40.9%	140 59.1%	237 100.0%	98 41.4%	139 58.6%	237 100.0%	102 43.0%	135 57.0%	237 100.0%	101 42.6%	136 57.4%	237 100.0%	100 42.2%	137 57.8%	237 100.0%
Father/Mother	79 33.3%	158 66.7%	237 100.0%	70 29.5%	167 70.5%	237 100.0%	65 27.4%	172 72.6%	237 100.0%	55 23.2%	182 76.8%	237 100.0%	9 3.8%	228 96.2%	237 100.0%
Friends	20 8.4%	217 91.6%	237 100.0%	29 12.2%	208 87.8%	237 100.0%	37 15.6%	200 84.4%	237 100.0%	38 16.0%	199 84.0%	237 100.0%	46 19.4%	191 80.6%	237 100.0%

Table (2.8) Gender & Type of Exposure to Media Materials

Materials	Saudi TV materials			Arab TV materials			Foreign TV materials			Videotape materials			Videogame materials		
Type of exposure	Gender		Yes	Gender		Yes	Gender		Yes	Gender		Yes	Gender		Yes
	M	F		M	F		M	F		M	F		M	F	
Alone	30 25.4%	30 25.2%	60 25.3%	38 32.2%	31 26.1%	69 29.1%	42 35.6%	27 22.7%	69 29.1%	45 38.1%	33 27.7%	78 32.9%	48 40.7%	34 28.6%	82 34.6%
Brother/Sister	40 33.9%	57 47.9%	97 40.9%	37 31.4%	61 51.3%	98 41.4%	37 31.4%	65 54.6%	102 43.0%	35 29.7%	66 55.5%	101 42.6%	40 33.9%	60 50.4%	100 42.2%
Father/Mother	33 28.0%	46 38.7%	79 33.3%	30 25.4%	40 33.6%	70 29.5%	25 21.2%	40 33.6%	65 27.4%	21 17.8%	34 28.6%	55 23.2%	6 5.1%	3 2.5%	9 3.8%
Friends	9 7.6%	11 9.2%	20 8.4%	13 11.0%	16 13.4%	29 12.2%	20 16.9%	17 14.3%	37 15.6%	17 14.4%	21 17.6%	38 16.0%	27 22.9%	19 16.0%	46 19.4%

collective exposure of children reaches its peak with siblings, followed by the company of parents, particularly with regards to Saudi TV materials (33.3%). The smallest percentage is for videogame materials (3.8%). In contrast, children are more exposed to videogame and videotape materials alone or with their friends in comparison to Arab TV or Saudi TV materials. This may be because videogames and videotape materials require greater involvement and participation and are therefore more challenging than Arab TV and Saudi TV materials.

Gender & Type of Exposure to Media Materials

With reference to table 2.8 about the type of exposure to materials by gender, it can be seen that big differences exist between the two genders in their patterns of viewing of different media materials along gender lines. Females watch media materials collectively more than males. Similarly, Hoffner & Heafner (1997) found that in Western societies girls (87.8%) specified co-viewers more frequently than boys (60%) did. Approximately half of the female sample watched media materials with siblings in contrast to only one-third of the males. (details are in table 2.8). This contrast can be explained in terms of males having more freedom to watch alone while females are more encouraged to cooperate with others as mentioned before. Moreover, except for videogame materials in which the percentage decreases to 2.5% among the females in comparison to 5.1% among males, the percentage of females watching foreign TV, Arab TV, Saudi TV and videotape materials with parents increases in comparison to that for males. In the Sultanate of Oman, Makkawi (1992) also found that more female students (60.6%) watch with their families while only 27.9% male students do. This is why, as will be seen in table 5.2,

females receive more social gratifications from watching with their families in comparison to males. Furthermore, the Saudi family discourages females from being independent in order to protect them against deviant values to the sex role. Females then become reliant on their nuclear reference to define the public context through collective exposure to the media's public sphere. Hence, aside from Saudi TV materials where they had equal percentages, the percentage of females who watched the different media materials alone is lower when compared to males.

Whereas both genders shared close percentages when exposed to foreign TV, Arab TV, Saudi TV and videotape materials with friends, it is noticeable there are many more males who play videogames with their friends (22.9%) compared to the females (16%). This is indicative of aggressively competitive play with little cooperation, conversation or discussion between players. If there is any it will be accompanied with the language of destruction such as 'eat him', 'zap him' and 'burn him'. It can even extend to the use of vulgar language. This is seen as a problem for the girls who are socialised to be soft and considerate (Alloway, Gilbert, 1998 , Provenzo, 1990).

Social Class & Type of Exposure to Media Materials

Table 2.9 points to differences among the social classes with regard to types of exposure to media materials. Middle class children are more exposed with their siblings than the lower and upper classes, especially in respect of foreign TV materials (45.7%), videogame materials (53.1%) and Arab TV materials (50.6%). In contrast, 41.7% of both the upper and lower classes watched foreign TV materials with siblings. Members of the

same classes who played videogames with siblings are 38.3% and 35.4% respectively, while those who watched Arab TV materials with siblings are 35% and 37.5% respectively. Also, the middle class shared higher percentages with the lower social class in watching Saudi TV materials with their siblings with, 43.2% and 44.8% respectively. Furthermore, the middle class also ranked equally with the upper social class in exposure to videotape materials with siblings, with 51.9% and 50% respectively. The restrictive middle class families are likely to impose rigid friendship regulations so that the child will not escape the supervision of the family (Al-jasami, 1994). This leaves them perhaps with no choice but to develop relations with their siblings. This in turn limits the child's viewing with others.

There is also a relationship between social class level and the watching of different materials alone. The higher the social class, the more likely the respondent is to be exposed to media materials alone. The underlying rationale could be that the higher social class tends to own more personal TV sets because they have higher incomes. The upper class, more than the other classes, also prefers to watch media materials with friends: especially foreign TV materials (35%), videotape materials (28.3%), videogame materials (26.7%) and Saudi TV materials (13.3%). The elite class encourages public relations as a channel for public power. Yamani (2000) reports that her interviewees noted that everything in Saudi Arabia requires *wasta* (family connections). Only those who have *wasta* will get VIP treatment. It allows them to increase their advantages over the poor and become richer (Yamani, 2000). But what makes having friends feasible for the elite class is probably having the means of transport to their friends' houses and vice-versa, plus the availability of space and entertainment in houses which are therefore suitable to

Table (2.9) Social Class & Type of Exposure to Media Materials

Materials	Saudi TV materials				Arab TV materials				Foreign TV materials				Videotape materials				Videogame materials			
Type of exposure	Social class			Total Yes	Social class			Total Yes	Social class			Total Yes	Social class			Total Yes	Social class			Total Yes
	UP	Mi	Lo		UP	Mi	Lo		UP	Mi	Lo		UP	Mi	Lo		UP	Mi	Lo	
Alone	20 33.3%	20 24.7%	20 20.8%	60 25.3%	26 43.3%	25 30.9%	18 18.8%	69 29.1%	26 43.3%	20 24.7%	23 24.0%	69 29.1%	36 60.0%	21 25.9%	21 21.9%	78 32.9%	30 50.0%	29 35.8%	23 24.0%	82 34.6%
Brother/Sister	19 31.7%	35 43.2%	43 44.8%	97 40.9%	21 35.0%	41 50.6%	36 37.5%	98 41.4%	25 41.7%	37 45.7%	40 41.7%	102 43.0%	30 50.0%	42 51.9%	29 30.2%	101 42.6%	23 38.3%	43 53.1%	34 35.4%	100 42.2%
Father/Mother	13 21.7%	22 27.2%	44 45.8%	79 33.3%	16 26.7%	25 30.9%	29 30.2%	70 29.5%	17 28.3%	25 30.9%	23 24.0%	65 27.4%	14 23.3%	21 25.9%	20 20.8%	55 23.2%	2 3.3%	5 6.2%	2 2.1%	9 3.8%
Friends	8 13.3%	5 6.2%	7 7.3%	20 8.4%	7 11.7%	8 9.9%	14 14.6%	29 12.2%	21 35.0%	9 11.1%	7 7.3%	37 15.6%	17 28.3%	11 13.6%	10 10.4%	38 16.0%	16 26.7%	15 18.5%	15 15.6%	46 19.4%

Table (2.10) Exposure Hours to Media Materials during Schooldays and Holidays

Materials	Saudi TV materials			Arab TV materials			Foreign TV materials			Videotape materials			Videogame materials		
Hours	School day	Holiday	Average	School day	Holiday	Average	School day	Holiday	Average	School day	Holiday	Average	School day	Holiday	Average
More than 3 hrs	19 8.0%	66 27.8%	42.5 17.9%	27 11.4%	86 36.3%	56.5 23.8%	41 17.3%	108 45.6%	74.5 31.4%	18 7.6%	91 38.4%	54.5 22.9%	30 12.7%	100 42.2%	65 27.4%
1-3 hrs	61 25.7%	57 24.1%	59 24.8%	70 29.5%	57 24.1%	63.5 26.7%	45 19.0%	49 20.7%	47 19.8%	42 17.7%	66 27.8%	54 22.7%	32 13.5%	42 17.7%	37 15.6%
Less than an hour	82 34.6%	46 19.4%	64 27.0%	77 32.5%	37 15.6%	57 24.0%	56 23.6%	25 10.5%	40.5 17.0%	51 21.5%	23 9.7%	37 15.6%	33 13.9%	25 10.5%	29 12.2%
Do not watch	43 18.1%	34 14.3%	38.5 16.2%	37 15.6%	29 12.2%	33 13.9%	62 26.2%	26 11.0%	44 18.5%	92 38.8%	17 7.2%	54.5 22.9%	89 37.6%	14 5.9%	51.5 21.7%
No comments	32 13.5%	34 14.3%	33 13.9%	26 11.0%	28 11.8%	27 11.4%	33 13.9%	29 12.2%	31 13.1%	34 14.3%	40 16.9%	37 15.6%	53 22.4%	56 23.6%	54.5 22.9%
Total	237 100.0%	237 100.0%	237 100.0%	237 100.0%	237 100.0%	237 100.0%	237 100.0%	237 100.0%	237 100.0%	237 100.0%	237 100.0%	237 100.0%	237 100.0%	237 100.0%	237 100.0%

invite the friends of children from this social class.

Exposure to Media Materials during Schooldays and Vacations

Table 2.10 shows differences in the viewing of media materials during schooldays and vacations. In general, the percentage of watching was higher during vacations than during schooldays. The percentage of children who watched for more than 3 hours a day was much more in vacations than on schooldays, as they watched for less than one hour during schooldays. This result agrees with many findings in the Arab world (Baharith, 1994; Abuzinada & Bait-al-mal, 1992; Salim & Hanura, 1988) in which children's viewing of media materials during holidays was found to be higher than during schooldays. Media viewing is the prinicipal leisure activity for children in Saudi families are not socialised to read or exercise other activities (Baharith, 1994). Foreign TV materials ranks first among what the children watch, with a percentage of 31.4% while Saudi TV materials, with 17.9% ranks last. This is not surprising due to the monotonous nature of Saudi TV materials and their lack of elements of excitement, suspense, and dazzle (Mishmishi, 1993). According to Mursi (1995) in all the Islamic countries, foreign programming containing different values from those accepted in Islamic cultures dominates the local ones. Moreover, as Mursi (1995) further explains, when Saudi Arabia attempts to produce its own programmes, "They were found to be cheap imitations of the foreign ones. As a result, Saudi viewers abandon them and instead have become prisoners of dangerous foreign programmes" (Mursi, 1995, 152).

Gender & Average Hour Exposure to Media Materials

Table 2.11 indicates that there are wide differences between the genders with regard to the amount of watching of TV programmes. Male respondents watch Saudi TV materials for more than 3 hours with a relatively higher percentage of 19.9% against 16% for female children. This is certainly because programmes presented on Saudi TV materials are male-orientated, introducing male related subjects as discussed in chapter 2. This is also why male children prefer Saudi TV programmes more than females, as cited in table 3.5. The male children's percentage of watching videotape materials was also more than the female children's. This is, however, contrary to the findings by Abuzinada (1988) in which Saudi females were found to be more exposed to videotape materials for longer hours than Saudi males, and those of Al-oofy & Danial (1992) where young rural Saudi girls watched videotapes more than young rural boys, despite the high family surveillance on what female children watch (Al-oofy & Daniel,1992, Abuzinada, 1988). The contradiction may be explained by the introduction of satellite channels to Saudi Arabia. This makes it easier and faster for females to watch controversial issues for arousal purposes. There is also a big difference between male children (31.7%) and female children (23.1%) in the frequency of playing videogames. The reason behind these differences, Alloway & Gilbert (1998) attribute to the nature of the videogames culture, which is largely directed at boys with masculinity expressed in terms of domination and control of others, competitiveness at any cost, institutionalised warfare and gratuitous violence attitudes to be frowned upon if indulged in by females (Alloway & Gilbert, 1998).

Table (2.11) Gender & Average Exposure Hours to Media Materials

Materials	Saudi TV materials			Arab TV materials			Foreign TV materials			Videotape materials			Videogame materials		
Hours	Gender		Total	Gender		Total	Gender		Total	Gender		Total	Gender		Total
	M	F	Aver.	M	F	Aver.	M	F	Aver.	M	F	Aver.	M	F	Aver.
More than 3 hrs	23.5 19.9%	19 16.0%	42.5 17.9%	27.5 23.3%	29 24.4%	56.5 23.8%	36 30.5%	38.5 32.3%	74.5 31.4%	30.5 25.8%	24 20.1%	54.5 22.9%	37.5 31.7%	27.5 23.1%	65 27.4%
1-3 hrs	32.5 27.5%	26.5 22.2%	59 24.8%	32 27.1%	31.5 26.5%	63.5 26.7%	22.5 19.0%	24.5 20.5%	47 19.8%	25 21.1%	29 24.4%	54 22.7%	17.5 14.8%	19.5 16.3%	37 15.6%
Less than an hour	27 22.9%	37 31.1%	64 27.0%	29 24.5%	28 23.5%	57 24.0%	21 17.8%	19.5 16.3%	40.5 17.0%	20 16.9%	17 14.2%	37 15.6%	12.5 10.6%	16.5 13.9%	29 12.2%
Do not watch	18 15.2%	20.5 17.2%	38.5 16.2%	13 11.0%	20 16.8%	33 13.9%	23.5 19.9%	20.5 17.2%	44 18.5%	24.5 20.8%	30 25.2%	54.5 22.9%	29.5 25.0%	22 18.5%	51.5 21.7%
No comments	17 14.4%	16 13.4%	33 13.9%	16.5 14.0%	10.5 8.8%	27 11.4%	15 12.7%	16 13.4%	31 13.1%	18 15.2%	19 15.9%	37 15.6%	21 17.7%	33.5 28.1%	54.5 22.9%
Total	118 100.0%	119 100.0%	237 100.0%	118 100.0%	119 100.0%	237 100.0%	118 100.0%	119 100.0%	237 100.0%	118 100.0%	119 100.0%	237 100.0%	118 100.0%	119 100.0%	237 100.0%

Table (2.12) Social Class & Average Exposure Hours to Media Materials

Materials	Saudi TV materials				Arab TV materials				Foreign TV materials				Videotape materials				Videogame materials			
Hours	Social class			Total	Social class			Total	Social class			Total	Social class			Total	Social class			Total
	UP	Mi	Lo	Aver.	UP	Mi	Lo	Aver.	UP	Mi	Lo	Aver.	UP	Mi	Lo	Aver.	UP	Mi	Lo	Aver.
More than 3 hrs	4.5 7.5%	13 16.0%	25 26.0%	42.5 17.9%	11 18.3%	22 27.1%	23.5 24.4%	56.5 23.8%	28.5 47.5%	23.5 29.0%	22.5 23.4%	74.5 31.4%	14 23.3%	21 25.9%	19.5 20.3%	54.5 22.9%	14 23.3%	28.5 35.2%	22.5 23.4%	65 27.4%
1-3 hrs	9.5 15.8%	19 23.4%	30.5 31.8%	59 24.8%	16.5 27.5%	18.5 22.8%	28.5 29.7%	63.5 26.7%	16 26.6%	15 18.5%	16 16.6%	47 19.8%	20 33.3%	16.5 20.3%	19.5 18.2%	54 22.7%	10 16.6%	15 18.5%	12 12.5%	37 15.6%
Less than an hour	12.5 20.8%	26 32.1%	25.5 26.5%	64 27.0%	9 15.0%	27.5 33.9%	20.5 21.3%	57 24.0%	5 8.3%	16 19.7%	19.5 20.3%	40.5 17.0%	9.5 15.8%	14 17.3%	13.5 14.1%	37 15.6%	9.5 15.8%	7 8.6%	12.5 13.0%	29 12.2%
Do not watch	17 28.3%	14 17.2%	7.5 7.8%	38.5 16.2%	14 23.3%	6.5 8.0%	12.5 13.0%	33 13.9%	8.5 14.1%	16 19.7%	19.5 20.3%	44 18.5%	11 18.3%	20.5 25.3%	23 23.9	54.5 22.9%	10.5 17.5%	19.5 24.0%	21.5 22.4%	51.5 21.7%
No comments	16.5 27.5%	9 11.1%	7.5 7.8%	33 13.9%	9.5 15.8%	6.5 8.0%	11 11.5%	27 11.4%	2 3.3%	10.5 12.9%	18.5 19.2%	31 13.1%	5.5 9.2%	9 11.1%	22.5 23.4%	37 15.6%	16 26.7%	11 13.5%	27.5 28.6%	54.5 22.9%
Total	60 100.0%	81 100.0%	96 100.0%	237 100.0%	60 100.0%	81 100.0%	96 100.0%	237 100.0%	60 100.0%	81 100.0%	96 100.0%	237 100.0%	60 100.0%	81 100.0%	96 100.0%	237 100.0%	60 100.0%	81 100.0%	96 100.0%	237 100.0%

Social Class & Average Hour Exposure to Media Materials

Table 2.12 deals with differences among the three social classes. It shows that about half the children of the upper social class (47.5%) watch foreign TV materials for more than 3 hours. The middle and lower classes' scores were much lower with 29% and 23.4% respectively. These clear differences among the social classes are attributable to the capability of the upper social class to watch satellite channels by subscribing to the foreign satellite channels like 'Showtime' and 'Orbit', which present the latest programmes with the most powerful technology and production techniques. Referring to the discrepancies in access to such luxuries, (Yamani (2000) writes that "What is happening today (in Saudi Arabia) is that access to technology is open to some and not to others" (Yamani, 2000, 24). Ghareeb (2000) corroborates the stand by arguing that the information revolution in the Arab social milieu is preliminary limited to the elite "because of high access cost and its largely English –language content" (Ghareeb, 2000, 395).

On the other hand, 35.2% of children of the middle class play with videogame materials for more than 3 hours, compared to the low percentages of the lower social class (23.4%) and upper social class (23.3%). For middle class children, whose families are protective and restrictive, videogames perhaps create a world of opportunity to discover danger through virtual proximity. This virtual exploration does not jeopardise the society's moral standard, for videogames are claimed to be censored by the government. In the West, on the other hand, the texts of videogames and of the magazines that support them ally vigorously to produce and to spread sexual politics (Alloway & Gilbert, 1998). The video gaming culture is different in Saudi Arabia. As an editorial states

"we at the end are an Islamic society, we follow up-to-date videogame consoles and their games but with our own moral terms... We tell those who ask about Western videogames that these games are in contradiction with our virtuous tradition. Hence, we ignore their letters because they have gone out of the right stream" (*Videogames,* 1998, 4).

The middle class (27.1%), together with the lower class (24.4%), watch Arab TV materials more than the upper class (18.3%). Nevertheless, 26% of the lower social class watch Saudi TV materials for 3 hours, compared to 16.5% of the middle class and 7.5% of the upper social class which do so. This is not surprising since the upper class aspires to foreign culture. Therefore, Arab TV materials are less likely to be an attractive choice. Nonetheless, both the middle and to a greater extent the upper class generally receive less gratifications from Saudi TV materials in comparison to the lower class.

In general, with respect to sources of information, about half the sample knows their programmes on television from television itself. However females, who are restricted to the private sphere, depend more on personal communication in order to know the schedule of the programmes on television than males. The social class status also plays a role in knowing the schedule of foreign TV, Arab TV and Saudi TV programmes. The higher the class, the higher the exposure to know the schedule of foreign materials from television. Regarding the control of media materials, over half the sample select what they want to watch by themselves. Nevertheless, females are less able to select media materials, especially videogames, foreign TV and videotape materials than males who enjoy more freedom. Again, the higher the class the more power it has to select by itself as economic expenditure is higher and this plays an important factor in the class's selection.

With respect to the type of exposure to media materials, the children, in general, more often watch with other people, especially siblings. However, the males' exposure to media materials alone is higher than females' exposure. Also, the higher the class the higher its ability to be exposed to media materials alone. Children's exposure to media materials during schooldays was less than their exposure during vacations. There was no difference between the males and females in their average exposure to media materials except with videotape materials as males watch slightly more than 3 hours in comparison to females. On the other hand, the foreign oriented upper class's exposure to foreign TV materials, and to a lesser extent, videotape materials was higher than the other classes for the upper class aspires for Western culture in comparison to the other classes. The middle class's exposure to videogame materials was higher than the other classes, who are less restricted in the public sphere, whereas the lower class's exposure to Saudi TV materials is higher in comparison to the upper and middle classes.

In conclusion, Saudi children's utilisation of media materials depends greatly on factors such as gender and social status. These factors which shape their socialisation in turn influence their consumption of media materials. Within the gender and class socialisation of over-protection, strict rules, spoiling, lack of communication within the family, inequality between the siblings and unconstructive role modelling, it would be interesting to discover how these factors shape the children's preferences for media materials' programmes.

CHAPTER 8

Preferred Television and Videotape Materials

This chapter discusses children's media materials preferences. With respect to television, the study investigates the most popular programmes, country of origin and the nationality of the channels used. In the case of videotapes, the discussion covers programme preferences and their country of origin. Preferences of television and videotape materials are highly influenced by gender and class status and different socialisation backgrounds.

Preferred Television Programmes

With regards to table 3.1 on the TV programme preferences, the results show that the most popular programmes are serials. In fact, the children selected these serial programmes on top of a list containing three choices. The children then selected films followed by cartoons. This result is similar to the findings of a study conducted three decades ago by Abdul-Rahman (1973) who found that Kuwaiti school children at the intermediate level reported a more or less identical listing films first, followed by serials and then cartoons (Abdul-Rahman, 1973).

Baharith (1994) noted the chaos within the life of the Muslim family by suggesting that the programmes that attract children attention most are the ones prepared for adults (Baharith, 1994). Buckingham (2000) also believes that the process of outlining

Table (3.1) Preferred Television Programmes

Preferences	Choice 1		Choice 2		Choice 3	
Programmes	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
Serials	64	27.0%	63	26.6%	41	17.3%
Films	38	16.0%	40	16.9%	27	11.4%
Cartoons	45	19.0%	16	6.8%	20	8.4%
Songs & music	20	8.4%	33	13.9%	31	13.1%
Sports	19	8.0%	19	8.0%	17	7.2%
Edu-cultural	9	3.8%	8	3.4%	18	7.6%
Religious	5	2.1%	4	1.7%	7	3.0%
News	3	1.3%	2	0.8%	4	1.7%
Ads	0	0.0%	3	1.3%	3	1.3%
Other	4	1.6%	4	1.6%	10	4.2%
No comment	30	12.7%	45	19.0%	59	24.9%
Total	**237**	**100%**	**237**	**100%**	**237**	**100%**

childhood has become intensively problematic. The differentiation between children and other classifications – 'youth' or 'adults' – has become difficult to define (Buckingham, 2000).

The children selected music and songs next, which Muhammed (1999) considers as cheap and popular entertainment (Muhammed, (1999). Kafawain (2001) believes that videotape clips are a continuation of foreign complex. They are considered 'deformed cloning', where women are presented as commodities (Kafawain, 2001). In fact, Al-oofy (1997) suggested a correlation between young people's negative attitudes to Saudi local culture and their interest in music and songs.

It is perhaps significant to discover that children place religious programmes last in their order preferences along with news and adverts. This is especially surprising in a country such as Saudi Arabia where the government claims credit for religious socialisation.

The findings in this research are contradictory to Al-hassan's (1993) study on Saudi children where they classified religious programmes as their first choice (Al-hassan, 1993). The differences in results may probably be due to the use of different methodological approaches. While Al-hassan used closed questions for this variable, open-ended questions were instead used for this study. Open-ended questions seem more appropriate for this sensitive issue. This made it easier and less embarrassing for the children to express their views freely.

As a matter of fact, Al-oofy's (1997) findings support the results of this study by showing that "religious programmes are the programmes that the Saudi young people least like to

watch. Only 3% of the sample mentioned that they like to watch them regularly" (Al-oofy, 1997, 38). Actually, when Al-hassan asked the children for suggestions about television programmes, they implied that religious programmes should be made easy to understand and pictorially rich (Al-hassan, 1993).

Truly, "religious programmes received the least attention from the media management. They are unfocused and unattractive" (Baharith, 1994, 12). Those who work in the field do not prepare for the job and religious scholars are unfamiliar with TV techniques (Al-garni, 2000).

Gender & Preferred Television Programmes

Table 3.2 points towards differences between the two genders in their preferences for TV programmes. Females are much more interested than males in watching serials, which were rated by 31.1% as their first choice, by 32.8% as their second choice and by 25.2% as their third choice. This compares to 22.9% as a first choice with males, 20.3% as second choice and only 9.3% as a third choice. On the other hand, males were more interested in films than females with 19.5% as a second choice and 14.4% as a third choice. Similarly, elsewhere in the Gulf region, Makkawi (1992) found that in comparison to Omani male students, Omani female students prefer to watch more soaps on television than movies (Makkawi, 1992). The case is also common in the UK as Buckingham (1994) confirms gendered tastes for soap operas. He stated, "for boys expressing contempt for soap operas ...can be a way of asserting a 'masculine' position" (Buckingham, 1994, 81), and perhaps soaps may require daily following while films do not require such dedication which gives more freedom of movement in the public sphere

Table (3.2) Gender & Preferred Television Programmes

Preferences	Choice 1		Choice 2		Choice 3	
	Gender		Gender		Gender	
Programmes	M %	F %	M %	F %	M %	F %
Serials	27 22.9%	37 31.1%	24 20.3%	39 32.8%	11 9.3%	30 25.2%
Films	19 16.1%	19 16.0%1	23 19.5%	17 14.3%	17 14.4%	10 8.4%
Cartoons	17 14.4%	28 23.5%	6 5.1%	10 8.4%	7 5.9%	13 10.9%
Songs & music	8 6.8%	12 10.1%	10 8.5%	23 19.3%	11 9.3%	20 16.8%
Sports	19 16.1%	0 0.0%	17 14.4%	2 1.7%	14 11.9%	3 2.5%
Edu-cultural	4 3.4%	5 4.2%	6 5.1%	2 1.7%	9 7.6%	9 7.6%
Religious material	0 0.0%	5 4.2%	1 0.8%	3 2.5%	4 3.4%	3 2.5%
News	3 2.5%	0 0.0%	1 0.8%	1 0.8%	4 3.4%	0 0.0%
Ads	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	3 2.5%	0 0.0%	3 2.5%
other	3 2.5%	1 0.8%	2 1.6%	2 1.6%	9 7.6	1 0.8%
No comment	18 15.3%	12 10.1%	28 23.7%	17 14.3%	32 27.1%	27 22.7%
Total	118 100%	119 100%	118 100%	119 100%	118 100%	119 100%

to the males.

Although both females and males preferred cartoons with relatively close percentages as a second choice, females preferred cartoons to the males as first and third choices with percentages of 23.5% and 10.9% respectively, in comparison to the males who reported percentages of 14.4% and 5.9% respectively. Similarly, Omani females reported a higher preference for cartoons than did Omani males (Makkawi, 1992). Cartoons, the watching of which could be less restricted by the parents of females, are thought to be a 'naive' form of entertainment, but a 'legitimate' way to withdraw to a fantasy world away from the constraints and pressures of the real world.

There was a clear difference in the interest of both genders with respect to songs and music. While females are more interested with 10.1% as a first choice, 19.3% as a second choice and 16.8% as a third choice, male responses were only 6.8%, 8.5% and 9.3% respectively. In a study by Salem & Hanura (1988) the percentage of female children who preferred to watch song and music programmes was higher with a percentage of 9.1% in comparison to the 2% of the males (Salem & Hanura, 1988). Similarly, Ng (2000) discovered that males are less tolerant of artists' egos because they are encouraged to be independent and have a sense of superiority unlike females who are socialised to be submissive and captivated (Ng, 2000). While males associate songs with enslavement, femininity and inferiority, they could correlate sports with achievement, competition and masculinity.

Perhaps, this is due to the nature of a patriarchal society which views sports as a macho activity, where it is taught in boys' but not girls' schools which also lacks sports facilities. In Britain even, according to Buckingham (1994), expressing an excitement for

aggressive sport by boys is seen as a manly assertion (Buckingham, 1994). This may explain why, contrary to the females, males were clearly more interested in sports with 16.1%, 14.4% and 11.9% in all choices respectively. This is also reflected in the Arab world according to the findings of Tayie, (1989), where Egyptian females showed less preference to sports in comparison to Egyptian males (Tayie, 1989)

Although the differences between the genders with respect to religious programmes were unnoticeable in the second and third preferences, as first preference female interest in religious programmes was 4.2% against 0% by males. Similarly in Oman, Makkawi (1992) noted that males were less interested in watching religious programmes than females (Makkawi, 1992). The reason could be that males in many Arab countries are socialised with their families with *laissez-faire* policies from their families and hence may find religion demanding in the way it imposes restrictions on their behaviour. For females, however, there is greater interest in religion for the "Islamic discourse provides them (women) with a moral power to challenge patriarchal norms that stand in the way of their professional achievement" (Yamani, 2000,101-102).

Social Class & Preferred Television Programmes

With respect to table 3.3 which shows the various TV programmes preferences among the social classes, there seems to be disagreement about what they like to watch. The lower class prefers serials while the other two classes chose serials less as a second preference. The disadvantaged lower class lives a lonely life despite the large family size, as will be discussed in detail in table 4.3. This might make the lower class relatively more

Table (3.3) Social Class & Preferred Television Programmes

Preferences	Choice 1			Choice 2			Choice 3		
	Social class			Social class			Social class		
Programmes	Up. %	Mi. %	Lo. %	Up. %	Mi. %	Lo. %	Up. %	Mi. %	Lo. %
Serials	17 28.3%	20 24.7%	27 28.1%	10 16.7%	22 27.2%	31 32.3%	11 18.3%	14 17.3%	16 16.7%
Films	9 15.0%	16 19.8%	13 13.5%	11 18.3%	13 16.0%	16 16.7%	8 13.3%	8 9.9%	11 11.5%
Cartoons	5 8.3%	13 16.0%	27 28.1%	3 5.0%	6 7.4%	7 7.3%	2 3.3%	10 12.3%	8 8.3%
Songs & music	6 10.0%	11 13.6%	3 3.1%	11 18.3%	10 12.3%	12 12.5%	8 13.3%	7 8.6%	16 16.7%
Sports	10 16.7%	1 1.2%	8 8.3%	9 15.0%	4 4.9%	6 6.3%	4 6.7%	2 2.5%	11 11.5%
Edu-cultural	1 1.7%	2 2.5%	6 6.3%	0 0.0%	1 1.2%	7 7.3%	2 3.3%	7 8.6%	9 9.4%
Religious material	0 0.0%	1 1.2%	4 4.2	1 1.7%	1 1.2%	2 2.1%	1 1.7%	1 1.2%	5 5.2%
News	1 1.7%	2 2.5%	0 0.0%	1 1.7%	0 0.0%	1 1.0%	3 5.0%	1 1.2%	0 0.0%
Ads	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	1 1.7%	1 1.2%	1 1.0%	0 0.0%	2 2.5%	1 1.0%
other	0 0.0%	2 2.5%	2 2.0%	0 0.0%	1 1.2%	3 3.1%	0 0.0%	5 6.2%	5 5.2%
No comment	11 18.3%	13 16.0%	6 6.3%	13 21.7%	22 27.2%	10 10.4%	21 35.0%	24 29.6%	14 14.6%
Total	60 100%	81 100%	96 100%	60 100%	81 100%	96 100%	60 100%	81 100%	96 100%

eager to watch serial programmes, which usually revolves around social relationships (Al-jasami, 1994).

19.8% of the middle class prefers film as a first choice in comparison to 15% of the upper class and the 13.5% of the lower class. Buckingham (2000) suggests that the ban on materials gives them the attraction of 'forbidden fruit', especially for the middle class, which is more restricted by their families. Nevertheless, children will try much harder to see them somehow (Buckingham, 2000). In fact, Al-yahaya (1991) cites a proverb in Arabic that says whatever is forbidden is desirable. Hence, as films challenge the social and cultural values they become more enticing for the children of protective families (Al-yahya, 1991).

It is noticeable that a higher percentage of the lower class (28.1%) prefers to watch cartoons than the middle class (16%) and the upper class (8.3%). The middle class comes second in listing cartoons as a third preference. The higher the class, therefore, the less its interest in cartoons. Al-Jasaimi (1994) rationalises this by stating that families play a role in encouraging their children's aspirations to be more involved in society (Al-Jasaimi, 1994). Therefore, the children of higher classes become more interested in adult programmes. By contrast, even in the West, lower class children appear to be 'comprehensively alienated' from the culture (Buckingham, 2000, Schramm *et al*, 1961).

