

The Effects of American and Egyptian Video Movies on Saudi College Students and Their Perceptions of Safety in the U.S. and Egypt: A Case Study

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Abstract

This study is concerned with the effects of American and Egyptian movies on young Saudi VCR viewing habits, using cultivation theory. As a result of this survey we found a positive correlation between VCR viewing and perceived safety among Americans in the U.S. Also, there was another positive correlation between VCR usages and viewing behavior and attitudes which include attention, intention and perceived realism. However, the relationships between the amount of VCR usages and social attitudes were still small and limited as were found by previous cultivation studies.

VCRs were very popular among Saudis during the late 70s, until the end of the eighties. The ownership reached about 80% of the population in the Kingdom.⁽¹⁾ In 1990, however, Aloofy found that the popularity of the VCR declined by almost 16 percent. The major reason for this decline was due to the new Islamic awareness among Saudis who felt VCRs were a tool of foreign culture intrusion into Islamic values and morals.⁽²⁾

This study was conducted during late 1991 and early 1992, and before the proliferation of satellite dishes in the Kingdom especially in Riyadh where the population of this study is located. At the time, VCRs were the only entertainment medium besides Saudi TV, first and second channels, for most of those who resided in Riyadh. Now many Saudis have their own satellite dishes on their rooftops or in their backyards and receive many international TV channels such as CNN, BBC, and many Arabic channels such as MBC and ART.

The purpose of this study was to examine the cumulative effect of the VCR on Saudi Social and behavioral attitudes and their perceptions of safety in the U.S. and Egypt. The researcher chose Saudi students viewers because they appeared to be the segment of Saudi society most affected, according to many previous studies.⁽³⁾

This paper would be the first one to test cultivation theory and its relation to the usages of the VCR abroad and in a traditional society in particular.

Cultivation Theory

This theory looks at the television culture and world and compares them with the real world and then looks at the differences between heavy and light TV viewers regarding social perceptions, in issues such as mistrust, violence, sex role and many others. Since American TV world is different from that of the real one, those who are heavy TV viewers would see the world as that of the TV.

This theory was meant to be mainly for the American television and its impact on the American heavy viewers. Recently, however, some researchers argued that this theory is workable with the new communication technologies in general and with VCRs in particular. They believed that this theory is **«really much more a theory of the effects of story telling than it is a theory of the effects of television. Television is studied for this purpose, not as a technology per se, but as a central institution of cultural production.....»**⁽⁴⁾. These authors in their conclusion to the same study said: **«.. we have found it useful to divorce cultivation from television specifically,..... cultivation then becomes a statistical and analytical account of the "teaching potential" of modern industrial storytelling, regardless of the medium used for delivery»**.

Despite the fact that most cultivation studies were done in the US, there were some few other studies which looked at the effect of cultivation internationally. For instance, in Britain in 1978, Wober did not find any relationship between TV exposure and violence.⁽⁵⁾ However, Hawkins and Pingree pointed out some problems with this study . The most serious one was... **"the British heavy viewers see less violence than many American light viewers. Wober's comparison is between light and extremely light viewers of violence, and his negative results are not surprising"**⁽⁶⁾. In Canada, Doob and McDonald found mixed results regarding television exposure and the viewer's perception of the nature and frequency of crime and violence.⁽⁷⁾ The problem with their study was that it did not control many other variables that could mediate the relationships.⁽⁸⁾ In Australia, Pingree and Hawkins reported in 1981 a significant relationship between TV exposure and violence variables despite their control of too many variables.⁽⁹⁾

VCR Viewing in Saudi Arabia

Most of the VCRs studies in Saudi Arabia indicated that Saudis watched VCR for two to three hours per day.⁽¹⁰⁾

Aloofy's study in 1990 found a moderate negative correlation between the age of the viewer and the amount of time spent watching VCR programs. Also, in the same study, he stated that while teenagers said that Saudi Television programs did not address their needs and problems, older people did not care much about VCR programs and in most cases, bought their VCR was just for their children's sake⁽¹¹⁾.

