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FEMALE GENDER ROLE REPRESENTATION BETWEEN 1990 AND 2010 IN IMPORTED CHILDRENS CARTOONS AND THEIR IMPLICATIONS FOR CONSERVATIVE YEMENI CULTURE

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FEMALE GENDER ROLE REPRESENTATION
BETWEEN 1990 AND 2010 IN IMPORTED CHILDREN'S CARTOONS
AND THEIR IMPLICATIONS FOR CONSERVATIVE
YEMENI CULTURE

By

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B.A., ENGLISH STUDIES

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ABSTRACT

This thesis explores the female gender role representations in imported cartoons across the years 1990 and 2010 and their resonance with the conservative Yemeni Muslim culture. The two selected cartoons are *A Little Princess Sara* (a Nippon Animation production) and *Totally Spies* (a Marathon Media production), both of which are imported to the Arab countries, dubbed into the Arabic language, aired on Arab children's channels and popular among girls. The study is inspired by theories of media and cultural globalization and imperialism, which were developed to explain media policies and flow around the globe. The study also draws on the assumptions of social learning theory and cultivation theory that explain media's influences on viewers. Analysis ultimately revealed several differences in female gender representations that are depicted in these cartoons. Although the representations in neither of the two cartoons examined proved completely resonant with the conservative Yemeni Muslim culture, in *A Little Princess Sara* some of the representations are resonant with some aspects of the Yemeni culture. In contrast, in *Totally Spies* almost all of the representations are highly dissonant to the Yemeni culture. This study explicates a number of the potential implications of these imported female gender representations for conservative Yemeni culture and the factors that impact the potential influences of these representations.

Keywords: Female gender role representation, media, children's cartoons, globalization, cultural imperialism, Yemeni culture.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction

Mass media and their multiple influences, agendas and ideologies have always been a central focus of interest to researchers concerned with the power of media to shape people's perceptions, opinions, and behaviors in society. Many scholars have argued that as media have become an integral part of people's everyday lives, they are influential forces in shaping people's sense of who they are and their sense of history. Some, like Grossberg, Wartella, Whitney and Wise (2006), have proposed that media offer a large part of the imagery and soundtrack of people's memories.

Indeed, the pervasiveness and complex structure of popular media of communication make them powerful cultural forces across cultures. Media are networks that encompass all the organizations, channels—such as television, radio, newspapers, Internet—content producers and programming that provide news and information for the public (Longman). Media outlets control the dissemination of entertainment, information, education, data, or promotional messages that reach most people in any society. In today's environment, they operate through broadcasting and narrowcasting to both large and segmented audiences (Online Business Dictionary). As Grossberg et al. (2006) noted, media can be divided into a range of categories. Media can be categorized in accordance with their geographic coverage (local, national, regional or global), modalities, or the type of social relations and modalities they are designed to construct. Examples of these types of relations are interpersonal media that are primarily used for person-to-person interaction and mass media that are used to deliver messages from one source to many audience groups. Media can also be labeled according to their diverse modalities. Among these are print (books), electronic (television), chemical (film), visual, and audio (radio).

Although each medium has been studied substantially by scholars, television has received considerable attention among researchers who have produced valuable work on the influences of television and its content on viewers. This work has generated multiple theories about television's influences, both short term and long term. Among the theories that have focused on effects, cultivation theory (e.g., Gerbner & Gross, 1976; Gerbner, Gross, Jackson-Beeck, Jeffries-Fox, & Signorielli, 1978; Gerbner, Gross, Morgan, & Signorielli, 1978) and social learning theory (Bandura, 1969; Bandura, 1973; Bandura, 1977a, Bandura, 1989) are particularly attractive for my research for they are most relevant to the study of the impacts media have on children and teenagers.

Much of the work on the influences of television programming for children has examined violent content (e.g., Anderson & Bushman, 2002; Gentile, 2003; Aust & Everhart, 2007; Coyne &Whitehead, 2008; Slotsve, Carmen, Sarver, & Watkins, 2008) and sexual content (Malamuth & Impett, 2001; Pediatrics, 2001; Rideout, 2007; Jordan, 2008). Scholars have also investigated diverse aspects of children's cartoons, including studies of content and its implications and influences (e.g., Hassan, 2013; Slotsve, Carmen, Sarver & Villarreal-Watkins, 2008; Cox, Garrett, & Graham, 2004; Potter & Warren, 1998).