13.6% of the middle class make songs and music a first preference compared with the upper class 10% and the lower class 3.1% only. 18.3% of the upper class make songs and music as their second choice, compared to 12.5% and 12.3% from the lower and middle

classes respectively. Interest in songs could be a luxury to the lower class which is deprived from basic needs that might consider songs as superficial. Buckingham (2000) states, "poor children have fewer leisure-time preferences" (Buckingham, 2000, 78). As a matter of fact, lower class children, according to Al-Jasaimi (1994), are overloaded with obstacles which make this class play social roles close to that of adults' in focusing on basic needs (Al-jasaimi, 1994). This is probably why the lower class's interest in cultural and religious programmes exceeds that of the middle and upper classes. Their interest in cultural programmes could be a substitute for their fewer cultural and educational opportunities, and their interest in religious programmes may reflect their interest in local culture. Moreover, Al-oofy, (1997) found positive correlation between interest in religious programmes and positive attitudes towards Saudi local culture (Al-oofy, 1997). In the case of Saudi Arabia, which derives its legitimacy from the sharia law, religion and culture become inseparable (Yamani, 2000)

With respect to sports, the upper and lower classes are more interested in sport gaming than the middle class. Unlike the more restricted middle class children, the upper and lower classes may have more freedom to practice sports either at home or at private clubs for the former, or in the streets for the latter.

Preferred Country of Origin of Television Programmes

Table 3.4 which deals with the country of origin of television programmes shows that the children prefer Arab TV programmes most of all. In all 3 choices, children preferred Arab TV materials most; first choice 36.7%, second 39.2% and third 30.8%. The respective percentages for Saudi TV were 14.3%, 18.6% and 17.3% only.

Table (3.4) Preferred Country of Origin of Television Programmes

Preferences	Choice 1		Choice 2		Choice 3	
Country of origin of television programmes	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
Arab	87	36.7%	93	39.2%	73	30.8%
Foreign	75	31.6%	44	18.6%	50	21.1%
Saudi	34	14.3%	44	18.6%	41	17.3%
No comment	41	17.3%	56	23.6%	73	30.8%
Total	237	100%	237	100%	237	100%

Table (3.5) Gender & Preferred Country of Origin of Television Programmes

Preferences	Choice 1		Choice 2		Choice 3	
Country of origin of television programmes	Gender		Gender		Gender	
	M %	F %	M %	F %	M %	F %
Arab	43 36.4%	44 37.0%	39 33.1%	54 45.4%	31 26.3%	42 35.3%
Foreign	32 27.1%	43 36.1%	16 13.6%	28 23.5%	22 18.6%	28 23.5%
Saudi	21 17.8%	13 10.9%	31 26.3%	13 10.9%	25 21.2%	16 13.4%
No comment	22 18.6%	19 16.0%	32 27.1%	24 20.2%	40 33.9%	33 27.7%
Total	118 100%	119 100%	118 100%	119 100%	118 100%	119 100%

Table (3.6) Social Class & Preferred Country of Origin of Television Programmes

Preferences	Choice 1			Choice 2			Choice 3		
Country of origin of television programmes	Social class			Social class			Social class		
	Up. %	Mi. %	Lo. %	Up. %	Mi. %	Lo. %	Up. %	Mi. %	Lo. %
Arab	17 28.3%	36 44.4%	34 35.4%	19 31.7%	31 38.3%	43 44.8%	14 23.3%	22 27.2%	37 38.5%
Foreign	28 46.7%	21 25.9%	26 27.1%	19 31.7%	13 16.0%	12 12.5%	22 36.7%	17 21.0%	11 11.5%
Saudi	2 3.3%	8 9.9%	24 25.0%	6 10.0%	11 13.6%	27 28.1%	1 1.7%	14 17.3%	26 27.1%
No comment	13 21.7%	16 19.8%	12 12.5%	16 26.7%	26 32.1%	14 14.6%	23 38.3%	28 34.6%	22 22.9%
Total	60 100%	81 100%	96 100%	60 100%	81 100%	96 100%	60 100%	81 100%	96 100%

In contrast, Al-Khoury (1997) found that Lebanese children were more interested in Lebanese programmes than Arab programmes, such as Egyptian ones (Al-khoury, 1997). Al-jammal (2001) also argues that due to the marked differences between Saudi Arabia and other Arab countries there are political, cultural and technological gaps. This had led to the impoverished Saudi media to rely heavily on more Arab accomplished materials (Al-jammal, 2001).

Since the Kingdom is such a substantial market for Arab television programmes, particularly drama, many are produced with the Saudi audience in mind (Boyd, 1999). This penetration is possible due to shared language and common cultural heritage (Khadour, 1998). Even though children are more exposed to foreign TV materials for longer hours than Arab TV or Saudi TV materials as mentioned previously, it is difficult for children from the lower and middle classes to understand the foreign languages. The use of a foreign language such as English may therefore hinder the Arabic-oriented children from following foreign programmes, especially if these programmes depend more on dialogue than on action. Nonetheless, the children's preference for foreign TV programmes is greater than that of Saudi TV programmes in all the three choices in spite of their ignorance of foreign languages and alienation from the foreign programmes' cultural system.

Al-jammal (2001) states one reason for this preference of foreign programmes over local programmes by asserting that local television production tackles with great naivety and

superficiality contents which are second-rate in direction, production and presentation. "Programme producers spend lots of time producing material with no other aim than to fill up the allotted broadcasting time" (Al-jammal, 2001, 164).

Reda (1996) found in his content analysis of foreign programmes that these programmes are characterised by fast and balanced shifts between the shots accompanied by harmonious sound track rhythm to connect between the events (Reda, 1996). However, aside from the technical aspect, Al-gareeb (2001) suggests a social motive for children's interest in foreign TV as well as in Arab TV programmes that are not reflective of the local culture. He states that incorrect socialisation inside the family makes the child susceptible to penetration. The child searches for models that are socially and psychologically more fulfilling and compensating in other contexts (Al-gareeb, 2001). Moreover, censorship of Saudi TV materials is not beneficial in terms of securing Saudi values; instead it only contributes to evading the facts (Yamani, 2000). This is in addition to the poor quality and production of Saudi materials.

Gender & Preferred Country of Origin of Television Programmes

Table 3.5 indicates differences between the genders over their responses to the nationality of the television programmes they prefer. Females are more interested than males in foreign TV programmes with 36.1% as first choice, 23.5% for both second and third choices. There is also more interest in Arab TV materials among the females than the males. Although both genders give roughly equal responses for Arab TV materials as a first choice, the females give higher percentages of 45.4% and 35.3% respectively as second and third choices in comparison to the males.

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Yamani (2000) indicates that through first hand or second hand experience with the outside world, Saudi females have become conscious that the social structure of gender roles in Saudi Arabia discriminates against them when compared with other Arab and Western females (Yamani, 2000). Al-saif (1997) confirms that favouring boys over girls is common practice in Saudi Arabia (Al-saif, 1997). Inequality at home can be a major factor in females breaking out from cultural constraints. Female sensitivity to discrimination makes them feel oppressed and mistreated. This, in turn, prompts them to become easy targets for unconventional media penetration to counterbalance their misfortunes (Al-gareeb, 2001). This is especially true when Saudi TV materials do not fill the gap. In fact, they frequently promote gender inequality by broadcasting patronising male orientated programmes. According to Al-Jammal (2001) and Al-garni (2000), there is a disinterest in, and insensitivity to women's, need for communication. The fundamental critical issues related to women's status in society which improve their social and cultural lifestyle are ignored or marginalised (Al-jammal, 2001, Al-garni, 2000). Consequently, it is not surprising that female interest in Saudi TV materials is lower than that of the male in all three choices. The males are more interested in Saudi TV materials with 17.8% as a first choice, 26.3% as second choice and 21.2% as third choice whereas the female responses are only 10.9% as first and second choices and 13.4% as a third choice.

Social Class & Preferred Country of Origin of Television Programmes

With respect to table 3.6 there is more interest from the lower class in Saudi TV materials than either the middle or upper classes in all choices. Exactly a quarter of the lower class

put it as a first choice, 28.1% as their second choice and 27.1% as their third, followed by the middle class in their interest in Saudi TV materials as this class also receives the highest gratifications from Saudi TV materials. The middle class, on the other hand, was more interested in Arab TV materials as a first choice with 44.4%, compared to the lower class with 35.4% and finally the upper class with 28.3% whereas the lower class was interested in Arab materials in second place with 44.8% and in third place with 38.5%, followed by that of the middle class. (table 3.6 provides a detailed account).

Al-oofy (1997) found that the effects of non-Saudi media on the audience is determined by interest in viewing and not by the length of exposure (Al-oofy, 1997). Therefore, the middle class reflects interest in Arab TV materials above everything else while the lower class interest in Arab TV materials comes second and third respectively. Both the middle and the lower classes, however, are equally exposed to Arab TV materials for more than 3 hours on average, as discussed before. This is probably because lower class understanding and intellect of cultures other than its own is limited. This may well be due to a lower level of contact with non-Saudis on a social level.

In the context of the West, Buckingham (2000) argues that, unlike the middle class, the lower working class is less sophisticated and sharp. This, he explains, is due to their deprived educational and social life (Buckingham, 2000). But perhaps, and this is different from Buckingham's explanation, Saudi middle class antagonism to its own culture makes it more curious about other cultures. That is why it gives a lower percentage to Saudi TV materials in comparison to the lower class. Even when there are

close responses between the middle and lower classes in their preference of foreign TV materials with 25.9% as first choice for the middle class and 27.1% for the lower class, the middle class percentages for foreign TV materials exceeds those of the lower class for second and third choices. Nevertheless, the upper class comes top in all choices with 46.7% listing this as first choice, 31.7% as second choice and 36.7% as third choice.

The foreign-inspired upper class is able to follow foreign TV materials in their original language to a greater extent than either the middle or lower classes. In addition, this class has more scope to subscribe to foreign satellite channels than the lower or middle classes as will be argued later. On the other hand, Saudi TV or even Arab TV materials, do not affect the class's ambitions and aspirations. The reason for this 'anomie' as Barakat (1998) claims, is that traditionalism and conservatism have changed with time during the age of backwardness to empty rituals that imposed themselves from outside with force. More importantly, as he goes on to argue are the general hypocritical double standards, which encourage displays of public conservation while practising something quite different in private. This has led the wealthy to break out of the traditional social system to embrace radical liberalism (Barakat, 1998).

Zakaria (1999) stresses that the children in this upper class identify a class position towards the society. Their opinions about their identity are reflected in their families' attitudes. Nevertheless, it is believed that this class, especially in petroleum-based countries contribute little to society or to the nation's welfare (Zakaria, 1999). In fact Al-gareeb (2001) declares that the elite's concern is only for revenue. It has no affiliations to

national cultural identity. They are dazzled by, and aspire to, Western modernity and progress. But all they actually follow is a superficial Western pop culture rather than an intellectual one (Al-gareeb 2001).

Channels Used for Preferred TV Programmes

Table 3.7 shows that the children's most preferred channels for watching their favourite programmes are Arab ones. It claims a large percentage of the viewing public. With the exception of exposure to the seasonal terrestrial Egyptian channels during the summer without the use of a decoder, viewers had little to compare Saudi TV with that of other Arab nations until satellite television became accessible. Before that they were unaware of the extent of programme censorship (Boyd, 1999). There was an increase in mass satellite exposure especially via CNN for exclusive live and up-to date news coverage during the Gulf War that embarrassed the Arab world for incompetence. Hence, the governments and the masses in the Arab countries began to realise the importance of satellite broadcasting channels. Consequently, a large number of people hurried to own decoders, which could broadcast free Arab satellite channels, "since then (according to Okasha) these Arab channels have thrown a stone in a stagnant water-well" (Okasha, 2001, 9).

At present, viewers in Saudi Arabia basically have access "to satellite channels (governmental or private) from every Arab state" (Boyd, 1999,165). Saudi TV local channels take second place as preferred channels, then come the privately owned Saudi TV channels, like the coded *art* and decoded *mbc*, with a total percentage for both of

15.2% as first choice, 16.5% as a second choice and 15.6% as a third choice. Boyd (1999, 2001) states that the Saudi-owned direct broadcast satellite services now compete with Western programming and DBS services from other countries in the Middle East. These private Saudi TV channels are neither broadcasting from outside of the Arab World nor owned by accident by members close to the Royal Family. Consequently they do not follow the censorship guidelines provided by the Saudi Ministry of Information as do Saudi TV channel 1 and 2 (Boyd, 1999, Boyd, 2001). Some even think that these channels are foreign TV channels as they carry non-Arabic logos composed of letters from the Latin alphabet (Al-shal, 1998). "Arab DBS are satellite cabarets", according to Al-sharif (2001, 6). As of now, they have no enlightening message. What they are after is to attract as wide an audience as possible (Al-sahrif, 2001). Kafwain (2001) goes further to state that they are imitating the West in their presentation and in all their programmes. This unlawful competition and imitation of the Arab DBS is increasing day after day directed at young people. these programmes have now passed all the red lines and take upon themselves to carry the flag of foreign cultural invasion (Kafwain, 2001). Respondents are more attracted to *mbc* than *art* because the latter requires a subscription and a special decoder. The other foreign channels came last of all due to the demand of purchasing a special subscription service.

According to Al-shal (1998) ownership of one satellite dish directed to ARABSAT is common practice in Saudi Arabia (Al-shal, 1998). According to Khadour, (1998) Syrian audiences watch Arab satellite channels as they do not require any effort. 77.2% indicated that they watch because of common language and 40% said they watch because of

Table (3.7) Channels Used for Preferred Television Programmes

Preferred Channels	Choice 1		Choice 2		Choice 3	
	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
Arab	78	32.9%	56	23.6%	53	22.4%
Saudi gov.	52	21.9%	63	26.6%	48	20.3%
Foreign	26	11.0%	20	8.4%	21	8.9%
MBC	24	10.1%	23	9.7%	26	11.0%
ART	12	5.1%	16	6.8%	11	4.6%
No comment	45	19.0%	59	24.9%	78	32.9%
Total	237	100%	237	100%	237	100%

Table (3.8) Gender & Channels Used for Preferred Television Programmes

Preferred Channels	Choice 1		Choice 2		Choice 3	
	Gender		Gender		Gender	
	M %	F %	M %	F %	M %	F %
Arab	34 28.8%	44 37.0%	28 23.7%	28 23.5%	26 22.0%	27 22.7%
Saudi gov.	30 25.4%	22 18.5%	37 31.4%	26 21.8%	30 25.4	18 15.1%
Foreign	12 10.2%	14 11.8%	6 5.1%	14 11.8%	8 6.8%	13 10.9%
MBC	11 9.3%	13 10.9%	7 5.9%	16 13.4%	8 6.8%	18 15.1%
ART	5 4.2%	7 5.9%	5 4.2%	11 9.2%	4 3.4%	7 5.9%
No comment	26 22.0%	19 16.0%	35 29.7%	24 20.2%	42 35.6%	36 30.3%
Total	118 100%	119 100%	118 100%	119 100%	118 100%	119 100%

common culture (Khadour, 1998). The Saudi viewer is attracted to the content of the satellite channels, rather than the nationality of the channels and not vice versa. The question is, then, will the Saudi audience become more attracted to foreign channels once they are broadcast in Arabic and the cost is marginalised especially as these channels are glossier, more dashing and entertaining?

Khadour (1998) found that Syrians are attracted by the content of the satellite channels rather than their identities. Searching for entertainment will draw the audience to specific channels regardless of nationality, said Khadour (Khadour, 1998). Saudi governmental television with both channels is the least popular among the sample (Al-oofy, 1997). "Saudi TV is not a preferred media channel" in Saudi Arabia (Merdad, 1993, 251). As some of Yamani's (2000) interviewees stated "Both Channels 1 and 2 specialise in shoving things down our throats" (Yamani, 2000, 172).

Gender & Channels Used for Preferred Television Programmes

The outcome in table 3.8 points to a difference between males and females in their choice of channels. It is not surprising that while the males choose Saudi TV government channels more than females in all choices, females prefer culturally antagonising channels. This is in spite of all the protective measures imposed by the family on accessibility to satellite decoders as discussed earlier. For example, females are more attracted than males to privately owned Saudi TV channels, especially *art* and *mbc*, which are devoted to non-Saudi materials.

Also, Arab channels just came in the first place as first choice for females with 37%

compared to 28.8% from the males despite the fact that the second and third choices were almost equal. In addition, more females cite foreign channels as their second and third choices than males although both females and males gave equal responses as first choice. The females attitudes may be explained by Zaki's (1990) comments that families and society discriminate between males and females leaving the female oppressed, psychologically damaged, frustrated and alienated. This alienation would force the suppressed female to seek refuge in less oppressive and more entertaining environment (Zaki, 1990). Some female interviewees, as quoted in Yamani, (2000) stated that "If we cannot drive how can we fly?". Yet, exposure to non-traditional materials increases the awareness of females about inequality and intensifies their demands for freedom. Gender as the stable and unquestioned component of identity is no longer taken for granted. The roles women are expected to play as obedient wives, self-sacrificing mothers and diligent housewives are coming under challenge from expectations of greater equality, educational advancement and career aspirations (Yamani, 2000).

Social Class & Channels Used for Preferred Television Programmes

Table 3.9 shows the differences among the social classes in their exposure to their preferred TV programmes. The upper class prefers foreign channels most. As mentioned, access to the latest technology is only available to certain classes. Ghareeb (2000) argues that accessibility to new technology is limited to the elite who can afford the high costs of subscription to foreign media and can identify with the content (Ghareeb, 2000). To the upper class, Arab DBS are second hand imitations of Western programmes that would be left to the less fortunate classes. Orbit, for example, was "initially priced at $10,000... in

addition to a monthly fee for a variety of program packages." On the other hand, ARABSAT would become more attractive and less costly if "dishes as well as satellite reception equipment are readily available in the Kingdom for $200" with no subscription charges (Boyd, 1999, 343). Therefore, it is not surprising that the middle class is ranked first in using Arab channels to watch their preferred programmes with 43.2% and 29.6% respectively as first and second choices, followed by the lower class in the second rank, who gave a higher percentage to Arab channels as a third choice with 30.2%.

Al-shal (1998) argues that the Saudi audience is trapped between two extremes. The external foreign dominance in the case of the upper class and the internal Arab dominance in the case of the middle class. Caught in the middle are those who do not have equal accessibility to DBS or to terrestrial neighbouring countries. They must reconcile their local channels (Al-shal, 1998). That is why the lower class, in contrast, was the most frequent user of Saudi TV channels with 41.7% citing them as first choice, 46.9% as second choice and 34.4% as third choice. Nevertheless, the upper class showed a relatively higher interest in privately owned Saudi TV channels as a second choice while the lower class listed privately own Saudi TV channels as second and third choices. As these channels have 'a Western flavour' as Boyd (2001) notes, they would appeal to the upper class. In fact, according to Al-shal (1998) some of her respondents mistakenly identified *mbc* as a foreign channel because of its logo use of foreign letters (Al-shal, 1998). Also, the specialised *art* channels require subscription fees that other classes could not afford.

Table (3.9) Social Class & Channels Used for Preferred Television Programmes

Preferred Channels	Choice 1			Choice 2			Choice 3		
	Social class			Social class			Social class		
	Up. %	Mi. %	Lo. %	Up. %	Mi. %	Lo. %	Up. %	Mi. %	Lo. %
Arab	10 16.7%	35 43.2%	33 34.4%	9 15.0%	24 29.6%	23 24.0%	9 15.0%	15 18.5%	29 30.2%
Saudi gov.	2 3.3%	10 12.3%	40 41.7%	3 5.0%	15 18.5%	45 46.9%	1 1.7%	14 17.3%	33 34.4%
Foreign	20 33.3%	5 6.2%	1 1.0%	15 25.0%	3 3.7%	2 2.1%	15 25.0%	4 4.9%	2 2.1%
MBC	7 11.7%	9 11.1%	8 8.3%	8 13.3%	10 12.3%	5 5.2%	7 11.7%	10 12.3%	9 9.4%
ART	2 3.3%	5 6.2%	5 5.2%	5 8.5%	3 3.7%	8 8.3%	3 5.0%	6 7.4%	2 2.1%
No comment	19 31.7%	17 21.0%	9 9.4%	20 33.3%	26 32.1%	13 13.5%	25 41.7%	32 39.5%	21 21.9%
Total	60 100%	81 100%	96 100%	60 100%	81 100%	96 100%	60 100%	81 100%	96 100%

Table (3.10) Preferred Video Programmes

Preferred video programmes	Choice 1		Choice 2		Choice 3	
	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
Films	91	38.4%	86	36.3%	58	24.5%
Cartoons	47	19.8%	26	11.0%	22	9.3%
Serials	20	8.4%	17	7.2%	18	7.6%
Sports	10	4.2%	12	5.1%	11	4.6%
Songs & music	3	1.3%	10	4.2%	14	5.9%
Religious	2	0.8%	3	1.3%	5	2.1%
Edu-cultrural	0	0.0%	3	1.3%	9	3.8%
Other	8	3.4%	9	3.8	7	2.9%
No comment	56	23.6%	71	30.0%	93	39.2%
Total	237	100%	237	100%	237	100%

Preferred Videotape Programmes

In the case of table 3.10, it can be seen that the Saudi children prefer films most of all, followed by cartoons and then serials in the third place. It is interesting to find that the children's preference for serials changed to third place as opposed to the first place for television. According to Al-hadidi & Ali (1985), the reason for the lack of appeal of serials on videotapes in comparison to television is that they are based on follow-up suspense which videotapes marginalise (Al-hadidi & Ali, 1985). It is also interesting to note that children are not as interested in songs and music on videotapes as on TV. This is probably due to the large coverage of songs and music on TV and the frequent repetition of them on the various satellite channels. Those who buy videos, however, are looking for programmes such as films, which are not frequently repeated. Nevertheless, the children report least interest in religious and edu-cultural programmes. Yamani (2000) argues that in Saudi Arabia now "there is marginalisation and diminution of the significance of religion" (Yamani, 2000, 23). However, the question is should religious and edu-cultural programmes be as dashing and dazzling as drama to attract interest? Or should socialisation in the family be modified to disregard entertaining drama production? Nevertheless, as religious and edu-cultural programmes remain static and socialisation in the family continues to be less concept-orientated, the previous situation will prevail.

Gender & Preferred Videotape Programmes

Table 3.11 on preferred videotape programmes between genders, shows big differences in responses. There is a similar pattern of interest with respect to gender in videotape programmes in comparison to those on television. Again, males prefer watching

videotape films relatively more than the females. They reported higher responses as first and third choices with percentages of 40.7% and 26.3% respectively whereas female percentages are relatively lower at 36.1% and 22.7%. In a similar study, Al-hadidi & Ali (1985) found that males' preference for films on videotapes exceeded females' interest (Al-hadidi & Ali, 1985). As for serials, the females once more preferred watching them on videotapes relatively more than males, especially as a third choice with a percentage of 10.1% compared to only 5.1% from the males. Perhaps males who are socialised to be independent, to be in control and to set their own agendas are less tolerant and impatient to watch serials, which, contrary to films, may require long-hours of dedicated viewing and follow up.

As with television, females again prefer cartoon programmes on videotapes 27.7% as first choice and 14.3% as second choice in contrast to 11.9% first and 7.6% second choices in comparison to the males. Abuzinada (1988) also found that females watch more cartoons and children's programmes on videotapes than males (Abuzinada, 1988). Unlike females who are encouraged for naivety, males are socialised for sophistication and complexity and, would find cartoons unsuitable for public sphere's achievements (Buckingham, 2000).

In sports programmes the difference between the two genders was once more enormous. Males prefer watching sports programmes on videotapes in all choices more than the females. Similarly, Abuzinada (1988) also found that females were significantly less interested in sports than males. Abuzinada attributes this to the fascination of Saudi men

Table (3.11) Gender & Preferred Video Programmes

Preferred video programmes	Choice 1		Choice 2		Choice 3	
	Gender		Gender		Gender	
	M %	F %	M %	F %	M %	F %
Films	48 40.7%	43 36.1%	42 35.6%	44 37.0%	31 26.3%	27 22.7%
Cartoons	14 11.9%	33 27.7%	9 7.6%	17 14.3%	11 9.3%	11 9.2%
Serials	9 7.6%	11 9.2%	9 7.6%	8 6.7%	6 5.1%	12 10.1%
Sports	10 8.5%	0 0.0%	11 9.3%	1 0.8%	9 7.6%	2 1.7%
Songs & music	1 0.8%	2 1.7%	4 3.4%	6 5.0%	3 2.5%	11 9.2%
Religious programmes	1 0.8%	1 0.8%	1 0.8%	2 1.7%	2 1.7%	3 2.5%
Edu-cultural	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	3 2.5%	3 2.5%	6 5.0%
Other	4 3.4%	4 3.4%	4 3.4%	5 4.2%	6 5.1%	0 0.0%
No comment	31 26.3%	25 21.0%	38 32.2%	33 27.7%	47 39.8%	46 38.7%
Total	118 100%	119 100%	118 100%	119 100%	118 100%	119 100%

Table (3.12) Social Class & Preferred Video Programmes

Preferred video programmes	Choice1			Choice2			Choice3		
	Social class			Social class			Social class		
	Up. %	Mi. %	Lo. %	Up. %	Mi. %	Lo. %	Up. %	Mi. %	Lo. %
Films	26 43.3%	34 42.0%	31 32.3%	28 46.7%	32 39.5%	26 27.1%	22 36.7%	19 23.5%	17 17.7%
Cartoons	7 11.7%	22 27.2%	18 18.8%	2 3.3%	12 14.8%	12 12.5%	3 5.0%	8 9.9%	11 11.5%
Serials	10 16.7%	5 6.2%	5 5.2%	4 6.7%	7 8.6%	6 6.3%	5 8.3%	10 12.3%	3 3.1%
Sports	4 6.7%	0 0.0%	6 6.3%	5 8.3%	2 2.5%	5 5.2%	3 5.0%	2 2.5%	6 6.3%
Songs & music	0 0.0%	2 2.5%	1 1.0%	5 8.3%	2 2.5%	3 3.1%	3 5.0%	7 8.6%	4 4.2%
Religious programmes	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	2 2.1%	0 0.0%	2 2.5%	1 1.0%	2 3.3%	1 1.2%	2 2.1%
Edu-cultural	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	3 3.1%	1 1.7%	4 4.9%	4 4.2%
Other	1 1.7%	2 2.5%	5 5.2%	1 1.7%	2 2.5%	6 6.3%	2 3.3%	0 0.0%	5 5.2%
No comment	12 20.0%	16 19.8%	28 29.2%	15 25.0%	22 27.2%	34 35.4%	19 31.7%	30 37.0%	44 45.8%
Total	60 100%	81 100%	96 100%	60 100%	81 100%	96 100%	60 100%	81 100%	96 100%

with sports programmes, which are predominantly male-oriented soccer and wrestling matches. He asserts that due to the heavy demands on the consumption of this videotape content, the videotape shops in Saudi Arabia have made separate catalogues and guides for all kinds of footage on soccer and wrestling (Abuzinada, 1988).

With respect to songs and music, although their differences are unnoticeable as first and second choices, there is variance in the third choice with percentages of 9.2% from the females and only 2.5% from the males.

This is consistent with Abuzinada's findings (1988) who confirmed that females view significantly more singing and dancing videotape content than males. He believes that such a difference is related to female boredom due to the length of time spent at home (Abuzinada, 1988). In fact, table 5.2 in this study will show that females receive more gratifications from exposure to videotape materials to alleviate boredom.

Social Class & Preferred Videotape Programmes

Table 3.12 shows the differences among the three social classes in their programme preferences. The upper class prefer films in general more than the middle and lower classes. The higher the social class the more its interest in videotape drama such as films and serials. The reason behind this higher interest in films from videotapes in comparison to television is perhaps because they permit earlier viewing of up-to-date films. This usually depends on the viewers' purchasing power of state of the art films. Al-oofy (1997) established a positive correlation between interest in drama and a positive attitude towards Western and especially American culture (Al-oofy, 1997). This class is also least

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controlled by family members, as mentioned in table 2.6. On the other hand, protective families may find cartoons an innocent form of entertainment. That is probably why the middle class is the more interested in them than the other classes especially as a first choice (27.2%), followed by the lower class (18.8%). It is worth noting that this class is also the most interested in videogame materials. Parents are not opposed to them, because the characters, as in cartoons, are unreal.

As for sports programmes, the upper and lower classes are more interested in them than the middle class. The same reason which was given in table 3.2, applies here.

Variety programmes, such as children's programmes, are liked most by the lower class. According to Buckingham (2000) "the higher the class, the more complex and sophisticated the people are compared with the majority of the working-class". Therefore, upper class children implicitly lay claim to a superior (more 'adult' or 'mature') identity (Buckingham, 2000,113). This sophistication of the elite class will give an edge for success in the age of globalisation (Yamani, 2000).

This could be why the lower and middle classes are more concerned than the upper class with religious programmes. They are searching for hope, justice and assurance. Religion for the upper class imposes pressure on their behaviour which, in turn, puts limits on their pleasure-oriented lifestyle. With respect to educational-cultural programmes, the lower class rates them higher in comparison to the middle class and to the upper class in particular. Interest in these rises the lower the social class. The more disadvantaged the families are and limited in their scopes and opportunities, the more their children may try

to seek alternatives to enhance their understanding of the context (Yamani 2000, Buckingham 2000).

Country of Origin of Preferred Videotape Programmes

Table 3.13 shows that the children prefer foreign videotape programmes the most. This is contrary to their preferred country of origin of TV programmes where they ranked Arab TV materials in first place. Here, programmes of foreign origin were chosen by almost half of the sample (49.4%) as first choice, 42.6% as second choice and 35% as third choice. Programmes of Arab origin then followed in the second rank with 14.3% as first choice, 13.9% as second choice and 12.2% as third choice. This result is compatible with Al-shal's (1994) results where Egyptian audiences ranked foreign programmes the highest followed by Arab programmes (Al-shal, 1994). It seems that a common language and a common cultural heritage count for little. Preference for foreign videotape programmes over those of Arab origin according to Mursi (1995) is due to the multi-billion-dollar hi-tech use of suspense and excitement in foreign films, yet cheaply sold in contrast to programmes of Arab origin that could hopelessly match them (Mursi, 1995).

Moreover, viewing these foreign films a number of times can make up for not understanding the language because the action could be understood from repeated viewing. Video enables viewers to stop the film and see it again in case certain scenes were misunderstood. Foreign films, according to Al-jammal (1990), usually depend on excitement and spectacular effects more than on dialogue (Al-jammal, 1990). This is especially so according to Abdul Malik (1999) because Arab materials are carbon copies of each other. He explains further that viewing one is viewing all (Abdul Malik, (1999).

Table (3.13) Country of Origin of Preferred Video Programmes

Country of origin of preferred video programmes	Choice 1		Choice 2		Choice 3	
	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
Foreign	117	49.4%	101	42.6%	83	35.0%
Arab	34	14.3%	33	13.9%	29	12.2%
Saudi	10	4.2%	16	6.8%	17	7.2%
No comment	76	32.1%	87	36.7%	108	45.6%
Total	237	100	237	100	237	100

Table (3.14) Gender & Country of Origin of Preferred Video Programmes

Country of origin of preferred video programmes	Choice 1		Choice 2		Choice 3	
	Gender		Gender		Gender	
	M %	F %	M %	F %	M %	F %
Foreign	56 47.5%	61 51.3%	50 42.4%	51 42.9%	42 35.6%	41 34.5%
Arab	16 13.6%	18 15.1%	13 11.0%	20 16.8%	10 8.5%	19 16.0%
Saudi	5 4.2%	5 4.2%	12 10.2%	4 3.4%	10 8.5%	7 5.9%
No comment	41 34.7%	35 29.4%	43 36.4%	44 37.0%	56 47.5%	52 43.7%
Total	118 100%	119 100%	118 100%	119 100%	118 100%	119 100%

Table (3.15) Social Class & Country of Origin of Preferred Video Programmes

Country of origin of preferred video programmes	Choice 1			Choice 2			Choice 3		
	Social class			Social class			Social class		
	Up. %	Mi. %	Lo. %	Up. %	Mi. %	Lo. %	Up. %	Mi. %	Lo. %
Foreign	39 65.0%	41 50.6%	37 38.5%	38 63.3%	34 42.0%	29 30.2%	32 53.3%	26 32.1%	25 26.0%
Arab	2 3.3%	13 16.0%	19 19.8%	1 1.7%	13 16.0%	19 19.8%	3 5.0%	16 19.8%	10 10.4%
Saudi	1 1.7%	2 2.5%	7 7.3%	2 3.3%	4 4.9%	10 10.4%	3 5.0%	3 3.7%	11 11.5%
No comment	18 30.0%	25 30.9%	33 34.4%	19 31.7%	30 37.0%	38 39.6%	22 36.7%	36 44.4%	50 52.1%
Total	60 100%	81 100%	96 100%	60 100%	81 100%	96 100%	60 100%	81 100%	96 100%

Children placed videotape programmes of Saudi nationality last in all choices. According to Abuzinada (1988) this is due to their lack of excitement and poor quality content (Abuzinada, 1988). Serious Saudi film production was never introduced to a Saudi market.