VCR Programming Preferences and Impacts

All previous studies about VCR viewing habits in the Kingdom indicated that the Saudi audience prefers Egyptian and American programs.⁽¹²⁾ Horror and adventure movies were one of the most popular types of movies in the Kingdom. Bakhaider stated that:

"Because the Saudi Arabian television network is not allowed to show films and programs which contain love scenes and only a few which contain strong violence, most viewers turn to the video cassette recorder to choose whatever is lacking on television. Video's impact on the viewing public includes this exposure to the depiction of a life style, its principles and values, which does not necessarily comply with traditions of an Islamic society".⁽¹³⁾

In his indepth interviews, Aloofy cited one of his female respondents. She said: **«I think horror, adventure movies, which I like, are preferred by most Saudis.. most of my friends share this with me. We like those movies because we want to fantasize about our future. The horror movies**

challenge our ability to follow them, this gives us special pleasure to watch». ⁽¹⁴⁾ Another participant, in the same study said "VCR programs are telling our children and young men and women that violence, killing, and disobeying parents..... are okay". ⁽¹⁵⁾

When Abuzinada asked his respondents whether they thought that VCRs enabled them to watch programs prohibited on Saudi TV, 81 percent said they strongly agreed, and 19% of them said they agreed. These movies, in general, consist of violence and love scenes. ⁽¹⁶⁾ Thus when Aloofy (1986) asked his participants about the danger that was represented by VCR, on Saudi society, most of them indicated that there was a strong danger: "The respondents are very uncomfortable with the negative influence that VCR programs would have on Saudi attitudes, manners, beliefs, and values". ⁽¹⁷⁾

Examples of Movies That Are Watched by Saudi Audiences

There has been no content analysis study conducted in Saudi Arabia regarding VCR programs that are liked by young Saudis. However, the author in a previous study interviewed directors and owners of video rental stores in many different cities in the Kingdom. He chose video rental stores that differed in size and location, some of them were very large, popular centers located on main streets, while others were very small outlets located in lower class areas.

All of these owners and directors pointed to horror, thriller, and action films as the most popular kinds of movies that were liked by Saudi audiences. The author listed the most popular movies among Saudi audiences in late 1989. All the movies on the list were American or Egyptian but two were Indians. The list included the following American films: Last platoon, Lock up, Batman, Licence to kill, The Punisher, Deadly weapon, and Wipe out. The Egyptian films included the following: The birth(Almolid), I'm not a killer (Ana lusto katel), The rapists(Almoghtasiboon), The tumultuous girls in danger (Albanat Almoshaghibat phee khatar), and Bargoon quarter(Hai Bergoon).

Obviously, all these films are action and adventure kind of movies which contain blood and feature gore and heady violence. Of course the American movies contain more violence and have more sexually explicit material. Furthermore, the production quality of American movies are better than that of the Egyptian.

In fact these movies mentioned above are just an example of the kind of movies and programs that are watched by Saudis. Also, we have to bear in mind that cultivation theory- which we are using in this study as the framework - does not measure the impact of one program or so, it measures the cumulative effects of all kinds of programs for a long period of time.

Hypotheses

- H1: Depending on previous literature review, we would expect that the time spent viewing VCR would be related negatively to perceptions of faith in others (to what degree a person trusts others and feels faith in them), life control (the degree of satisfaction and happiness the person feels about his life and his accomplishments), interpersonal connections (kind of relationships the person has with others), and safety (how safe the person feels in his living) among Saudi students at King Sa'ud University who ranged from 17 to 32 years of age.
- H2: Since most of the preferred American materials among young Saudi VCR viewers were horror and violence movies*, and since most of them lacked the direct contact with Americans, we would expect a negative correlation between VCR viewing of American movies and young Saudis' perceptions of safety among Americans and in the U.S.

Rubin, Perse and Taylor stated that **«there was a growing evidence that cultivation is a learning process and, as such, depends on attention to and comprehension of programming and the ability to draw inferences from television portayals»**.⁽¹⁸⁾ Also, the uses and effect model pointed out that the flow of effects come from instrumental rather than ritualistic use. That is the effect related to: the degrees of attention to a program, kind of contents, attitude towards the medium and its content, and the intentionality of viewing. Therefore, many authors believed that viewing behaviors and attitudes would have more impact on social attitudes than viewing exposure per se.

