

## **The influence of Islamic values on connected generation students in Saudi Arabia**

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### **ABSTRACT**

The current study examined the relationships between the connected generation and college students in Saudi Arabia. The study also explored the relationship between students' attitudes about the "connected generation" as affected by Saudi Arabia's strict interpretation of Islamic values. The findings indicate that Saudi Arabian students living in a strict Islamic society still see themselves as part of the worldwide connected generation. These users employ mobile devices to download and distribute video, more for social networking and trend-pacing than for music or news services. A promising finding was the positive relationship between students' attitudes toward learning through educational video. This finding should be, however, tempered by the fact that video is one of the leading methods of on-line communication for members of the "connected generation."

Keywords: Islamic values and traditions, connected generation, Saudi Arabia, video, the Internet

## INTRODUCTION

The current study investigated Saudi Arabian college students' attitudes toward being members of the 'connected generation.' Dubbed Generation C by Nielsen, this group or cohort is so connected that it leads all others in the use of online videos, social networking, promoting blog sites and the ownership of tablets and Smartphones (Nielsen, 2012; Harris, 2012; Clear Focus, 2013). The study also explored the relationships between Saudi Arabian college students and the connected generation, their use of small mobile devices to access video and behavioral variables such as their willingness to seek video outside the classroom.

The study also evaluated attitudes about educational video of college students at a large public university in Saudi Arabia. While the social mores may differ in Saudi Arabia, and the social structure is considered more strict, Saudi Arabian college students are by description no less a part of the "connected" generation than their counterparts the world over (Harris, 2012; Brown, 2013). This gives rise to the question of how Saudi Arabian college students actually see themselves in relation to membership in Generation C? The study of Generation C in general is important to at least two areas of business: recruiting and consumer behavior. While their use of handheld communications devices and Internet technology may be well reported on, little is known about the attitudes of Generation C toward video or the use of video in the classroom. Further, the present study is the first of its kind to actually go into the classrooms of students in Saudi Arabia to find out how they associate with the connected generation, and study their attitudes toward Westernized video in an educational setting.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### The Connected Generation

Nielsen coined the terms Generation C referring to adults aged 18 to 34 who lead a digital lifestyle (Nielsen, 2012). However, Generation C (called Gen C for short) encompasses more than an age range. While typical generational cohorts like the Millennials are characterized as members of distinct psychographic groups, Generation C is comprised of people of different ages who are more connected, both socially and technologically by digitalized information, than ever before. Unlike Gen Y or Gen Z, Generation C is not bounded by a specific age cohort. Some restrict "Gen C" to teens and 20-somethings that have been "hatched" out of the social media era. What 'C' stands for has been widely debated. A few years ago it was about Generation 'Content' – now it's about a multitude of things; constantly connected, content-centric, computerized, community-oriented, collaboration, and always clicking curiosity. But most of all, Generation C is the 'Connected Collective' consumer," Pankraz explained (Nielsen, 2012). Thus, understanding how this connected consumer communicates is not an elective sales and marketing strategy but rather an overall business imperative.

The concept of word of mouth (WOM) has expanded beyond an individual's normal reach of family and a few close friends. Since the Internet now carries the voices of both satisfied and dissatisfied customers, electronic (eWOM) has the capacity for customers to have hundreds of contacts valuing products and services, simultaneously. These eWOM comments then have the ability to encourage or stifle prospective purchases from others, at the speed of the Internet. In fact eWOM consumer reviews are significantly more trusted, nearly 12 times more, than traditional WOM comments or from descriptions by manufacturers and retailers

(Internetbasedmoms.com, 2011, Goodrich & de Mooij, 2013). Moreover, a Harris Interactive poll found 71% of respondents admitted favorable reviews from others exert a “great” or “fair” amount of influence on their purchases (Harris interactive, 2010). Further, 24% of respondents stated their level of online shopping had increased from the previous year and 53% stated they preferred to seek advice of what to buy or what products and brands to avoid before purchasing (Harris interactive, 2010). This connected group has also caught the eyes of prospective employers.

Members of the connected generation are tech-savvy, use a variety of electronic devices, and consume a great deal of content by way of video, blog posts, and games. This type of knowledge and curiosity brings benefits to their employers because of their ability to creatively solve problems, take initiative and work independently, and to collaborate with peers. For example, Clear Focus, a company that specializes in finding new career opportunities for Accounting & Finance professionals, believes that much of the connectedness and communications strategies used by connected generation members helps prepare them for challenging roles in commerce. Thus, business managers who know how to select these connected users, and then attract and retain them could benefit from the communications, technical expertise, and social networking skills they can bring to employer organizations.

However, Saudi Arabians are heavily influenced by the religion and teachings of Islam which impact the business environment. Saudis adhere to strict divisions between members of society based on factors such as tribal affiliations, age, gender, and the like (Saudi Arabia, 1989; Lippman, 2002). The current study explored Saudi Arabian students’ attitudes toward the “connected generation” and the use of video in the classroom.