Gender & Country of Origin of Preferred Videotape Programmes

Table 3.14 shows that the variances in gender preferences are similar to those in table 3.5 regarding the country of origin of TV preferred materials. There are some differences between the two genders in relation to foreign videotapes . Although the differences are negligible in the second and third choices, as first choice females prefer foreign videotapes with a relatively higher response of 51.3% in comparison to males (47.5%). Arabic videotapes showed differences between the genders. More females than males again preferred the materials, especially as second and third choices. This is not surprising as inequality between the genders continues. Females are restrained while males can move about freely (Boyd & Al-najai, 1984). Boys spend much of their unrestricted time joining in or attending sports activities. Females, by contrast, are not permitted to drive cars and are customarily confined to their houses. Girls are frowned at and even restrained from watching male sporting contests, and they seldom compete in sports (Abuzinada, 1988) while their duties have conservatively included childcare and domestic chores (Al-kharaiji, 1993). Girls face greater pressure to abide by conventional behavioural norms than do boys. Even though they are predicted to submit to guidelines established by family elders, a more lenient atmosphere exists for boys (Al-oofy & McDaniel, 1992). Discrimination at home can be a major factor in females breaking out

from cultural pressures. Female consciousness of inequality makes them feel oppressed and mistreated. This, in turn, provokes them to become easy objects to unconventional media penetration to counterbalance their tragedy. They become aware that the social construction of sex roles in the country differentiates them from other women in the Arab world and totally splits them from those in the foreign world (Al-gareeb, 2001, Yamani, 2000).

Disinterest and inability of videotapes of Saudi materials in producing suitable and presentable communication content for women could be another factor for females being interested in videotape programmes of non-Saudi origin. Women do not receive any attention. Consequently, Saudi videotapes that deal with women's social issues are non-existent (Al-jammal, 2001). That is why, the females interest in videotape materials originating from Saudi is less than that of the males. Moreover, the males prefer Saudi videotape materials as second and third choices more than the females. This may be due to the nature of the videotapes originating from Saudi, which is similar to that of Saudi TV.

Social Class & Country of Origin of Preferred Videotape Programmes

Table 3.15 shows that there are differences among the social classes in their preference for different media materials. The upper class is the group that most prefer foreign videotape materials with 65% as first choice, 63.3% as second choice and 53.3% as third choice respectively. The middle class follows next with 50.6%, 42% and 32.1% as first, second and third choices respectively. The lower class, however like them least. This is due to the fact that the higher the social status the greater its ability to buy the latest

foreign action films from state-of-the-art videotape stores. Also, the higher the class the more it is able to follow the film in its original language, especially in English. The middle class can understand foreign films only if they are translated. Nevertheless, in all classes there is a huge imbalance between their preference of foreign videotape programmes against those of Arab origin and, to an even greater extent, of Saudi origin. Al-shabaily (1992) argues that the international, political, economic, cultural, constitutional, technical systems and their development represent the core problem. The one way flow of information reflects the political, cultural and economic structure of developing countries. Arab countries are interested in developing the media structure but are not equally capable of developing intellectually satisfying programmes to compete against those from abroad. Al-jammal (2001) explains that there are many companies in developing countries that are gasping for foreign media production to fill the vacuum, yet to justify their incompetence they claim that the imported contents are inappropriate (Al-jammal, 2001). The question is why they import them in the first place? Are they forced to freight in foreign production? Al-gareeb (2001) argues that inner collaboration of the elite class (bourgeoisie) for the sake of making profits and to satisfy its aspiration of Western culture (the centre) is the cause for this dissemination of foreign production (Al-gareeb, 2001).

As for Arab videotape materials, the lower class prefer them relatively more than the middle class and far more than the upper class. For ambitious classes as the upper and the middle classes Arab videotape materials do not present progressive culture, especially if a high percentage of Arab drama presented is predominantly Egyptian and is given to contemplating social issues pertaining to the illiterate working-class (Al-mahya 1993, Al-

baymi, 1995). Hence, unlike the simple lower class, the more sophisticated upper and middle classes represent a challenge to videotape materials of Saudi origin for, most probably, these materials do not reflect their aspirations for modernity and advancement. Therefore, it is only to be expected that these two classes report videotape materials of Saudi origin with the lowest percentages in comparison to the lower class in all choices. With regards to Saudi materials, the lower class reports the highest response compared to the rest of the classes in all choices.

To sum up, with respect to television programme preferences, the children rank serials as their number one preference, followed by films and then by cartoons while placing religious programmes at the end of the list with news and ads. Females prefer serials (soaps) and cartoons while the males prefer films. The upper and lower classes prefer to watch serials while the middle class prefer films, and the lower class prefer to watch cartoons more than the other classes.

Regarding the country of origin of preferred television programmes, the children reported Arab TV programmes as their first choice, followed by foreign TV programmes and finally Saudi TV programmes. The females were more interested than males in foreign TV programmes while males are more interested in Saudi TV programmes which are male-orientated. The upper class is more interested in foreign TV materials while the middle class, somewhat more than the lower class, is interested in Arab TV materials; however, the lower class was more interested in Saudi TV materials.

The children reported Arab TV channels as the most popular channels, followed by Saudi TV channels while they reported foreign TV channels last. Whereas females prefer Arab

TV channels, private Saudi TV channels and foreign TV channels, the males prefer Saudi TV channels more than females. The middle class prefers Arab TV channels while the Westernised upper class prefer foreign TV channels. The lower class is mostly limited to Saudi TV channels.

With regards to videotape programmes, the children prefer films, followed by cartoons while serials (soaps) come third. As with television, females prefer cartoons and serials while males prefer films more than the females. The upper class prefer films and serials to cartoons, which are preferred by the controlled middle class followed by the lower class.

With respect to countries of origin of preferred videotape programmes, the children put foreign videotape materials on the top of the list, followed by Arab and finally Saudi programmes. Although both genders show a high preference for foreign programmes, females prefer foreign and Arab videotape programmes relatively to the males who prefer Saudi videotape programmes. The higher the class then, the higher its interest in foreign videotape programmes.

In conclusion, socialisation within the Saudi context tends to influence the children's interest in different media materials. Preference for foreign television and videotape programmes is widely reported by the restricted gender, the females, and the group with the greatest freedom of choice, the upper class. Hence, the question is, does this interest also direct their judgements and gratifications of media materials?

CHAPTER 9

Judgements of Media Materials

Closely related to the debate on media effects, media judgements have attracted significant interest among communication researchers. Such studies attempt to answer questions such as: How do media materials come across to the audience? What aspects of materials make them acceptable to the audience? What characteristics of the source influence the judgements of communication?

It was one of the objectives of this study to assess the children's perception's of the credibility of materials to which they are exposed. Such materials were classified into four broad categories: Saudi TV, Arab TV, Foreign TV and video materials, and respondents were asked to indicate which of these categories they found most credible, using a set of eight values as indices of credibility. These values included *"importance"*, *"respect of privacy"*, *sensitivity to what viewers' think"*, *"ethics"*, *"considerate of viewers' interests"*, *"concern about public interest"*, *"thoroughness"*, and *"trustworthiness"*.

Children's Judgements of Media Materials

Table 4.1 shows that the closer media materials are to the children's social context, the more likely they are to hold protective attitudes. Therefore, Saudi materials emerged with the highest average of credibility, while foreign TV and video materials had the lowest

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Table (4.1) Judgement of Media Materials

Media Materials	Saudi TV materials			Arab TV materials			Foreign TV materials			Videotape materials		
Judgements	Yes	Other	Total N	Yes	Other	Total N	Yes	Other	Total N	Yes	Other	Total N
Importance	149 62.9%	88 37.1%	237 100%	137 57.8%	100 42.2%	237 100%	105 44.3%	132 55.7%	237 100%	116 48.9%	121 51.1%	237 100%
Respect of privacy	143 60.3%	94 39.7%	237 100%	129 54.4%	108 45.6%	237 100%	112 47.3%	125 52.7%	237 100%	108 45.6%	129 54.4%	237 100%
Sensitivity of what the viewer thinks	121 51.1%	152 48.9%	237 100%	122 51.5%	115 48.5%	237 100%	123 51.9%	114 48.1%	237 100%	123 51.9%	114 48.1%	237 100%
Ethics	138 58.2%	99 41.8%	237 100%	120 50.6%	117 49.4%	237 100%	79 33.3%	158 66.7%	237 100%	101 42.6%	136 57.4%	237 100%
Considerate of viewers' interest	111 46.8%	126 53.2%	237 100%	103 43.5%	134 56.5%	237 100%	108 45.6%	129 54.4%	237 100%	109 46.0%	128 54.0%	237 100%
Concerned about public interest	137 57.8%	136 42.2%	237 100%	113 47.7%	124 52.3%	237 100%	92 38.8%	145 61.2%	237 100%	97 40.9%	140 59.1%	237 100%
Thoroughness	121 51.1%	116 48.9%	237 100%	102 43.0%	135 57.0%	237 100%	98 41.4%	139 58.6%	237 100%	113 47.7%	124 52.3%	237 100%
Trustworthiness	112 47.3%	125 52.7%	237 100%	94 39.7%	143 60.3%	237 100%	71 30.0%	166 70.0%	237 100%	92 38.8%	145 61.2%	237 100%
Total average	54%	46%	100%	49%	51%	100%	42%	58%	100.%	45%	55%	100%

averages. This is despite the fact that the children do not like Saudi programmes as much as other Arab and foreign TV programmes. In addition, they do not devote as much time to watching them as they do for other media materials, as discussed in tables 2.10 and 3.4. Nonetheless, the children gave Saudi materials the highest average ratings of 54%, followed by Arab materials with 49% and then foreign TV and video materials the lowest and equal averages of 42% and 45% respectively.

The results in this study are contrary to the findings of two Egyptian studies which showed that dependency on local materials correlated positively with credibility (Bahnasi, 2000; Khaled, 1997).

It is also contrary to a study from the United Arab Emirates in 1997 according to Boyd (2001), which found that young people, especially when they are more exposed to and prefer foreign media over local outlets, find the former to be more credible than local ones (Boyd, 2001). Kazan (1999) explains the differences by pointing out that the strength of grip of the traditional/religious ideology on the social structure is strongest in Saudi Arabia among the Gulf countries, yet weaker in a country such as the UAE (Kazan, 1999).

Further, the discrepancy between children's viewing habits and their judgements of media materials reflects the particular ambiguity in the traditional Saudi identity. As a matter of fact, Al-saraf (1983) in his article *The Contemporary Arab Child and the Problems of Cultural Alienation* rationalised the idea of the Arab traditional child rejecting the cultural reality of his society by remarking that the revolution against the value system, which is cultivated by the society, "means a revolution against the self and

slipping down the maze of mess and, as a result, the child becomes a victim of his/her emotions" (Al-saraf,1983, 99). Hence, the children's noting of Saudi materials as *"important"* and *"respectful of privacy"* on top of the list, followed closely by the materials' attention regarding *"ethics"* and *"concern about public interest,"* indicates that they identify more with Saudi materials. Similarly, the children attributed Arab materials as *"important"* and *"respectful of privacy"* on top of the judgement scale.

However, Sari (1999a) argues that Arabs in general (Saudis included) rate themselves very highly, attributing to themselves all graces and perfections (Sari, 1999a). "The Arab ego views itself as the more credible in passing judgements, the centre of importance ... and the more capable of preserving the human inheritance". This view of self by the Arab is a result of an inflated view of the self (Sari, 1999b, 378). For instance, Al-hamad (1999) explains that when the collective self (Arabs including Saudis) becomes less important in comparison to another collective self (the West), as a result of an understandable historical process that can be rationalised objectively, this situation is usually unacceptable to the defeated subjective self. The self will, therefore, use all defence mechanisms available to protect itself from the hegemonic outside danger (the West). This is for the purpose of giving a sort of a balance to the hurt ego even if this is contradicted by reality. This is achieved by ignoring the given reality consciously or sub-consciously (Al-hamad, 1999).

The problem usually manifests in a display of "schizophrenic attitude, a display of contradictory attitudes or double standards in thinking and practice in thought and action whilst with ourselves or whilst in front of others" (Sari, 1999a, 371). Consequently, in

times of crisis "we turn everywhere but here" as Fandy comments satirically. We trust all other sources but local ones (Fandy, 2000, 393). For instance, during the Gulf War crisis, many people turned mostly to foreign sources such as CNN (Abdul-Malik, 1999,Yamani, 1995). Nevertheless, "we accuse them of all the vices and imperfection by attributing to (the West) immorality, bad intention, avidity, hegemony etc." (Sari, 1999a, 372). These were probably the main reasons why children give *"trustworthiness"* and *"ethics"* such low percentages for foreign TV materials as well as giving *"trustworthiness"*, *"concern of public interest"* and *"ethics"* with the lowest percentages for the mainly foreign video materials. Sari (1999a) discusses this ambivalence further by asserting, "We reject the West yet at the same time we hide a passionate attachment and masked fondness [to it]" (Sari, 1999a, 372). This could be the reason behind giving foreign TV and video materials close percentages to Saudi and Arab materials on the variables *"sensitive of what the viewer thinks"* and *"considerate of viewer interest"*.

Gender & Judgement of Media Materials

Table 4.2 shows that, with the exception of video materials, both males and females reported equal averages of judgements to media materials. Males and females reported Saudi materials with the highest close averages of 56% and 53% respectively, followed by Arab materials with about equal averages of 50% from males and 47% from females in that sequence. Nevertheless, fewer males than females indicated that Saudi materials promoted *"ethics"*. The reason behind the lower male accreditation of *"ethics"* to Saudi materials is probably due to the appearance of male singers in love songs and women wearing make-up in a mixed environment by Saudi materials in a male orientated sphere contrary to the Saudi social traditions and values as will be discussed in relation to table

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Table (4.2) Gender & Judgement of Media Materials

Media Materials	Saudi TV materials		Arab TV materials		Foreign TV materials		Video materials	
Judgements	Gender		Gender		Gender		Gender	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
Importance	75 63.6%	74 62.2%	71 60.2%	66 55.5%	58 49.2%	47 39.5%	58 49.2%	58 48.7%
Respect of privacy	70 59.3%	73 61.3%	68 57.6%	61 51.3%	51 43.2%	61 51.3%	52 44.1%	56 47.1%
Sensitivity of what the viewer thinks	64 54.2%	57 47.9%	58 49.2%	64 53.8%	60 50.8%	63 52.9%	64 54.2%	59 49.6%
Ethics	65 55.1%	73 61.3%	61 51.7%	59 49.6%	37 31.4%	42 35.3%	43 36.4%	58 48.7%
Considerate of viewers' interest	60 50.8%	51 42.9%	53 44.9%	50 42.0%	51 43.2%	57 47.9%	49 41.5%	60 50.4%
Concerned about public interest	69 58.5%	68 57.1%	60 50.8%	53 44.5%	49 41.5%	43 36.1%	46 39.0%	51 42.9%
Thoroughness	64 54.2%	57 47.9%	52 44.1%	50 42.0%	49 41.5%	49 41.2%	53 44.9%	60 50.4%
Trustworthiness	61 51.7%	51 42.9%	47 39.8%	47 39.5%	36 30.5%	35 29.4%	44 37.3%	48 40.3%
Total average	56%	53%	50%	47%	41%	42%	43%	47%

6.2.

Saudi materials are male directed as mentioned before in table 3.5. Hence, more males

than females view the materials as *"sensitive of what the viewer think"*, *"considerate of*

the viewer's interest", *"thoroughness"* and *"trustworthiness"*.

With respect to Arab materials, more females than males regard them as more *"sensitive*

of what the viewer thinks", yet less *"important"*, *"respectful of privacy"* and *"concerned*

about public interest". Perhaps this is because Arab materials are more open to women

who are rebellious against Saudi social tradition. This may also explain why females

report them as more *"sensitive of what the viewer thinks"*. Nevertheless, the serious

issues with which men in public life are confronted are more represented in Arab

materials while "the serious problems relating to women in society are rarely represented

or are some times tackled superficially on television" (Al-gammal, 2001, 157). Probably,

for this reason, females report Arab materials as less *"important"*, *"respectful of*

privacy" and *"concerned about public interest"*.

On the other hand, though females give foreign TV materials close averages of

judgements to the males', they rate video materials (47%) slightly higher than the males

do (43%). This is despite the fact that, as discussed earlier, their viewing habits are more

restricted than the males. This finding is close to Tayie's (1989) who found in his study

on young Egyptian's images of foreign people and foreign countries through the media

that young females' attitudes were more positive than those of young males when

exposed to channels which are more devoted to foreign programmes (Tayie, 1989). This could be because these foreign programmes stress Western stereotypes of gender which are different from Egyptian ones.

Similarly, in Saudi Arabia, Yamani (2000) claims that females of the new generation express increasing aggravation and frustration at the constraintsand control that a patriarchal dominated culture places on their life choices (Yamani, 2000). Females face many more cultural, social and psychological constraints than do males in Saudi Arabia (Kazan, 1999). Therefore, exposure through the media, education and travel "increases the awareness of young women about inequality and heightens their demands for freedom" (Yamani 2000, 95). Perhaps, this is why females' consider foreign TV materials as more *"respectful of privacy"* and foreign video materials as more *"thorough"* than the males. Moreover, their judgements on *"ethics"* and *"consideration of viewer's interest"* in foreign TV and video materials are more positive than the males.

However, these findings are contrary to Al-oofy's (1992) study which found that females in rural areas in Saudi Arabia indicate VCRs as *'harmful'* to Saudi culture (Al-oofy, 1992). Perhaps the reason behind this is that urban females are more outspoken than their rural sisters. This could be because rural females who live in a more traditional and conservative socio-cultural system than those in the city find it more difficult or even embarrassing to express a contrary view.

On the other hand, males exposure to the public sphere is greater than that of females. Males are more gratified from learning from foreigners' experiences than are females, as

mentioned in table 4.2. Hence, more males consider that mainly foreign video materials are more *"sensitive of what the viewer thinks"* and foreign TV materials are more *"important"* and *"concerned about public interest"*.

Social class & Judgement of Media Materials

In table 4.3, there were differences among the classes in attitudes towards media materials. The middle class gives Saudi materials the highest average of judgement (60%). This is almost equal to that of the lower class (62%). This is despite the fact that the middle class does not watch Saudi materials as much as the lower class as discussed in table 2.10. On the other had, it gives Arab materials a lower average of judgements (51%) which is close to that of the lower class (49%) even though it favours watching Arab materials to Saudi ones as discussed in table 3.8. What, then, is the cause of this ambiguity? What is the reason behind the discrepancy between belief and practice, between the declared and the hidden?

This may be explained by Sari (1999a) who states that this inconsistency is a result of the glorification of the self from one side and from the other side attacking, with the sense of superiority, when discussing others. As the conservative, mainly middle class self views itself "as the more advanced in thinking; the more credible in passing judgement and making statements; the more righteous in preserving the common values and the more capable of dealing with the outside world" (Sari, 1999a, 391). Hence, the educated strata of society is probably dominated by defensive protective attitudes. This could be as an outcome of, as Bazi (1998) claims, that in the face of other dominant forces in the Middle

Table (4.3) Social Class & Judgement of Media Materials

Media Materials Judgements	Saudi TV materials			Arab TV materials			Foreign TV materials			Video materials		
	Social class			Social class			Social class			Social class		
	Up	Mid.	Lo.	Up	Mid.	Lo.	Up	Mid.	Lo.	Up	Mid.	Lo.
Importance	20 33.3%	57 70.4%	72 75.0%	29 48.3%	46 56.8%	62 64.6%	36 60.0%	33 40.7%	36 37.5%	34 56.7%	39 48.1%	43 44.8%
Respect of privacy	23 38.3%	54 66.7%	66 68.8%	31 51.7%	43 53.1%	55 57.3%	35 58.3%	39 48.1%	38 39.6%	34 56.7%	37 45.7%	37 38.5%
Sensitivity of what the viewer thinks	18 30.0%	50 61.7%	53 55.2%	31 51.7%	47 58.0%	44 45.8%	39 65.0%	38 46.9%	46 47.9%	35 58.3%	47 58.0%	41 42.7%
Ethics	26 43.3%	51 63.0%	61 63.5%	26 43.3%	46 56.8%	48 50.0%	25 41.7%	26 32.1%	28 29.2%	28 46.7%	35 43.2%	38 39.6%
Considerate of viewers' interest	18 30.0%	40 49.4%	53 55.2%	25 41.7%	37 45.7%	41 42.7%	37 61.7%	34 42.0%	37 38.5%	33 55.0%	35 43.2%	41 42.7%
Concerned about public interest	25 41.7%	51 63.0%	61 63.5%	28 46.7%	41 50.6%	44 45.8%	29 48.3%	30 37.0%	33 34.4%	27 45.0%	34 42.0%	36 37.5%
Thoroughness	20 33.3%	42 51.9%	59 61.5%	20 33.3%	36 44.4%	46 47.9%	37 61.7%	39 48.1%	22 22.9%	39 65.0%	39 48.1%	35 36.5%
Trustworthiness	20 33.3%	44 54.3%	48 50.0%	24 40.0%	35 43.2%	35 36.5%	22 36.7%	21 25.9%	28 29.2%	26 43.3%	33 40.7%	33 34.4%
Total average	35%	60%	62%	45%	51%	49%	54%	40%	35%	53%	46%	40%

East the traditionalist's aim is to shield the self from danger (Bazi, 1998). It is a means of reclaiming the supposition that we are the best, the greatest, but we are not given the chance to prove it (Al-hamad, 1999). Hence, compared to the other classes, the middle class attributes the highest positive judgement on Saudi materials the variables *"sensitive of what the viewer thinks"* and *"trustworthiness"*. Nonetheless, the lower class, which is more exposed to Saudi materials as discussed before, values *"importance"*, *"thoroughness"* and *"consideration of viewer's interest"* more. This could be because their social contact with different Arab cultures, other than their own is limited. This is why, when compared to the middle class, they receive more learning and information gratifications from Saudi materials (c.f. table 5.3). Maybe this explains why although they consider Arab materials to be more *"important"*, they view them as less *"sensitive of what the viewer think"*, *"ethics"* and *"concern about public interest"* to the materials in comparison to the middle class.

The higher the class, the more likely it is to have a positive attitude to foreign media materials. The upper class accredits foreign TV and video materials with the highest averages of 54% and 53% respectively, followed by the middle class who gives video materials 46% and foreign TV materials 40%, while the lower class values foreign TV and video materials least, 35% and 40%. Hence, a high degree of attitudinal modernity also corresponds into high degrees of judgements accredited to foreign media and to high levels of interest in, and gratification with, foreign media and their content among respondents (Kazan, 1999).

The conservative middle class rates foreign TV as having the least *"trustworthiness"*. In a similarly study entitled *The Dependency of the Educated Class on Television in Crisis Time: Case Study of the Luxour Incident*, Al, Kilini (1998) argues that the educated middle classes in Egypt gave the lowest rating to the variable *"trustworthiness"* to CNN despite their high dependency on its news coverage of the tourists' murder at Luxour, Egypt. This is probably because the cautious conservative Arab custom of trust is selective, differentiated and complex. For these Egyptians, "it is not enough to trust the medium or the message, but also the whole social, economic and political system" (Fandy, 2000, 394). They have a fear of a continuous historical conspiracy (Al-hamad, 1999).

To sum up, the closer the materials are to the children's social context, the more likely they will hold defensive judgements. Contrary to Saudi materials, the children give foreign TV and video materials the lowest averages of judgements, especially in terms of *"trustworthiness"*, *"ethics"* and *"concern of public interest"*. Although both males and females reported Saudi and Arab materials with equal percentages, the females observed them mainly as male orientated, where they discredited the former as less *"sensitive of what the viewer thinks"*, *"considerate of the viewer interest"*, *"thoroughness"* and *"trustworthiness"* while discrediting the latter as less *"important"*, *"respectful of privacy"* and *"concerned about public interest"*. Nevertheless, females regarded foreign TV materials as *"respectful of privacy"* and video ones as *"thorough"*. They accredited both materials as *"considerate of viewers interest"* as well as with *"ethics"*. The classes differed in their judgements about media materials. The middle class attitude was

unexpected when it reported Saudi materials with high average of judgements equal to the lower class while it described Arab materials with less positive attitudes contrary to the class's dependency and preferences. The classes' social context plays a major role in their judgement of foreign TV and video materials. The upper class reported them with the highest average, while the lower class reported them with the lowest. The middle class reports foreign TV materials with the lowest percentage for *"trustworthiness"* probably as a result of the fear of victimisation and plotting by the West.

It may be concluded from this analysis that the fragility of the socio-political orientation of Saudi children makes them give protective judgement to Saudi materials in spite of not liking them as much as the other media materials. Conversely, this protectiveness makes them also devalue foreign TV and video materials contrary to the fact that they like to watch them for longer hours. Indeed, more studies are necessary to examine the relationship between Saudi children's dependency on media materials and their dispositions. This may also help to answer questions on how to improve the social structures within their environment and how to develop and maximise their immunity and critical thinking rather than their protective thinking?

CHAPTER 10

Gratifications Obtained from Visual Media Materials Utilisation

This chapter investigates the gratification approach, which focuses on what active audiences in Saudi Arabia do with the media. Although some scholars are sceptical about measuring gratifications because they are considered difficult to measure, I am still confident about the validity of self-reporting. To enhance the validity, I selected variables according to their applicability and relevance to the culture of the Saudi child. Then I asked the children to report their gratifications from the different visual media materials such as Saudi TV, Arab TV, foreign TV, video and videogame materials. Hence, I clustered their responses into four groups according to their correspondence.[1] Gender and social class likewise provided an important insight into the gratification context of different media materials within Saudi culture.

Gratifications Obtained from Utilising Visual Media Materials

The results in table 5.1, which deal with the cluster of learning/information gratifications, show that the closer the materials to the Saudi children's social context and background the higher their response. Therefore, Saudi materials received the highest average of learning/information gratifications with 58.8%, followed closely by Arab materials with 55.3%. Other materials such as foreign, video and to a greater extent videogames, received lower average responses. Similar to this findings,

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[1] First cluster: learning/information gratifications which include *"learning things of interest," "learning from others' experience," "learning problems' solving," "learning of ethics".* Second cluster: social gratifications such as *"socialising with peers," "socialising with family," "occurrences of screened problems in real life," "resemblance of screened situations to real life".* Third cluster: release gratifications which involve *"enjoyment," "a habit," "relaxation".* Fourth cluster: arousal/escape gratifications that encompass *"alleviating boredom," "passing time," "excitement," "increasing self-esteem by increasing insight," "deflecting anger," "attractiveness of screened characters," "relating to a particular screened character," "loneliness," "escape from problems with family," "escape from problems with teacher," "escape from home duties," "escape from school work".*

Table (5.1) Gratifications Obtained from Media Materials' Utilisation

Media materials / Gratifications	Saudi TV materials			Arab TV materials			Foreign TV materials			Video materials			Videogame materials		
	Yes %	Other %	Total %	Yes %	Other %	Total %	Yes %	Other %	Total %	Yes %	Other %	Total %	Yes %	Other %	Total %
Learning things of interest	147 62.0%	90 38.0%	237 100%	142 59.9%	95 40.1%	237 100%	135 57.0%	102 43.0%	237 100%	128 54.0%	109 46.0%	237 100%	108 45.6%	129 54.4%	237 100%
Learning from others' experience	139 58.6%	98 41.4%	237 100%	134 56.5%	103 43.5%	237 100%	112 47.3%	125 52.7%	237 100%	123 51.9%	114 48.1%	237 100%	111 46.8%	126 53.2%	237 100%
Learning problem solving	138 58.2%	99 41.8%	237 100%	129 54.4%	108 45.6%	237 100%	102 43.0%	135 57.0%	237 100%	124 52.3%	113 47.7%	237 100%	79 33.3%	158 66.7%	237 100%
Learning of ethics	134 56.5%	103 43.5%	237 100%	119 50.2%	118 49.8%	237 100%	116 48.9%	121 51.1%	237 100%	110 46.4%	127 53.6%	237 100%	86 36.3%	151 63.7%	237 100%
Learning/information gratifications average	58.8%	41.2%	237 100%	55.3%	44.7%	237 100%	49.1%	50.9	237 100%	51.2%	48.8%	237 100%	40.5%	59.5%	237 100%
Socialising with peers	102 43.0%	135 57.0%	237 100%	108 45.6%	129 54.4%	237 100%	118 49.8%	119 50.2%	237 100%	121 51.1%	116 48.9%	237 100%	106 44.7%	131 55.3%	237 100%
Socialising with family	114 48.1%	123 51.9%	237 100%	102 43.0%	135 57.0%	237 100%	90 38.0%	147 62.0%	237 100%	106 44.7%	131 55.3%	237 100%	87 36.7%	150 63.3%	237 100%
Occurrence of screened problems in real life	96 40.5%	141 59.5%	237 100%	104 43.9%	133 56.1%	237 100%	97 40.9%	147 59.1%	237 100%	95 40.1%	142 59.9%	237 100%	68 28.7%	169 71.3%	237 100%
Resemblance of screened situations to real life	98 41.4%	139 58.6%	237 100%	97 40.9%	140 59.1%	237 100%	88 37.1%	149 62.9%	237 100%	96 40.5%	141 59.5%	237 100%	66 27.8%	171 72.2%	237 100%
Social gratifications average	43.3%	56.7%	237 100%	43.4%	56.6%	237 100%	41.5%	58.5%	237 100%	44.1%	55.9%	237 100%	34.5%	65.5%	237 100%
Enjoyment	130 54.9%	107 45.1%	237 100%	142 59.9%	95 40.1%	237 100%	142 59.9%	95 40.1%	237 100%	150 63.3%	89 36.7%	237 100%	144 60.8%	93 39.2%	237 100%
As a habit	98 41.4%	139 58.6%	237 100%	103 43.5%	134 56.5%	237 100%	103 43.5%	134 56.5%	237 100%	109 46.0%	128 54.0%	237 100%	118 49.8%	119 50.2%	237 100%
For relaxation	85 35.9%	152 64.1%	237 100%	95 40.1%	142 59.9%	237 100%	86 36.3%	151 63.7%	237 100%	112 47.3%	125 52.7%	237 100%	108 45.6%	129 54.4%	237 100%
Release gratifications average	44.1%	55.9%	237 100%	47.8%	52.2%	237 100%	46.6%	53.4%	237 100%	52.2%	47.8%	237 100%	52.1%	47.9%	237 100%
Alleviating boredom	136 57.4%	101 42.6%	237 100%	123 51.9%	114 48.1%	237 100%	148 62.4%	89 37.6%	237 100%	130 54.9%	107 45.1%	237 100%	132 55.7%	105 44.3%	237 100%
Passing time	115 48.5%	122 51.5%	237 100%	147 62.0%	90 38.0%	237 100%	120 50.6%	117 49.4%	237 100%	129 54.4%	108 45.6%	237 100%	131 55.3%	106 44.7%	237 100%
Excitement	97 40.9%	140 59.1%	237 100%	113 47.7%	124 52.3%	237 100%	138 58.2%	99 41.8%	237 100%	141 59.5%	96 40.5%	237 100%	128 54.0%	109 46.0%	237 100%
Increasing self-esteem by increasing insight	120 50.6%	117 49.4%	237 100%	124 52.3%	113 47.7%	237 100%	130 54.9%	107 45.1%	237 100%	115 48.5%	122 51.5%	237 100%	93 39.2%	144 60.8%	237 100%
Deflecting anger	98 41.4%	139 58.6%	237 100%	100 42.2%	137 57.8%	237 100%	110 46.4%	127 53.6%	237 100%	106 44.7%	131 55.3%	237 100%	116 48.9%	121 51.1%	237 100%
Attractiveness of screened characters	78 32.9%	159 67.1%	237 100%	96 40.5%	141 59.5%	237 100%	115 48.5%	122 51.5%	237 100%	121 51.1%	116 47.7%	237 100%	118 49.8%	119 50.2%	237 100%
Relating to a particular screened character	81 34.2%	156 65.8%	237 100%	94 39.7%	143 60.3%	237 100%	102 43.0%	135 57.0%	237 100%	124 52.3%	113 47.7%	237 100%	96 40.5%	141 59.5%	237 100%
Loneliness	76 32.1%	161 67.9%	237 100%	76 32.1%	161 67.9%	237 100%	65 27.4%	172 72.6%	237 100%	86 36.3%	151 63.7%	237 100%	81 34.2%	156 65.8%	237 100%
Escapism from problems with family	40 16.9%	197 83.1%	237 100%	36 15.2%	201 84.8%	237 100%	47 19.8%	190 80.0%	237 100%	41 17.3%	196 82.7%	237 100%	41 17.3%	196 82.7%	237 100%
Escapism from problems with teacher	32 13.5%	205 86.5%	237 100%	26 11.0%	211 89.0%	237 100%	46 19.4%	191 80.6%	237 100%	34 14.3%	203 85.7%	237 100%	40 16.9%	197 83.1%	237 100%
Escaping from home duties	29 12.2%	208 87.8%	237 100%	35 14.8%	202 85.2%	237 100%	35 14.8%	202 85.2%	237 100%	36 15.2%	201 84.8%	237 100%	39 16.5%	198 83.5%	237 100%
Escaping from school work	21 8.9%	216 91.1%	237 100%	30 12.7%	207 87.3%	237 100%	21 8.9%	216 91.1%	237 100%	30 12.7%	207 87.3%	237 100%	36 15.2%	201 84.8%	237 100%
Arousal/escape gratifications average	32.5%	67.5%	100%	35.2%	64.8%	100%	37.9%	62.1%	100%	38.4%	61.6%	100%	37%	63%	100%

Merdad (1993) in his study of gratifications obtained from Saudi youth when using media of different nationalities, found that the nearer the materials are to the young people's context, the more likely for them to derive cognitive /information gratifications. Consequently, young Saudis reported foreign programmes with the lowest cognitive/information gratifications in comparison to those from Saudi, Egyptian and Gulf state programmes (Merdad, 1993).