Teenagers and young heavy VCR viewers in Saudi Arabia acknowledged that VCR especially its movies, played a big role in their lives. They considered its movies as travelling tools and as problem solvers. VCR movies were travelling tools because **«you really do not need to travel anymore to know what is happening in the world and how other people live. VCR brings them to us»**.⁽¹⁹⁾ And VCR movies were problem solvers because adolescents, who were heavy VCR users, used them to have new ideas and thoughts that enabled them to solve their problems and to understand their world better. Discussions about VCR programs and characters were very popular among those viewers, and advice and recommendations about these movies and their values were given to those who did not watch them. The nature of the VCR medium helps those heavy viewers to concentrate and get more information as they want since it allows them to watch what they want to watch at any time they want and gives them the freedom to play back scenes that they missed or could not understand at first. Also, VCR gives the viewers the right to forward scenes that they do not like to view. On the other hand, those who watch VCR lightly do not have the time nor the energy to concentrate for a long time. Moreover, they rarely discuss with other viewers what they have seen on the VCR.⁽²⁰⁾

H3 : Therefore, we would argue that VCR time spent would be positively related to attention, intentions, and perceived realism. That is, the more the viewers watched VCR, the more they paid attention, viewed intentionally and perceived programs as real.

Methodology

Three hundred undergraduate students at King Sa'ud University were chosen out of 30925 as the total number of students at the University during the academic year 1991-1992. On purpose, the sample was meant to have maximum variations regarding the subject majors of studies and the number of terms spent at the university.

The Arabic questionnaire was adopted from previous studies.⁽²¹⁾ Statements of viewing behaviors and attitudes and statements of social attitudes were chosen mainly from the study of Rubin, Perse and Taylor.⁽²²⁾ These measurements were pretested before and used by the researcher in another study and proved to be applicable to Saudi audiences.

It took more than two months to collect these data. The questionnaire was administered, from November 1991 to January 1992, by the researcher on 150 male students, while his wife distributed another 150 among female students. This was necessary because males could have no contact with female students who take their courses at the university in a separate place. While the author received all 150 questionnaires that he had administered on his male respondents, he received only 144 questionnaires from his female students. This result left the sample consisting of 51% males and 49% females.

This questionnaire was a long one which consisted of three parts. The first one dealt with questions related to the respondent's demographic and personal characteristics. The second part dealt with attitudes and social behavior perceptions. The last part was concerned with VCR and TV viewing among Saudi respondents.

Sample Demographics

As indicated in Table 1. The participants ranged in age from 17 to 32 years. The mean was 21.7, with standard deviation of 2.6. About 36% of the respondents were between 17-20 years, 54% were between 21-25 years, and about 5% were between 26-30 years old.

Also as seen in Table 1, most of the respondents (65%) were from middle - class families. And about 25% indicated that they were rich. Only 5 and 3 percent said they were very rich and poor respectively.

Looking at the table, one can see that most of the participants were in their second and third years at the university. Only about 4% were in their last year.

The majority of the respondents (47%) said they had never travelled abroad, and only 5% said they always travelled outside the Kingdom.

These descriptions of the sociodemographic variables are very important to cultivation analysis as we will explain next.

Table 1

Sample Demographics

Age		No. of cases	%
1.	17-20	107	36.39
2.	21 -25	160	54.42
3.	26-30	15	5.10
4.	31-On	2	.68
5.	Missing	10	3.40
Income		No. of Cases	%
1.	V. Rich	14	4.8
2.	Rich	73	24.8
3.	Mid	194	66
4.	B. Mid	8	2.7
5.	V.Poor	2	.7
6.	Missing	3	1
No. of Years at the university		No. of cases	%
1.	Frirst year	85	28.9
2.	Second year	100	34.01
3.	Third year	96	32.65
4.	Fourth year	13	4.42
5.	Missing	0	0
Travelling abroad		No. of cases	%
1.	Always travel abroad	15	5.10
2.	Sometimes travel	69	23.47
3.	Rarely travel	57	19.38
4.	Never travel	138	46.94
5.	Missing	15	5.10