## **Saudi Arabia: Religion, Islamic Values, and Cultural Influences**

### **Religion**

“Religion [within a society] has always helped to define what is proper and fitting, and that is not different in Islamic societies” (Rice & Al-Mossawi, 2002, p.5), indicating religion could be an important aspect of Muslim society. One characteristic that distinguishes believers of Islam from the believers of other faiths is that by the Qur’an religion is an essential part of the lifestyle of all Muslims (Rice & Al-Mossawi, 2002). However, there are differences in Islamic beliefs even among countries where Islam is the dominant religion. For example, while the vast majority of Saudis are Sunni Muslims, Iraqis are predominantly from the Shiite sect (Ali & Al-Shakhs, 1989). The Saudi national population is 99% Sunni Muslims (Saudi Arabia, 1989; Robertson, et al, 2008). The religiousness and ethnicity of Saudi Arabia’s people has created an environment which makes it easier for the Saudi government to enforce a strict Islamic code of conduct among its people, from both political and social viewpoints, (Robertson, et al, 2008; Saudi Arabia, 1989; Lippman, 2002). Additionally, as the birthplace of Islam the Saudis have assumed the religious leadership position for Muslims around the globe (Saudi Arabia, 1989). Thus, from Islamic religious and lifestyle points of view, Saudi Arabia may be arguably the most pious and fundamental Muslim country (Saudi Arabia, 1989; Hickson & Pugh, 1995; Robertson, et al, 2008).

In fact, Saudi Arabia has taken the Qur’an to be its constitution (Hickson & Pugh, 1995). According to Muslim faith the Qur’an is the exact words revealed by God to the prophet Mohammed via the Angel Gabriel (Robertson, et al, 2008; Saudi Arabia, 1989; Lippman, 2002).

The Qur'an describes all of the essentials of human beings from wisdom to religious worship to abiding the law (Saudi Arabia, 1989; Lippman, 2002; Robertson, et al, 2008). The Qur'an is the written mandate of living and praying for every Muslim (Saudi Arabia, 1989). So it is possible that Islamic religious beliefs could shape Saudi Arabian college students' attitudes toward membership in the "connected generation".

### **Islamic Values**

Society in Saudi Arabia's culture is a mixture of Islamic (religious) values and Saudi social traditions all of which has influence on behavior (Al-Saggaf, 2004). A somewhat dated 1987 study of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries (Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates), showed that a majority of survey participants agreed that Islamic values were a primary influence on people's lives, and that their association with Gulf society and Arab identity are interwoven (Rice & Al-Mossawi, 2002; MERAC,1987). The influence of strict social codes of the Bedouin tribes added to a historically influential patriarchal-type family structure have vested themselves within Middle Eastern culture (Hickson & Pugh, 1995, Robertson, et al, 2008). Saudi Arabia's strict Islamic culture has differentiated this country even from other Arab nations. For example, while it is not the case in more moderate countries like Egypt or United Arab Emirates, Islamic law, or *Shari'ah*, is completely enforced in Saudi Arabia (Hickson & Pugh, 1995; Robertson, et al, 2008). Moreover, many traditions such as gender segregation in the workplace or social settings are fully enforced in Saudi Arabia, however in other Gulf States such as Kuwait and Oman these practices hardly exist at all (Robertson, et al., 2008). This means that because of strict interpretation of Islamic values and religious traditions, Saudi college students could be more likely to abide by their unique culture and be less accepting of social mores associated with the "connected generation".

### **Cultural Influences**

Islam may seem confusing and is often misunderstood by many people around the world, especially those from Westernised cultures. People from other cultures are surprised when they learn life for Muslims includes a system of socioeconomics and practices for daily living. In Islam, business activity is considered to be a socially useful function. For example, Prophet Muhammad was involved in trading for much of his life. Previously reported briefly, Muslims live their existence based on the Qur'an (Muslims believe it to be the word of God revealed to the Prophet Muhammad in seventh century Arabia), and from the *Sunnah* (the record of sayings and behavior of Prophet Muhammad) (Rice & Al-Mossawi, 2002). The overall perspective of the Islamic lifestyle is encompassed in the human beliefs of well-being, piety, living in harmony, and, with socioeconomic justice for all. True Muslims believe in a life that necessitates balancing spiritual and material needs of all humans (Chapra 1992). The basic theme in the Qur'an guides the association between God and the creatures of his domain (Robertson, et al, 2008). By the Qur'an, Islam provides principles for living in a fair and equitable society, with appropriate human interaction, and a fair and impartial system of economics (Saudi Arabia, 1989). Islamic law or *shari'ah* governs the conduct of business dealings among buyers and sellers. It also establishes the Islamic socio-economic system that contains explicit meaning and usage of many economic topics such as Al-riba or interest; jizyah or taxation; fair trading, and the accumulation of wealth (Rice & Al-Mossawi, 2002, Saudi Arabia, 1989). As decreed by God through the

Qur'an all activities in Islam are generally classified as *halal*, meaning lawful or *haram*, meaning prohibited. Unless some action or activity is specifically prohibited by the Qur'an or banned by a religiously authenticated and explicit *Sunnah*, *every activity is halal* (Rice & Al-Mossawi, 2002).