With respect to the social gratification cluster, the findings in the table show that the children obtain lower social gratifications averages from the media in comparison to the learning/information gratifications cluster. However, other than foreign videogame materials, they give the rest of the mainly foreign videotape materials as well as Arab TV, Saudi TV and foreign TV similar higher averages of 44.1%, 43.4%, 43.3% and 41.5% respectively. The reasons for videogame materials receiving the lowest average for the cluster is due to their lack of story line (Kinder, 1993), and they "bear little resemblance to reality" (Poole, 2000, 16), making them less attractive for discussion as well as having characters and situations remote to social reality in comparison to the other materials. This result is consistent with the role model cluster in table 6.1, as will be discussed further.

In the social gratifications cluster, it was not surprising that in a conservative country such as Saudi Arabia *"socialising with peers"* receives the highest percentages from the children with foreign video and TV materials. As a result of the sensitivity of the content, they are most likely to contain obscene images contrary to Islamic family values, thereby making these materials unpopular for discussion with the families. This is due to the fact that as Saudi parents usually express strong disapproval of their children' "viewing and imitating of horror, violent and pornographic scenes as well as

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learning and adopting behavioural habits which (are) inconsistent with their cultural lifestyles and religion" (Abuzinada, 1988, 202).

In respect of the cluster regarding the release-gratifications, the children received most gratifications from foreign video and video game materials with averages of 52.2% and 52.1% while receiving least gratifications from the cluster of Saudi materials with an average of 44.1%, accompanied by foreign TV materials of 46.6%. The reason for this result may be that video and videogame materials require participation and involvement from the children, which in turn substitutes the remoteness of the foreign language while drawing attention to the fact that Saudi materials lack content and form. According to Mishmishi (1993) "Saudi television uses mainly wide shots in local programmes, failing to comprehend the importance of the coherence between stylistic dazzling content and high quality direction and production" (Mishmishi, 1993, 145). This makes Saudi TV materials unattractive for involvement in spite of the language advantages.

In the arousal/escape gratifications cluster, the children stated that *"alleviating boredom"*, *"passing time"* and then *"excitement"* were the most important gratifications received. Basically, in Saudi Arabia outdoor activities to alleviate boredom, pass time and be ecstatic offer limited scope so young people spend their leisure time primarily at home watching television (Al-Sadhan, 1994). On the other hand, the children reported gratification from *"loneliness"* and all the variables for *"escape"* at the bottom of the list of reasons for exposure. This is, in fact, contrary to the claims of some social scientists such as Katz & Foulkes (1962) and McQuail (1998) who suggested the notion of *"escape"* to each and every step in the

psychological course of attending to the mass media (Katz & Foulkes 1962, McQuail, 1998). Since Saudi society is family orientated and solitude is highly discouraged responses to these variables were low in general. A similar situation prevails elsewhere in the Arab world. A study focusing on Egypt by Misbah (1991) stated, "Egyptians are not "escapist" viewers as the cluster of 'Forget/Escape' received the lowest mode" in the study (Misbah, 1991, 94).

The children gained most gratification in this cluster from foreign video, TV, videogame materials and Arab materials with close averages of 38.4%, 37.9%, 37% and 35.2%, whereas Saudi materials gave the lowest gratifications with an average of 32.5%. Nevertheless, it was close to the percentage for Arab materials. Programmes of foreign content were deemed more exciting and dynamic than Arab and Saudi materials on account of the latter's poor technology and cheap budgeting. In addition, they fell under the general frame of the Arab media's of glorifying the authoritative ruling system (Adeeb, 1998). In fact, the drab presentation and limited scope of issues covered on Saudi television mean that it has increasingly been rejected. Moreover, Saudi television was commonly referred to as "'ghasb' (force-feeding) Channel 1 and 'ghasb' Channel 2" (Yamani, 2000, 19). Also, Al-najai (1982) found in his study that Saudi TV was infrequently used by the children to seek 'affective needs'. Indeed, the foreign media have supremacy in quality and quantity and introduce themselves as the only alternative, identified as an external hegemonic order (Al-shal, 1998).

Gender & Gratifications Obtained from Utilising Visual Media Materials

Dealing with the cluster of learning/information gratifications in table 5.2, gender differences are noticeable. The majority of the Saudi female children give the highest averages for the learning/information gratifications cluster, to almost all materials

Table (5.2) Gender & Gratifications Obtained from Media Materials' Utilisation

Media materials	Saudi TV materials		Arab TV materials		Foreign TV materials		Video materials		Videogame materials	
	Gender		Gender		Gender		Gender		Gender	
Gratifications	M %	F %	M %	F %	M %	F %	M %	F %	M %	F %
Learning things of interest	72 61.0%	75 63.0%	68 57.6%	74 62.2%	63 53.4%	72 60.5%	60 50.8%	68 57.1%	61 51.7%	47 39.5%
Learning from others' experience	70 59.3%	69 58.0%	63 53.4%	71 59.7%	59 50.0%	53 44.5%	55 46.6%	68 57.1%	56 47.5%	55 46.2%
Learning problem solving	64 54.2%	74 62.2%	60 50.8%	69 58.0%	51 43.2%	51 42.9%	56 47.5%	68 57.1%	50 42.4%	29 24.4%
Learning ethics	61 51.7%	73 61.3%	53 44.9%	66 55.5%	50 42.4%	66 55.5%	46 39.0%	64 53.8%	50 42.4%	36 30.3%
Learning/information gratification average	56.6%	61.1%	51.7%	58.9%	47.3%	50.9%	46%	56.3%	46%	35.1%
Socialising with peers	50 42.4%	52 43.7%	55 46.6%	53 44.5%	58 49.2%	60 50.4%	60 50.8%	61 51.3%	61 51.7%	45 37.8%
Socialising with family	52 44.1%	62 52.1%	50 42.4%	52 43.7%	41 34.7%	49 41.2%	49 41.5%	57 47.9%	46 39.0%	41 34.5%
Occurrence of screened problems in real life	42 35.6%	54 45.4%	44 37.3%	60 50.4%	46 39.0%	51 42.9%	45 38.1%	50 42.0%	41 34.7%	27 22.7%
Resemblance of screened situations to real life	41 34.7%	57 47.9%	46 39.0%	51 42.9%	44 37.3%	44 37.0%	44 37.3%	52 43.7%	42 35.6%	24 20.2%
Social gratifications average	39.2%	47.3%	41.3%	45.4%	40.1%	42.9%	41.9%	46.2%	40.3%	28.8%
Enjoyment	65 55.1%	65 54.6%	69 58.5%	73 61.3%	64 54.2%	78 65.5%	72 61.0%	78 65.5%	73 61.9%	71 59.7%
As a habit	57 48.3%	41 34.5%	57 48.3%	46 38.7%	56 47.5%	47 39.5%	64 54.2%	45 37.8%	70 59.3%	48 40.3%
For relaxation	47 39.8%	38 31.9%	51 43.2%	44 37.0%	40 33.9%	46 38.7%	58 49.2%	54 45.4%	60 50.8%	48 40.3%
Release gratifications average	47.7%	40.3%	50%	45.7%	45.2%	47.9%	54.8%	49.6%	57.3%	46.8%
Alleviating boredom	67 56.8%	69 58.0%	58 49.2%	65 54.6%	67 56.8%	81 68.1%	59 50.0%	71 59.7%	69 58.5%	63 52.9%
Passing time	60 50.8%	55 46.2%	76 64.4%	71 59.7%	54 45.8%	66 55.5%	66 55.9%	63 52.9%	68 57.6%	63 52.9%
Excitement	50 42.4%	47 39.5%	61 51.7%	52 43.7%	65 55.1%	73 61.3%	67 56.8%	74 62.2%	67 56.8%	61 51.3%
Increasing self-esteem by increasing insight	54 45.8%	66 55.5%	60 50.8%	64 53.8%	64 54.2%	66 55.5%	53 44.9%	62 52.1%	54 45.8%	39 32.8%
Deflecting anger	49 41.5%	49 41.2%	52 44.1%	48 40.3%	56 47.5%	54 45.4%	53 44.9%	53 44.5%	64 54.2%	52 43.7%
Attractiveness of screened characters	44 37.3%	34 28.6%	46 39.0%	50 42.0%	53 44.9%	62 52.1%	59 50.0%	62 52.1%	67 56.8%	51 42.9%
Relating to a particular screened character	44 37.3%	37 31.1%	49 41.5%	45 37.8%	52 44.1%	50 42.0%	66 55.9%	58 48.7%	59 50.0%	37 31.1%
Loneliness	44 37.3%	32 26.9%	46 39.0%	30 25.2%	37 31.4%	28 23.5%	47 39.8%	39 32.8%	48 40.7%	33 27.7%
Escapism from problems with family	26 22.0%	14 11.8%	22 18.6%	14 11.8%	28 23.7%	19 16.0%	25 21.2%	16 13.4%	27 22.9%	14 11.8%
Escapism from problems with teacher	25 21.2%	7 5.9%	20 16.9%	6 5.0%	29 24.6%	17 14.3%	24 20.3%	10 8.4%	30 25.4%	10 8.4%
Escaping from home duties	22 18.6%	7 5.9%	25 21.2%	10 8.4%	24 20.3%	11 9.2%	27 22.9%	9 7.6%	27 22.9%	12 10.1%
Escaping from school work	16 13.6%	5 4.2%	24 20.3%	6 5.0%	15 12.7%	6 5.0%	24 20.3%	6 5.0%	29 24.6%	7 5.9%
Arousal/escape gratifications average	35.4%	29.6%	38.1%	32.3%	38.4%	37.3%	40.2%	36.6%	43%	31%

with the exception of videogame materials. Despite the fact that females do not watch Saudi materials as much as males, as previously discussed, the average for learning/information gratifications of Saudi materials was relatively higher (61.1% for females against 56.6% for males). Whilst males gave close responses to females' with regards to the variables *"learning things of interest"* and *"learning from others' experience"*, they gave a lower response to *"learning how to solve problems"* and *"learning ethics"*. This is not surprising since males command more freedom in the family than females. In Saudi Arabia, "The males enjoy more privileged and democratic treatment from the parents that increases their status inside the family thereby giving them greater personal freedom to study, marry, work and travel" (Al-Saif, 1997, 165). Because of this freedom that males enjoy, they are less likely to receive gratification from *"learning of problem solving"* and *"learning from ethics"*. On the other hand, parents' treatment of females is still influenced by attitudes that force females to mentally adapt to family and societal values. Moreover, it demands that females always show obedience to males, thus restricting their (females) freedom and constraining them to the supervision and authority of the family. This is to make them behave in an acceptable manner in order to maintain their reputations and not dishonour their family (Al-baker, 1990, Al-khateeb, 1990). In addition to Saudi materials, all of the learning/information gratifications cluster in Arab, video and, to a lesser extent foreign TV materials, were valued more highly by the females with 58.9%, 56.3% and 50.9% respectively. Because females in Saudi society are restricted to the private sphere as they spend more time at home, television and video materials gratify intentional information viewing. This result is compatible with the Egyptian findings of Misbah (1991) who stated that Egyptian females seek to gratify intentional informational viewing more than the males because "Women in Egyptian society are

still socially isolated to some extent …This in turn make these women turn to television as an available source of information." (Misbah, 1991, 127). However, although Saudi females give the foreign TV materials' learning/information gratifications cluster a higher average than Saudi males, the differences in results were insignificant. Both gave close responses to the variable *"learning of problem solving"* with 43.2% and 42.9% respectively. This is most probably because the problems presented on foreign TV materials are unrelated to the genders' social context. Nevertheless, Saudi males' exposure to the public sphere is greater than the females'. This subsequently enabled males to receive higher gratifications from the variable *"learning from others' experience"* in foreign TV materials than the females. Moreover, Saudi male children value the cluster of learning/information gratifications for videogame materials with an average of 46% more than Saudi female children whose average was only 35.1%. This is due to the fact that Saudi males are more highly exposed to videogames than females, as can be seen in table 2.11. However, females gave an almost equal percentage to the variable *"learning from others' experience"* in videogame materials, most probably because many of the video game characters fight back in self defence, which is attractive to females who do not enjoy equality of power because Saudi society is male orientated and "males are granted power over the females." (Al-saif, 1997, 186).

Regarding the cluster on social gratifications, differences between genders are significant. While the males report receiving equal averages from all media materials, female responses are varied. They obtain higher social gratifications than males from most of the media materials while receiving equal or lower social gratifications from the others. They give Saudi, foreign video and Arab materials equal averages of 47.3%, 46.2% and 45.4%. These ratings are higher than those of the males'. As

discussed earlier, this can be explained by the fact that the males are more exposed to the public sphere. They can obtain first hand experience of the outside world while the females use media materials as their window to the outside world. Compared to the males, they also stay longer in the private sphere and their family ties are more developed. The males, therefore, rate the variable *"socialising with family"* less important than the females who report the variable of *"occurrences of screened problems in real life"* slightly higher than the males, even though both genders rate foreign TV materials more or less equally. However, some of the materials that are sensitive to family values are more safely discussed with peers, therefore, both genders obtain equal gratifications from *"socialising with peers"* with most of the materials. But again the males, as usual, receive higher social gratifications from foreign videogame materials than the females.

With the exception of foreign TV materials where both genders report equal averages on the release gratifications cluster, males receive higher gratifications with the other media whether they be videogame, video, Arab or Saudi materials with averages of 57.3%, 54.8%, 50% and 47.7% than the females who reported 46.8%, 49.6%, 45.7% and 40.3% only and correspondingly. However, the females seem to receive more gratifications with the variable *"enjoyment"* than males for they reported higher figures with respect to foreign TV and video materials, or at least equal gratification with regard to the rest of the media in spite of the fact that they do not use Saudi or foreign video game materials as much as males. Unlike females, the more fortunate Saudi males are encouraged to participate in other activities such as sports from which they can derive enjoyment. According to Yamani (2000), they enjoy wider choices in life whereas for females choices are restrained and limited. For them, everything is either sinful or shameful (Yamani, 2000). The males are less likely to use foreign TV

materials for *"relaxation"* in comparison to the females. Foreign TV materials do not require involvement unlike video and videogame materials which require physical involvement as well as Saudi and Arab materials which require language involvement. This can be helpful for males when returning from the public sphere charged to release this energy through participation and involvement.

The findings on the arousal/escape gratifications cluster show that Saudi males receive higher gratifications from almost all media materials with the exception of foreign TV materials. Males report obtaining more gratifications in this cluster with the video game, video, Arab and Saudi materials with averages of 43%, 40.2%, 38.1% and 35.4% respectively than the females whose ratings are 31%, 36.6%, 32.3% and 29.6% correspondingly. Generally speaking, the females are less hegemonic on the materials than the males (of table 2.5). They are less likely to be excused from *'escaping'* difficulties than the males who are permitted more freedom and control. This also explains why although both genders report receiving equal gratification from foreign TV materials with averages of 38.4% from the males and 37.3% from the females, in comparison to the males, the females received more gratifications from the materials to " *alleviate boredom"*, *"pass time"*, *"excitement"* and from the *"attractiveness of the foreign TV characters"*. They also obtain more gratifications from video materials with the variables *"boredom"*, *"excitement"* and *"increasing self-esteem by increasing insight"*. Moreover, they obtain greater satisfaction from Arab materials for *"alleviating boredom"* and from Saudi materials *"to increase self-esteem by increasing insight"* as much as the males. This is to be expected for their lives are centred around the private sphere where little activity takes place. The reason for this is that the Youth Trust "in Saudi society cares more about males than females.

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It provides for the former activities and entertainment services" while neglecting the latter, leaving them with no other option but the media to satisfy their aspirations (Al-Saif, 1997, 269).

Social Class & Gratifications Obtained from Utilising Media Materials

Table 5.3 shows differences among the socio-economic classes in the Kingdom with respect to their response to gratifications obtained from different visual media materials. With regard to the learning/information gratifications cluster, there is a direct relationship between the status of the social class and the gratification obtained from the materials. The higher the social status, the greater the learning/information gratifications obtained from foreign materials. Conversely, the average of learning/information gratifications in Saudi materials is highest in the lower social class (69.3%), followed by the middle class with a relatively lower average of 63% whereas the upper class report an average of only 36.7%. On the other hand, although close to the Saudi materials responses, the middle class report the highest average of learning/information gratifications in Arab materials in comparison to the other two classes, while the upper class reported the highest average for foreign TV materials of 60%, in comparison to the middle class's 49.7% and the lower class's 41.9%. Similarly, the upper class replies for the average of video materials learning/information gratifications are the highest, close to those for foreign TV materials. In other words, the higher the social status, the more highly information gratifying foreign materials are valued, while the lower the social status, the more gratifying local information materials are regarded. In Saudi, some knowledge of a Western language, especially English, is the benchmark of the well-educated class, a mark of the new elite. In fact, "Saudi Arabians who are proficient in English are

Table (5.3) Social Class & Gratifications Obtained from Media Materials' Utilisation

Media materials	Saudi TV materials			Arab TV materials			Foreign TV materials			Video materials			Videogame materials		
	Social class			Social class			Social class			Social class			Social class		
Gratifications	Up. %	Mi. %	Lo. %	Up. %	Mi. %	Lo. %	Up. %	Mi. %	Lo. %	Up. %	Mi. %	Lo. %	Up. %	Mi. %	Lo. %
Learning things of interest	19 31.7%	55 67.9%	73 76.0%	32 53.3%	51 63.0%	59 61.5%	41 68.3%	47 58.0%	47 49.0%	36 60.0%	44 54.3%	48 50.0%	25 41.7%	39 48.1%	44 45.8%
Learning from others' experience	23 38.3%	45 55.6%	71 74.0%	32 53.3%	52 64.2%	50 52.1%	33 55.0%	40 49.4%	39 40.6%	38 63.3%	46 56.8%	39 40.6%	26 43.3%	47 58.0%	38 39.6%
Learning problem solving	26 43.3%	49 60.5%	63 65.6%	32 53.3%	49 60.5%	48 50.0%	36 60.0%	30 37.0%	36 37.5%	35 58.3%	42 51.9%	47 49.0%	23 38.3%	34 42.0%	22 22.9%
Learning ethics	20 33.3%	55 67.9%	59 61.5%	28 46.7%	45 55.6%	46 47.9%	33 55.0%	44 54.3%	39 40.6%	30 50.0%	42 51.9%	38 39.6%	17 28.3%	37 45.7%	32 33.3%
Learning/information gratifications average	36.7%	63%	69.3%	51.7%	60.8%	52.9%	60%	49.7%	41.9%	57.9%	53.7%	44.8%	37.9%	48.5%	35.4%
Socialising with peers	16 26.7%	33 40.7%	53 55.2%	21 35.0%	38 46.9%	49 51.0%	32 53.3%	47 58.0%	39 40.6%	39 65.0%	40 49.4%	42 43.8%	25 41.7%	41 50.6%	40 41.7%
Socialising with family	17 28.3%	39 48.1%	58 60.4%	20 33.3%	33 40.7%	49 51.0%	22 36.7%	36 44.4%	32 33.3%	25 41.7%	38 46.9%	43 44.8%	21 35.0%	32 39.5%	34 35.4%
Occurrence of screened problems in real life	17 28.3%	35 43.2%	44 45.8%	25 41.7%	42 51.9%	37 38.5%	33 55.0%	30 37.0%	34 35.4%	32 53.3%	31 38.3%	32 33.3%	15 25.0%	24 29.6%	29 30.2%
Resemblance of screened situations to real life	17 28.3%	32 39.5%	49 51.0%	25 41.7%	36 44.4%	36 37.5%	35 58.3%	28 34.6%	25 26.0%	34 56.7%	30 37.0%	32 33.3%	18 30.0%	22 27.2%	26 27.1%
Social gratifications average	27.9%	42.9%	53.1%	37.9%	46.0%	44.5%	50.8%	43.5%	33.8%	54.2%	42.9%	38.8%	32.9%	36.7%	33.6%
Enjoyment	18 30.0%	48 59.3%	64 66.7%	35 58.3%	53 65.4%	54 56.3%	47 78.3%	53 65.4%	42 43.8%	43 71.7%	61 75.3%	46 47.9%	36 60.0%	61 75.3%	47 49.0%
As a habit	16 26.7%	33 40.7%	49 51.0%	24 40.0%	38 46.9%	41 42.7%	33 55.0%	34 42.0%	36 37.5%	37 61.7%	40 49.4%	32 33.3%	32 53.3%	43 53.1%	43 44.8%
For relaxation	16 26.7%	34 42.0%	35 36.5%	18 30.0%	40 49.4%	37 38.5%	31 51.7%	32 39.5%	23 24.0%	35 58.3%	40 49.4%	37 38.5%	28 46.7%	49 60.5%	31 32.3%
Release gratifications average	27.8%	47.3%	51.4%	42.8%	53.9%	45.9%	61.7%	49%	35.1%	63.9%	58%	39.9%	53.3%	63.9%	42%
Alleviating boredom	19 31.7%	56 69.1%	61 63.5%	26 43.3%	48 59.3%	49 51.0%	42 70.0%	56 69.1%	50 52.1%	39 65.0%	46 56.8%	45 46.9%	33 55.0%	57 70.4%	42 43.8%
Passing time	21 35.0%	42 51.9%	52 54.2%	36 60.0%	54 66.7%	57 59.4%	42 70.0%	46 56.8%	32 33.3%	39 65.0%	52 64.2%	38 39.6%	34 56.7%	59 72.8%	38 39.6%
Excitement	18 30.0%	35 43.2%	44 45.8%	25 41.7%	48 59.3%	40 41.7%	43 71.7%	51 63.0%	44 45.8%	42 70.0%	58 71.6%	41 42.7%	37 61.7%	53 65.4%	38 39.6%
Increasing self-esteem by increasing insight	16 26.7%	45 55.6%	59 61.5%	27 45.0%	44 54.3%	53 55.2%	35 58.3%	45 55.6%	50 52.1%	24 40.0%	49 60.5%	42 43.8%	20 33.3%	38 46.9%	35 36.5%
Deflecting anger	14 23.3%	36 44.4%	48 50.0%	19 31.7%	42 51.9%	39 40.6%	28 46.7%	40 49.4%	42 43.8%	30 50.0%	36 44.4%	40 41.7%	26 43.3%	53 65.4%	37 38.5%
Attractiveness of screened characters	14 23.3%	28 34.6%	36 37.5%	22 36.7%	38 46.9%	36 37.5%	39 65.0%	40 49.4%	36 37.5%	39 65.0%	45 55.6%	37 38.5%	26 43.3%	47 58.0%	45 46.9%
Relating to a particular screened character	15 25.0%	29 35.8%	37 38.5%	22 36.7%	34 42.0%	38 39.6%	28 46.7%	37 45.7%	37 38.5%	37 61.7%	51 63.0%	36 37.5%	22 36.7%	43 53.1%	31 31.3%
Loneliness	12 20.0%	25 30.9%	39 40.6%	12 20.0%	24 29.6%	40 41.7%	16 26.7%	17 21.0%	32 33.3%	23 38.3%	28 34.6%	35 36.5%	16 26.7%	35 43.2%	30 31.3%
Escapism from problems with family	8 13.3%	14 17.3%	18 18.8%	6 10.0%	14 17.3%	16 16.7%	12 20.0%	15 18.5%	20 20.8%	15 25.0%	10 12.3%	16 16.7%	11 18.3%	16 19.8%	14 14.6%
Escapism from problems with teacher	4 6.7%	9 11.1%	19 19.8%	6 10.0%	9 11.1%	11 11.5%	9 15.0%	14 17.3%	23 24.0%	12 20.0%	11 13.6%	11 11.5%	9 15.0%	14 17.3%	17 17.7%
Escaping from home duties	6 10.0%	10 12.3%	13 13.5%	8 13.3%	10 12.3%	17 17.7%	7 11.7%	13 16.0%	15 15.6%	14 23.3%	8 9.9%	14 14.6%	10 16.7%	15 18.5%	14 14.6%
Escaping from school work	4 6.7%	9 11.1%	8 8.3%	5 8.3%	11 13.6%	14 14.6%	7 11.7%	6 7.4%	6 8.3%	11 18.3%	9 11.1%	10 10.4%	10 16.7%	13 16.0%	13 13.5%
Arousal/escape gratifications average	21%	34.8%	37.7%	29.7%	38.7%	35.6%	42.8%	39.1%	33.8%	45.1%	41.5%	31.7%	35.3%	45.6%	30.7%

esteemed while those who, for social and economic .... reasons, fail to master the language are looked down upon as somehow involuntarily trapped in the Saudi Arabia of yesteryear" (Yamani, 2000, 60). Consequently, the higher the class, the more interested it becomes in cultures other than its own and the more its ability to comprehend different dialects and languages. As a result, it subsumes to itself the social context of other influential cultures. Huntington (1996) refers to them as the Davos brigade, who are reasonably fluent in English with extensive international involvement and regular travel outside their own country. These people generally share beliefs, which are common among people in Western societies (Huntington, 1996). On the other hand, the lower class's understanding and comprehension of different cultures, apart from Saudi culture, are limited through its lower level of social contact with non-Saudis. They are busy with their own world and striving for their own living. With respect to videogame materials, the highest average for learning/information gratifications, although low, was given by the middle class (48.5%) in comparison to almost equal responses from the upper and lower classes of 37.9% and 35.4% respectively. The rationale behind this is that the middle class is more highly exposed to this medium than the other classes because the families find it suitable for viewing as mentioned. Moreover, the middle class seems to receive more gratifications from the variable *"learning of ethics"* from all media materials than the other two classes. This is probably because the middle class derives its identity and significance and maybe its legitimacy from leading a restricted life-style, appointing itself as the 'watch dog' on the rest of the society and the guardian of morality and virtue.

The findings of the social gratifications cluster reveals that there are more differences than similarities among the classes. For the second time, it may be noted that the lower the class the higher the social gratifications obtained from Saudi materials. The lower class report receiving the highest social gratifications from Saudi materials with an average of 53.1% while obtaining the least from foreign video and TV materials of 38.8% and 33.8%. In contrast, while giving Saudi materials the least average of 27.9% the upper class gives the highest averages for social gratifications to foreign video and TV materials with 54.2% and 50.8% correspondingly. The results in this section, especially with the variables *"occurrences of screened problems in real life"* and *"resemblance of screened situations to real life"* conform with that of table 6.3 where the upper class gave the highest averages in role models, behaviours and leisure clusters to the foreigners in foreign TV as well as in video materials and in real life. This is due to the fact that this class also holds positive judgements on foreign TV and video materials as discussed before. This national bourgeoisie, according to Amin (1977) and Ahmed (2002), alienates and detaches itself from its local culture, which it looks down upon, to pursue a stronger one (Amin, 1977, Ahmed, 2002).

The middle class receive almost equal social gratifications from Arab, Saudi and all foreign video and TV materials. Unlike the Westernised upper class and the localised lower class, middle class identity is ambivalent, fluctuating between the two classes, as discussed in table 4.3, reflecting a socio-orientated character. Nevertheless, the class receives greater gratifications from foreign TV materials with the variables *"socialising with peers"* and *"socialising with family"* than the upper class. Unlike the upper class that may not find foreign TV materials challenging as much as the Internet or video, the middle class regards them as offering their only access to unconventional issues because their families exercise stronger control on more

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challenging media to social norms. However, it receives fewer social gratifications from foreign videogame materials, close in this respect to the lower class average and slightly higher than that of the upper class. This is not surprising as videogame materials are not compatible with the social reality as will be discussed in table 6.3. They are unattractive for social gratifications.

Regarding the cluster on release gratifications, the classes vary considerably in their responses. Again, the higher the class, the greater its gratifications with the cluster. The upper class receives the greater gratifications from foreign video and TV materials with averages of 63.9% and 61.7%, while receiving fewer from Saudi materials with an average of 27.8%. Conversely, the lower class obtains its highest gratification from Saudi materials, whilst deriving its lowest gratifications from foreign materials, especially TV. As mentioned before, the upper class has greater access to foreign satellite channels and videotapes which show up-to-date trendy programmes in addition to its involvement with foreign culture. The lower class, on the other hand, finds the Saudi content of the programmes best suited to them. As Adeeb (1998) explains, the language and the sharing of common values and cultural systems (Adeeb, 1998) are the main reason for the lower class's responses. Also, these materials on Saudi TV are the most readily available to them unlike the satellite channels. This has made "this incapable stratum settle for local channels" (Al-shal, 1998, 315). Al-sarhan (1981) explains further that this is all that they know and therefore can identify with (Al-sarhan, 1981) for availability is pre-conditioned and a prerequisite to selectivity (Misbah, 1991). The middle class, on the other hand, receives highest gratifications from foreign video game materials with an average of 63.9%, followed by video materials with an average of 58%. The private sphere-

orientated middle class favours video and videogame materials greatly as this class participates least in activities outside the family for they are least exposed to the public sphere due to their strict upbringing. However, the middle class receives slightly higher gratification from the variable *"enjoyment"* from video materials with 75.3% against the upper class's 71.7%. The upper class enjoys wider choices for enjoyment than the middle class and has absolute access to the internet as a dynamic highly involving medium, in comparison to video. It holds access to global culture and information in the palm of its hands because, according to Kirchner (2001), "English is the language of the internet and will continue to be so for the foreseeable future. (Consequently, in the Arab world) only the elites have access" (Kirchner, 2001, 141). Although the middle class obtains fewer gratifications from videogame materials than from the above materials, its gratification was still higher than for both the lower and upper classes. Also, the middle class obtains more gratifications for *"relaxation"* from Saudi materials than the lower class for, in comparison to the other two classes, this class does not regard media materials as an aid to relaxation. This is because the use of media materials is considered by the lower class as a luxury. In fact, as a consequence of the acceleration of the rising spectrum of unemployment, particularly after the Gulf War (1990-91), the economy of the Kingdom has declined and "by early 1998 the economic situation was even more precarious with the price of Saudi crude as low as 11 dollars per barrel. This necessitated a government policy of cutbacks and reduced social security programmes" (Yamani, 2000,72). In turn, this has directly affected the lower stratum of the society

In the cluster of arousal/escape gratifications, consistent with earlier findings, the higher the class the greater the gratifications it receives from foreign video and TV

materials. The upper class reports receiving the least arousal/escape gratifications for Arab and Saudi materials in comparison to the middle and lower classes. However, the upper class receives greater gratifications from foreign video and TV materials with averages of 45.1% and 42.8% in that order, followed by the middle class with 41.5% and 39.1% respectively. The lower class reports receiving the least arousal/escape gratifications from the materials mentioned. Still, access to state-of-the-art technology is limited to the elite who can afford the high costs and identify with their content. To this class, anything else is a second-hand imitation of Western programming that should be left to the less advantageous classes (Ghareeb, 2000, Boyd, 2001). Nevertheless, the middle class receives gratifications from the variable *"alleviating boredom"* of foreign TV materials equal to that of the upper class. Also, it receives the highest gratifications for *"alleviating boredom"* from Saudi and Arab materials, in comparison to the lower class. This is not surprising for this class's interaction is restricted to the private sphere unlike the upper and lower classes as mentioned. Also, the middle class obtains gratifications from *"increasing self-esteem by increasing insight"* equal to that of the upper class from foreign TV materials and even more than the upper class with respect to video materials. This indicates that the upper class, as an elite class, commands self-confidence and hegemony. Yet for the less influential middle class, the more the materials are challenging and revolutionary to the established values, the more the information it receives from them is appreciated and valued. This due to the fact that its access to foreign TV and Video materials is restricted and supervised by parents. The lower class, on the other hand, reports gratification for *"loneliness"* more than that of the upper class from foreign TV materials and equally with video materials. Unlike the upper class child whose life is centred around friends, and the middle class child whose life is focused on family,

the lower class child is deprived of intimate relationships as its family is working class, striving for a living and, therefore, encouraging its children to take their own responsibilities. Moreover, this class receives more gratification from using foreign TV materials as an *"escape from problems with the teacher"* (24%), than the upper class (15%) and the middle class (17.3%). This is because the least advantageous lower class is unlike the upper and middle classes who receive support from members of their household. Teachers, therefore, are wary of unnecessarily exaggerating problems because the parents in these classes often exert influence on school administrators unlike the uneducated lower class family which is incapable of following up their children's progress. In a commentary entitled, *Take Care, Our Child Studying with our Money*, Al-naser (1999) criticises the influence of the upper classes on their children's grades and treatment at schools. Conversely, in comparison to the middle and lower classes, the upper class reports little gratification from foreign TV materials to *"escape from home duties"*. This is due to the fact that in the upper class, nannies and servants take care of the chores at home. Again as expected, the public sphere restricted middle class obtains most gratifications from videogame materials, followed by the upper class and then the lower class.