Variables and Measurements

Some recommendations of previous studies

This paper followed some of the previous advice and recommendations by many reserachers regarding cultivation concepts, methods, and methodolgies. Therefore, the researcher dealt with the following problems:

1. The effects of other variables that may mediate the cultivation effects were controlled at the same time as recommended by many researches. These variables include the sociodemographic aspects: (age, sex, income, marital status, and number of terms spent at the university). Some of these variables would not be so significant in this study because they were concerned with young Saudi students

who do not differ in growth from one another. Moreover, the researcher controlled other variables that he thought could have an impact on the cultivation final result. These include travelling frequencies and degree of religiosity. Travelling frequencies were tested by asking the respondents to state the number of times that they had travelled outside Saudi Arabia: (many times = 1; never at all = 5). Religiosity variable was controlled by omitting the subjects who indicated that they did not watch VCR nor TV for religious reasons. The author did not create indices nor scales about religiosity because they were difficult to make especially for females.

2. Some other researchers stated that there were some other variables that were responsible for the cultivation relationships. These included contents of TV programs, attention, and perceived realism. Hawkins and Pingree stated that **«cultivation relationships are attributed to some television content and not to others, and to total television viewing per se»⁽²⁴⁾**. Also, Rubin, Perse and Taylor said: **«Researchers have observed that crime oriented programming, especially programs that depict an unjust resolution, are mostly likely to be associated with cultivation effects»⁽²⁵⁾**. Thus, the author examined the relationship between VCR total exposure and viewing behavior and attitudes. Also, he tested the effect of American movies (mostly violence movies) and the Saudi perceptions of safety among Americans and in the U.S.

3. To minimize response bias, the author used positive and negative items as they were recommended by Rubin, Perse, and Taylor **«it would be advisable for future studies to include both positive and negative items in the formulation of personal perceptions, including typical cultivation dependent measures.»⁽²⁶⁾**

VCR viewing: Level of VCR viewing was measured by asking the respondents to indicate their daily average time spent with VCRs including weekends and summer. This question was appropriate and more reliable among Saudi respondents according to previous studies which were done by Aloofy⁽²⁷⁾.

One hundred and twenty nine persons (44%) indicated that they did not watch VCR at all. Only 39 persons (13%) said they watched it for less than one hour. Those who viewed VCR for two hours were 49 persons (17%), 21 respondents (7%) watched it for 3 hours and another 7 percent viewed it for more than 3. The mean was 2.55 and the standard deviation was 1.76.

Social attitudes: The author did not choose the typical cultivation indices, but instead, he used that of Rubin, Perse and Taylor, which was created based on some previous studies.⁽²⁸⁾ These indices were the opposite of the typical negative cultivation indices. That is, mistrust, a lousy world, alienation, fearfulness, and external control indices were changed to interpersonal trust, life satisfaction, locus of control, safety and interpersonal connection indices instead. There were sixteen statements Likert type which were given to the participants to state their opinion (1 = strongly disagree, 5 = strongly agree). Fifty percent of these statements were positive and the other fifty were negative.

The 16 statements were submitted to principal component analysis to construct the social attitudes indices. Varimax relation was compared with oblique rotation to which they appeared to be similar. Varimax rotation was used. To select the components, the author used the graphical method of screen test, the factors with eigenvalues of more than one, and the loading of (.40) in an absolute value which enabled the researcher to be confident that he

did not deal with non-chance loadings since his sample was over 200 people.

The principal component revealed 6 factors which amounted for 57% of the total variance. It produced 4 factors theoretically interpretable. These include life control with eigenvalue of 2.26, faith in others with eigenvalues of 1.65 and interpersonal connection and safety with eigenvalue of 1.29 and 1.16 respectively. While cronbach alphas were not high among these scales, they were all acceptable (between .6 and .7) except the interpersonal connection scale which had alpha with .55.