Culturally speaking, most Muslims consider Islam to be a total way of living, never making distinctions between the religious and the secular sides (Kavoossi, 2000, Lawrence, 1998). The combining of religious beliefs and secular traditions often leads to generalizations, which can cloud understanding. For example, widely-held attitudes concerning gender and beliefs about women's traditional roles in society that have shown negative results in the promotion of women in the workplace in many places around the globe but are perhaps even more pronounced in countries like Saudi Arabia because of strict Islamic beliefs (Robertson, et al., 2008). Women's status in Saudi Arabia is a question of Islamic interpretation, something which varies between the conflicting beliefs of modernists and fundamentalists (Robertson, et al., 2008; Haddad, 1998). Nonetheless, the cultural norms influencing the treatment of women in Saudi Arabia while commonly attributed to the Qur'an and Sunnah should more properly be attributed to the prevailing social customs.

However, Ruth Roded (1999), editor of a scholarly text on women's concerns, where Muslims interpreted their own religious beliefs and life situations, offers some examples from the Hadith that include: 1, "on the exalted social and religious status of women — Paradise [Heaven] lies at the feet of mothers" (p. 25); 2, "on male/female relationship — Admonish your spouse with kindness" (p. 62); 3, "on the right to choose in marriage — Mohammed invalidated the marriage of a woman who came to him complaining of her parents forcing her to marry a man of their choice." (p. 65); and 4, "on the equality of men and women — ... since men and women came from the same essence, they are equal in their humanities" (p. 67). Putting these examples aside for the moment, it can sometimes become difficult interpreting the meanings of Islam from the practices of local customs. While these passages would seem to lay the groundwork for how Muslims should view women in society, in practice they may not be so clear.

For example, with respect to the seclusion of women, there is no recorded specific time when this practice came into being in Islamic societies. However, it is known that during the earliest times of Islam, prior the death of Prophet Mohammed female-based segregation was not a part of Islamic culture (Robertson, et al., 2008). During these times Islamic women worked and practiced their faith alongside of men. Also, the Prophet Mohammed had a trading business, and his spouse was a merchant as well (Barswell, 1996). The cultural practice of secluding women began, it is estimated, more than one and a half centuries after the Prophet Mohammed died. Even then, nomadic tribes eschewed the idea of secluding women from men (Barswell, 1996). In modern Muslim society practicing female-gender segregation and veiling are customs more influenced by cultural values than religious beliefs (Haddad, 1998; Lippman, 2002). This can often lead to differing degrees of compliance. For example, in United Arab Emirates, Oman, and Bahrain women openly walk without veils and female segregation at institutions of education and the workplaces is totally out of the norm (Robertson, et al., 2008). More recently, some parts of the Muslim world have female heads-of-state including prime ministers Benazir Bhutto of Pakistan, Khaleda Zia & Hasina Wazed of Bangladesh, Tansu Ciller of Turkey, Madior Boye of Senegal, and Executive President Megawati Sukarnoputri of Indonesia (Offenhauer, 2005).

The present study was conducted in Jeddah, the Western region's most inhabited and the most open cultural city in Saudi Arabia. Jeddah, a port city located on the Red Sea, has been a center for Middle Eastern trading for centuries to the present. Due to its heritage as a commercial

hub, Jeddah is an area which includes a great mixture and diversity of ethnicities (races), cultures and thoughts, all of which enrich the social structure of the city. However, as culturally diverse as the city of Jeddah may be, the teachings and religious values of Islam are firmly practiced. This means Saudis practice customs based on the Qur'an (accepted by Muslims as the literal word of God), as well as from time-honored, secular cultural traditions. These time-honored traditions include practices such as gender separation of male and female sexes, an accepted practice in Saudi Arabia. Societal interpretation of gender separation has led to many male-dominated professions, and also to male-dominated leadership roles in ordinary work environments. These traditions are further reflections of Saudi Arabia's strict conservative social traditions, though they may in fact not all be based on Islamic values, or religion.

Further, females from many Islamic countries including Saudi Arabia are subject to the concept of "Hijab," which means women should be covered in front of men, including the wearing of abayas, a scarf-like head covering. Women are not allowed to leave their homes or workplaces unless escorted by husband or haram (non-marriage eligible) male, and cannot drive automobiles. Also, dating and attending mixed-male/female functions such parties and celebrations are strictly prohibited. Further, marriage continues to be an arranged process. These types of cultural traditions, whether based on Islamic religious values or not, run counter to Western culture, and even the culture practiced in some Middle Eastern countries. Also, videos that are generally watched by members of the connected generation will more often portray the values of Westernised society. So this could lead to situations where students accustomed to Islamic values and the strict Saudi (Arabian) traditions could be negatively affected by viewing by Westernized videos, which have content that is not in keeping with these strict social traditions. For example, watching videos, which depict actors drinking alcoholic beverages and/or eating pork, both of which are forbidden by Islam, might cause uncomfortable feelings or be seen as offensiveness for viewers. Thus, they might feel embarrassed to see the openness portrayed by other cultures. This could especially embarrassing for male students when they view videos with "uncovered" women, particularly when these females are also portrayed in management or leadership roles. Saudi Arabian college students who embrace the "connected generation" will inevitably be exposed to videos that portray lifestyles that run counter to Islamic beliefs and Saudi culture. Through their actions these students will decide whether or not membership in the connected generation is consistent their Islamic beliefs and Saudi culture.