To summarise, Saudi materials are widely used for learning/information and social gratifications, followed by Arab materials, while the least used materials for these purposes were videogame materials. On the other hand, Saudi materials are the least used for release gratifications and arousal/escape gratifications whereas video materials are used most. With respect to gender, females are higher users of media materials for learning/information and social gratifications. Males mainly used the media materials *"as a habit"*, for *"relaxation"*, *"passing time"*, *"relating to a*

particular character", and against *"loneliness"* and for all the *"escape"* variables. On the other hand, females used media materials in general and foreign TV materials in particular, to obtain *"enjoyment"*, *"excitement"*, for *"alleviating boredom"* and for an *"increase of self-esteem by increasing insight"*. However, both genders share the usage of the materials for *"attractiveness of characters"* and *"deflecting anger"*. With regards to social class, the upper class mainly uses foreign and video materials for gratification while the middle class use all such materials. The middle class identity is ambivalent between the indigenous and the foreign whereas the lower class uses Saudi materials for gratification more than the other classes. Relating to a language is vital in the gratification cause. The lower class understanding of cultures different from the Saudi one is limited. Yet, it derives the least gratification from using Saudi materials for *"relaxation"*. Maybe because this deprived class may find relaxation as a luxury. Moreover, it derives relief from *"loneliness"* more than the elite class from foreign TV materials and equally from video materials, for the scope of establishing intimate relationships is limited because its life is overloaded with responsibilities for survival.

In conclusion, media materials were found to play a major role in gratifying the children's aspirations for learning, socialising, releasing and for arousal. It would be equally interesting to know what part media materials play in relation to the image Saudi children hold of foreigners, Arabs and Saudis.

CHAPTER 11

Images of Lifestyle of Saudis, Arabs and Foreigners in Reality & Media

This chapter examines the remarkable approach regarding cultivation of perceptions of social reality. Yet, in contrast to George Gerbner who claims that viewers are cultivated since they are passive and only watch *'by the o'clock'* indiscriminately, reducing the relevance of genre, I believe that viewers (including children) are active. They watch according to interest which also influences their perceptions of social reality. For this purpose, I asked the children to report different images of lifestyle on the Saudi TV, Arab TV, foreign TV, video and videogame materials. I also asked them to report their opinions of these images about Saudis, Arabs and foreigners in reality. Thus, I clustered these images of lifestyle into three categories. The first cluster: role model which includes *"physical attractiveness"*, *"fashion"*, *"VIPs"* and *"wealth"*. Second cluster: behaviour such as *"romance"*, *"violence"*, *"boldness"*, *"independence"* and *"competing for status"*. Third cluster: leisure activities which encompass *"adventure"*, *"wild parties"*, *"eating in restaurants"*, *"shopping"* and *"travelling"*. Then, I reduced the argument to the responses of the children who identified these images among the peoples in real life as well as in media materials, since their responses were dominant and also fascinating. Variables such as gender and social class were likewise interesting factors in perceiving these images in reality and media.

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Table (6.1) Images of lifestyle about Foreigners, Arabs and Saudis in Reality and in Visual Media Materials

Lifestyle images	Images of foreigners in real life & in foreign TV materials			Image of foreigners in real life & in videotape materials			Image of foreigners in real life & in videogame materials			Image of Arabs in real life & in Arab TV materials			Image of Saudis in real life & in Saudi TV materials		
	Yes	Other	Total	Yes	Other	Total	Yes	Other	Total	Yes	Other	Total	Yes	Other	Total
Physical attractiveness	104 71.2%	42 28.8%	146 100%	98 67.1%	48 32.9%	146 100%	68 46.6%	78 53.4%	146 100%	66 55.0%	54 45.0%	120 100%	55 42.3%	75 57.7%	130 100%
Fashion	100 74.1%	35 25.9%	135 100%	84 62.2%	51 37.8%	135 100%	58 43.0%	77 57.0%	135 100%	54 52.9%	48 47.1%	102 100%	43 42.2%	59 57.8%	102 100%
(VIPs)	77 68.8%	35 31.2%	112 100%	70 62.5%	42 37.5%	112 100%	41 36.6%	71 63.4%	112 100%	68 63.0%	40 37.0%	108 100%	62 56.9%	47 43.1%	109 100%
Wealthy	35 60.3%	23 39.7%	58 100%	29 50.0%	29 50.0%	58 100%	20 34.5%	38 65.5%	58 100%	44 53.7%	38 46.3%	82 100%	53 52.0%	49 48.0%	102 100%
Role Model Average	68.6%	31.4%	100%	60.5%	39.5%	100%	40.2%	59.8%	100%	56.2%	43.8%	100%	48.4%	51.6%	100%
Romantic	106 67.1%	52 32.9%	158 100%	105 66.5%	53 33.5%	158 100%	52 32.9%	106 67.1%	158 100%	51 50.0%	51 50.0%	102 100%	44 50.6%	43 49.4%	87 100%
Violent	82 62.1%	50 37.9%	132 100%	77 58.3%	55 41.7%	132 100%	67 50.8%	65 49.2%	132 100%	24 53.3%	21 46.7%	45 100%	9 30.0%	21 70..0%	30 100%
Bold	75 50.3%	74 49.7%	149 100%	85 57.0%	64 43.0%	149 100%	55 36.9%	94 63.1%	149 100%	52 47.3%	58 52.7%	110 100%	58 47.5%	64 52.5%	122 100%
Independent	57 47.1%	64 52.9%	121 100%	64 52.9%	57 47.1%	121 100%	40 33.1%	81 66.9%	121 100%	33 39.8%	50 60.2%	83 100%	34 39.1%	53 60.9%	87 100%
Competitive for status	56 43.4%	73 56.6%	129 100%	60 46.5%	69 53.5%	129 100%	59 45.7%	70 54.3%	129 100%	35 40.2%	52 59.8%	87 100%	28 35.0%	52 65.0%	80 100%
Behaviour Average	54.0%	46.0%	100%	56.2%	43.8%	100%	39.9%	60.1%	100%	46.1%	53.9%	100%	40.4%	59.6%	100%
Adventure	111 59.4%	76 40.6%	187 100%	119 63.6%	68 36.4%	187 100%	100 53.5%	87 46.5%	187 100%	48 50.5%	47 49.5%	95 100%	41 43.2%	54 56.8%	95 100%
Wild parties	94 60.3%	62 39.7%	156 100%	84 53.8%	72 46.2%	156 100%	51 32.7%	105 67.3%	156 100%	41 47.7%	45 52.3%	86 1000%	24 34.8%	45 65.2%	69 100%
Eating in restaurants	69 50.0%	72 50.0%	141 100%	76 55.1%	65 44.9%	141 100%	48 34.8%	93 65.2%	141 100%	48 55.8%	88 44.2%	136 100%	42 45.2%	92 54.8%	134 100%
Shopping	77 49.4%	79 50.6%	156 100%	82 52.6%	74 47.4%	156 100%	44 28.2%	112 71.8%	156 100%	78 48.4%	83 51.6%	161 100%	77 47.2%	86 52.8%	163 100%
Travelling	63 44.7%	75 55.3%	138 100%	74 52.5%	64 47.5%	138 100%	53 37.6%	85 62.4%	138 100%	65 47.8%	21 52.2%	86 100%	53 39.6%	40 60.4%	93 100%
Leisure Average	52.8%	47.2%	100%	55.5%	44.5%	100%	37.4%	62.6%	100%	50.0%	50.0%	100%	42.0%	58.0%	100%

Children's Images of Saudis, Arabs and foreigners in Reality and Media

In table 6.1, the image children have of foreigners in real life and in foreign TV and video materials is with the highest averages for the clusters of role models, behaviours and leisure activity. On the other hand, the image they have for the Arabs in real life and in Arab TV materials and indeed Saudis in reality and in Saudi TV materials is with the lowest ratings to the clusters.

Regarding the role model cluster, the image children have of foreigners in real life and in foreign TV and video materials is with the highest average while the image they have of the Saudis in reality and in Saudi TV materials is with the lowest average. The image children have of role model regarding the foreigners in reality and in foreign TV is with an average rating of 68.6%, followed by 60.5% in reality and in foreign video materials. This is despite the fact that the image children have of them in reality and in videogame materials is with the lowest average of 40.2%. The reason behind the order of this result is that the more up-to-date the information is, as in the case of foreign TV, the higher the percentage for role model. On the other hand, videogames are considered fictional and therefore children do not consider them realistic and do not receive social gratifications from them as mentioned in table 5.1. As videogames represent a virtual reality, their ability to reflect role model images of reality are low (Shapiro, 1992, Biocca, 1992, Mcdonial, 1992). In a recent study on American children, Valkenbury and Janssen (1999) found that the primary reason for watching entertainment programmes on TV was because children believed they were *"real"*. Also, the medium of video cannot compete with that of TV for the former lacks the immediacy, presentation and feeling of a sharing of events. Unlike TV video marginalises the follow up on characters and events (Al-Hadidi 1985). This is why children likewise receive more learning/information gratifications from foreign TV

materials in comparison to the mainly foreign video materials as discussed in table 5.1.

Hence, the image children have of foreigners with the variable *"fashion"* in reality and in foreign TV materials is placed on top of the cluster, followed by the variables *"physical attractiveness"* and *"VIPs"*. This order is reversed with foreign video materials, when they identify foreigners with the variables *"fashion"* and *"VIPs"* second. In any case, Al-khoury, (1997) argues that physical appearance attracts Arab children in their search of a role model - best to aspire, the looks and beauty (Al-Khoury 1997). At the same time, according to Al-yahya (1991), the visual media glorify stars and cultivate in the minds of the child that dancers, actors, football players and politicians are more important than scientists, engineers, teachers and doctors. Moreover, old used cars and old clothes are regarded as queer, to be ridiculed and changed for something up-to-date and fashionable, otherwise a person will be considered backwards, old and out-of-date (Al-yahya, 1991). In fact, Yamani (2000) also states that Western fashions, inspired by satellite television and the US dominated global culture, compete with Saudi culture and national dress. "The dresses they wear …represent the complexity and tension of this situation" (Yamani, 2000, 8).

Generally, when a society admires the civilisation of another, as Al-khamis (2001) explains, this admiration will include the lifestyle of the civilised society which will lead the admiring society to imitate the admired in its dress, housing and all other matters including beauty. Thus, physical attractiveness is subject to the image created in the civilised society. The view, therefore, of the Western appearance, which was considered ugly in the past, is now considered the most physically attractive. This is due to the effect of modern Western civilisation on the society. This is because, Al-khamis asserts, "the winners for the civilisation providers are those who dominate the

political, economic and social decisions. Those winners are the ones who deserve to establish beauty standards" (Al-khamis, 2001, 77).

This idea of inferiority is also reflected in the Arab world in a study conducted by Al-Khoury (1997) on Lebanese young people. She found that they succumbed to the lure of Western physical appearance, which they obtain from Western TV characters. Two thirds of the Lebanese sample took this view while the Arab appearances were only favoured by one third (Al-khoury, 1997). There is also a feeling among her sample that fashion deceives its user that s/he is better off and more civilised. This feeling flows from the Western countries which are universally revered in modern times. And fashion plays a part in setting trends to modernity and in inviting adherents to have a feeling of superiority. She stated further, "and the blind imitation that the Lebanese society falls under reflects the suppressed desire to compensate for the lost time. With fashion they change and disguise their backwardness. It, therefore, pushes them along to the surface of the society" (Al-khoury, 1997: 90).

Bisher (1994) also views the call to imitate Western fashion and the drowning of the Muslim lands with it as a dangerous trend because dress represents the national identity of a country. Each nation has its own clothes and Bisher fears that external imitation will lead to internal imitation of values, tradition and religion (1994).

This is perhaps why, in the result, the image children have of the role model of Arabs in reality and in Arab TV materials is lower than that they have of foreigners, for they report the Arabs with an average of 56.2%. However, the image children have of the Saudis in real life and in Saudi TV materials is the lowest with an average of only

48.4%. Nevertheless, the images they have of both Arabs and Saudis in reality and in media as *"VIPs"* were with the top percentages in comparison to the other role models. This is perhaps the reason why Al-shal (1998) views VIPs in the Arab world as authoritative propaganda (Al-shal, 1998). According to Mursi (1995), however, the other role models are pale Western imitations whether in reality or on the screen (Mursi, 1995). The imitation of the Western model on Arab media is superficial and artificial. Al-hadidi (1996) cites for example, "colouring the hair on the screen to appear blond and wearing unsuitable dresses that are not convenient to the Eastern tradition" (Al-hadidi, 1996, 186) whereas the true essence of the Western culture (*magna charta*) is neglected.

Nonetheless, while the images children have of Arabs in reality and in Arab TV materials with the variables *"physical attractiveness"*, *"wealth"* and *"fashion"* are second in the cluster, the images they have of Saudis in real life and in Saudi TV materials with the variables *"physical attractiveness"* and *"fashion"* are third. This is not surprising since Saudi Arabia, unlike other Arab countries, follows the Islamic *Sharia* where women's beauty and fashion are not approved in the public sphere, a concept that is relatively reflected in Saudi TV materials. One of the rules of Saudi TV programmes is that women should not appear indecently dressed (Abuzinada 1988, Al-kharaiji, 1993).

Nevertheless, this policy is still not fully implemented as the image children have of Saudis in reality and in Saudi TV materials are 42.3% for *"beauty"* and 42.2% for *"fashion"*. Although the Ministry of Information forbids female broadcasters and actresses from beautification, it does not enforce the policy religiously. Hamad (1983)

states, "in spite of all the rules, they beautify themselves and if they wear the veil, it is decorated and colourful revealing features of their bodies and their faces are covered with a thick layer of what all the beauty companies have produced of make up and colours" (Hamad, 1983, 37). (For more details refer to the section on media and censorship guidelines in chapter 2).

In the behavioural cluster, the table shows that the children's exposure to media is related to the created perceptions of foreigners, Arabs and Saudis. The image children have of foreigners in reality and in foreign video and TV materials for the behavioural cluster are the highest and with equal averages of 56.2% and 54% respectively while the image they have of them in real life and in videogame materials is with the lowest average. On the other hand, the behavioural image children have of Arabs in reality and in Arab TV materials and especially the Saudis in real life and in Saudi TV materials are with the lowest averages of 46.1% and 40.4% respectively.

Still in the Arab world, the Arab media and particularly the Saudi medium impose censorship guidelines on behaviours that they do not regard as consistent with the values of the Arab societies, and that are considered alien to tradition unlike Western media policy. According to Al-qorashi (1998), "The Western foreign societies are not controlled by restrictions and ethics and their social values are broadcast to our nations without any censorship, control or examination" (Al-qorashi, 1998, 75). This is why the *"romantic"* image children have of foreigners in reality and in foreign TV and video materials is on top of the behaviour cluster. Nonetheless, the *"violent"* image they have of them in reality and in foreign TV materials is second in the cluster whereas the *"violent"* and *"bold"* images they have of them are second in real life

and in foreign video materials. The *"violent"* image children have of foreigners is also on the top of the behaviour cluster in reality and in videogame materials. The reason behind this result could be explained by Al-qorashi's (1998) comments that the majority of the media products in the West depend on the elements of open relationships between the sexes, violence and many other negative rebellious values (Al-qorashi, 1998).

In Arab countries, media moguls introduced the arousal and violent elements from the West because they realise it is financially profitable. Therefore, they ensure their productions embrace such (Al-angary, 1992). Hence, although lower than the foreigners, the *"violent"* and *"romantic"* images children have of Arabs in real life and in Arab TV materials are on top of the behaviour cluster. Surprisingly, the image children have of the Saudis in reality and in Saudi TV materials as *"romantic"* is also on top of the behavioural cluster. This is despite the fact that amorous relationships are frowned upon publicly and are against Saudi media policy. Nevertheless, romantic relationships are indeed presented on Saudi TV materials in implicit scenes and verbal forms (e.g. love songs). On the other hand, the image children have of Saudis in reality and in Saudi TV materials as *"violent"* is at the bottom of the cluster with 30%. This is not surprising since Saudi media policy forbids the appearance of women in violent situations. However, as observed by Awadalla (2001), "we are not an angelic society". Like the rest of the world, Saudi Arabia is undergoing economic and social change and its crime rate is also rising (Awadalla, 2001, 33).

In the leisure and activities cluster, there are both differences and similarities in the children's image of leisure and activities among foreigners, Arabs and Saudis in real life and those in the various media materials. The images children have of foreigners'

lifestyle in reality and in foreign video and TV materials as full of leisure and activities are with averages of 55.5% and 52.8% respectively, although the image they have of them in reality and in videogame materials is only 37.3% . The image children have of Arabs in reality and in Arab TV materials is with an average of 50%, close to image they have of the foreigners in real life and in foreign TV materials whereas the image they have of Saudis in real life and in Saudi TV materials in leisure activities is only 42%. It may be evident that Arabs and, to a greater extent, Westerners propagate excitement, pleasure and fun in leisure as opposed to the restricted leisure lifestyles of Saudi Arabia. This is why imported Western and Arabic televised culture attracts many youngsters. According to Yamani (2000), "Despite state-sponsored efforts to restrict what can be watched on domestic television there is nonetheless a great variety available on satellite television both Western and Arab channels. The state run media have lost their dominance over young people," (Yamani,2000, 19), especially since sports and cultural activities are limited in the country, as mentioned. Not only do the children perceive foreigners as primarily enjoying *"adventures"* in reality and in foreign video and videogame materials, but they also perceive them as enjoying *"wild parties"* and *"adventures"* in real life and in foreign TV. In fact, a content analysis of American drama as carried out by Rida (1997) found that these adventurous images in drama represent American society as a risk-taking society that accepts danger to make scientific discoveries and to uncover mysteries in space, genetic engineering and the environment. (Rida, 1997). In fact, wild parties, according to Al-yahia (1991), appear both with and without justification in foreign children's cartoons and adults programmes (Al-yahia, 1991). On the other hand, the image children have of the Arabs in reality and in Arab TV materials as *"eating in restaurants"* is on top of the cluster. However, eating in restaurants, Bisher (1991)

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argues, "is an intruding lifestyle to Islamic culture and it is a pure Western style."

These restaurants might have been adapted with good intentions, he explains, but in

the Arab world today they are encouraging the sexes to meet away from their parents.

(Bisher, 1994, 67). On the other hand, and contrary to their image about foreigners

and Arabs, the image children have of the Saudis in reality and in Saudi TV materials

in "wild parties" is at the bottom of the cluster. In Saudi Arabia, Al-khariji (1993)

explains the appearance of women dancing or singing in public in front of non-related

men is not allowed according to Islamic *Sharia* law, a ruling which is also still

strongly reflected in Saudi TV materials (Al-kharaiji, 1993). However, the question is

will the Saudi media join the bandwagon regarding women's appearances as a

desperate action to regain its audience from DBS?

Gender & Images of Saudis, Arabs and foreigners in Reality & Media

In table 6.2, there are many differences between the genders in identifying the

lifestyle images of role models, behaviour and leisure activity clusters among the

foreigners in reality and in foreign TV, video and videogame materials. They also

differed in their perceptions of Saudis in real life and in Saudi TV materials and to a

lesser extent towards Arabs in reality and in Arab TV materials. Contrary to

expectations regarding the role model cluster, the table shows the image males have

of foreigners, Arabs and Saudis and in all visual media materials is with higher

averages than the females. This could be explained by the fact that females, according

to Botta (1999), like to identify social juxtapositions more than males (Botta, 1999);

therefore, their appraisals may be more critical than males when comparing foreign,

Arab and Saudi environments. Also, females in Saudi Arabia are usually exposed to

video media with other people present, as mentioned in table 2.5 where discussions

Table (6.2) Gender & Images of Lifestyle about Foreigners, Arabs and Saudis in Reality and in Visual Media Materials

Lifestyle images	Images of foreigners in real life & in foreign TV materials			Image of foreigners in real life & in videotape materials			Image of foreigners in real life & in videogame materials			Image of Arabs in real life & in Arab TV materials			Image of Saudis in real life & in Saudi TV materials		
	Gender		Total	Gender		Total	Gender		Total	Gender		Total	Gender		Total
	M	F	yes	M	F	yes	M	F	yes	M	F	yes	M	F	yes
Physical attractiveness	54 77.1%	50 65.8%	104 71.2%	50 71.4%	48 63.2%	98 67.1%	40 57.1%	28 36.8%	68 46.6%	31 56.4%	35 53.8%	66 55.0%	30 48.4%	25 36.8%	55 42.3%
Fashion	52 71.2%	48 77.4%	100 74.1%	48 65.8%	36 58.1%	84 62.2%	39 53.4%	19 30.6%	58 43.0%	32 58.2%	22 46.8%	54 52.9%	26 47.3%	17 36.2%	43 42.2%
(VIPs)	32 68.1%	45 69.2%	77 68.8%	28 59.6%	42 64.6%	70 62.5%	18 38.3%	23 35.4%	41 36.6%	33 63.5%	35 62.5%	68 63.0%	33 55.0%	29 59.2%	62 56.9%
Wealthy	21 65.6%	14 53.8%	35 60.3%	17 53.1%	12 46.2%	29 50.0%	13 40.6%	7 26.9%	20 34.5%	22 59.5%	22 48.9%	44 53.7%	26 50.0%	27 54.0%	53 52.0%
Role Model Average	70.5%	66.6%	68.6%	62.5%	58%	60.5%	47.4%	32.4%	40.2%	59.4%	53%	56.2%	50.2%	46.6%	48.4%
Romantic	48 63.2%	58 70.7%	106 67.1%	48 63.2%	57 69.5%	105 66.5%	29 38.2%	23 28.0%	52 32.9%	27 48.2%	24 52.2%	51 50.0%	27 56.3%	17 43.6%	44 50.6%
Violent	37 56.9%	45 67.2%	82 62.1%	35 53.8%	42 62.7%	77 58.3%	39 60.0%	28 41.8%	67 50.8%	15 55.6%	9 50.0%	24 53.3%	8 36.4%	1 12.5%	9 30.0%
Bold	28 43.1%	47 56.0%	75 50.3%	33 50.8%	52 61.9%	85 57.0%	27 41.5%	28 33.3%	55 36.9%	22 37.3%	30 58.8%	52 47.3%	30 47.6%	28 47.5%	58 47.5%
Independent	37 61.7%	20 32.8%	57 47.1%	31 51.7%	33 54.1%	64 52.9%	22 36.7%	18 29.5%	40 33.1%	20 40.8%	13 38.2%	33 39.8%	20 42.6%	14 35.0%	34 39.1%
Competitive for status	28 43.8%	28 43.1%	56 43.4%	32 50.0%	28 43.1%	60 46.5%	37 57.8	22 33.8%	59 45.7%	23 48.9%	12 30.0%	35 40.2%	18 40.0%	10 28.6%	28 35.0%
Behaviour Average	53.7%	54.0%	54.0%	53.9%	58.3%	56.2%	46.8%	33.3%	39.9%	46.2%	45.8%	46.1%	44.6%	33.4%	40.4%
Adventure	53 65.4%	58 54.7%	111 59.4%	54 66.7%	65 61.3%	119 63.6%	46 56.8%	54 50.9%	100 53.5%	25 52.1%	23 48.9%	48 50.5%	21 42.0%	20 44.4%	41 43.2%
Wild parties	51 63.8%	43 56.6%	94 60.3%	43 53.8%	41 53.9%	84 53.8%	30 37.5%	21 27.6%	51 32.7%	22 47.8%	19 47.5%	41 47.7%	15 42.9%	9 26.5%	24 34.8%
Eating in restaurants	33 47.8%	36 52.2%	69 50.0%	35 50.7%	41 59.4%	76 55.1%	26 37.7%	22 31.9%	48 34.8%	27 58.7%	21 52.5%	48 55.8%	22 45.8%	20 44.4%	42 45.2%
Shopping	32 43.2%	45 54.9%	77 49.4%	35 47.3%	47 57.3%	82 52.6%	25 33.8%	19 23.2%	44 28.2%	39 49.4%	39 47.6%	78 48.4%	44 53.0%	33 41.3%	77 47.2%
Travelling	33 46.5%	30 42.9%	63 44.7%	38 53.5%	36 51.4%	74 52.5%	30 42.3%	23 32.9%	53 37.6%	30 47.6%	35 47.9%	65 47.8%	25 37.3%	28 41.8%	53 39.6%
Leisure Average	53.3%	52.3%	52.8%	54.4%	56.7%	55.5%	41.6%	33.3%	37.4%	51.1%	48.9%	50%	44.2%	39.7%	42%

and reflections are more likely to be generated in such settings. On the other hand, males, as Hoffner & Haefner (1997) affirm, are frequently alone when they watch and this independence allows them to formulate television images far more than females (Hoffner, Haefner, 1997).

The image females hold of foreigners in reality and in foreign TV materials as *"fashionable"* takes prime position (77.4%). This is probably because females are more interested in up-to-date fashion than males, as they are more critical than males who may care less about details. Another reason could be that, for females, fashion trends are limited to clothes and make-up, whilst for males fashion may include accessories such as cars, which become part of their scope for showing off. Abdu Salam *et al* (1997) explains that "owning a fashionable car is a great matter in the boys relationship with each other and their relationship with the opposite sex" (Abdu Salam *et al.*, 1997, 33).

Arab society, and especially Saudi society, emphasises the image of the traditional beautiful woman and women feel that as long as they are young and beautiful they still have a chance for upward social mobility. Today, many women are afraid that their traditional beauty becomes undesirable as Western physical appearances become more favoured (Al-kholy, 1984).

Females tend to devalue the beauty of women (Weiss, 2000). This projection could be as a result of their lower self-esteem. A study conducted by McMullen (1984) found that females demonstrated lower physical self-esteem than males. They were less likely than males to agree that they were as attractive as most characters of their own sex on the screen and were less likely than males to be happy with their appearance

and to agree that they were attractive (McMullen, 1984). In fact, females receive more gratifications from media materials to increase self-esteem as discussed in table 5.2 and because they suffer from lower self-esteem, they tend to give lower percentages to beautiful peoples in reality and in all media materials in comparison to the males. Ng (2000) reveals that "this stems from the fact that we live in a patriarchal world whereby the interest of males is perceived to be relentlessly superior." Hence, it is inculcated into females that they are to make sense of their identities via the eyes of the males (Ng, 2000, 14).

Therefore, even though the image both males and females have of Arabs in reality and in Arab TV materials as "VIPs" is with roughly equal percentages of 63.5% and 62.5% respectively, and even the image they have of foreigners as "VIPs" in real life and in foreign TV materials is with similar percentages, females appear to be more interested in "VIPs" than the males. They identify foreigners in reality and in foreign video materials as "VIPs" with higher scores of 64.6% than the males' 59.6%. Further, 35.4% of females likewise identify foreigners in real life and in videogame materials as "VIPs", almost equal to the males' 38.3%. This is despite the fact that their hours of exposure to the materials are less than that of the males. Moreover, they identify the Saudis in reality and in Saudi TV materials as "VIPs" with slightly higher percentage than the males. This result is not unexpected since males exposure to the public sphere makes their lives more exciting and closer to those of the "VIPs" public figures unlike the females whose lives are full of boredom as mentioned before in table 5.2. Hence, the lives of public figures appear less exciting to males than to females. This exemplifies the notion that females tend to glorify "VIPs" because of their feelings of inferiority by living in a patriarchal world which sentences them to

centralise their lives around others while self-confident males tend to centre themselves more around their own egos and less around *"VIPs"* (Ng, 2000). As discussed in the section on gender socialisation in Saudi Arabia, Saudi males are encouraged to be confident unlike the females who are socialised to pay respect and be submissive to their brothers, even if they are younger

The image males have of foreigners and Arabs in reality and in all foreign and Arab TV materials as *"wealthy"* is higher than the image that females have who interestingly identify Saudis in reality and in Saudi TV materials with the variable at a relatively higher percentage (54%) than do the males (50%). Again this is not surprising for females who are less exposed to the public sphere and their perspectives of wealth are limited to the private sphere such as houses and jewellery; on the other hand, wealth, according to males, encompasses far more because in Saudi Arabia commerce is male-orientated while businesswomen's participation in this field is very limited (*The Economist*, 1999). As a result, the males' recognition of wealth was more cognitive than the females'.

In the cluster regarding behavioural images, there are differences between the genders. Even though the average of the behavioural images females have of foreigners in reality and in foreign TV materials is equal to the average of the behavioural images of the males', the average of the behavioural images females have of foreigners is relatively higher in reality and in video materials to that of the males'. However, as usual, the average of behavioural images females have of foreigners in reality and in videogame materials is lower than that of the males'. This is to be

anticipated as they receive more arousal gratifications from video materials and less gratification from videogame materials in comparison to the males (c.f. table 5.2).

The differences between the genders continues as the behavioural image males have of Arabs and Saudis in reality and in Arab and Saudi TV materials are equal whereas the behavioural image females have of Saudis in reality and in Saudi TV materials is lower than the behavioural image they have of Arabs both in reality and in Arab materials. This is again not surprising for, as discussed, Saudi females give the lowest preference to Saudi TV materials than the males. They also receive fewer arousal gratifications from Saudi TV materials than from Arab ones. The so-called *'Women's Programmes'* consist of a 30-minute show broadcast three times a week on Saudi TV. Their main concern is limited to housekeeping chores and cookery. Saudi TV does not consider that female viewers may have other interests. It fails to sustain a broad view of women's interests as a whole (Al-garni, 2000, 2002).

The images females hold of foreigners in reality and in foreign TV and video materials and Arabs in reality and in Arab TV materials as *"romantic"* and *"bold"* are more than those images they hold of Saudis in real life and in Saudi TV materials. This is despite the fact that female exposure to foreign TV, video, and Arab TV materials is more highly controlled by the family members. (c.f. table 2.5).

This result is compatible with a study conducted by Al-oofy & McDaniel (1992) on 100 children in a rural area in Saudi Arabia where they found that females watch more romance on the screen than males. In Saudi Arabia where women's reputations are always at stake, Saudi females "have a sense of their distinctiveness through the media as women ....aware that the social construction of gender roles in Saudi Arabia distinguishes them from other Arab women and radically divides them from Europeans and Americans" (Yamani, 2000, 113-114). This has made them think that

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non-Saudi men are more gentle, romantic and caring and their women are freer (Alumar, 2001). The exposure of Western and Arab stereotypes of romance through TV and video films make females tend to expect more affection than Saudi men are traditionally socialised to show.

Consequently, many families control what their daughters watch. The fear of the influence of Western ethical values on females has also been observed in other non-Western cultures. In two studies conducted in Korea by Kang and Morgan (1990) and Tamorini and Choi (1990), it was stated that Korean females have become more rebellious against their local culture and less conservative about private relationships between the sexes as a result of exposure to western media (Kang & Morgan 1990; Tamorini & Choi 1990).

Nevertheless, Saudi females perceive foreigners in reality and in foreign media materials as less *"independent"* and *"competing for status"* than the males; Moreover, they perceive Arabs in reality and in Arab TV materials and especially Saudis in real life and in Saudi TV materials as the least *"independent"* and *"competing for status"*. This is because women in the Arab world are sustained financially by male relatives (Al-Munajjed, 1997). Furthermore, women in Saudi Arabia were not entitled to separate citizenship cards until recently but were included as dependents on their father's or husband's card which bolster women's economic dependence on men (Al-eqtusadiah, 2002). Yamani (2000) explains further that females in Saudi Arabia "centre themselves within this patriarchal family structure because it is all that they have known." There is also a narrower range of academic and vocational courses and career paths available for them than to men (Yamani, 2000, 95). About 93% of Saudi women are officially unemployed in the Kingdom (Pilkington, 2002).

Males are encouraged by the society to be independent and compete for status in the public sphere and to improve the family economic and social status (Al-saif 1997). The result is compatible with an Egyptian study conducted by Al-jabri &Al-deeb (1998) where males were found to be more competitive for status and more independent than females as a " result of their parents expectation of sex role" (Al-jabri & Al deeb 1998, 310).

Both genders perceive Saudis in reality and in Saudi TV materials as the least *"violent"* in comparison to Arabs and especially to foreigners in reality and in Arab and foreign media materials. However, the males give a higher response than the females in this respect because Saudi TV materials are male orientated where violence on the screen is related to the male sphere, while females find foreigners more *"violent"* in reality and in foreign TV and video materials than the males. Even in Western culture, according to Sander & Studlar (1999), unlike females, males consider some violent actions as action-adventure. "Action-adventure … primarily appeals to young males, looking for physical action on the screen and excitement … and they are largely disliked by the women" (Sander & Studlar, 1999,111). This is due to the fact that action-adventure productions normally involve depictions of aggression, violence, and destruction. (Oliver, 1991).

The cluster regarding leisure activities in reality and in media materials shows both differences and similarities between the males and females in their responses. The males, who play more videogame materials than the females as discussed before, note foreigners in reality and videogame materials with a higher average of 41.6% than the females (33.3%). Nonetheless, both genders give equal and higher averages to them in reality and in foreign TV and video materials. However, the images males have of the

foreigners in reality and in foreign TV and video materials as experiencing "adventures", "wild parties" and "travelling" are more than the image females have who, on the other hand, identify them more with "eating in restaurants" and "shopping" in comparison to the males. Today in Saudi Arabia, Alumar (2001) states, "the girl does not count her father or her brother as a role model but the storming love story and romantic setting in restaurants" where she becomes the centre of care and attention as portrayed on the foreign screen (Alumar, 2001, 33). Females feel less cared for in comparison to males not only in the home but also outside where the efforts of the General Presidency of Youth Supervision are dedicated to the male youth and exclude females. The Ministry of Planning is also derelict in its duties towards females in its failure to establish entertaining and attractive gardens and to build libraries open for them. "She [the female] is disadvantaged in entertainment and education for there are no cultural centres, general libraries and trips for her which makes her female social gathering restricted to what has arrived to the market of fashion and accessories." Shopping is the only activity women in Saudi Arabia are allowed to do without being frowned upon socially (Hamad, 193, 50-51). Males, on the other hand, have more social independence and freedom and are less criticised. Hence, males identify with foreigners in challenging activities such as "adventure", "wild parties" and "travelling". According to Aqil (1998), these increase their popularity among their peers more than the females.