Safety among Americans and in the U.S.: This variable was tested by an index of

Social Attitudes

Table 2

Attitude Statements	F1 life control	F2 faith in others	F3 inter- personal connection	F4 safety
Factor 1: Life control				
You are very content and satisfied with your life	.69	.00	.16	-.00
You feel you have been successful in achieving your goals in life	.68	-.09	.10	-.05
Your life could be happier than it is now.	.54	.19	-.32	-.06
Factor 2: Faith in others				
Husbands cannot be trusted	.45	.59	-.09	.05
Wives care more about their marriage than their husbands do	.17	-.59	.23	-.23
Most people can be trusted	-.01	-.57	.10	-.04
Most people cannot be depended upon to help in solving other people's problems	-.00	.58	.10	-.04
Factor 3: Interpersonal connections				
You should feel happy if you helped others	-.04	.09	.63	-.30
It is important for you to see what happens to people you know	.06	.10	.54	.20
It is important for you to visit relatives and neighbors.	.28	.39	.52	.29
Factor 4: Safety				
You would not feel safe walking alone at night.	.22	.34	-.03	.69
You would feel safe at your home even if you leave the doors unlocked.	.22	.14	.11	.63
Eigenvalue	2.26	1.65	1.29	1.16
Percent of total variance	15.1	11.0	8.6	7.7
Note: N = 228				

two statements, one was positive and the other was negative**. These two statements were also Likert type (1 = strongly disagree, 5 = strongly agree). The means of the index was 3.23, the standard deviation was 1.56, and the cronbach alpha was .60.

Viewing behaviours and attitudes: Depending on some early articles the author chose 12 statements Likert type scale (1 = strongly disagree, 5 = strongly agree). These 12 statements created 3 indices related attention to VCR programs, intention and planning to VCR programs, and finally, perceived realism.

The principal component here, which used similar methods as above, revealed 6 factors. The factor solution accounted for 60% of the total varimax orthogonal rotation. However, for theoretical purposes and for more interpretable factors, three factor solutions were enforced. These three factor solutions accounted for only 51.3% of the total variance.

While the cronbach alpha was high with two indices perceived realism and intention with .74 and .73 respectively, it was low with the attention index with .54.

Table 3

Viewing Behaviour and Attitudes

Behaviour and attitude statements	F1 perceived realism	F2 viewing intention	F3 viewing attention
Factor 1: Perceived realism			
VCR movies and programs show life as it really is.	.627	.142	.176
Most of what you see on VCR happens in real life.	.726	.007	-.002
VCR makes you see how other people live.	.811	.091	.182
VCR shows you the world as if you were there.	.604	.141	.201
While you watch VCR, you often think of other things.	-.443	.17	.216
Factor 2: Viewing Intention			
You prefer watching VCR rather than staying very often with people.	-.075	.591	.003
You do not care about new video release.	-.043	.618	.348
You often listen carefully to the programs when you watch VCR.	.376	.578	.263
You feel satisfied with VCR programs that you pick up from VCR rental stores.	.248	.709	.233
You do not see except these programs that you like.	.164	.669	.374
Factors 3: Viewing Attention			
You do not like people talking while you are watching VCRs.	.115	.399	.566
You try as you can to play back scenes that you could not see or hear at first.	.085	-.001	.816
Eigenvalue.	3.50	1.57	1.08
Percent of total variance.	29.2	13.1	9.0
Note: N = 160.			

Findings

Some support was given to the hypothesis that VCR viewing would be negatively correlated with social attitude indices which include safety, interpersonal connection, faith in others, and life control. As shown in Table 3, only life control and faith in others, were negatively correlated to VCR viewing (partial $r = -.144$, $p < .03$, partial $r = -.133$, $p < .02$ respectively). The other two indices were not significant and , while interpersonal connection was negatively related to VCR viewing, safety was not related at all.

There were few significant correlations between demographic characteristics and social attitudes. These include gender with faith in others and safety. Also, this correlation was apparent between numbers of terms spent at the university and life control.

Table 4

Partial correlation of amount of VCR usage and social attitude measures:

Correlation	life Control	Faith in others	Interpersonal connection	Safety
Age	.067	.015	-.011	.064
Gender	.016	.122**	.071	.285*****
No of terms	-.111*	-.015	.109	.017
Socioeconomic Status	-.023	.118*	.079	-.062
Marital status	-.071	.020	-.024	.105
Amount of VCR usage	-.144***	-.133*****	-.031	.00

Note: The data are fourth-order partial correlations for the demographics and fifth order for the amount of VCR usage controlling for all the demographics.