## **OBJECTIVES OF STUDY**

As stated earlier, Generation C – with the C standing for "connected" – is a term coined by Nielsen, a global leader in measurement and information, to describe young adults between the ages of 18 and 34 who lead a mainly digital lifestyle. Making up just 23 percent of the U.S. population and an untold number worldwide, this group leads all others by their use of online videos, networking, and blog sites, and in owning and using tablets and Smartphones. The term was originally used by research firms and marketing companies. Determining how pervasive this new "connected generation" is in light of other world cultures, and in particular the strict social structure of Saudi Arabia, is a timely and relevant research endeavor (Harris, 2013; Clear Focus, 2013; Brown, 2013).

While the connected generation leads all other groups in its use of online videos and social networking, little is known about how this group is affected by cultural differences, or how it responds to the use of educational video in the classroom. Since video, particularly viral

video is a major part of the communications arsenal of the connected generation, it is important to understand how this group feels about educational video used in the courses they study. The purpose of the present study was to investigate the attitudes of students at a large public university in Saudi Arabia about how they feel about being classified as members of the “connected generation.” An additional purpose of the research was to measure students’ attitudes toward the use of on-line and educational videos.

All students in the study were enrolled in International business courses (classes where the subject language is taught in English). The social mores of Saudi Arabia are different, and Saudi Arabia’s interpretation of Islam creates a social structure that is considered very strict, even when compared with other Arabic and Islamic countries. Would these factors have an impact on whether or not Saudi students see themselves as members of the “connected” generation? Are Saudi Arabian college students’ choices in on-line video affected by Islamic beliefs and Saudi Arabia’s stricter social fabric? How do Saudi Arabian college students perceive the use of educational video? These inquiries led to the following five research questions:

## **RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

Research Question (RQ) 1. Do Saudi Arabian college students from a strict Islamic culture see themselves as part of the modern day “connected generation”?

Research Question (RQ) 2. Do Saudi Arabian college students use on-line video as a source of information used in their daily lives?

Research Question (RQ) 3. What types of information do Saudi Arabian college students seek when viewing on-line videos, from sources such as YouTube, AOL, Yahoo, Google, and others.

Research Question (RQ) 4. Are Saudi Arabian college students from a strict Islamic culture negatively affected by videos portraying Westernized beliefs and culture?

Research Question (RQ) 5. How do Saudi Arabian college students perceive the use of educational video in the classroom?

## **RESEARCH METHODS**

### **Westernized Videos in the Classroom**

Topical videos portraying learning segments from Marketing such as personal selling, customer relations and communications, ad strategy, and the like were introduced and shown to randomly selected classes of business students from a large public university in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia. The Marketing videos filmed in Westernised cultures were shown to students as part of their regular pedagogy, see Table 1 in Appendix 1. College students as one consumer segment are also influenced by Islamic values and Saudi traditions. Thus, watching videos, which depict actors portraying Westernised behaviors such as drinking alcoholic beverages and/or eating pork, both of which are forbidden by Islamic rules (Fam, et al., 2004), might cause uncomfortable feelings or be seen as offensive for viewers. Students accustomed to Islamic values and the strict

Saudi traditions could be affected by viewing by Westernized videos, which have content that is not in keeping with their strict social traditions. Thus, they might feel embarrassed to see the openness portrayed by other cultures. This could be especially embarrassing for male students when they view videos with “uncovered” women, particularly when these females are also portrayed in management or leadership roles.

Following from the previous discussion, any scenes that suggest romance, with either actions or words are taboo in Saudi Arabia’s conservative culture and could be embarrassing even for college students, most of whom are not married. These students could feel embarrassed watching male/female personal contact in romantic scenes, or even ordinary course of business scenes. For example, a L’Oreal video, (see Table 1, Item 7), depicts a female sales assistant trying to explain to a male customer the benefits of a face cream product and she actually uses a pad to apply the cream directly to his face. The actions portrayed by the actors in this video, though seemingly harmless, could be seen as very offensive by Saudi college students. The reason for this is that Muslim societies are conservative in comparison to Westernized cultures, and Saudi Arabia is more conservative than other Muslim cultures. Therefore, women college students have grown up with the beliefs that they feel uncomfortable or shy if they are in mixed company, let alone touching men. Thus, the actions depicted in the L’Oreal video are taboo in Saudi Arabia.

Additionally, in the Tumbleweed’s Southwestern Grille video, [Table 1 (Appendix 1), Items 1 & 2] men and women are, again, shown together eating and drinking alcoholic beverages. In Saudi Arabia restaurants have separate dining areas for single men, single women, and for families for the same reasons mentioned above — Saudi Arabia’s very conservative societal mores regarding men and women being together. The most taboo action is the consumption and advertising of alcoholic beverages. Drinking alcoholic beverages is banned under the Islamic rules as this is considered one of the major sins that forbid not only drinking but also serving alcohol. Therefore, talking about alcoholic beverages or situations showing people drinking is unacceptable behavior, especially in front of teenagers.

### **Video Attitudes Survey (VAS)**

Video Attitude Survey (VAS) was adapted and modified from the attitudinal constructs of Escalda & Zollman’s (1997) Computer Attitude Scale instrument to make it more applicable to the present investigation, measuring students’ attitudes toward video. The modifications included moderate changes in the wording of most items, reflecting the differences in technology between computers and video. The resulting Video Attitude Survey (VAS) instrument was used to assess students’ attitudes toward video usage and applications which were described as on-line, in-classroom, on demand and streaming video (Izzo & Ezzi, 2013). Thus, video applications referred to commercial videos like YouTube, AOL, Yahoo and Google used by students for information gathering, news services, music, and social networking. The video applications also included and proprietary, Marketing topics educational videos of the type and design that were shown in the classrooms.