And yet, a noticeable pattern in the cartoon studies is that they mostly investigate the influences of the respective cartoons on children of both genders, and few studies attempted to bring to light the different influences on differing genders. For example, Rozario (2004) focused on a specific gender in an investigation of the influences of the Disney princess culture on girls. Moreover, scholars who examined children's programming, namely cartoons, have typically focused on the influences of cartoons on

children from the same culture where the cartoons have been produced. It is rare to find scholarly work that explains the influence of cartoons on children in different countries or from different cultures. Hassan and Daniyal (2013) produced one of the few studies that examined the influences of cartoons on school-age children in the Islamic country of Pakistan. The results showed a strong association between the programs children watch and their behavior in class; with violent content being the most prominent content influencing the children's behaviors (Hassan & Daniyal, 2013). However, the existing research does not touch on the influences of children's cartoons and children-friendly animated films on the child audiences in Arab countries.

Studying such an issue is relatively complex because it has to go beyond traditional content and direct effects analyses of cartoons on a de-contextualized audience. Instead, it must address the content of the producing culture's cartoons on the world-views and perceptions of children in a very specific, and typically quite different, cultural context. In such a case, historical, societal and cultural contexts need to be analyzed. These and other contexts come into play when trying to investigate the potential influences of cartoons produced in foreign countries, mainly the United States, Canada, and Japan, as well as Europe, on children in Arab countries. This is arguably the case because the direct effects that have been considered so significant among researchers in places like the United States or Europe may be significantly different than the context of a cartoon produced primarily for and by one culture influencing young audiences in a very different cultural milieu.

Influences of cartoons are not associated solely with violence and sex, they do extend to the way both genders are represented and what implications those

representations have on audiences around the world with very different cultures, worldviews and realities. In this respect, media research that has focused on globalization (e.g., Rantanen, 2005; Servaes & Lie, 2008; Rodriguez, 2009) and media imperialism (e.g., Straubhar, 1991; Sparks, 2012. Zhang, 2010) becomes an important source for my investigation on the likely effects of female gender role representations imported to Arab cultures on the children watching them.

Gender role representations broadcast in Arab countries have greatly changed over the past decades, especially with the massive availability of internationally distributed children's cartoons. The issue here is that channels of distribution of children's programming by multinational media conglomerates have expanded over the last two decades and brought to the foreground issues of media globalization and their influences on local audiences. Hollywood's and other international children's media programming is distributed to regional, national, and local markets that demonstrate remarkable cultural diversity. These programs are delivered via television, film, and online websites and, in fact, they have become extremely popular among children around the world. Their popularity among children and other audiences whose socioeconomic, linguistic, religious, gender, and even parenting practices are significantly divergent from the cultures where the cartoons were produced—primarily Japan and United States— raises critical questions about the meanings and influences of children's exposure to foreign programming. Therefore, it is important to examine the impact of the growing availability and popularity of Western and Japanese television cartoons that target girls as their main audiences in Arab Muslim societies where the dominant gender ideologies

tend to be very different from the dominant ideologies of gender in Western or Asian societies.

Japanese and Western cartoons gained more popularity in Muslim and Arab countries, including Yemen, in the early 1990s. However, there were a few examples of dubbed cartoons dating back to the 1970s. The popularity of these cartoons has been attributed to the changes made to some facets of the content to make the programming more appealing to audiences in Arab Muslim countries, as well as being more culturally appropriate in those markets. The most prominent change made to these imported cartoons is dubbing into Arabic language. According to Maluf (2003), dubbing of films or television programming is the act of replacing the original soundtrack of dialogue of any production by another, either in a different language or voice. The process of dubbing goes back to the early days of producing films. In the Arab world, dubbing imported cartoons first took place in 1963 by an Arab, Beirut-based corporation, Al Ittihhad Al Fanni. Ghanem Dajjani, Sobhi Abou Loghd and Abed El Majid Abou Laban developed the corporation originally as a radio house (Maluf, 2005).