* $P < .05$; ** $P < .04$; *** $P < .03$; $P < .02$; **** $P < .001$

N = 188 - 198.

The second hypothesis which predicted a negative correlation between VCR viewing and young Saudis' perceptions of safety among Americans and in the U.S. was not supported. In fact, there was a significant positive correlation. That is, the more the viewers watched VCR programs the more they believed in safety among American and in the U.S. Beside controlling for the five demographic characteristics, the author controlled for travelling abroad and religiosity. Partial r was .18, $p < .004$.

There were different perceptions of safety among Americans and in the U.S. between those who preferred watching American programs and those who

preferred to watch Egyptian programs. While there was a positive correlation between time spent watching American programs and the perception of safety among Americans and in the U.S.. (partial $r = .18$) there was no significant correlation between time spent watching Egyptian programs and the perceptions of safety among Egyptians and in Egypt. ($r = .03$). The t-test showed that there was no significant difference in time spent between those who preferred watching American programs and those who preferred watching Egyptian ones $t(244) = .21 > .84$.

However, the statistics showed that most Saudis thought that there was no safety at all among Americans and in the U.S. with about 55% and 63% respectively. Those who believed in safety among Americans and in the U.S. were 11 and 26 percent respectively.

Table 5
Partial correlation of amount of VCR usage and safety among Americans and the U.S.

Correlates	Safety Among Americans and in the U.S.
Age.	-.005
Gender.	-.252***
Number of terms spent at the university.	.112*
Socioeconomic Status.	.113*
Frequency of Travelling.	.016
Amount of VCR usage.	.18**

Note: The data are fourth- order partial correlations for the demographics and fifth-order for the amount VCR usage controlling for all the demographics.

* $P < .05$; ** $P < .004$; *** $P < .0001$.

N= 198 - 228.

The third hypothesis was corroborated. That is the more the viewers watched VCR programs, the more they paid attention, viewed intentionally and perceived programs as being real.

Looking at the relationships between demographic variables and viewing behaviour and attitudes, we found that there was a correlation between VCR and the number of terms spent at the university and intentional viewing.

Table 6

Partial correlation of amount of VCR usage and viewing behavior and attitude measures:

Correlates	Viewing Attention	Perceived Realism	Viewing Intention
Age.	-.094	-.052	.049
Gender.	-.059	.012	.132**
No. of terms	-.051	0.46	-.116*
Socioeconomic status	.069	-.00	-.043
Marital status	.048	.031	.051
Amount of VCR usage	.179***	.212****	.304*****

Note: The data are fourth-order partial correlations for the demographic variables and fifth-order for the amount of VCR usage controlling for all the demographic variables.

*P < .05; **P < .03; ***P < .007; ****P < .002; *****P < .00001

N = 150 - 160.

Discussions

The limited support of the relationships between amount of VCR usages and the conception of social reality, in this study, was in line with other previous studies⁽²⁹⁾. While there were statistically significant negative correlations between the amount of VCR usage and life control and faith in others, and another non-significant negative correlation with interpersonal connection, there was no relationship between amount of VCR usage and safety. This latter result was, also, found by many other researchers. For example, Morgan, Shanahan and Harris stated «**Mean world' measures are unrelated to overall amount of VCR usage, for both males and females**»⁽³⁰⁾. Furthermore, while Plotter⁽³¹⁾ did not find any relationships between crime and violence TV programs and hours of exposures, Zillmann and Wakshlag found a positive relationship⁽³²⁾. That is, the more the viewer watched TV, the more he/she believed to be safe. To explain this phenomenon, Potter stated:

«With crime and violence, it is difficult to determine what the television second-order measure should be. It could be argued that heavy viewers should hold the belief that the

television world is mean and violent because there are so many acts of violence and crime presented there. However, it could also be argued that heavy viewers should hold the belief that the television world is orderly and peaceful because there is a strong mechanism operating there that always identifies the wrongdoers and punishes them with minutes»⁽³³⁾.