Students participating in the study were asked to take the Video Attitude Survey and answer questions about being members of the “connected generation,” using video and to rate their usage of certain types of video applications. At the completion of the survey students were debriefed as to the nature of the research. The students were advised that the survey was assessing their beliefs, feelings, and behaviors in relation to using commercial video services,



video use in the classroom, and that there were no right or wrong answers. Survey respondents were assured of their anonymity with respect to filling out the surveys.

### **Sample**

A convenience type sampling procedure was used to collect data for the study. Surveys were administered to 189 undergraduate and MBA students. Due to unscorable responses eight surveys were removed leaving 181 usable surveys. The respondents included in the study were from sections of the male and female segregated student body of the faculty of Economics and Business Administration at a large public university in Saudi Arabia. The rationale for using college student was that they fit well with the profile description of the study population. Specifically, the respondents in the study were age-appropriate, college students enrolled in International business courses where the classes are taught in English. In addition, the authors felt that students would be interested participants in the study by the nature of the subject of the research.

An important consideration was the issue of sufficiency in the number of observations to meet the purposes of the study, measuring attitudes. According to completed studies that investigated similar attitude phenomena there should be at least 103 observations (Aiken & West, 1991; Bagozzi, 1992; McClelland & Judd, 1993). Thus, a sample size of 181 was considered sufficient for the purposes of the study.

### **Data Collection**

The data was collected from students who were surveyed during their normal class times. The classes were selected randomly from a list of classes that agreed to be surveyed. All students were in classes where video was introduced as a component of the course material delivery process. Entire classes were chosen and surveyed to control for self-selection bias. Data was gathered using the Video Attitude Survey, a five point Likert scale instrument where; 1 = 'Strongly Disagree'; 2 = 'Disagree;' 3 = 'Neither agree nor disagree;' 4 = 'Agree;' and 5 = 'Strongly Agree.' For discussion of each of the five research questions frequency tables were calculated for the variables of interest and concurrently placed next to the analysis discussion of each research question. The surveys were administered in Arabic, the native language, though many students have excellent command of English and were taking International classes taught in English.

### **Statistical Techniques**

The five research questions are the basis for the analysis in the study. Descriptive statistics, Pearson product-moment correlation coefficients (Pearson's correlations), and selected Chi square analyses were calculated using SPSS on the survey data. Frequency distributions (e.g. frequencies, means, percentages, and standard deviations) were calculated to show the variables of interest for each research question, and then presented in concurrent tables. The Pearson's correlations were run and are presented in Table 2 (Appendix 1).

### Research Question RQ1

Table 3 (Appendix 1) presents the descriptive statistics of the basic characteristics of the sample and frequencies of several categorical variables. The first research question can be addressed with summary statistics shown in Table 3. Regarding RQ1 approximately 92% of student respondents see themselves members of connected generation (CG). Also, Table 2 (Appendix 1), Pearson's Correlations, shows Variable VC7-18 was strongly correlated with behavioral variable VU8-10 *downloading video to keep up with latest trends and information* ( $r=.37$ ,  $P < .01$ ). Providing additional support, in Table 4 (Appendix 1), the frequency distributions for VC7-18 show that, of those surveyed, approximately 87% agree with the statement, 60% 'Strongly Agree' and 27% 'Agree'. Belief in this item scored a mean value, 4.4/5, representing a positive attitude of respondents toward the importance of Smartphones in their life as connected generation. These findings support that Saudi Arabian students surveyed do see themselves as part of the "connected" generation.

### Research Question RQ2

This question pertains to how Saudi Arabian college students use on-line video as a source of personal information and in their classes. Table 5 (Appendix 1) presents frequency distributions for usage variables. The overall results in Table 5 indicate that respondents have positive attitudes toward watching and using on-line videos as a source of information. Examination of responses to specific statements reveals that respondents believe that using on-line videos is a source of information for their education, and to keep up with the latest information and trends as a part of the connected generation communications. In addition, VUI-1 watching videos from the Internet in general scored the highest mean 4.13, indicating that the connected generation depends on on-line videos as a source of information and a way to be connected with other members from their generation. Moreover, the correlation coefficient test found that there is moderate strength but significant relationships between some of the study variables. For example, the relationships between VU1-1 and VU8-10 ( $r=-.392$ ,  $P < 0.01$ ); VU3-7 and VU8-10 ( $r=.330$ ,  $P < .01$ , and VU4-13 and VU8-10 ( $r=.287$ ,  $P < .01$  all were moderate to weak, but significant. VU2-2 has only significant relationship with VU4-13 ( $r=.358$ ,  $P < .01$ ). These results highlight that respondents who like watching videos from the Internet for their daily life needs are more likely to use video as source of information for educational purposes.