Among the first successful dubbings of cartoons was done by video dubbing pioneer Nicolas Abu Samah whose company dubbed the cartoon *Sindbad* in 1974 and *Zena Wa Nakhoul* in the following year (Maluf, 2003). The success of dubbing these two cartoons triggered the dubbing of a slew of other children's cartoons in later years before the corporation started dubbing Mexican soaps into standard Arabic (Maluf, 2005). While standard Arabic is usually used in literature and formal occasions, or within the context of television news broadcasts, people usually use the vernacular to engage in everyday discourse (Maluf, 2003). Not all Arabs speak the same vernacular in everyday speech

and, in some cases, the differences are significant enough that the dialect is almost incomprehensible and alien to people from different Arab countries. Standard Arabic is usually reserved for formal occasions, literature, or news broadcasts, in the context of television (Maluf, 2005). And so, when dubbing into Arabic, companies usually use a form of Arabic known as Educated Spoken Arabic (ESA) that integrates standard Arabic and acceptable colloquial forms that are well understood among almost all Arabs (Maluf, 2003).

According to Maluf (2005), dubbing imported media productions is usually perceived as more effective than subtitling. Usually subtitles constantly remind viewers that the television program or film being watched is foreign. Thereby, viewers are not expected to identify with the actors of the programs they watch or to believe that the storylines apply to their own culture. Precisely, dubbing aims to make viewers fail to notice, forget or quietly forget and curb the fact that they are watching a translation of the original production. Dubbing into Arabic, in such a case, is explainable partly on educational grounds as to introduce children to the higher form of the language at an early age. (Maluf, 2005).

This thesis focused on the particular case of two cartoon series: one of which is a Japanese cartoon that was aired in Yemen in the early 1990s and the other is produced in France and Canada but was set in Beverly Hills, California, and first aired in the United States of America before it aired elsewhere. The French-Canadian produced cartoon has been aired in Yemen during the last three to four years and is still being aired. I focused on both of these cartoons because they are extremely popular among girls in Yemen. The analysis of female gender representations in this study focuses on a set of dimensions that

include the depiction of behaviors, physical appearance, roles in society, and values associated with gender. To reach this end goal, this study draws on a set of theoretical frameworks that allow for the discussion of implications and effects of media productions across cultures. Therefore, I worked within the postulations of social learning theory and cultivation theory, as well theories of media globalization, imperialism, glocalization and localization.

I focused on these two cartoons and their implications for teenage girls in the Yemeni culture because it is still considered a different sort of culture within the regional cultures of other Arab countries. In this sense, Yemeni culture is regarded as socially more obedient to the Islamic canons that regulate the different aspects of life in Muslim societies, including ─ but not limited to ─ gender roles, gender interaction, and ethics Muslims should abide by.

As a matter of fact, girls in the Yemeni culture, their behavior, and the role they play in society displays certain restrictions that comply with the general description of the culture as a conservative one. Usually, when they are outdoors girls of different ages have to dress in a certain way that covers all of their bodies except for their faces and hands; these norms are usually common among girls aged over 13. Their dresses should be wide enough to not outline the shape of their bodies, and must be as simple as possible so that they do not attract the attention of others. Notwithstanding these restrictions on girls' dressing behaviors outside their houses, it is noteworthy that even indoors girls over 13 are expected to wear modest clothes that do not reveal their body features when relaxing with their brothers and fathers.

Since media are believed to have a great influence on viewers, among Yemeni families, cartoons have always raised concerns regarding their impacts on children. In particular, cartoons that are produced in developed Western countries and feature values different than what children in Yemen acquire through family, religious and interpersonal contexts are expected to raise concerns.

These cultural concerns can mainly be attributed to the fact that cartoons that are produced in the foreign countries and aired across the many privately owned television channels in Yemen enjoy popularity among children in general and girls in particular, in large part due to the lack of equivalent Arab-produced cartoons. Although Qatar, through Al Jazeera Group channels, produces some children's cartoons and programs in order to balance or minimize the influences of the foreign culture products, the Al Jazeera Group cartoons and programs still have not achieved the popularity to realize the desired goal, at least at the time this thesis was written—2015. As a matter of fact, currently in Yemen, children's cartoon viewing is dominated by cartoons produced in foreign countries, such as Japan, the United States of America, France, Canada and others in Europe. These programs are dubbed into Arabic, which, in turn, makes them more appealing to children and raises concerns about the impacts of these programs on Yemeni children and their perceptions of reality. The key issue here is that children are considered a vulnerable group of media consumers who still do not have the ability to think critically and distinguish between real and fictional representations. So they might be particularly susceptible to absorb the cultural and ideological themes and representations depicted in the programs they watch. Thereby, with this study, I add to the existing body of literature that has examined the many aspects of children cartoons and their content and influences