It seems that this latter argument is the case in this study, especially if we know that most of the American violent movies available in the Kingdom praise Americans' power and strength and their abilities to fight criminals around the globe as will be explained later.

Most of the previous studies about VCR viewing in Saudi Arabia indicated that preferred American programs among young Saudis were violence, horror and adventure kind of movies.⁽³⁴⁾ Therefore, the researcher expected a negative correlation between amount of VCR usages and the Saudis' conceptions of safety among Americans and in the U.S. However, the result showed that there was a positive significant correlation. That is, the more the viewer watched VCR programs, the more he/she thought there is safety among Americans and in the U.S. Further analysis pointed out that this positive correlation is only among those who preferred watching American programs. For instance, there was no correlation between safety among Americans and in the U.S. and those who preferred watching Egyptian programs despite the fact there was no significant difference in amount of VCR usages among those who preferred watching American programs and those who liked watching Egyptian ones.

Most of the Saudi people have negative pictures and stereotypes about Americans and their ways of life and about western cultures in general. They are believed to be responsible for the Arab and Muslim problems today. Here, it seems that VCR plays a good role in closing this cultural gap despite the fact that most of these American programs available in the Kingdom are violence and horror kind of movies. These movies, mostly, deal with the power and strength of Americans. In fact, there are two types of these movies. The first one deals with criminals who break the rules and commit crimes and felonies and the role of American laws enforcement. Usually, criminals in these films are not typical Americans. They are foreigners or have some foreign connections.⁽³⁵⁾ The second type deals with American military actions. Here American military personnel invade and strike other countries to save Americans who are prisoned or held as hostages. Sometimes American military forces intervene in other nations just for the sake of saving other people from their dictators, rulers, and communist governments. Americans sacrifice their lives just to free other people and to have justice for all. The role of

Americans on the VCR screen could have been enforced by the American military role in the Gulf War. Therefore, it seems reasonable to find a positive relationship between amount of VCR usages and young Saudis' perceptions of safety among Americans and in the U.S.

Many previous studies pointed out the importance of viewing behaviour and attitude among TV viewers and blamed cultivation theory for not taking into account the selectivity and instrumental use of TV, which they thought them to be more important than TV exposure.⁽³⁶⁾ However, in this study, it is clear that the amount VCR usage was positively correlated with viewing behavior and attitude. This means that the final effects were the results of those two factors combined. This could be held here because of the nature of the VCR which gives the concerned viewers the freedom to choose when, where, and what to watch. Moreover, the viewers have the ability to rewind things that they could not see or hear well at first and at the same time they could forward things that they do not want to watch. While these technological features are available to all kinds of viewers, heavy or light, they seem more usable by heavy VCR viewers in Saudi Arabia. Heavy VCR users as indicated by Aloofy's study in 1990, utilized what they see on VCR in their real life, VCR solves their problems, takes them abroad, and gives them lots of information that they could use in their interpersonal interaction and discussions. Thus, heavy viewers are more likely than the lighter ones to carefully choose their VCR programs and concentrate on them during their viewing⁽³⁷⁾.

In summary, while this study, showed a positive correlation between amount of VCR usage and viewing behaviour and attitude, the general relationships between the amount of VCR usage and social attitude were still small and limited as found by other previous studies. Also, this paper pointed out the positive role that VCR was playing to Saudi viewers regarding their perceptions of safety in the U.S. Next studies should explore and explicate this relationship between amount of VCR usage and viewing behaviour and attitude. Furthermore, more comprehensive study regarding VCR cultivation effect on young Saudi heavy VCR viewers, content analysis should be done concerning the kinds of VCR programs that are watched by heavy Saudi viewers.

Notes

- * While it was meant by violence and action movies any movies dealing with physical force including hurting and killing, it was meant by horror all movies that contain beside physical force, emotional and psychological violence as well. These American frightening and horror movies deal with psychopathic persons and things like vampire women.
- ** 1. Americans are not safe.
2. You can feel safe if you visit the United States.

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