### Research Question RQ3

This question analyzed the relationships of Saudi Arabian college students' usage of on-line services and behavior in seeking types of information. From the responses in Table 6 (Appendix 1) it appears that Saudi Arabian college students seek information through on-line videos from services providers such as YouTube, AOL, Yahoo, Google, and others. What may be most interesting is that from the responses, whether using personal PC's or Smartphones, the greatest number of Saudi Arabian college students use on-line videos to track entertainment, from 148/181 watching YouTube videos, to 135/181 using their Smartphones, while 142/181 admitted using PC's to track entertainment. This finding is not too surprising given the age group for traditional college students, and their interests in entertainment. What may be surprising is that general knowledge (118/181), political (117/181), flash items (105/181) and current events

(100/181) showed strongly, led only by entertainment. The results do show that, like other connected generation members, Saudi Arabian college students do watch on-line videos for entertainment and news items.

#### **Research Question RQ4**

This question asks if Saudi Arabian college students' attitudes toward videos are negatively affected where the material may not be presented in behaviours adhering to strict Islamic values. The correlations between the 3 observed variables is, if nothing else, interesting. VC2-19 negatively correlates ( $r=-.31, P < .01$ ) ( $r=-.21, P < .01$ ), respectively, with variables VC1-9 and VC3-14, which correlate positively ( $r=.24, P < .01$ ). While none of these relationships bordering between weak and moderate are particularly strong, the relationships may expose a bias. Chi squares showed there were significant differences in terms of male gender on VC1-9 = ( $\chi^2(4) = 8.54, p = .074$ ) and VC2-19 = ( $\chi^2(4) = 10.55, p = .032$ ), with expected values 5.17 and 9.55, respectively. VC-3-14 =  $\chi^2(4) = 7.21, p = .125$ , expected value of 9.55 did not show a significant gender difference. However, male gender had a moderate relationship to VC1-9 students watching potentially offensive video (Cramer's  $V=.341$ ) and VC2-19 students offended by non-Islamic (Westernised) behaviours (Cramer's  $V=.317$ ). Thus, it appears that male students were more offended than females by videos containing materials not in keeping with Islamic traditions. In Table 7 (Appendix 1), frequency distributions for the variables in question show that more than 50% of the students surveyed in items VC1-9 and VC2-19 indicated some offensiveness from the Westernised videos. The midpoint or neutral responses were on the high side with counts ranging from 25 to 28%. This may mask the true meaning of the respondents' angst toward these items, and account for the weak-to-moderate findings. However, if the neutral group's answers truly signal disinterest, then it might be quite reasonable to include them with those students who seem unaffected by the Westernised videos. Conversely, item VC3-14 about the prospects of learning from Westernized videos scored 36%, the largest percentage to 'Strongly Disagree' with any of the three variables. In summary, the survey data shows weak to moderate negatively affected correlation coefficients and moderate Chi square findings of male offensiveness over female on items VC1-9 and VC2-19. Given these findings it becomes difficult to suggest overall whether Saudi Arabian college students have a positive view of videos portraying Westernised behaviours.

#### **Research Question (RQ) 5**

RQ5 analyzed the relationships of Saudi Arabian college students' perceptions of and behavior to seek learning through educational video in the classroom. The first four of the five variables in Table 8 show how students' perceived value of the value of video in the classroom, and their willingness to seek video outside the class to augment their learning for classes taught in Arabic and those in English. For classes in Arabic (VL1-3), the summed percentages that indicated that only 33% 'Strongly Agree' and 'Agree.' This is contrasted with 80% for courses taught in English (VL2-8). Thus, it is evident, and perhaps intuitive, that Saudi students find more value for videos used in courses taught in English, and far less for those taught in their own language.

In terms of seeking video outside the classroom, the evidence was similar, where only 44% would do this for courses taught in Arabic, while 62% would seek outside video for courses

taught in English. In both instances, and perhaps intuitively, the value of video in the classroom, and students' willingness to seek video outside the classroom rated higher for courses taught in English. Referring to Table 1(Appendix 1), the correlation between behavior seeking in VL3-11 and VL4-17 ( $r=.558$ ,  $P < .01$ ) was strong and significant. The interactions between VL4-17 and VC5-12 ( $r=.415$ ,  $P < .01$ ) and VL4-17 and VL2-8 ( $r=.368$ ,  $P < .01$ ) were both moderate. These findings suggest a positive relationship between students taking classes taught in English and learning from educational videos. Students seem to value educational video in the classroom, overall and are willing to seek video outside the classroom to increase their learning. In terms of Saudi students beliefs that videos in English broaden their abilities to understand multi-cultural issues and differences, 83% of respondents total 'Strongly Agree' or 'Agree,' with 13% undecided.

## **LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH**

As with any exploratory research, particularly in cross-cultural studies, limitations are unavoidable and present risks that must be undertaken to extend extant knowledge in the chosen field. For example, generalizability in the present study was impeded by collecting data of only one university in one country. Procuring data at more universities from more diverse Middle Eastern countries, such as Egypt, Iraq, Qatar, and Lebanon, would have added to the present results.

Even though this study explored the relationships and interactions of several groups of variables that surround the connected generation's attitudes toward video usage in the classroom, causal relationships were not explored. It is recommended that further studies examine the causal relationships through structural models and experimental designs. Further the study was geographically limited to one university, and only students of the college of economics and business administration. Future research would benefit from expanding the sample to include students of other college disciplines, and at different colleges. Finally, this study focused on Saudi Arabian college students and the connected generation, their on-line video usage in general, and attitudes toward educational video. New research may want to focus and document specific relationships between college students, the connected generation, and video initiatives to evaluate them in terms of specific educational goals.