Both genders, too, give Arabs in reality and in Arab TV materials equal averages regarding the behavioural cluster. However, 58.7% of males note Arabs in reality and in Arab materials as "eating in restaurants" more than the females (52.5%). The reason for this result is perhaps that the context of Arabian restaurants is group orientated, suitable for males who have more freedom to gather with peers than

females (al-Saif, 1997). With reference to Saudis in reality and in Saudi TV materials regarding the leisure activities cluster, again, the males note them with relatively a higher average (44.2%) in comparison to the females (39.7%). However, the image they have of Saudis in reality and in Saudi TV materials for *"travelling"* is with a percentage of 37. 3%, slightly lower than the females (41.8%). Also, the image they have of Saudis in reality and in Saudi TV materials in *"adventures"* and *"eating in restaurants"* are equal to those images females hold even though they watch more Saudi TV materials. This may be best explained by Al-oofy (1993) who found in his study that Saudi male children prefer to watch more adventure materials than Saudi females (Al Oofy, 1993). Saudi TV materials, however, do not use the latest technology. *"Tash ma tash"*, considered the best action-adventure serial for Saudi standards presented on Saudi TV and repeated throughout the year, was satirically compared to Western materials. Al-ahaidab (2001) cynically states that

"there is no usage of computer graphics, or stunt masters or a specialised team! It ('Tash ma tash') is a very modest work. It has none of the dazzle of the action movies or the technical excellancy of sci-fi and horror, or the high quality equipment used in natural disaster films. In short, the most adventurous things they have done were burning a car down hill and filling a room with water!!" (Al-ahaidab, 2001,19).

Therefore, this type of leisure activity presented on Saudi TV does not fulfil the desires of the more liberated males. What they watch on Saudi TV materials is inferior to what they aspire to and can obtain from on foreign and even Arab materials.

Social Class & Images of Saudis, Arabs and foreigners in Reality & Media

Table 6.3 shows that classes in Saudi Arabia vary in reporting the clusters of role model, behaviour and leisure activities among Saudis, Arabs and foreigners in real life

Table (6.3) Social Class & Images of Lifestyle about Foreigners, Arabs and Saudis in Reality and in Visual Media Materials

Lifestyle images	Images of foreigners in real life & in foreign TV materials				Image of foreigners in real life & in videotape materials				Image of foreigners in real life & in videogame materials				Image of Arabs in real life & in Arab TV materials				Image of Saudis in real life & in Saudi TV materials			
	Social class			Total yes	Social class			Total yes	Social class			Total yes	Social class			Total yes	Social class			Total yes
	UP	Mi	Lo		UP	Mi	Lo		UP	Mi	Lo		UP	Mi	Lo		UP	Mi	Lo	
Physical attractiveness	35 85.4%	43 71.7%	26 57.8%	104 71.2%	34 82.9%	41 68.3%	23 51.1%	98 67.1%	18 43.9%	27 45.0%	23 51.1%	68 46.6%	8 36.4%	28 59.6%	30 58.8%	66 55.0%	8 26.7%	16 39.0%	31 52.5%	55 42.3%
Fashion	32 76.2%	42 80.8%	26 63.4%	100 74.1%	32 76.2%	34 65.4%	18 43.9%	84 62.2%	17 40.5%	26 50.0%	15 36.6%	58 43.0%	14 63.6%	21 50.0%	19 50.0%	54 52.9%	11 47.8%	16 40.0%	16 41.0%	43 42.2%
(VIPs)	28 87.5%	27 67.5%	22 55.0%	77 68.8%	24 75.0%	30 75.0%	16 40.0%	70 62.5%	15 46.9%	14 35.0%	12 30.0%	41 36.6%	14 63.6%	24 61.5%	30 63.8%	68 63.0%	11 50.0%	20 51.3%	31 64.6%	62 56.9%
Wealthy	12 80.0%	13 61.9%	10 45.5%	35 60.3%	9 60.0%	11 52.4%	9 40.9%	29 50.0%	4 26.7%	9 42.9%	7 31.8%	20 34.5%	13 52.0%	11 50.0%	20 57.1%	44 53.7%	11 33.3%	13 50.0%	29 67.4%	53 52.0%
Role Model Average	82.3%	70.5%	55.4%	68.6%	73.5%	69.3%	44%	60.5%	39.5%	43.2%	37.4%	40.2%	53.9%	55.3%	57.4%	56.2%	39.5%	45.1%	56.4%	48.4%
Romantic	38 79.2%	39 66.1%	29 56.9%	106 67.1%	35 72.9%	43 72.9%	27 52.9%	105 66.5%	15 31.3%	21 35.6%	16 31.4%	52 32.9%	9 42.9%	22 57.9%	20 46.5%	51 50.0%	5 33.3%	19 59.4%	20 50.0%	44 50.6%
Violent	27 75.0%	29 55.8%	26 59.1%	82 62.1%	24 66.7%	31 59.6%	22 50.0%	77 58.3%	19 52.8%	30 57.7%	18 40.9%	67 50.8%	6 35.3%	7 53.8%	11 73.3%	24 53.3%	3 27.3%	3 42.9%	3 25.0%	9 30.0%
Bold	28 70.0%	23 44.2%	24 42.1%	75 50.3%	29 72.5%	30 57.7%	26 45.6%	85 57.0%	16 40.0%	23 44.2%	16 28.1%	55 36.9%	12 37.5%	25 64.1%	15 38.5%	52 47.3%	13 40.6%	20 51.3%	25 49.0%	58 47.5%
Independent	19 48.7%	19 46.3%	19 46.3%	57 47.1%	24 61.5%	24 58.5%	16 39.0%	64 52.9%	13 33.3%	16 39.0%	11 26.8%	40 33.1%	5 26.3%	13 56.5%	15 36.6%	33 39.8%	4 21.1%	11 37.9%	19 48.7%	34 39.1%
Competitive for status	18 52.9%	22 42.3%	16 37.2%	56 43.4%	18 52.9%	25 48.1%	17 39.5%	60 46.5%	18 52.9%	24 46.2%	17 39.5%	59 45.7%	11 44.0%	9 30.0%	15 46.9%	35 40.2%	5 26.3%	13 43.3%	10 32.3%	28 35.0%
Behaviour Average	65.2%	50.9%	48.3%	54%	65.3%	59.4%	45.4%	56.2%	42.1%	44.5%	33.3%	39.9%	37.2%	52.5%	48.4%	46.1%	29.7%	47%	41%	40.4%
Adventure	37 68.5%	39 58.2%	35 53.0%	111 59.4%	42 77.8%	46 68.7%	31 47.0%	119 63.6%	29 53.7%	43 64.2%	28 42.4%	100 53.5%	12 57.1%	18 64.3%	18 39.1%	48 50.5%	7 41.2%	14 53.8%	20 38.5%	41 43.2%
Wild parties	35 77.8%	33 52.4%	26 54.2%	94 60.3%	30 66.7%	28 44.4%	26 54.2%	84 53.8%	12 26.7%	23 36.5%	16 33.3%	51 32.7%	9 50.0%	19 61.3%	13 35.1%	41 47.7%	8 53.3%	4 17.4%	12 38.7%	24 34.8%
Eating in restaurants	22 57.9%	23 44.2%	24 50.0%	69 50.0%	25 65.8%	27 51.9%	24 50.0%	76 55.1%	14 36.8%	20 38.5%	14 29.2%	48 34.8%	10 43.5%	15 53.6%	23 65.7%	48 55.8%	10 35.7%	11 39.3%	21 56.8%	42 45.2%
Shopping	20 50.0%	27 50.9%	30 47.6%	77 49.4%	25 62.5%	27 50.9%	30 47.6%	82 52.6%	13 32.5%	17 32.1%	14 22.2%	44 28.2%	17 44.7%	30 50.0%	31 49.2%	78 48.4%	15 34.1%	27 50.0%	35 53.8%	77 47.2%
Travelling	15 41.7%	20 39.2%	28 51.9%	63 44.7%	21 58.3%	27 52.9%	26 48.1%	74 52.5%	13 36.1%	21 41.2%	19 35.2%	53 37.6%	19 46.3%	19 43.2%	27 52.9%	65 47.8%	17 34.7%	18 42.9%	18 41.9%	53 39.6%
Leisure Average	59.2%	49%	51.3%	52.8%	66.2%	53.8%	49.4%	55.5%	37.2%	43%	32.5%	37.4%	48.3%	54.5%	48.4%	50%	39.8%	40.7%	45.9%	42%

and in the different visual media materials. With respect to the role model cluster, the upper, and to a lesser extent the middle, classes note foreigners with the highest averages in reality and in foreign TV materials and video materials. This is despite the fact that they identify them in reality and in videogame materials with low averages. Again, in contrast to lower class, the averages of role model image the upper and middle classes have of Arabs in real life and in Arab TV materials are as low as 53.9% for the former and 55.3% for the latter while the averages of role model image they have of the Saudis in real life and in Saudi TV materials are only of 39.5% for the upper class and 45.1% for the middle class. The lower class, on the other hand, notes foreigners in reality and in foreign TV materials with equal averages for role model to Arabs and Saudis in reality and in Arab and Saudi TV materials. Indeed, the lower class even perceives the foreigners in reality and in foreign video and videogame materials with the lowest averages for role model. From the findings it might be concluded that the lower class does not conceive foreigners, or even Arabs, as better role models than Saudis, whereas the middle class and especially the upper class perceive them on top of the ladder. This is probably because the upper and middle classes are more ambitious for superiority than the lower class. According to Al-khoury (1997) these two classes aspire for comparison with "the foreigners who in modern times are the providers of the superior culture" (Al-khoury, 1997:190). Beauty for the lower class is not on top of the agenda as it is for the other two classes. The rational behind this, from Sarhan's (1981) point of view, is that the lower class is concerned with basic needs rather than with what they consider trivial desires. (Sarhan, 1981). For them, beauty does not facilitate upward social mobility. Family reputation still counts in Saudi Arabia.

Nonetheless, the lower class identifies *"physical attractiveness"* more with foreigners in reality and in videogame materials in comparison to the other two classes. This is in spite of the fact that the lower class is the least exposed to videogame materials for financial reasons. The characters in videogame materials are perhaps similar to those of cartoon characters and this class favours cartoons more than the other two classes. This class, according to Al-kholy, (1984), is less connected to the real world compared to the upper and middle classes as the children are less ambitious and don't seem to get encouragement from their parents for social upward mobility (Al-kholy,1984).

While the upper class identifies *"fashion"* with foreigners in reality and in foreign TV and video materials with 76.2% each, the perception of the middle class of *"fashion"* with foreigners in reality is relatively the highest with foreign TV and lower than that of the upper class with foreign video materials. Middle class access to up-to-date video materials is most probably limited for financial reasons in comparison to the upper class, as mentioned. Different from the middle class, upper class lifestyle is fashion oriented, where it follows fashion in clothes, cars, houses and where the other classes cannot compete financially (Sarhan, 1981). This elite class is a fashion provider and through it innovations are diffused. Consequently, what seems to the middle class as fashion is for the elite class out-of-date and vice versa. This fashion sensitive elite class could even be inspired by history and tradition for fashion lifestyles (Ashi, 1999). Therefore, the image the upper class has of the Arabs in reality and in Arab materials with the variable *"fashion"* is the highest in comparison to the other classes. That was why perhaps the class also unexpectedly notes Saudis in reality and in Saudi TV materials with *"fashion"* by a relatively higher percentage than the other two classes.

Again in the behaviour cluster, the results show differences among the classes in their perceptions of behaviour of foreigners, Arabs and Saudis in reality and in media materials. The upper class holds high images of behaviour of foreigners in reality and in foreign media materials. Therefore, the upper class notes foreigners in real life and in foreign video and TV materials with the highest and equal averages for behavioural images of 65.3% and 65.2% in comparison to the middle and lower classes. In this case, the questions are whether the upper class will aspire to the behaviour image of the foreigners and whether this class will adopt this foreign behaviour image. More studies are required to measure the behaviour and action components of the upper class.

Nonetheless, the image the middle class has of foreigners in reality and in video materials as *"romantic"* and *"independent"* are the same as the responses of upper class, albeit that the middle class's exposure is more controlled by family members than the upper class. This result could be clarified by Aqil's (1998) argument which states that in Arab countries the middle class is careful about preserving its reputation for social respect and honour. Therefore, it is sensitive to any action that might violate ethical and moral behaviour (Aqil, 1998). This sensitivity makes the middle class probably more alert to people who have even implicitly radical social norms. For that, it is not even surprising that the middle class reports the highest gratifications from the variable *"learning of ethics"* (c.f. table 5.3). Nevertheless, although the upper class hours of exposure to videogame materials is less than that of the middle class, the upper class still notes the behavioural cluster with equal averages to that of the middle class. Not only that, but the upper class also notes foreigners in reality and

in videogame materials as more *"competitive for status"* than the middle class. The upper class, whose selective exposure is higher and less controlled by family members is most probably encouraged by its family to expand its experience and increase its vision, where the impossible is possible and representation evolves into presentation. In other words, virtual behaviour becomes actualised, living in post-modernity and post-reality. In the age of globalisation and post-globalisation, exploration of unconventional thinking will give an edge to boost the successes of the unlimited elite class for whom the sky is the limit.

Although the middle class notes the behaviour of the Arabs in reality and in Arab TV materials with a relatively higher average than the other classes, the perception class has about them is least as *"competitive for status"* among the nationals and the classes. This is probably because the middle class, which follows a strict lifestyle as a ladder for upward social mobility, may view Arabs, according to Yamani (1995), at the bottom of the new world order as a result of losing their credibility among themselves and the world (Yamani, 1995). This has resulted in *"the foreign complex"* which stresses the superiority of non-Arabs as competitors for status (Abdu Daym, 2000).

Furthermore, the lower class probably finds Arabs as a threat to its social and economic security as a low status working force in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (Yamani, 2000). After the oil boom in the seventies, Saudi Arabia accelerated the development of its infra-structure, yet the lower class looked down on manual work. This has resulted in an influx of Arab labour to Gulf countries to work in manual jobs that are despised by the lower class. Nevertheless, after the huge decrease of oil

prices during the nineties, Arab workers became a danger to the unskilled lower class (Al-basam, 1995). Also drama, which is mainly Egyptian, reflects the hardship in the working class lifestyle. In content analyses of values, it was found that illiterate characters, who are mainly lower class, dominate Arab drama in comparison to the educated classes. In addition to that the lives of lower class children are full of violence and crime as a tactic for survival (Al-mahya 1993, Al-baymi, 1995, Ibrahim, 1997). This is probably the reason why the lower class notes Arabs in real life and in Arab materials as the most *"violent"* among the peoples and the classes.

Despite the fact that the middle class notes Saudis in reality and in Saudi TV materials with a lower average of behavioural image than those of the foreigners and Arabs, its average is, nevertheless, the highest among the classes, regardless of the fact that the lower class hours of exposure to Saudi TV materials exceed those of the middle class. The middle class obtains more social gratifications from Saudi TV materials in this respect than the lower class as discussed in table 5.2. However, the middle class notes Saudis in reality and in Saudi TV materials as less *"independent"* than that of the lower class. In general, Saudi society does not encourage individualism and, according to Al-jasimi (1994), the middle class has the closest ties with their families in comparison to the other classes whose outside contacts and freedoms are unrestricted (Al-Jasimi, 1994).

The findings of the leisure cluster again show differences among the classes in their responses regarding Saudis, Arabs and foreigners in reality and in media materials. The upper class is more likely to perceive foreigners as leading a lifestyle of leisure in comparison to the other two classes. Even though the upper class notes foreigners in reality and in videogame materials with a lower average than the middle class, the

upper class notes them in reality and in foreign video and TV materials with the highest averages of 66.2% and 59.2% respectively, whereas it notes Arabs in reality and in Arab TV materials with an average of 48.3% and Saudis in real life and in Saudi TV materials with an average of 39.8% only. Unlike the upper class, both the middle and lower classes identify foreigners in reality and in foreign video materials with low and equal averages in leisure activities. Likewise, they note them in reality and in foreign TV materials with low and almost equal averages in comparison to the upper class. In fact, the middle and lower classes averages of responses about Arabs in real life and in Arab TV materials in leisure activities were close to their responses about those of the foreigners. Sarhan (1981) explains this by stating, "the interests of the elite class are reflected in its ability to select the types, times and places of leisure. It can enjoy food, drinking, wild parties, and (adventures) which other classes cannot afford or understand" (Sarhan, 1981, 140). The unrestricted upper class can afford, comprehend and even take part in activities which others cannot. However, the image the middle class has of the foreigners in reality and in video materials as enjoying *"wild parties"* is less than the lower class. This may be due to the fact that the parents in this class exercise more control on what their children watch on video. According to Al-jasimi (1994) "This is because the parents in this middle class are stricter with their children because they are very keen their children develop their characters in a way that ensures their careers will facilitate their upward social mobility" (Al-Jasimi, 1994, 118).

Yet, the images the lower class have of foreigner in reality and in foreign TV materials and Arabs in reality and in Arab materials as leading *"travelling"* lifestyle is more than those images of the other two classes. Also, the same class notes Arabs in

real life and in Arab materials as *"eating in restaurants"* more than the upper and middle classes. Furthermore, it notes foreigners in reality and in foreign TV materials as *"eating in restaurants"* more than the middle class does. The reason for this result may be best explained by Al-kholy (1984) who pinpoints this to the lower class's economic disadvantages which limits its mobility and ability to stand the cost of eating in restaurants even though this is as an aspiration to this least prosperous class (Al-kholy, 1984).

Again, Saudis in leisure activity in reality and in Saudi TV materials receives relatively higher average from the lower class (45.9%) in comparison to the middle class (40.7%), who share equal responses with the upper class to the variable. However, the middle class gives them a higher percentage for *"adventure"* (53.8%) than the upper and lower classes which reports close percentages of 41.2% and 38.5%. This class is least allowed to experience life outside the family boundary because they are tied to relationships with their families (Ismail *et al*, 1967, Al-jasimi, 1994). Hence, adventure, which is fairly trivial for the other two classes, becomes significant for the middle class.

Contrary to expectations, the upper class notes Saudis in reality and in Saudi TV materials as taking part in *"wild parties"* (53.3%) in comparison to the lower class (38.7%) and the middle class of (17.4%). Wild parties are simply an expansion to the upper class houses. Their houses are designed and equipped to receive such entertainment. Therefore, *"wild parties"* as seen on Saudi TV can be easily imitated by the elite class, which is also celebrity (VIPs) orientated.

To summarise, the images children have of foreigners in real life and in foreign TV as well as in video materials are the highest in the clusters of role model, behaviour and leisure activities whereas the images they have of Arabs in real life and in Arab TV materials and indeed Saudis in real life and in Saudi TV materials are the lowest. Males note foreigners with role models in reality and in foreign media materials with the highest averages whereas females note their behaviours with the highest average with video materials especially with the variables *"romance"*, *"violence"* and *"boldness"*. With respect to Saudis, males note them in real life and in Saudi TV materials with all the clusters with higher averages with the exception of the variables *"VIPs"*, *"wealthy"* and *"travelling"*. Although the general image both males and females have of Arabs in reality and in Arab materials is equal regarding averages for the leisure activities cluster, the image males have of them as *"eating in restaurants"* is higher than that of the females. This is because Arab restaurants are suitable for male group-orientation. With regards to social class, the higher the class the more likely to note foreigners in reality and in foreign TV and video materials with the highest images and the more likely to note Saudis in real life and in Saudi TV materials with the least of those images. The only exception is when the upper class note the Saudis in reality and in Saudi TV materials more with the variables *"fashion"* and *"wild parties"*. This is not surprising for the upper class is fashion and wild parties orientated.

In conclusion, there is a strong relationship between the children's pattern of exposure to media materials images of lifestyle and their perception of those images in reality. Their active exposure to media materials relates to their perceptions of foreigners, Arabs and Saudis in reality. The children conceptualised foreigners in reality and in foreign TV and video materials with the highest images of lifestyle, followed by the

Arabs in reality and in Arab TV materials and then Saudis in real life and in Saudi TV materials. Gender and social class also play a major role as strong intervening variables in contrast to Gerbner's assertions. In juxtaposition to the children reports, it would be interesting to know how Saudi policy-makers perceive the context of the media for children in the Kingdom and how they view the issue of the children's socialisation in this regard.

CHAPTER 12

Policy-makers' Views on Media Policy, Activity, Imperialism and Children

In order to understand the media context for children in Saudi Arabia and seek a deeper insight into children's viewing interests, I studied policy-makers' perspectives regarding Saudi media for children, levels of activity of the children and cultural imperialism. To cover these objectives, I carried out interviews by fax, where I presented lengthy open-ended questions to nine top figures in the fields of media industry and socialisation agencies between 23 December 2001 and 25 February 2002, as discussed in the research methodology chapter. I classified the questions into three sections. The first section focused on the visual media policy for children in Saudi Arabia. In this section, I asked policy-makers their opinions on the status of visual media policy for Saudi children in the Kingdom and their views of the aims of visual media policy in Saudi Arabia as well as its foundation. I also asked them to express their thoughts on steps taken to accomplish these policy aims and how dedicated media personnel and staff are in implementing policy objectives. The second section dealt with the perceptions of the interviewees about the role of Saudi media industrialists in enhancing Saudi children's participation and levels of activity with visual media materials and industry. One of the questions asked in this section was about their views regarding the efforts of Saudi media industrialists in the development of children's ability to critically analyse media materials. I also sought their opinions on how Saudi media industrialists gauge children's opinions regarding media materials, and whether policy-makers ever considered involving children in media policy.

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The final section centred on cultural imperialism and ways of resistance. The section covers how policy-makers convey their thoughts about the impact of foreign and Arab materials on the values of the Muslim Saudi child. It also discussed the views of the interviewees on the strategies for blocking undesired cultural penetration.

The Status of Visual Media Policy on Children in Saudi Arabia

In their responses regarding the first section about the status of the visual media policy and its efficiency in fulfilling aspirations of socialisation for children in Saudi Arabia, there was a sharp gap between media bureaucrats on one hand and high-ranking officials in socialisation agencies and independent media on the other. While the media bureaucrats were decidedly positively about the role the Saudi media play and were protective of their achievements, the other interviewees had opposing views in this regard. When asked to outline the status of media policy for children and its objectives, the Director of STV Channel 1, Tariq Riri, said that media policy for children is compatible with the General Media Policy, which, according to him, is based on the values of Islam. Moreover, the Minister of Information, Dr. Fowad Farsi, agreed and affirmed the functionality of media policy for children. He stated that the objectives of this media policy are to educate Saudi children religiously and scientifically and to enlighten them about their country's values and customs through correct upbringing orientation. This is in addition to introducing some entertainment programmes suitable for the child's mental ability. The policy, he continues, is directed at instilling a love of the nation in the children through programmes designed for this purpose. It also aims to familiarise them with the importance of sports in the development of their bodies and

maintenance of their health. In agreement with the views of the Minister of Information, the Director of STV Channel 2 added that the policy aims for health awareness through presenting simple health care that is compatible with the child's cognition through professional and specialist assistance.

The Director of STV Channel 1 expanded on the policy objectives by adding that the policy aims to direct the child to behaviours that are socially acceptable by emphasising the importance of home and road safety in addition to environmental awareness. Moreover, he stated that the media policy is concerned with the development of the child's mental, social and psychological welfare. The policy, he proceeded, focuses also on the importance of the Arabic language as a container of Islam and its culture. The Director of STV Channel 1 went further to proclaim that the policy stresses the importance for the compatibility of programmes with contemporary events, both local and international. In addition, he asserts that Channel 1 is attentive in informing children of their rights according to the UNESCO covenant where it does not contradict Islamic teachings. Therefore, he claims that it is observant in involving the children in presenting their programmes and producing some of the episodes. Interest in children, the Director of STV Channel 1 comments, covers all age groups and classifications, including orphans and the disabled with different types of disability. It also stresses the importance of involving these children with their healthy companions in addition to covering all the occasions and the foundations that are associated with them. These go hand in hand with an interest in producing programmes especially for distinguished gifted children, he concludes. Saudi media authority officials expressed an optimistic view about the aims and objectives of their policy for children in Saudi Arabia. Nevertheless, top

socialisation agency officials, medialogists, and private media industrialists did not share the media bureaucrats' assurances and convictions. On the contrary they opposed and sometimes attacked these views.

The Director of the Administration of Upbringing Supervision who is considered the highest female authority in the General Presidency for Girls' Education in Jeddah, Dr. Turaifa Al-showaer said that if there is a policy for children regarding visual media, it is ambiguous. This policy if it does exist, does not live up to the standards of the envisaged objectives for the preparation of Saudi children for a promising future since the local programmes do not have a tangible presence. She expects the policy's objectives to have concrete results by adopting realistic selective action by the authorities to formulate the child's attitudes and the scope of their thinking so that they can comprehend and communicate successfully within the changing context. In fact, Dr Al-rashid, the Minister of Education, urged media industrialists to have as part of its objectives, a commitment to help the educators fulfil their responsibilities.

Sheikh Saleh Kamel, the private Arab Radio and Television (ART) tycoon and media entrepreneur reported a completely contrasting opinion to that of the media bureaucrats. In this regard he said, "frankly speaking there is no such special visual media policy for the children in the kingdom to this policy ... There are no objectives."

The former Minister of Information and prominent public figure Prof. Muhammad Yamani, also current President of the ART Board of Directors, asserted that there is no definite policy regarding visual media for children and "the old general media policy is unfortunately inadequate for the aims of visual media for children." Supporting this view, Dr. Abdugader Tash, a well known figure in the field of media and Islamic propagation,

who worked as a senior consultant in several media companies including ART in Saudi Arabia where he initiated some of its channels such as the popular satellite channel, "*Iqraa*", expressed unawareness of any systematic policy for visual media and confessed that what is broadcast for children on Saudi channels is based on trials and the general media policy has not transformed to operative practical schemes.

Moreover, the General Secretary of the World Assembly of Muslim Youth in Jeddah (WAMY), Prof. Abdul-Wahab Nourwali, stated that he saw no policy specifically directed at children. The programmes broadcast are unselective cartoon programmes to fill airtime. He also presumed that an employee is assigned to get some programmes in an indiscriminate way that does not serve specific clear objectives. In fact, these objectives according to Nourwali are mainly for entertainment and some, he considers, may not be appropriate for a Muslim society.

Clearly, there is an uncompromising dichotomy of views regarding visual media policy for children between media bureaucrats on one side and top officials in socialisation and non-governmental media industrialists on the other side. A sense of bitterness can be perceived from high-ranking figures in socialisation agencies and from non-official media lords towards what they feel are obscure Saudi media policy and objectives. Yet, media bureaucrats, who are maybe unaware of this antagonism, or have probably adopted a protective attitude, have exaggerated the value of their policy for children.

In fact, the division between the private media and socialisation policy-makers on one hand and the media bureaucrats on the other regarding the issue about the foundation

pillars of media policy for children continues. While media bureaucrats try to legalise its foundation, others give juxtaposing opinions. The Minister of Information, Dr. Fowad Farsi, stated that the media policy for children was established on "top governmental guidance, our ancient tradition and customs. This is according to the General Media Policy of the Kingdom which was issued by the Supreme Council of Media in 1981."

The Director of STV Channel 2, Abdulaziz Abu-naja supported him. He said that the foundation of this policy could be traced to the Ministry of Education, the General Presidency of Youth Care and the General Presidency of Girls' Education, where trustworthy consultants and specialists present their visions regarding the visual media policy for children to the Supreme Council of Media which in turn issues its guidelines to the television sector for implementation and utilisation. In this sense, they agree with the Minister of Information's ideas.

The Director of STV Channel 1 added that the source of this visual media policy for children is the religion of Islam based on the Quran, the teachings of the Prophet and the social values and manners which are inspired from them.

Contrary to the above statements, Sheikh Kamel, ART owner, stated that there is no source of reference to media policy for children. Furthermore, the Minister of Education refutes media bureaucrats claims about the involvement of the Ministry of Education in the formation of media policy regarding children. He denied his Ministry played any substantial role in media policy formulation, limiting the policy establishment to the Ministry of Information and the Supreme Council of Media. He, in fact, strongly

appealed for coordination between media policy-makers and educators on bringing up Saudi children to have virtuous values and habits.

Dr Al-showaer added further that the initiators of this policy had drawn no benefit from the experience of leading countries in this field, nor included the opinions of those who are responsible for bringing up child such as parents, teachers and experts in media and child education.

It may well be concluded from the above arguments that media bureaucrats are trying to substantiate their claims on religious or legislative jurisdiction. Others, however, find that these claims are neither truly realised nor representative.

Again, contrary to the assessments of the private media sector and socialisation agencies concerning the steps taken to achieve the policy plans, official media bureaucrats have been affirmative and comfortable about their procedures. The Director of STV Channel 2 comments on the execution of the visual media policy regarding children through a plan directed by two independent administrations headed by him and the director of STV Channel 1. Their roles, he states, are to produce and execute children's programmes of all types with the supervision and preparation of a number of Saudi and Arab female specialists in child mental and scientific upbringing. This is done, he continues, by providing educational and informational services which include films, slides etc, and by arranging technical professional crews. These are in addition to providing governmental financial support or encouraging the contributions of some qualified companies in presenting symbolic gifts or promotional presents for the children for gameshow programmes.

The Minister of Information added that these plans for children's programmes were executed for every television span. The Director of STV Channel 1 explained this television span by classifying it into three cycles. The first cycle is called the general programme span, which starts in the autumn and includes the holy month of Ramadan and the Eid celebration. This is followed by the second cycle which covers programmes about the month of pilgrimage. Finally, the third cycle begins during the summer. Programmes of an entertaining nature are broadcast during this period. These cycles, he stated, are prepared for and studied in advance by specialists who choose the best and most compatible ones with content appropriate to the standards of the children's programmes according to the aspired objectives mentioned. In order to attain these aims, the Director of STV Channel 1 added that qualified presenters and directors are chosen, and all relevant social and educational organisations are contacted. "No programme is permitted for showing without checking by the specialists", he stressed.

From the other camp, Prof. Nourwali, Dr Al-showaer and Dr. Tash said that they were unaware of any plan for implementing the visual media policy for children in reality or of any timetable for its execution or of any assessment for success. The Minister of Education stated that the Ministry of Education, through its Educational Media Administration, tries to open routes with the media sectors according to a general plan. Yet the Ministry of Information in the Kingdom, according to the Minister of Education, is exclusively authorised to formulate strategic plans and for following up their execution. Yamani completely rejected the media authorities' claims and argued, "there is no plan but only a bunch of trials that do not accomplish the desired objectives. Until now what we have is basically some incomplete programme spans with no specific informational or

upbringing (educational) aims." Nourwali even dismissed any follow up by Saudi channels to ensure the execution of these plans, if there are any, or to examine their suitability for meeting the objectives. It is noticeable, he says, that there are no programmes that aim at enforcing acceptable standards of behaviour, nor are there any surveys to measure the impact of these programmes on the audiences.

Nevertheless, not only did the media bureaucrats make assurances of the suitability of their plans' techniques to meet the objectives of media policy, contrary to the views of the socialisation agencies and the private media, but they also all affirmed the enthusiastic implementation by media staff of the visual media policy regarding children. The Director of STV Channel 1's comments agree with the Minister of Information who said, "there is a full commitment in the implementation of the plans which have been a noticeable success." In fact, the Director of STV Channel 2 showed even more optimism by stating "the fulfilment of the policy plan by the media staff went beyond expectations." The proof of this, he says, is the inclusion of the many locally produced programmes for children by Saudi Television in television production festivals in the Gulf area and the Arab world. Moreover, he added, the quality of these programmes has surpassed many of those from other countries.

It seems again that there was a significant division and immense isolation between media officials and the rest of society. The media bureaucrats argue from an achievement perspective that may not emulate top quality standards. This would probably indicate that they are arguing from an *ivory tower* and are missing feedback from the rest of society,

which could strongly reflect the general policy of the Kingdom, which is highly protective.

Al-showaer implied dissatisfaction with the commitment of media staff and distressfully abstained from commenting. Also, in agreement with Yamani, Kamel admitted that there is no commitment among media staff in general to implement a visual media policy for children. Tash added that the commitment of Saudi media staff to any media plan is based only on individual efforts.

The arguments stated in this respect suggest a lack of seriousness and zeal by the Saudi media industrialists at all levels to pursue directed goals for progressive successful socialisation. However, the condemnation may not be laid on Saudi communicators alone, as there are no practical or effective procedures for assessing media communicators performance nor has there been any adaptation of a proficient effective scheme to promote excellence and discipline short falls by executive policy in general. Moreover, many policy-makers involved in child socialisation are themselves strangled politically. They dare not speak their mind frankly.

The Minister of Education deliberately declined to answer the question regarding the commitment of media staff in implementing a visual media policy plan for children. Perhaps he was seeking to avoid embarrassment.

Saudi Children's Participation and Levels of Activity with Media Materials

Unfortunately, frustration with the performance of the Saudi media industry continues; the socialisation agencies and the private media sector are disappointed with the low

involvement and level of activity of the children with media materials. This is despite the positive and assuring statements of the Saudi media bureaucrats concerning the issue.

With respect to the role of Saudi media policy in promoting critical thinking about the media, the Director of STV Channel 2 said, "generally speaking, developing children's ability to reflect and analyse is the most important element in the work of Saudi Television." In addition to his statement, the Director of STV Channel 1 argued that what this channel wants to accomplish through children's programmes is the development of the child's mental, social and psychological aptitudes. Also, its purpose is to activate the intellect and develop the child's knowledge and to associate them with the world around them through programmes such as ' Between Children' and 'Children Meeting'. (These programmes are for children under 12 years).