on children and teenagers. Notably, the available body of research has concentrated on

the influence of violent or sexual cartoon contents from the perspective and framing of

the cultures where these cartoons were produced. The content and influence of these

cartoons on children in other cultures has not been considered in the vast majority of this

existing research and so this study adds an important perspective to the available

research.

Chapter 1

Theoretical Framework and Literature Review

Theoretical Framework

As stated earlier, this paper is based on a theoretical framework that incorporates social learning theory, cultivation theory, media globalization and cultural imperialism. The theories of social learning and cultivation are concerned with the short and long term influences of media on viewers, be they children, teenagers or adults. In this chapter, I will discuss their relevance for the study of effects on children. Discussions over media and cultural globalization and imperialism are concerned with how First World countries have ownership of media industries and the channels of global distribution of programming and thus the power to undermine media industries in smaller countries so as to perpetuate the economic and cultural domination of Third World countries. First World countries also are globalizing their culture at the present time through distribution of their media productions to the Third World countries.

According to Bandura (1969) social learning theory is built on a number of assumptions that explain the influences and effects of viewing media and the actions depicted in television programming. This theory presumes that the likeliness of viewers' imitating the behaviors depicted on television is based on whether the behavior is rewarded or punished. It also explains that if viewers identify with the characters in the television programs then viewers are more likely to imitate the depicted behavior. Cultivation theory is more concerned with the long-term influences of watching television (Gerbner, Gross, Morgan, & Signorielli, 1994; Morgan & Shanahan, 2010).

Simply, cultivation theory is all about the way heavy viewing of television influences the way people view and perceive the outside world based on the way it was depicted. For example, heavy viewers of violent programming, will start perceiving the real world as more violent. Considering the number of theories about media and their influences, these two theories best explain the influences of media on viewers and their behaviors. The processes of viewing and consuming media and the following consequences are not likely to take place in a relatively short period of time and these two theories are among the best theories available that also go into explicating the psychological processes inherent in heavy television viewing.

Media and cultural imperialism explains a lot of the general media status and the way it functions in the Arab countries, Yemen included. Although the United States of America and other First World countries, in a lot of cases, have little or no physical and military control over Third World countries, the United States still enjoys an element of control over developing countries by controlling media entities, productions and content. This type of soft-power control is likely to be considered a more effective way of controlling other nations as the developing countries will be more susceptible to have their overarching construction, behaviors, beliefs, and their cultural norms changed over the long stretch of time. And yet, globalization as a media industry practice ran into a number of challenges that to some extent hindered its effectiveness, forcing some of the most pressing marketing issues, to be resolved through glocalization and localization techniques.

Glocalization and localization attempt to localize globalized media content so that it is more engaging and appealing to the international audiences where it is distributed.

Thereby, through localization techniques media producers would include local names, local languages, and sites by which these media productions resonate with the viewers' background and environment. Media globalization is concerned with the Americanization and Westernization of other cultures by circulating and spreading of the American and Western culture via media outlets that slowly integrate it into the culture of other nations. With nations' media content being either filled with American productions or exhibiting content that is similar to that of U.S. media-type of productions, current generations in Third World nationals are more prone to develop hybrid personalities so that they comply with the requirements and traditions of their original culture but concomitantly keep up with the other cultures that they see through media and perceive to be a more free and liberal way of life, to which they might also aspire.