## **IMPLICATIONS**

College graduates of today and tomorrow will be able to contribute to respective employers more than the skills and abilities learned through their college experiences. As members of the "connected generation," this group of college graduates will also bring the value of their networking skills and technological expertise to the organizations that hire them. This constantly connected generation's ability to network and stay connected can result in potential gains in organizational productivity. Through social networking these graduates have learned not only to work independently, but also collaborate with their peers to creatively solve problems, and assume greater responsibility. Thus, the collaboration skills and technological mobility of these connected generation graduates means they will possess the abilities to increasingly help organizations achieve goals and objectives.

## CONCLUSIONS

The present study explored some relationships among Saudi Arabian college students' attitudes toward being members of the connected generation. Also explored were attitudes of students about their willingness to search for and share video, their feelings toward Westernised video, and how they value the use of educational video. Five research questions were presented, analyzed, and the findings discussed. In summary, in RQ1 findings revealed that Saudi Arabian college students, whose lifestyle is characterized by strict Islamic traditions, do see themselves as members of the connected generation. With respect to RQ2 and RQ3 Saudi college students generally responded favorably toward the use of on-line video and use a variety of on-line video services, including YouTube, to keep up with a wide array of interests. The findings here also indicated that Saudi Arabian college students have greater preference for video searching and sharing for social communication and entertainment and less interest in major news information. These findings seem consistent with the networking goals of connected generation. RQ4 focused on the interactions of gender with respect to videos portraying non-Islamic (Westernised) behaviours. Further, the findings showed that more than 50% of respondents were offended by videos portraying non-Islamic behavior, with a moderate affect for males. The present findings imply that while Saudi Arabian college students see themselves as being part of the connected generation, their beliefs are also influenced by Islamic culture. In RQ5, the interactions between Saudi Arabian college students' perceptions of and behavior toward learning through educational video in the classroom were analysed. Excepting for courses taught in Arabic, Saudi Arabian college students highly value educational video in the classroom, and are willing to seek videos to increase their learning. The most promising findings of the study were, perhaps in RQ5, the relationships between students' attitudes toward learning through educational video. The findings with respect to learning from classroom video showed that over 83% of Saudi Arabian college students found value in educational video for improving their English speaking ability and gaining greater understanding of multi-cultural issues and differences.

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**APPENDIX 1**

**Table 1**

Islamic Values	Example From Video
1) No alcohol	Stewart Vineyards video demonstrating pricing Strategy in a Marketing lesson where the business is a winery. Tumbleweed’s Southwestern Grille’s renovations included installing liquor bars.
2) Banned food items, and beverages	Tumbleweed’s Southwestern Grille depicts scenes advertising barbecued pork ribs and pork chops, and waitresses serving alcoholic drinks.
3) Separation of sexes /male dominated Leadership roles	Fallon Advertising Worldwide video depicting women in leadership roles, men and women working in close proximity to each other.
4) Gender role identity In the workplace	Tumbleweed’s Southwestern Grille female food servers (waitresses) and open-seating dining areas. Current Marketing shows women in key leadership roles in an advertising firm, men & women working together.
5) Clothing & apparel	In all videos women are not covered, and men and women alike are shown wearing varieties of fashion-oriented apparel, above the knees dresses and skirts, close-fitting and open-necked garments — men’s shirts and women’s blouses.
6) No socializing/dating or mixed company, and families & singles are separated	Dining areas are not separated. Some restaurant scenes show men and women cavorting while consuming alcoholic beverages, and at the same time, families and everyone all sharing the same dining areas.
7) Male and female interaction is banned also are romantic scenes, suggestive words and/or prurient gestures	L’Oreal video (sales assistant explaining how the face cream works to a male customer, by using a pad to apply the cream directly to his face.
8) Music is prohibited	Almost all videos included music as a background.

**Islamic Values vs. Westernised Culture Depicted in Videos Shown in Marketing Courses**



**Table 2**

Variables	VU1-1	VU2-2	VU3-7	VU4-13	VC1-9	VC2-19	VC3-14	VL1-3	VL2-8	VL3-11	VL4-17	VC5-12	VU8-10	VC7-18
VU1-1	1	.281**	.269**	.216**	.046	-.028-	.015	.182*	.222**	.051	.141	.277**	.392**	.219**
VU2-2		1	.098	.358**	.228**	.183*	.136	.361**	.294**	.374**	.310**	.251**	.219**	.216**
VU3-7			1	.256**	-.005-	.103	.052	.098	.154*	.142	.135	.110	.330**	.268**
VU4-13				1	.143	.157*	.166*	.170*	.236**	.396**	.310**	.157*	.287**	.269**
VC1-9					1	-.152*	.278**	.114	.181*	.230**	.184*	.110	.255**	.119
VC2-19						1	-.021-	-.047-	.013	.012	.041	-.078-	-.125-	-.025-
VC3-14							1	-.145-	.111	.119	.009	.097	-.041-	.053
VL1-3								1	.060	.243**	.160*	.146*	.330**	.211**
VL2-8									1	.144	.368**	.584**	.284**	.316**
VL3-11										1	.558**	.223**	.167*	.146*
VL4-17											1	.415**	.154*	.212**
VC5-12												1	.344**	.412**
VU8-10													1	.366**
VC7-18														1
N	181	181	181	181	181	181	181	181	181	181	181	181	181	181