The Director of STV Channel 2 added that school students are welcome to attend programmes or participate in preparing programme episodes under the supervision of officials from socialisation agencies. Invitations to children's programmes are open to all children, according to the Director of Channel 2. The Minister of Information confirmed the views of the directors of STV Channels 1& 2 by stating further that both channels "fulfil the criteria of developing the child's ability to evaluate and analyse media programmes they watch, at present and in the future, with all means and techniques". On the other hand, Kamel rejects their claims by stating that developing children's ability to scrutinise and analyse visual media materials is "only the policy of Egyptian TV and Arab Radio and Television (ART) but not others".

One can sense some exaggeration from all Saudi media industrialists whether governmental or non-governmental. Have they overestimated their accomplishments in

this respect? Probably the reason behind this tendency to exaggerate was to escape condemnation. However, their claims are laced with counter arguments. Therefore, attempts to justify their different positions has exposed them to acrimonious backfire. Tash and the Minister of Education deny their arguments and say that increasing children's aptitude to reflect and analyse visual media materials is what should have been in reality. Tash added that reality is different and interest in child media communication is seriously limited. Nourwali also refutes the claims and states that some Egyptian satellite educational channels have programmes which do increase the aptitudes of children, yet the media arena in general lacks materials that promote the development of analytical and critical thinking about media materials.

Agreeing with Nourwali, Yamani confirms that most of the prepared programmes do not provoke children to reach this level of activity. Basically, this analytical and critical activity does not exist, added Yamani. Sadly, he continues, "children's programmes are awkwardly prepared." He asserted further that we could not determine children's reception of the media because there have been no specialised studies on this subject. The previous discussion draws a gloomy picture about the impotence of the media industry in contributing to media education activity for the children.

However this is not all. Others view the issue even more differently. Al-showaer rejects the idea and declares that thinking during childhood depends on spontaneity and not on deliberate consciousness in scrutinising or analysing many of the variables and factors which the child deals with. The child generally, she continues, may be affected by the responses of adults about many matters. Analytical and critical thinking is beyond the

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ability of the child and hence it should be confined to those who are responsible for the child's upbringing.

Be that as it may, views similar to those of Al-showaer are expected, especially from a conservative country such as Saudi Arabia. In such societies, the socialisation of children is based on imitation rather than on concept-orientation and inquisition. Hence, new ideas are likely to be considered a threat to established norms and tradition, which might open the door to new, difficult and challenging aspirations from the children.

In discovering the Saudi children's views and aspirations about visual programmes, media bureaucrats, people in the private media sector and socialisation agencies all respond differently to the issue. Kamel claims that ART and Egyptian TV explore children's opinions on programmes through telephone surveys. On the other hand, media bureaucrats oddly express satisfaction with their approaches to discovering the aspirations of children about media programmes. This in fact could be considered a failure and a source of embarrassment according to professional standards. They were satisfied to find out about children's opinions concerning programmes through the efforts of the audience to contact Saudi channels by telephone calls or faxes. They also claimed that they are considering future plans to survey children's views regarding what is presented to them and concerning their future aspirations. But it can be concluded from their declarations that they have so far not done any systematic research or even a pilot study to learn about Saudi children's views. Consequently, this self-inflicted isolation from their audience may well hinder them from making improvements and may lead them to overvalue their achievements as they look through their *rose-tinted spectacles'*.

Tash commented that, generally speaking, recognition of children's aspirations is done through personal methods and not through scientific investigations based on in-depth studies, surveys, etc. Yamani states that there is no procedure for discovering children's views regarding visual media materials except sometimes possibly by putting indiscreet and quick questions to children during the preparation of programmes. The selection of media programmes for children is not done by media professionals on those channels. However, "some satellite television channels such as the one from Bahrain, *'Space Toon'*", commented Nourwali, "use questionnaire surveys to identify children's aspirations and opinions." Regardless, scientific and systematised investigations are not widespread techniques within Saudi society. Likewise, the Minister of Education, restricting the argument to the Ministry of Education's programmes on Saudi channels, said that recognition of children's preferences is done through personal experience and by following up children's requests.

Al-showaer denies any knowledge of efforts by Saudi media bureaucrats in finding out about children's opinions regarding visual media materials. Yet she suggests the formation of a team representing the Ministry of Information and the Education administrations, which would use surveys on elementary school children to understand their aspirations regarding visual media materials.

Perhaps, the reason for limiting investigation to the elementary school level is due to the sensitivity of the age of older children who are about to enter adulthood. They may well be outspoken about issues that might be considered taboo from society's perspective. Nevertheless, avoiding communication and negotiation with children especially of critical

ages will probably widen the disconnection and isolation between them and the adults and, consequently, lead to anxiety and a generation gap.

Moreover, distrust and scepticism of Saudi children's qualifications, competence and creativity, made exacerbated by the lack of adequate preparation and training make the prospect of their interference in media policy unattractive both now and in the near future. This has been clearly stated by high ranking policy-makers from the media private sector and the socialisation agencies, and also inferred from the responses of media bureaucrats. Direct participation of the children in setting up a visual media policy has not been achieved.

The Director of STV Channel 2 says, "there may not be direct intervention from the children". However, he agrees with the Minister of Information and the Director of STV Channel 1 that their opinions and ideas are taken into consideration when participating in their own programmes and these thoughts are passed on to the authorities and specialists in programme production who in turn pass them on to the 'specialised' departments either to implement them immediately or to transfer to the 'specialised' authorities to study them for later production.

Tash believes that such involvement is beyond actual reality. Moreover, Nourwali states that, generally in Arab world media and Saudi media in particular, "such a realisation does not exist". Kamel also does not think that there is such a participation in media policy-making by the children. Yamani, in fact, declined to answer this question, implying the inapplicability of such a concept in Saudi Arabia.

However, Al-showear considers the matter differently and perceives media policy-making as a business of the authorities in media programme planning for children. Yet

she proposes observing the children's attitudes and ideas for use during programme preparation.

Responses of the interviewees reflect the general line regarding children's involvement in administration in third world countries. Undoubtedly, reformation of Saudi society is necessary to boost children's creative, administrative and critical aptitudes, to prepare them for executive standard roles as early as possible and to give them the opportunity to develop their potential into effect. However, is society ready to accept and pursue radical changes in socialisation to reach such aims? What are the procedures to accomplish these goals?

Media Imperialism and Ways of Resistance

This section discusses the views of the interviewees on cultural imperialism and their opinions regarding resistance. Most interviewees expressed anxiety over the effect of foreign programmes on Islamic values. However their views regarding Arab programmes were ambivalent. All the interviewees agreed on the negative un-Islamic effects of foreign programmes on children, and some even conveyed cynical opinions. Yet others suggested some positive effects from them as well. The Director of Channel 2 acknowledges that foreign programmes have great negative and immoral effects on the children's Islamic belief; therefore, he says, "these serials and foreign programmes are frequently subjected to rejection and censorship on account of the unsuitability regarding costumes and the traditions of this country." The Minister of Information agreed and added that all foreign programmes presented to children are reviewed cautiously to make sure they do not contradict Islamic religious and social values. Kamel, the service

provider to various international satellite channels to the Arab world and especially to Saudi Arabia, sorrowfully admits that foreign programmes have a huge negative effect on the Saudi child's moral values. Yamani added that they all have effects whether directly or indirectly. "Yet we are absent from all this matter".

The Minister of Education said that they might have negative effects for everything in the child's context affects the child. Al-showaer based the effects of foreign programmes on the child's ability to perceive differences between what those programmes show of situation and behaviour contrary to what the child finds in the surrounding context. These situations and behaviours may receive acceptance from the child and reach the stage of imitation. Nevertheless, if the child receives condemnation, this will affect his/her responses towards them.

Both the Director of STV Channel 1 and Nourwali accept the remoteness of the culture and values of foreign programmes to those of the Saudi child and acknowledge their damage to Islamic values yet both of them avow that some foreign programmes have a pedagogical benefit in to developing children's aptitudes. However, Nourwali added that those who should be involved in the selection of such programmes are the specialists charged with the responsibility of children's upbringing. Tash mentioned the benefits from the efforts of the *Space Toon* Channel, which dubs educational foreign cartoons into Arabic. The effort, he says, is successful and stimulating more production of such channels and materials for children. Especially, if they are more professional and cognitive than the present ones.

However, fear of Arab programmes damaging Islamic values is not as intense as foreign programmes. This is regardless of the fact that some would consider them Western

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distorted cloning. Yet, their effects, which are marginalised, could go beyond those of foreign programmes being presented in the Arabic language, for they can reach a larger sector of society. Nevertheless, there were mixed feelings among Saudi policy-makers regarding the effects of Arab programmes on the Islamic values of Saudi children. Some did consider that they would have negative effects, others did not.

Yamani regards the effect of Arab programmes as weak because they have no clear structural plan and their preparation and direction are unintelligent; therefore, their impact is ineffective. They are similar to school materials in their preparation, hence they do not have mass communication appeal. Furthermore, the Director of STV Channel 2 rejects the idea that Arab programmes have as negative an effect on Islamic values as foreign programmes because, according to him, most Arab countries producing these programmes are Arab-Islamic countries which have similar values and costumes that the Muslim Saudi child has. The Minister of Information does not expect Arab programmes to affect the Islamic values of the Saudi child as long as they observe the solid values of the belief, while the Minister of Education said that Arab programmes affect the Islamic values of the Saudi child to some extent. Nourwali comments that moral Arabic programmes are not voluminous yet, he says, there are some efforts in the Gulf from some private companies to produce fine quality cartoons, which also develop many Islamic values.

The Director of STV Channel 1 implies that Arab programmes shown through Saudi television represent values, morals and behaviours that are acceptable to society. However, he observes the effect of exposure to other cultures, including Arab ones through satellite channels, make their negative impact go beyond the Saudi child to reach

all Arab Muslim children. In fact, Kamel, the service provider of many different Arab

Satellite channels, stresses the negative values and points to Arab programmes especially

those from Lebanon. Tash acknowledges that there is no doubt that Arab programmes are

more effective on the child in Saudi Arabia because these programmes speak the child's

language and he sees that the accumulative effect is the strongest. Al-showaer, however,

states that if there were an appraisal and constructive criticism from adults about Arab

programmes through dialogue with the child, it might be possible to select those

programmes that are consistent with the context's values and attitudes.

Dealing with the possible insurgency of cultural imperialism, the interviewees were

mainly divided into three groups. One group cynically gave up hope for improvement.

Another considered the answer lay in the family's hands while the third group put the

onus of resistance on media regulation and management. In fact all media bureaucrats are

supportive of the third opinion. They claim that they use the most effective technique for

protecting children against programmes of negative non-Islamic values. This tactic is

censorship which, according to them, is stopping any Arab or foreign programmes from

being broadcast on Saudi Television that do not agree with Islamic principles, social

traditions or the visual media plan for children. This is done, according to the directors of

STV 1 & 2, through the Censorship Department in the Ministry of Information and

through restrictions imposed on the importation of programmes that are offensive to

Arab, Islamic or friendly countries and on programmes that are derogatory, immoral or

inconsistent with Islamic traditions, customs and values in the Kingdom. The Minister of

Information stated, "these measures are considerably successful." The Director of STV

Channel 2 claims, "since Saudi television was established, it has not received any

negative comments from any sector whether locally, internationally, privately or governmentally".

Moreover, ART owner, Kamel, and former Minister of Information, Yamani, confirmed that there are no prevailing measures to save children from programmes of un-Islamic values. Yet Kamel proclaimed that ART is trying to fill the vacuum created by establishing an ART Channel for children and its message. "The aim", he states, "is to rescue Arab children from the foreign programmes' defects. This is in addition to some production of good quality programmes in the fields of religion and upbringing." Yet, he admitted that ART capacity is limited and the glamour used in ART programmes is not up to Western standards.

On the other hand, the Minister of Education rejects the media industrialists' defence and stresses that they do not pursue and implement effective measures. "Reality does not carry good news about this predicament", asserts the Minister of Education. Nevertheless, Al-showaer, from the camp that emphasises the role of the family, stresses that the most important measure to protect the Saudi child is to open dialogue to explain whatever contradict values and norms to enable the child reach his/her own opinion. Tash points out that the family plays a big role through continuous awareness, sound supervision and active participation with the children in watching and discussing what they are exposed to. This can be effective through organising exposure schedules and establishing roles for selection and discrimination. This is in addition to the supervision and following up of what the children watch. Nourwali suggests that the measures should be clear to all in society, and every family should establish certain standards when selecting which channels and programmes the children may watch. They should observe the rules of

Islam by avoiding obscenity, immorality, violence and horror. In addition, programmes should be entertaining yet pedagogic and consistent with the child's cognition. However, on the question whether to put power in the hands of the media or in the hands of the family, the problem remains to be solved. Unless children are empowered to be self-regulatory, concerns about media imperialism will continue.

Nevertheless, as a final comment, Yamani cynically asserts that Arab and Islamic media do not care about the child and children's programmes do not receive the supposed attention. Nor do media policies serve the child's edification obligation, as programmes are mostly unplanned, naïve and indiscriminate. Nourwali and Al-showaer add that the situation is seriously important and there has to be a clear vision, which would include in-depth research, work plans and timetables to ensure progress. This is to strengthen the child's identity and all values necessary to achieve a satisfactory moral and critical immunity. However, the question is, are the political, social, economic and educational and family structures capable of pursuing these aspirations? At the same time, how is it possible to immunise the children from harmful materials without violating their right to search for knowledge and act upon it?

In short, there are huge splits between the public media sector on the one hand and the private one and high-ranking officials in socialisation on the other, not only regarding the status and objectives but the base foundation of media policy for children in the Kingdom. Media bureaucrats express favourable and complimentary opinions about the establishment of media policy for children of all ages and all classifications based on religious, scientific and contextual objectives for the development of social and psychological welfare. This would be through the support of official socialising sectors.

Also, media officials claim the execution of their plan for media policy through technical and financial support. Furthermore, they gave assurances on the full devotion of media staff to a successful implementation of media policy objectives by utilising the suggested plan procedures. On the contrary, the non-governmental media industrialists and socialisation agency bureaucrats deny, or at least claim unfamiliarity with, a media policy for children. They also denied the aims of the media policy, if it exists at all, or at least regard them as obscure. In addition, they disavow and question the source of the policy foundation. They also reject media bureaucrats' plan procedures for implementing aims and objectives of a media policy for children. They further express dissatisfaction with the performance of media staff towards the socialisation of children. Some even withheld their response, giving up on media personnels' concern.

The opinions of interviewees varied regarding the evaluation of children's activities with media materials. In fact, high-ranking officials in socialisation agencies and the independent media criticised media industrialists and socialisation agency officials for not using scientific research to find out children's views and aspirations on media materials. On the other hand, officials expressed satisfaction about their knowledge of children's opinions through viewers' communications by phone calls and faxes in respect of all Saudi television programmes, and through personal experience in the case of the particular programmes of the Ministry of Education on Saudi channels. This is with the exception of private media, such as ART, where they depend on telephone surveys. Furthermore, all Saudi media industrialists are content with their individual efforts in promoting children's analytical and critical thinking towards media materials. Some even claim that they do this through all means and techniques possible. This is contrary to

some views, which consider the remoteness of such an achievement in reality in Saudi Arabia. Nevertheless, others reject the ideas and regard them as unfavourable for a conservative society. Most interviewees, nevertheless, declared or at least implied that active participation in media policy-making by the children is beyond possibility at present and future prospects are bleak. Indeed, one feminine voice considers children's involvement in policy-making as unacceptable. In general, the interviewees showed displeasure at the effects of foreign media materials on Saudi children, yet conveyed indecisive views regarding Arab media materials since they share the same language as the Saudis and much of the culture. This disregards the fact that much of the Arab materials' promote un-Islamic values. However, there was a clear divergence of views regarding resistance to cultural imperialism. One view uses measures such as rules or attempts for better production by media industrialists, while the other uses family regulations for protecting children. Some would not find substantial resolution in this regard.

Reflecting on the interviews, it is evident that there is a necessity for policy-makers to open up channels for bold dialogue on all media levels and to reassess the accomplishments in this field for young people. Investigations and research ought to be introduced to the field as swiftly as possible. The views and aspiration of young viewers need to be analysed and evaluated. Precise socialisation objectives should be introduced and implemented. Young people need to be trained and encouraged to be involved in decision-making. Relaxed discipline and ambiguous goals, in addition to repressed opinions regarding media appraisement must not be accepted. However, how far would a

traditional system such as the Saudi one welcome, and even pursue, such revolutionary changes? Even if the system accepts unconventional aspirations, is the system competent enough to pursue these conceptions effectively? Will a media analytical critical administrative Saudi child become a reality in the 21st century? Or is it going to be another frustrating and marginalised century for those who are representing more than half of society, if not most?

CHAPTER 13

Summary, Conclusion and Recommendations

This chapter discusses the main findings, conclusions and recommendations of this thesis. I have summarised the results of the survey conducted on Saudi children regarding their media uses, gratifications and cultivations. I have also summarised the findings of the interviews with policy makers regarding the media context in the Kingdom for children. I have further contextualised the media situation in relation to the children's responses. This is tackled with regards to both internal and external factors. Finally, I have suggested some ideas for improving young Saudi viewer's experiences with the media.

The findings in respect of Saudi children's experiences with the media showed that ownership of television was lower in comparison to some less conservative neighbouring countries, such as Egypt and Lebanon. However, ownership of other equipment such as satellite decoders was high in comparison to other developed countries. The results showed that the children used television itself as the leading source for the programme broadcasting schedule. About half of the sample knew their programmes on television from the medium. Also, over half of the sample selected what they wanted to watch by themselves. However, the children in general more often watched with other people, especially their siblings. As expected, their exposure to media materials during schooldays was less than their exposure during vacations.

With respect to television programme preferences, the children ranked serials as their

number one preference, followed by films and then cartoons whilst they ranked religious programmes at the bottom of the list along with news and advertisements. They favoured Arab materials as their first choice, followed by foreign materials and finally Saudi materials. Also, they noted Arab TV channels were the most popular channels, followed by Saudi TV channels. They reported foreign TV channels last. With regards to videotaped programmes, the children preferred films first, cartoons second, whilst serials came third. They favoured foreign videotaped materials on the top of the list, followed by Arab and lastly Saudi materials.

Regarding credibility judgements, the closer the materials were to the children's social context, the more likely they will hold defensive responses. Hence, the children gave Saudi materials the highest averages of judgements, especially in terms of *"trustworthiness"*, *"ethics"* and *"concerned of public interest"*, contrary to foreign TV and video materials. Also, they widely used Saudi materials for learning/information and social gratifications, followed by Arab materials, whilst the least used materials for these purposes were videogame materials. However, they used Saudi materials least for release gratifications and arousal/escape gratifications whereas video materials were used most. Interestingly, the image children have of the foreigners in real life and in foreign TV, as well as in video materials, were the highest in the clusters of role model, behaviour and leisure activity, whereas the image they have of Arabs in real life and in Arab TV materials and indeed Saudis in real life and in Saudi TV materials were the lowest.

Focusing on gender, the study found many contrasting responses between males and females in their experiences with media as a result of their different socialisation

backgrounds. For example the males' reports of ownership of videogame consoles and satellite channel decoders, which were considered male-orientated equipment, were higher than females. Females, who were restricted to the private sphere, depended more on *'personal'* communication in order to know the schedule of the programmes on television than males. As a result, they were unable to choose which media materials to watch when compared to the males who enjoyed more freedom. Not only that, the males' exposure to media materials *"alone"* was also higher than the females'. They also watched videotape materials for more than 3 hours in comparison to the females.

There were also noticeable differences between males and females with respect to television preferences. While females preferred serials and cartoons, the males preferred films. Females were more interested than males in foreign materials whereas males were more interested than females in Saudi materials. Further, females favoured Arab TV channels, private Saudi TV channels and foreign TV channels more than males. On the other hand, they disliked Saudi TV channels in comparison to males.

Similar to television, females preferred videos of cartoons and serials, whilst males more preferred film programmes. Moreover, females preferred foreign and Arab videotaped materials and disliked Saudi videotaped materials in contrast to males. The females also judged Saudi materials as less *"sensitive of what the viewer thinks"*, less *"considerate of viewers interest"*, less *"thorough"* and *"trustworthy"* while noting that the Arab materials were less *"important"*, *"respectful of privacy"* and *"concerned about public interest"* in comparison to the males. On the other hand, females regarded foreign TV materials as *"respectful of privacy"* and video materials as *"thorough"*. They even credited both materials with being *"considerate of viewers interest"* as well as with

"ethics" in opposition to males' judgements.

Furthermore, females were higher users of media materials for learning/information and social gratifications. Males primarily used media materials *"as a habit"*, for *"relaxation"*, for *"passing time"*, *"relating to a particular character"*, and against *"loneliness"* and all the mentioned *"escape"* variables. On the other hand, females used media materials in general and foreign materials in particular, to obtain *"enjoyment"*, *"excitement"*, for *"getting rid of boredom"* and for an *"increase of self-esteem by increasing insight"*.

Regarding impressions of peoples' lifestyle, the males noted foreigners with role models' images in reality and in foreign media materials with the highest average whereas females reported their behaviours' images with the highest average with video materials especially with the variables *"romance"*, *"violence"* and *"boldness"*. As expected, the images males have of Saudis in real life and in Saudi TV materials with all the lifestyle clusters were with higher averages with the exception of the variables *"VIPs"*, *"wealthy"* and *"travelling"* which do not match the standards of the males who are public sphere-oriented. Also, the males noted the Arabs both in reality and Arab materials as more *"eating in restaurants ,"* which were suitable for male group-orientation in Arab context.

Also, results of the study showed that there was almost a constant pattern in the classes experience with the media. Middle class ownership of television sets was less than that of the others. As predicted, upper class ownership of all media equipment was the highest among the classes. Moreover, the upper class exposure to media was more planned and less accidental in comparison to the other classes. The members of this class also had

more power to choose by themsleves their favoured programmes and to watch them privately.

Further, the upper class's exposure to foreign TV materials, and to a lesser extent, videotape materials was higher than the other classes. This is because the upper class craved for Western culture in comparison to the other classes. On the other hand, middle class exposure to safe videogame materials was higher than the other classes, whose children were more restricted in the public sphere. The lower class's exposure to Saudi TV materials was higher in comparison to the upper and middle classes.

Regarding preferences of television programmes, materials and channels, there were many differences and some similarities among the classes in this respect. The upper and lower classes preferred to watch serials on television whilst the middle class preferred films. The lower class preferred to watch cartoons more than the other classes. Again, as expected, the upper class was more interested in foreign materials whereas the middle class, somewhat more than the lower class, was interested in Arab materials. The lower class was more interested in Saudi materials. The middle class preferred Arab TV channels while the Western-oriented upper class preferred foreign TV channels. The lower class was mostly confined to Saudi TV channels, perhaps due to the fact that it could afford it. With respect to video, the upper class was again much more interested in foreign videotape programmes than the other classes. The upper class preferred video programmes of films and serials to cartoons, which were preferred by the middle class followed by the lower class.

On the other hand, middle class attitudes were surprising when it selected Saudi materials

with high average credibility judgements equal to that of the lower class whereas it described Arab materials with less credibility judgements contrary to the class's dependency and preferences. The classes' social context played a major role in their judgement of foreign TV and video materials. The upper class reported them with the highest averages while the lower class reported them with the lowest. The middle class reported foreign TV materials with the least percentage for *"trustworthiness"* perhaps as result of fear of victimisation and plotting by the West.

With respect to gratification from the media, the upper class predominantly used foreign TV and video materials for gratifications, whilst the middle class used all media materials for the mentioned purpose, whereas the lower class used Saudi materials for gratification more than the other classes. Unlike the identity-determined upper and lower classes, middle class identity was ambivalent between the indigenous and foreign, as implied in the results. In fact, relating to a particular language was vital in the gratification reason. The lower class understanding of cultures different from the Saudi culture was limited. Yet, it derived the least gratification from using Saudi materials for *"relaxation"*. This was perhaps because this deprived class viewed relaxation as a luxury. Furthermore, it derived relief from *"loneliness"* more than the elite class from foreign TV materials and equally from video materials. The scope for establishing intimate relationships was limited because this class's lifestyle was overloaded with responsibilities for survival. Furthermore, the upper class was more likely to report foreigners in reality and in foreign TV and video materials with the highest images of lifestyle and was more likely to report Saudis in real life and in Saudi TV materials with the least of those images. The only

exception was when the upper class reported Saudis in reality and in Saudi TV materials more with the variables *"fashion"* and *"wild parties"*. This was not unanticipated, for the upper class is vogue and fun-orientated in these directions.

In order to provide a wider scope of children's viewing interests, I have investigated the media context for children in Saudi Arabia through studying the opinions of policy makers. In juxtaposition to the children's responses, Saudi policy-makers perceived the context of the media for children in the Kingdom in different ways. Some were isolated from the dynamics of the situation in reality, while others cast doubt on the structure of Saudi media for children, levels of activity of the children and cultural imperialism and its impact on the values of Islam.

Briefly, there were huge gaps between the public media sector on the one hand and private sector and high-ranking officials in socialisation on the other regarding the status, objectives and basis foundation of media policy for children in the Kingdom. Media bureaucrats expressed favourable and complimentary opinions about the establishment of media policy for children of all ages and all classifications based on religious, scientific and contextual objectives for the development of social and psychological welfare. On the contrary, the non-governmental, media industrialists and socialisation agency bureaucrats denied or at least claimed unfamiliarity with a media policy for children. They also denied the aims of the media policy or at the very least regarded them as obscure. In addition, they disavowed and questioned the source of the policy foundation. They further rejected media bureaucrats' planning procedures for implementing the aims

and objectives of a media policy for children. They also expressed dissatisfaction with the performance of media staff towards the socialisation of children.

Also, opinions of the interviewees differed regarding the evaluation of children's activities with media materials. In fact, high-ranking officials in socialisation agencies and the independent media denounced media industrialists and socialisation agency officials for not using empirical research to find out about children's views and aspirations about media materials. Instead, officials expressed satisfaction about their procedures. Moreover, all Saudi media industrialists were satisfied with their individual efforts in promoting children's analytical and critical thinking towards media materials. They even claimed that they do this through all means and techniques possible. This was contrary to the views of other interviewees, who considered the remoteness of such an achievement on reality in Saudi Arabia. Most interviewees, however, declared or at least implied that active participation in media policy-making by children is beyond possibility at present, and that even future prospects are bleak.

In general, the interviewees showed displeasure at the effects of foreign media materials on Saudi children, yet they expressed indecisive views regarding Arab media materials since they share the same language as the Saudis and some common cultural traits. Indeed, there was a clear divergence of opinion regarding resistance to cultural imperialism. One view used measures such as rules or attempts for better production by media industrialists, whilst others used family regulations for protecting children. Some did not find concrete resolution in this regard.

It could be concluded from the interviews that different visions of policy-makers as a result of unclear aims and objectives and imprecise information and communication

policy was evident. Even if there was a media policy, Saudi Television performance was still inconsistent with, and deviated from, this declared Saudi communication and information policy, especially with respect to the cultural aspects of media performance. The views of policy-makers were significantly different from those of the children. The children in general showed obvious disinterest in the Saudi media in terms of use, gratification and perceptions of social reality.

The views of the children were consistent with the fears of officials from socialisation agencies and non-official media representatives regarding the negative impact of media. The children ranked entertainment as their preference in terms of serials, movies and cartoons. They also selected Arab and foreign TV programmes as their preferred materials while reporting religious programmes as their least favourite. The situation was contrary to the claims of the policy-makers that media policy was based on Islamic values to educate Saudi children religiously and scientifically, as well as to enlighten them about their country's values through sound upbringing and orientation.

However, the children's defensive views to local materials were not an indication of healthy conduct, especially when there was a gap between what they stated and what they really did. As previously mentioned, they did not like Saudi materials as much as other media materials and did not like to watch them for long hours as frequently. This was also affirmed by the observation of many socialisation agencies and non-governmental media representatives who described Saudi programmes as unprofessional and unappealing. Nonetheless, using Saudi materials for learning/information and social gratification by the children does not indicate that they chose them as sources of

inspiration. In fact, the image children had of foreigners in real life and in foreign TV and in video materials as well as Arabs both in reality and in Arab materials were high for the role model, behaviour and leisure activity clusters. Ironically the findings contrasted with the statements of media officials of the functionality of Saudi materials for inculcating a love of the nation and directing children to behaviours that are socially acceptable. Also, this was contrary to their claims of the compatibility of Saudi programmes with contemporary life and affairs. The findings from the children's responses confirmed worries of policy-makers from private media and socialisation agents who expressed anxiety towards the impact of foreign media on the Muslim Saudi child. At the same time, they showed a more lenient attitude regarding the non-Islamic effects of Arab media. Whether policy-makers hold protective or hopeless views regarding media context for children in the Kingdom, it is not an exaggeration to conclude from this that Saudi TV was far from shaping the Islamic identity of the Saudi child.

Certainly, contrary to the expectations of a conservative society that proclaims Islam as its foundation, Saudi children were empathetic to cultures that were remote from the teachings of Islam. The discussion above seems to puncture this view and shows strong support for foreign media influences on Saudi children. Western culture, in such diverse contexts of hi-tech, restaurants, fashion, malls and open relations between the sexes (romance), was aspired to by young Saudi people. This process of cultural penetration was based on the desirability and attractiveness of Western materialism, whilst at the same time it has led to the disinterest of Saudi children in local culture as symbolised by Saudi materials. Generally, visual media's agendas were not value-free, as discussed in

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the literature, to promote modernisation epitomised in consumerism and diffusion with the Western capitalist system. Yet there was huge doubt as to whether the media can truly play such a role unless the internal social milieu serves such a situation.

As previously mentioned, it is the whole display of internal factors that hinders genuine modernisation in Saudi society and promotes superficial materialistic development grounded in entertainment and pleasure as seen in the study. It is therefore not justified at all that the capitalist expansion of Western culture has destroyed desirable indigenous forms of welfare. The absorption of Western culture depended on the local situation of each country. In fact, the assimilation process of Western culture took place by invitation rather than by invasion. The emotional attack of imperialism, globalisation or Westernisation was in fact a favourable disguise for calloused and persisting internal conditions.

Frankly, as discussed earlier in the thesis, it took Saudi Television three days to announce Iraq's invasion of Kuwait in 1990 and even then it merely focussed on CNN's coverage. The Saudi media at that time barely played a role in informing and explaining to Saudi viewers what was happening within their own borders. The Gulf War changed media equipment ownership. Therefore, globalisation tools (DBS) rocketed dramatically to follow the up-to-date news on the Gulf crisis and its aftermath. The children's responses confirmed that, when given the choice, most of them with access to satellite programmes did not regularly watch Saudi Television services.

Among these internal situations was the lack of representative political participation, decentralisation and social democracy. In this case, the relationship between the state and

society was imbalanced. The role of the state exceeded that of society and non-governmental sectors. This is because internal security and stability precedes socio-political rights. Hence, the local visual media do not portray the image of the people, by the people and for the people. From interviews with policy-makers, Saudi TV was perceived as an authoritative propagandistic channel where more than half of the society (children) are unrepresented. Also, it was found that decision-making in the national media structure was autocratic. Interviews with policy-makers indicate that direct and serious participation of the audience (children) and personnel in socialisation institutions with regards media planning and programming were restrained, if not closed. Most probably, this could be why Saudi children showed more preference for cultures that portray *'openness'*.

Indirect participation, through audience studies, was also non-existent. A lack of surveys and research to communicate with the audience distanced media officials from their subjects, as revealed in the interviews. Likewise, as the media authorities were distant from the subjects, they were also distant from self-reliance on genuine indigenous media production. As discussed below, the implications of the media in Saudi Arabia in chapter 2, the broadcasting equipment and the qualified staff to run these facilities were imported. Yet, most important was that programmes could not be produced locally as a result of the lack of trained local talent and resources. The local production system was weak if not handicapped. Local children's programmes encountered significant failure. They contained dull reports about government achievements in development projects or out-of-date programmes.

The children were heavily dependent on imported 'diet' of foreign and Arab origin. Much of these programmes depicted values, ideas and lifestyles that were in conflict with the principles of Islam and were considered irrelevant to Saudi culture. This problem of un-Islamic or inappropriate messages was considered a result of Saudi TV aimlessly relying on imported entertainment programmes, produced in other cultures alien to the teaching of Islam, since it was established in the 1960s. This reliance was reinforced by the dearth of local productions. What is broadcast may determine enormously the cultural outlook of the nation. Sadly, the domestic realm was non-existent or was at best out of attention. The isolation of policy-makers advocates withdrawal from the children as disclosed in the study.

From an educational perspective, programmes on Saudi TV channels, which were imported from foreign and Arab countries, were not of didactic function but rather of a low-cost entertaining nature. Correspondingly, the elevation of the Saudi Muslim identity was not faithfully observed in the Saudi media. This objective was taken in practice as a secondary responsibility as indicated in the responses of the representatives of the socialisation agencies. Indeed, rerun cartoons, presumed as an innocent form of entertainment on Saudi TV, were depicting values that were contrary to the teachings of Islam. At the same time, the limited religious programmes restricted themselves to spelling out religious obligation without involving any up-to-date critical thinking issues as argued before. Mostly, they were ceremonial with second-rate production value. It was not surprising that Saudi children in the present study reported entertainment and enjoyment in general as their major interest in media use, whilst reporting religious and

edu-cultural programmes their least favourite. The low quality production and restricted range of topics covered on Saudi television meant that it was increasingly being deserted. The focus had also pointed to issues such as autonomy from government censorship, freedom of expression, as well as control over media facilities, which were crucial to an active production industry. The issue of the censorship of Saudi TV materials was not useful in terms of protecting Saudi Islamic values; on the contrary, it only contributed to escaping the facts. Ironically, media censorship tactics on Saudi TV were used to veil the minds and restrain concept pluralism. The local programming system was fragile and impotent by exactly these types of complications.