\*\* , Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed). \* , Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

**Pearson’s Correlations for Study Variables**

**Table 3**

Gender	Frequency	Percent	Major	Frequency	Percent	Course	Frequency	Percent
Female	72	39.8	Business Adm.	61	33.7	ACCT	5	2.76
Male	109	60.2	Marketing	51	28.2	CB	5	2.76
Total	181	100.0	HR	11	6.1	FIN	18	10.0
Age	Frequency	Percent	Finance	6	3.3	HR	8	4.41
19-22	124	68.5	MIS	14	7.7	MBA	42	23.2
23-26	23	12.8	Other	38	21.0	MGMT	9	5.0
27-30	8	4.4	Total	181	100.0	MRKT260	48	26.5
31-34	13	7.2				MRKT361	8	4.41
35-38	9	5.0	CG	Frequency	Percent	MRKT367	11	6.1
39-42	4	2.3	Yes	167	92.3	MRKT369	10	5.5
			No	14	7.7	MRKT462	17	9.5
Total	181	100.0	Total	181	100.0	Total	181	100.0

**Descriptive Statistics**

**Table 4**

Variable – Description	1	2	3	4	5	Total	Mean	SD
VC7-18: I believe that small mobile device and Smart- phones have made accessing video easier for my generation.	3 1.7%	6 3.3%	15 8.3%	49 27.07%	108 59.7%	181 100%	4.4 5	0.90

**Mobile Devices and Video Usage**

**Table 5**

Variable	1	2	3	4	5	Total	Mean	SD
VU1-1: I like watching videos from the Internet	4 2.2%	12 6.6%	23 12.7%	75 41.4%	67 37.0%	181 100%	4.04	.982
VU2-2: I access videos as a source of information in my present courses	6 3.3%	25 13.8%	65 35.9%	68 37.6%	17 9.4%	181 100%	3.36	.948
VU3-7: Videos available through the Internet news services are a major source of my information	9 5%	45 24.9%	69 38.1%	44 24.3%	14 7.7%	181 100%	3.05	1.002
VU4-13: I send a lot of Internet videos to my friends	9 5%	36 19.9%	49 27.1%	63 34.8%	24 13.3%	181 100%	3.31	1.088
VU8-10: I believe that downloading video to keep up with the latest information and trends is part of how my generation communicates	4 2.2%	16 8.8%	48 26.5%	69 38.1%	44 24.3%	181 100%	3.73	.998

**Saudi Arabian Student Usage of On-line Video**

**Table 6**

Do you watch YouTube videos? VU8-25	N	Which sources of videos do you currently watch on your Smartphone? VU11-29	N
Entertainment	148	Entertaining/ Celebrity news	135
Celebrity news	57	Educational	53
Religious	89	News/ Current events	75
Professional/job information	50	Flash items	105
General knowledge	118	Do not watch videos on my Smartphone	9
Educational	44	Do not own Smartphone	7
Political	117		
Social	104		
Cultural	17		
Do you watch musical videos? VU9-27	N	Which sources of videos do you currently watch on your PC? VU10-28	N
Daily	37	Entertaining	142
Weekly	70	Celebrity news	48
Only Occasionally	34	Educational	90
I do not watch musical videos	40	News/ Current events	100
		Do not watch videos on my PC	8

**The Relationships of Saudi Arabian College Students' Usage of On-Line Services**

**Table 7**

Variable – Description	1	2	3	4	5	Total	Mean	SD
VC1-9: I would mind watching educational videos assuming the materials are not in-line with the Islamic culture	13 7.2%	21 11.6%	51 28.2%	62 34.3%	34 18.8%	181 100%	3.46	1.138
VC2-19: I would be offended if some material is presented that is not in keeping with Islamic traditions	14 7.7%	19 10.3%	45 24.9%	48 26.5%	55 30.7%	181 100%	3.61	1.077
VC3-14: I believe watching videos that portray behaviors that are non-Islamic are/can be educational/helpful for learning	38 21%	28 15.4%	46 25.4%	45 24.9%	24 13.3%	181 100%	2.94	1.334

**Students' Evaluations of Westernized Videos vs. Islamic Values**

**Table 8**

Variable	1	2	3	4	5	Total	Mean	SD
VL1-3: I feel that videos will enhance my learning for courses taught in Arabic	28 15.5%	54 29.8%	40 22.1%	27 14.9	32 17.7%	181 100%	2.89	1.321
VL2-8: I feel that videos will enhance my learning for courses taught in English	2 1.14%	13 7.2%	21 11.6%	65 35.9%	80 44.2%	181 100%	4.15	.963
VL3-11: I would access on my own time educational videos for my courses taught in Arabic	12 6.6%	41 22.7%	49 27.1%	55 30.4%	24 13.3%	181 100%	3.21	1.135
VL4-17: I would access on my own time educational videos for my courses taught in English	8 4.4%	16 8.8%	45 24.9%	70 38.7%	42 23.2%	181 100%	3.67	1.064
VC5-12: I believe that watching videos in English will help me to better understand multi-cultural issues or differences	2 1.1%	6 3.3%	23 12.7%	73 40.31%	77 42.5%	181 100%	4.20	.866

**Saudi Arabian Students' Perceptions of Educational Video**