More important than the incompetence of the national media and their structure were the micro-internal conditions that facilitated the indulgence of Saudi children in non-Saudi materials. In the study, it was implied from the children's experiences with the media and family, and from the responses of media policy-makers that socialisation of children has never been planned and seriously implemented by the family in particular, and by society as a whole. Saudi children were brought up either in 'laissez-faire' families, where there was barely any parent/child communication, or in socio-orientated protective families which hardly stimulated the child to develop a broad-minded, contemplative outlook on the world. In other words, the socio-political participation of the child at the embryonic stage was non-existent. That was why, from the results, the children were found to be distant from their families in their media use. Families lost their function as a reference point to more energetic and provocative sources (such as visual media materials). Unfortunately, the educational system and religious practice also reinforced this 'status quo' which depended heavily on dictation rather than on curiosity and thinking.

On top of these enigmas, the socialisation of children in Saudi society is influenced by gender and social class, which could be shaped by incorrect characteristics such as inequality between siblings, over-shielding, strictness, leniency, distancing or unhealthy modelling. Saudi Arabia is a patriarchal society. Women are deprived of many of their basic human rights and there are many levels of gender discrimination where females are mistrusted, questionable and undependable. Prejudiced socialisation in favour of males against females is critical in their interests in visual media and materials that are challenging to the social structure as shown in the study.

There is little chance for females to communicate. Women's issues were hardly addressed by the domestic media. This is contrary to media officials' claims that Saudi TV caters for audiences of different groups. Therefore in the study, Saudi females' exposure to Saudi TV programmes was very much less than the males. They in fact described Saudi TV as less *"sensitive of what the viewer thinks"*, less *"considerate of viewer interest"*, less *"thorough"* and less *"trustworthy"* in comparison to the males. On the other hand, they were more interested in TV programmes of foreign origin.

In addition to these gender issues, the influx of wealth from petroleum in Saudi society has produced various incongruities and dependence. The society turned out to be one of the highest consumer-oriented societies in the world, as reviewed earlier in the thesis. The *'nouveau- riche'* Saudis indulged in various forms of extravagant consumption, mostly of Western commodities. Still, there were massive gaps among people with respect to wealth, education, modernity and traditionalism. This stratification influenced the way young people approached the media. The upper class separated itself from its local

culture to aspire to a dominant Western one. They are closely linked to foreign power and will remain a source of foreign cultural influence within the society. The results in the study confirmed this assumption where the upper class was foreign-orientated in 'heart' and 'body'. The anti-Westerners accused this class of alienation from local culture and questioned its loyalty. The irresourceful lower class, on the other hand, had no option but to surrender to local hegemonic power. Yet, more seriously problematic in the study was the middle class, which revealed ambiguity and split identity. It exercises a hypocritical compliance to a traditional Saudi way of life but yet strives intrinsically towards a foreign and Arab non-Islamic way of life. Middle class attitudes were surprising when reporting Saudi materials with a high average of credibility judgements equal to the lower class, yet it showed less preference and likeness to Saudi materials when compared to foreign and Arab materials than the lower class.

The contextualisation of the situation of the media and children in Saudi Arabia with external and internal factors was informative. Yet, the results should be treated with caution. This is because the sample selected was limited to the city of Jeddah, considered to be the most liberal in the Kingdom. The findings cannot be applied to other regions because of social and lifestyle differences. Also, it could be misleading to reach absolute conclusions based on a one-shot cross-sectional survey. Despite the usefulness of joint theoretical approaches in media research, they do have limited applicability in countries where some of the suppositions need to be reconsidered according to the characteristics of the relevant culture and context. Although both the uses and gratification approach and cultural indicators were modified to suit Saudi culture, the cultural indicator required

substantial alteration to be reflective as much as possible of the particulars of Saudi society. Consequently, this may affect interpretation of the results. For example, to investigate how the children compared their local contexts against Arab and foreign cultures through their media uses, gratification and cultivated perceptions about images of lifestyle, I focused on the intercultural comparative representation of the images of lifestyle rather than the actual number of images in the societies as emphasised in the original cultural indicators. Media effects research cannot be used in *'pure'* theorisation and must be regarded fundamentally from a cultural perspective. Further, although the multiple techniques employed in data collection improve our understanding of the impact of the various visual media materials on Saudi children, some of the findings are better treated as preliminary.

Given the nature of the indigenous broadcasting system, global media and the overall findings of this study, I have introduced some suggestions below that may help the improvement of the media context, along with children's exposure to media materials in Saudi Arabia.

1. Increasing the Saudi TV budget to produce quality programmes in general.

2. Employment of talented media professionals, both Saudis and non-Saudi who are seriously committed to Islamic values, yet who represent different schools of Islamic thinking. This is in order to build up a resourceful Islamic identity for the Saudi child.

3. Continuous training programmes for staff both old and new.

4. Consultancy of world experts in media production and management.

5. Review of media policy for children and serious implementation of the aims and objectives through reward and discipline schemes.

6. Re-examination of censorship guidelines.

7. Promotion of equal opportunities for the less representative groups and disadvantaged gender by opening channels to communicate their worries, concerns and issues.

8. Training of socialisation institutions, such as the family and schools, to acquire interactive concept-orientation skills for child socialisation. These institutions ought to be frequently involved with the children to critically assist them in handling intellectual, emotional and physical consequences resulting from their sophisticated experiences with the media.

9. Active involvement of the socialisation institutions at the heart of the media market and empowering them to play a more attentive role with media broadcasters to pursue clear Islamic socialisation objectives. This is probably best achieved by establishing media watch group networks and societies.

10. Teaching media education courses in schools, which includes knowledge about media, their impact and function.

11. Establishment of local media education institutions with the cooperation of already established international associations and organisations that are concerned with children's experiences of the media. This is to train and encourage Saudi children to be involved in decision-making in media production.

12. Establishment of an active research department within Saudi TV. The primary function of such a facility is to conduct audience research to help media personnel better understand viewers' media behaviour. The research department will become a means of

two-way communication. This is by acting as a channel for Saudi audiences to voice their concerns and aspirations. The research department should be given the freedom, flexibility and funds to conduct longitudinal studies to monitor how different segments of Saudi society have been affected by various media materials.

13. Due to the geographical diversity of the Kingdom, further research regarding children's viewing interests from different regions of Saudi Arabia is needed. This will give new and broad dimensions to audience research from different areas of society.

14. The evolution of technology and the growing popularity of the internet among young Saudis and its impact necessitates careful and planned research in Saudi Arabia, considered to be the most 'closed' society. Researchers should pay close attention to the overall long-term effects on users of different stratifications.

15. Research regarding the construction of an effective mechanism in order for the domestic media to pursue the building of a Saudi children's creative Islamic identity is needed. This might include a detailed description of Islamic identity and an applicable mechanism through different media genres, production administration and technical effects.[1]

Final words

Purely secular models fall short to recognise the particularity of an Islamic society and the contexts of religion and culture in the process of development. Therefore, I advocate reforms not only in regard to media policy but on all fronts in Saudi society, and call for change without compromising Islam as a reference for identity. At the same time, I do not share the views of Islamists and their proponents that the Islamic world and developing

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[1] However, the question is how far the system in Saudi Arabia can pursue such ambitious changes.

countries are the subject of conspiratorial plots organised and orchestrated by the developed world through globalisation and its tools of new media technologies. In fact, I believe that internal forces are holding back the potential of Saudi Arabia to survive in the global market. Therefore, internal factors should be the focus of examination and the axis for change. This is fundamental by starting from the smallest unit in Saudi society, such as the family, and spreading up to the highest levels such as CEOs to implement change, which in turn will help to alleviate many of the external factors, providing balanced relations with others. Saudi Arabia does not yet enjoy a system that promotes social and political awareness to empower people to participate fully in the decision-making process. Therefore, cultural penetration is an invitation for the exchange of human experiences, a challenge for excellence and an inspirational mechanism for creativity. In the case of Saudi TV, the channel has started to improve as a result of the competition that it faces from DBS.[1] The look at cultural penetration as an antagonising force and the accusation of globalisation of imperialism reflect weaknesses on multidimensional internal levels. Although it has to be admitted that some of the *charter* of foreign and Arab cultures are not in the best interest of Saudi Arabia, dissociation with and shutting out from interacting culturally would seem to be in opposition to the law of cultural evolution. Cultural dissociation would in fact give prominence to certain types of cultures which would deprive Saudi Arabia of cultural diversity. However, cultural selectivity and discriminative invitation are the keys to advancement and achievement. Cultural penetration or globalisation should be seen as a gear for progress. The question in this case is how to avoid bad cultural *'cholesterol'* while absorbing good cultural

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[1] Whilst writing this section and monitoring Saudi TV Channel 1, a presenter in one of the cultural programmes discussed with his guest some socially taboo issues. He then had to confess on air that the reason for this degree of openness was the pressure that Saudi TV encounters from DBS.

'diet'. Unfortunately, cultural adopters usually find it is easy to adopt magna *'Mac'* and *'fool'*[1] because they are easy to consume while they find it difficult to consume quality cultural *magna charta* and Islam, perhaps because they require much more effort for digestion. This is especially true when the system is weak and unprepared, frozen to materialistic and entertainment-orientated aspects of the culture.

Generally, it would be dangerous to hallmark everything Western as a form of cultural invasion and equally so to seek modernisation only through the eyes of Westernisation. This is because pluralism is a prerequisite for modernisation. Islamically speaking, exchanging experiences on many levels and viewing the world as a *'melting pot'* lab, where nations communicate and contribute their distinguished cultures to serve in the age of *'globalism'* would be the ideal conclusion. Yet, the question remains how to synthesise such clashing spheres without jeopardising identity and particularity?

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[1] It is a cheap and popular dish in the Arab world.

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APPENDIX (1)

Dear Student,

First of all, I would like to thank you very much for helping me in conducting this research. The aim of this survey is to study young people's experience of the media. There are no right or wrong answers. The important thing is that you read each question carefully and circle the answer that reflects your opinion. Your answers will be used for the purpose of this research only and will be confidential. Please answer the following questions. Your co-operation is appreciated.
Thank you again.

<div align="center">

Hanan Ahmed Ashi
PhD student in
Mass Communications,
University of Leicester,
England

</div>

Please fill in this questionnaire.

Section One:

1. Circle the relevant answer according to your feelings. Your answer is correct in all cases.

People in foreign countries are fashionable	Yes	No	No opinion	A1
People in Arab countries are fashionable	Yes	No	No opinion	A2
Saudis are fashionable	Yes	No	No opinion	A3
People in foreign countries are wealthy	Yes	No	No opinion	A4
People in Arab countries are wealthy	Yes	No	No opinion	A5
Saudis are wealthy	Yes	No	No opinion	A6
The lives of people in foreign countries are full of wild parties	Yes	No	No opinion	A7
The lives of people in Arab countries are full of wild parties	Yes	No	No opinion	A8
The lives of Saudis are full of wild parties	Yes	No	No opinion	A9
People in foreign countries every day eat in restaurants	Yes	No	No opinion	A10
People in Arab countries every day eat in restaurants	Yes	No	No opinion	A11
Saudis every day eat in restaurants	Yes	No	No opinion	A12
People in foreign countries go always shopping	Yes	No	No opinion	A13
People in Arab countries go always shopping	Yes	No	No opinion	A14
Saudis go always shopping	Yes	No	No opinion	A15
Screen personalities in foreign counties are VIPs	Yes	No	No opinion	A16
Screen personalities in Arab counties are VIPs	Yes	No	No opinion	A17
Screen personalities in Saudi Arabia are VIPs	Yes	No	No opinion	A18
Foreigners are always travelling around the world	Yes	No	No opinion	A19

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Arabs are always travelling around the world	Yes	No	No opinion	A20
Saudis are always travelling around the world	Yes	No	No opinion	A21
Lives of foreigners are full of adventure	Yes	No	No opinion	A22
Lives of Arabs are full of adventure	Yes	No	No opinion	A23
Lives of Saudi are full of adventure	Yes	No	No opinion	A24
Foreigners are highly beautiful (physically attractive)	Yes	No	No opinion	A25
Arabs are highly beautiful (physically attractive)	Yes	No	No opinion	A26
Saudis are highly beautiful (physically attractive)	Yes	No	No opinion	A27
Foreigners are very bold	Yes	No	No opinion	A28
Arabs are very bold	Yes	No	No opinion	A29
Saudis are very bold	Yes	No	No opinion	A30
Foreigners are highly independent (away from the control of others)	Yes	No	No opinion	A31
Arabs are highly independent (away from the control of others)	Yes	No	No opinion	A32
Saudis are highly independent (away from the control of others)	Yes	No	No opinion	A33
Foreigners are romantic with each other	Yes	No	No opinion	A34
Arabs are romantic with each other	Yes	No	No opinion	A35
Saudis are romantic with each other	Yes	No	No opinion	A36
Foreigners are always competing for status	Yes	No	No opinion	A37
Arabs are always competing for status	Yes	No	No opinion	A38
Saudis are always competing for status	Yes	No	No opinion	A39
Foreigners' lives are full of violence	Yes	No	No opinion	A40
Arabs' lives are full of violence	Yes	No	No opinion	A41
Saudis' lives are full of violence	Yes	No	No opinion	A42

Section Two:

2. Do you have a TV set in your house?   Yes   No   A43

3. Do you watch TV?   Yes   No   A44   (If not got to section five)

4. If you watch TV, how many hours do you watch during schooldays?

Foreign programmes	Arab programmes	Saudi programmes	A45-46-47
I do not watch	I do not watch	I do not watch	
Less than an hour	Less than an hour	Less than an hour	
1-3hrs	1-3hrs	1-3hrs	
More than 3hrs	More than 3hrs	More than 3hrs	

5. If you watch TV, how many hours do you watch during holidays?

Foreign programmes	Arab programmes	Saudi programmes	A48-49-50
I do not watch	I do not watch	I do not watch	
Less than an hour	Less than an hour	Less than an hour	
1-3hrs	1-3hrs	1-3hrs	
More than 3hrs	More than 3hrs	More than 3hrs	

6. If you watch foreign programmes, how do you know the schedule of the programmes?

Print media   TV   Family member   A friend   By chance   A51

7. Who controls what you watch of foreign TV programmes?

Myself   Father   Mother   Siblings   Family decision   Other (   )   A52

8. Who do you watch foreign TV programmes with?

Alone   Siblings   Parents   Friends   A53

9. Are the following lifestyle images strongly portrayed in foreign TV programmes you watch?

People appearing fashionable	Yes	No	No opinion	A54
People possessing wealth (money, expensive cars, jewellery, luxurious houses)	Yes	No	No opinion	A55
Beauty (physically attractive people)	Yes	No	No opinion	A56
Wild parties	Yes	No	No opinion	A57
People eating out in restaurants	Yes	No	No opinion	A58
People shopping	Yes	No	No opinion	A59
Celebrities (VIPs)	Yes	No	No opinion	A60
Adventure (discovering new things, solving mysteries)	Yes	No	No opinion	A61
Bold people who do what they like to do	Yes	No	No opinion	A62
People who try to be independent from others	Yes	No	No opinion	A63
Romance	Yes	No	No opinion	A64
People competing for status	Yes	No	No opinion	A65
Violent people	Yes	No	No opinion	A66

10. I believe that foreign TV programmes are:

Important	Agree	Disagree	No opinion	A67
Thorough	Agree	Disagree	No opinion	A68
Trustworthy	Agree	Disagree	No opinion	A69
Ethical (teach what is acceptable or unacceptable)	Agree	Disagree	No opinion	A70
Respectful of people's privacy	Agree	Disagree	No opinion	A71
Sensitive to what the viewer thinks	Agree	Disagree	No opinion	A72
Considerate of viewers' interests	Agree	Disagree	No opinion	A73
Concerned about public interest	Agree	Disagree	No opinion	A74

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11. I watch foreign TV programmes because:

I learn new things for my own interest	Agree	Disagree	No opinion	A75
I learn from the experiences of others	Agree	Disagree	No opinion	A76
I learn from the way people solve their problems	Agree	Disagree	No opinion	A77
I learn what is right or wrong	Agree	Disagree	No opinion	A78
People's circumstances which I watch resemble those which I come across in my daily life	Agree	Disagree	No opinion	A79
Problems which people on foreign TV discuss might happen to me as well	Agree	Disagree	No opinion	A80
They help me pass time	Agree	Disagree	No opinion	A81
I enjoy watching foreign TV	Agree	Disagree	No opinion	A82
It has become a habit	Agree	Disagree	No opinion	A83
I do not have anyone to talk to	Agree	Disagree	No opinion	A84
It helps me escape from school work	Agree	Disagree	No opinion	A85
It helps me escape from problems with the teacher	Agree	Disagree	No opinion	A86
It helps me escape from family problems	Agree	Disagree	No opinion	A87
It helps me escape from housework	Agree	Disagree	No opinion	A88
It gets me out of boredom	Agree	Disagree	No opinion	A89
It relaxes me	Agree	Disagree	No opinion	A90
It deflects my anger	Agree	Disagree	No opinion	A91
The characters on the screen are attractive	Agree	Disagree	No opinion	A92
It helps me relate to a particular person	Agree	Disagree	No opinion	A93
It helps me talk more with my peers	Agree	Disagree	No opinion	A94
It helps me talk more with my family	Agree	Disagree	No opinion	A95
It increases my self-esteem by increasing insight	Agree	Disagree	No opinion	A96

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Section Three:

12. If you watch Arab programmes, how do you know the schedule of the programmes?

Print media   TV   Family member   A friend   By chance   B1

13. Who controls what you watch of Arab TV programmes?

Myself   Father   Mother   Siblings   Family decision   Other (   )   B2

14. Who do you watch Arab TV programmes with?

Alone   Siblings   Parents   Friends   B3

15. Are the following lifestyle images strongly portrayed in Arab TV programmes you watch?

People appearing fashionable	Yes	No	No opinion	B4
People possessing wealth (money, expensive cars, jewellery, luxurious houses)	Yes	No	No opinion	B5
Beauty (physically attractive people)	Yes	No	No opinion	B6
Wild parties	Yes	No	No opinion	B7
People eating out in restaurants	Yes	No	No opinion	B8
People shopping	Yes	No	No opinion	B9
Celebrities (VIPs)	Yes	No	No opinion	B10
Adventure (discovering new things, solving mysteries)	Yes	No	No opinion	B11
Bold people who do what they like to do	Yes	No	No opinion	B12
People who try to be independent from others	Yes	No	No opinion	B13
Romance	Yes	No	No opinion	B14
People competing for status	Yes	No	No opinion	B15
Violent people	Yes	No	No opinion	B16

16. I believe that Arab TV programmes are:

Important	Agree	Disagree	No opinion	B17
Thorough	Agree	Disagree	No opinion	B18
Trustworthy	Agree	Disagree	No opinion	B19
Ethical (teach what is acceptable or unacceptable)	Agree	Disagree	No opinion	B20
Respectful of people's privacy	Agree	Disagree	No opinion	B21
Sensitive to what the viewer thinks	Agree	Disagree	No opinion	B22
Considerate of viewers' interests	Agree	Disagree	No opinion	B23
Concerned about public interest	Agree	Disagree	No opinion	B24

17. I watch Arab TV programmes because:

I learn new things for my own interest	Agree	Disagree	No opinion	B25
I learn from the experiences of others	Agree	Disagree	No opinion	B26
I learn from the way people solve their problems	Agree	Disagree	No opinion	B27
I learn what is right or wrong	Agree	Disagree	No opinion	B28
People's circumstances which I watch resemble those which I come across in my daily life	Agree	Disagree	No opinion	B29
Problems which people on Arab TV discuss might happen to me as well	Agree	Disagree	No opinion	B30
They help me pass time	Agree	Disagree	No opinion	B31
I enjoy watching Arab TV	Agree	Disagree	No opinion	B32
It has become a habit	Agree	Disagree	No opinion	B33
I do not have anyone to talk to	Agree	Disagree	No opinion	B34
It helps me escape from school work	Agree	Disagree	No opinion	B35
It helps me escape from problems with the teacher	Agree	Disagree	No opinion	B36
It helps me escape from family problems	Agree	Disagree	No opinion	B37

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It helps me escape from housework	Agree	Disagree	No opinion	B38
It gets me out of boredom	Agree	Disagree	No opinion	B39
It relaxes me	Agree	Disagree	No opinion	B40
It deflects my anger	Agree	Disagree	No opinion	B41
The characters on the screen are attractive	Agree	Disagree	No opinion	B42
It helps me relate to a particular person	Agree	Disagree	No opinion	B43
It helps me talk more with my peers	Agree	Disagree	No opinion	B44
It helps me talk more with my family	Agree	Disagree	No opinion	B45
It increases my self-esteem by increasing insight	Agree	Disagree	No opinion	B46

Section Four:

18. If you watch Saudi TV programmes, how do you know the schedule of the programmes?

Print media   TV   Family member   A friend   By chance   B47

19. Who controls what you watch of foreign TV programmes?

Myself   Father   Mother   Siblings   Family decision   Other (   )   B48

20. Who do you watch Saudi TV programmes with?

Alone   Siblings   Parents   Friends   B49

21.Are the following lifestyle images strongly portrayed in Saudi TV programmes you watch?

People appearing fashionable	Yes	No	No opinion	B50
People possessing wealth (money, expensive cars, jewellery, luxurious houses)	Yes	No	No opinion	B51
Beauty (physically attractive people)	Yes	No	No opinion	B52
Wild parties	Yes	No	No opinion	B53
People eating out in restaurants	Yes	No	No opinion	B54
People shopping	Yes	No	No opinion	B55
Celebrities (VIPs)	Yes	No	No opinion	B56

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Adventure (discovering new things, solving mysteries)	Yes	No	No opinion	B57
Bold people who do what they like to do	Yes	No	No opinion	B58
People who try to be independent from others	Yes	No	No opinion	B59
Romance	Yes	No	No opinion	B60
People competing for status	Yes	No	No opinion	B61
Violent people	Yes	No	No opinion	B62

22. I believe that Saudi TV programmes are:

Important	Agree	Disagree	No opinion	B63
Thorough	Agree	Disagree	No opinion	B64
Trustworthy	Agree	Disagree	No opinion	B65
Ethical (teach what is acceptable or unacceptable)	Agree	Disagree	No opinion	B66
Respectful of people's privacy	Agree	Disagree	No opinion	B67
Sensitive to what the viewer thinks	Agree	Disagree	No opinion	B68
Considerate of viewers' interests	Agree	Disagree	No opinion	B69
Concerned about public interest	Agree	Disagree	No opinion	B70

23. I watch Saudi TV programmes because:

I learn new things for my own interest	Agree	Disagree	No opinion	B71
I learn from the experiences of others	Agree	Disagree	No opinion	B72
I learn from the way people solve their problems	Agree	Disagree	No opinion	B73
I learn what is right or wrong	Agree	Disagree	No opinion	B74
People's circumstances which I watch resemble those which I come across in my daily life	Agree	Disagree	No opinion	B75
Problems which people on Saudi TV discuss might happen to me as well	Agree	Disagree	No opinion	B76

They help me pass time	Agree	Disagree	No opinion	B77
I enjoy watching Saudi TV	Agree	Disagree	No opinion	B78
It has become a habit	Agree	Disagree	No opinion	B79
I do not have anyone to talk to	Agree	Disagree	No opinion	B80
It helps me escape from school work	Agree	Disagree	No opinion	B81
It helps me escape from problems with the teacher	Agree	Disagree	No opinion	B82
It helps me escape from family problems	Agree	Disagree	No opinion	B83
It helps me escape from housework	Agree	Disagree	No opinion	B84
It gets me out of boredom	Agree	Disagree	No opinion	B85
It relaxes me	Agree	Disagree	No opinion	B86
It deflects my anger	Agree	Disagree	No opinion	B87
The characters on the screen are attractive	Agree	Disagree	No opinion	B88
It helps me relate to a particular person	Agree	Disagree	No opinion	B89
It helps me talk more with my peers	Agree	Disagree	No opinion	B90
It helps me talk more with my family	Agree	Disagree	No opinion	B91
It increases my self-esteem by increasing insight	Agree	Disagree	No opinion	B92

24. Do you have a satellite channels' receiver in your house?   Yes   No   B93

25. What are three programme types you like to watch regularly on television? Please specify the type of programmes (for example cartoons, music and songs, films, religious programmes etc.) What is the nationality of the country producing these programmes and what is the name of the channel? (Rank these programmes according to importance to you).

B94-95-96   B97-98-99   B100-101-102

1. Type _____   Nationality _____   Channel _____

2. Type _____   Nationality _____   Channel _____

3. Type _____   Nationality _____   Channel _____

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Section Five:

26. Do you have a video recorder in your house? (If not go to section six)   Yes   No   C1

27. Do you watch videotapes?   Yes   No   C2

28. How many hours do you watch during schooldays?

I do not watch   Less than an hour   1-3hrs   More than 3hrs   C3

29. How many hours do you watch during holidays?

I do not watch   Less than an hour   1-3hrs   More than 3hrs   C4

30. Who controls what you watch on video?

Myself   Father   Mother   Siblings   Family decision   Other (   )   C5

31. Who do you watch video with?

Alone   Siblings   Parents   Friends   C6

32. Are the following lifestyle images strongly portrayed in videotape programmes you watch?

People appearing fashionable	Yes	No	No opinion	C7
People possessing wealth (money, expensive cars, jewellery, luxurious houses)	Yes	No	No opinion	C8
Beauty (physically attractive people)	Yes	No	No opinion	C9
Wild parties	Yes	No	No opinion	C10
People eating out in restaurants	Yes	No	No opinion	C11
People shopping	Yes	No	No opinion	C12
Celebrities (VIPs)	Yes	No	No opinion	C13
Adventure (discovering new things, solving mysteries)	Yes	No	No opinion	C14
Bold people who do what they like to do	Yes	No	No opinion	C15
People who try to be independent from others	Yes	No	No opinion	C16
Romance	Yes	No	No opinion	C17
People competing for status	Yes	No	No opinion	C18
Violent people	Yes	No	No opinion	C19

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33. I believe that videotape programmes are:

Important	Agree	Disagree	No opinion	C20
Thorough	Agree	Disagree	No opinion	C21
Trustworthy	Agree	Disagree	No opinion	C22
Ethical (teach what is acceptable or unacceptable)	Agree	Disagree	No opinion	C23
Respectful of people's privacy	Agree	Disagree	No opinion	C24
Sensitive to what the viewer thinks	Agree	Disagree	No opinion	C25
Considerate of viewers' interests	Agree	Disagree	No opinion	C26
Concerned about public interest	Agree	Disagree	No opinion	C27

34. I watch videotape programmes because:

I learn new things for my own interest	Agree	Disagree	No opinion	C28
I learn from the experiences of others	Agree	Disagree	No opinion	C29
I learn from the way people solve their problems	Agree	Disagree	No opinion	C30
I learn what is right or wrong	Agree	Disagree	No opinion	C31
People's circumstances which I watch resemble those which I come across in my daily life	Agree	Disagree	No opinion	C32
Problems which people on video discuss might happen to me as well	Agree	Disagree	No opinion	C33
They help me pass time	Agree	Disagree	No opinion	C34
I enjoy watching video	Agree	Disagree	No opinion	C35
It has become a habit	Agree	Disagree	No opinion	C36
I do not have anyone to talk to	Agree	Disagree	No opinion	C37
It helps me escape from school work	Agree	Disagree	No opinion	C38
It helps me escape from problems with the teacher	Agree	Disagree	No opinion	C39
It helps me escape from family problems	Agree	Disagree	No opinion	C40

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It helps me escape from housework	Agree	Disagree	No opinion	C41
It gets me out of boredom	Agree	Disagree	No opinion	C42
It relaxes me	Agree	Disagree	No opinion	C43
It deflects my anger	Agree	Disagree	No opinion	C44
The characters on the screen are attractive	Agree	Disagree	No opinion	C45
It helps me relate to a particular person	Agree	Disagree	No opinion	C46
It helps me talk more with my peers	Agree	Disagree	No opinion	C47
It helps me talk more with my family	Agree	Disagree	No opinion	C48
It increases my self-esteem by increasing insight	Agree	Disagree	No opinion	C49

35. What are three programme types you like to watch regularly on video? Please specify the type of programmes (for example cartoons, music and songs, films, religious programmes etc.) What is the nationality of the country producing these programmes. (Rank these programmes according to importance to you).

C50-51-52   C53-54-55

1. Type _____   Nationality _____

2. Type _____   Nationality _____

3. Type _____   Nationality _____

Section Six:

36. Do you have a videogames console in your house?   Yes   No   C56

37. Do you play videogames?   Yes   No   C57

38. How many hours do you play during schooldays?

I do not play   Less than an hour   1-3hrs   More than 3hrs   C58

39. How many hours do you play during holidays?

I do not play   Less than an hour   1-3hrs   More than 3hrs   C59

40. Who controls what you play on a videogames console?

Myself   Father   Mother   Siblings   Family decision   Other (   )   C60

41.Who do you play videogames with?

Alone   Siblings   Parents   Friends   C61

42. Are the following lifestyle images strongly portrayed in videogames you play?

People appearing fashionable	Yes	No	No opinion	C62
People possessing wealth (money, expensive cars, jewellery, luxurious houses)	Yes	No	No opinion	C64
Beauty (physically attractive people)	Yes	No	No opinion	C64
Wild parties	Yes	No	No opinion	C65
People eating out in restaurants	Yes	No	No opinion	C66
People shopping	Yes	No	No opinion	C67
Celebrities (VIPs)	Yes	No	No opinion	C68
Adventure (discovering new things, solving mysteries)	Yes	No	No opinion	C69
Bold people who do what they like to do	Yes	No	No opinion	C70
People who try to be independent from others	Yes	No	No opinion	C71
Romance	Yes	No	No opinion	C73
People competing for status	Yes	No	No opinion	C73
Violent people	Yes	No	No opinion	C74

43. I play videogames because:

I learn new things for my own interest	Agree	Disagree	No opinion	C75
I learn from the experiences of others	Agree	Disagree	No opinion	C76
I learn from the way people solve their problems	Agree	Disagree	No opinion	C77
I learn what is right or wrong	Agree	Disagree	No opinion	C78
People's circumstances which I play resemble those which I come across in my daily life	Agree	Disagree	No opinion	C79
Problems which people on videogames have might happen to me as well	Agree	Disagree	No opinion	C80
They help me pass time	Agree	Disagree	No opinion	C81

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I enjoy playing videogames	Agree	Disagree	No opinion	C82
It has become a habit	Agree	Disagree	No opinion	C83
I do not have anyone to talk to	Agree	Disagree	No opinion	C84
It helps me escape from school work	Agree	Disagree	No opinion	C85
It helps me escape from problems with the teacher	Agree	Disagree	No opinion	C86
It helps me escape from family problems	Agree	Disagree	No opinion	C87
It helps me escape from housework	Agree	Disagree	No opinion	C88
It gets me out of boredom	Agree	Disagree	No opinion	C89
It relaxes me	Agree	Disagree	No opinion	C90
It deflects my anger	Agree	Disagree	No opinion	C91
The characters on the screen are attractive	Agree	Disagree	No opinion	C92
It helps me relate to a particular character	Agree	Disagree	No opinion	C93
It helps me talk more with my peers	Agree	Disagree	No opinion	C94
It helps me talk more with my family	Agree	Disagree	No opinion	C95
It increases my self-esteem by increasing insight	Agree	Disagree	No opinion	C96

44. How old are you?————   C97

45. What is your nationality?————   C98

46. Other comments ...   C99

MANY THANKS

APPENDIX (2)

Dear ---------------

First of all, I would like to thank your Excellency very much for helping me in conducting this research. The aim of this interview is to understand the media context for children in Saudi Arabia, by investigating the visual media policy for children in the Kingdom, levels of activities, cultural imperialism and their impact on the values of the Saudi child. Your opinion is appreciated.

For your convenience, I will receive your answers by fax, (026556927).

Thank you again for your kind attention.

Hanan Ahmed Ashi
PhD student in
Mass Communications,
University of Leicester,
England

First: Visual Media Policy for Children in Saudi Arabia

1. What is the status of visual media policy for Saudi children in the Kingdom?

2. How do you view its aims in your opinion?

3. What criteria are followed in the formulation of visual media policy for children?

4. Do you follow any articulate plan for the implementation of the policy on children? What are the plan's steps?

5. To what extent do media broadcasters faithfully implement the plan?

Second: Saudi Children's Participation & Level of Activity with Visual Media

6. Is making children watch and analyse media materials critically one of the objectives of the media policy?

7. What procedures do you follow to identify the aspirations of the children?

8. To what extent are children involved in the process leading to the setting of the objectives of the media policy in your opinion?

Third: Cultural Imperialism & Resistance

9. How do you view the effects of foreign programmes on the Islamic values of the Saudi child?

10. How do you view the effects of Arab programmes on the Islamic values of the Saudi child?

11. Are their any strategies taken in blocking undesired cultural penetration?

12. What are these strategies and how effective are they?

13. Other comments...