Literature Review

New World Information and Communication Order and Cultural Imperialism

Much research on international television has examined the global development of media as a prominent aspect of U.S. and European imperialism. Viewing television as a facet of U.S. and European imperialism and deriving from the Marxist philosophy, communication and culture are perceived as the ideological superstructure of economic expansion (Straubhaar, 2003). Scholars interested in studying media have reflected on media and cultural imperialism and their relation to the New World Information and Communication Order that was developed as a critical response against the uneven flow of media from certain elite countries to other developing countries. According to the McBride Report (1980), at the time of foundation of the United Nations and of UNESCO,

the international community set themselves the objective of guaranteeing and fostering a free flow of information. Nevertheless, the evident imbalances in communication proved the view that the "free flow" was merely a "one-way flow." Although these notions date back to the 1950s, they became more recognized and defined between the late 1960s and early 1970s. By that time, the debates over the uneven flow of news and information between industrialized and developing countries was a key topic in international meetings (McBride Report, 1980). The term or concept of media imperialism indicates "a situation whereby a media system of a particular area of focus is subject to the dictates of the media system of another area" (Omoera & Ibagere, 2010, p.15). According to Zhang (2011) and Omoera and Ibagere (2010) a more precise, but dated, definition of media imperialism was provided by Boyd-Barrett (1977, p. 117) who defined media imperialism as:

> The process whereby the ownership, structure, distribution or
> content of the media in any one country are singly or together
> subject to substantial external pressures from media interests of
> any other country or countries without proportionate reciprocation
> of influence by the country so affected.

Schiller (1976) as cited in Charusmita (2012) defined cultural imperialism as:

> The sum of the processes by which a society is brought into the
> modern world system and how its dominating stratum is attracted,
> pressured, forced and sometimes even braided into shaping social
> institutions to correspond to, or even promote, the values and

structures of the dominating center of the system. (The concept of

cultural imperialism section, para. 1)

Media imperialism, above all, recognizes the power hierarchy in global

communication and associates it with broad issues of political and economic dependency.

The very idea of imperialism suggests that that the flow of media during 1960s and 1970s

revealed that there were certain observed patterns in the structure and role of mass media

on the global scale. These patterns led to charges that the United States of America and a

few other countries among the First World nations were dominating the media content of

developing countries, and that this also maintained the privileged position of First World

cultures (Charusmita, 2012; Sparks, 2012; Zhang, 2011; Omeora & Ibagere, 2010). More

recently, Zhang (2011) has noted that Western, particularly American, media hardware

and software dominates the informational landscape in much of the world. In compliance

with White (2001), United States topped the list of countries dominating the international

flow of media, which pushed some scholars to bestow other alternative terms for media

imperialism, such as "media are American," as cited in Omeora and Ibagere (2010, p.2).

For its part, the United States tried to promote particular ideas centered on the

need for having a relatively free flow of news and cultural products, including television,

movies, music and advertisements. This libertarian media philosophy complimented the

idea that entertainment is a key function of media and commercial media would benefit

the development goals of most countries (Strabuhaar, 1991).

According to Zhang (2011) the concept of media imperialism is often associated

with cultural imperialism and both appeared to surface and dominate the issues of

international communication in the 1960s and 1970s (Sparks, 2012; Zhang 2011). It

evolved out of Latin American dependency theory serving as a critical reflection of the development approach, which considers mass media as a tool for accelerating the modernization of developing countries. It is also important to point out that Omoera and Ibagere (2010) view media imperialism as not only a feature of globalization, but also an injurious development that threatens indigenous media culture with the imposition of a foreign one. Nevertheless, it must be acknowledged that the countries that initiated this imperialism did so either intentionally as a commercial policy or inadvertently through an enhanced distribution strategy in which First World media products were distributed onto developing nation's media markets at a lower price. Moreover, although it is true that developing countries may be helpless and unable to resist the media invasion even if they want to, the so affected countries have had the choice to either accept or adopt the content they receive or absorb while being relatively ignorant of its consequences (Omoera & Ibagere, 2010).

Although it has been many years since the concept of media imperialism was introduced by media scholars, it is still a concern (Nordenstreng, 2013). Still, Sparks (2012) has argued that media and cultural imperialism are more or less outdated and discredited. Although, as noted earlier, media imperialism has always been tied to cultural imperialism (Zhang (2011), the concept of media imperialism differs from cultural imperialism in that media imperialism does not indicate a prior broader domination, nor does it suggest that imperialism is a phenomenon across time and space. Sparks (2012) has reported that cultural imperialism took a concrete form over the struggle for what is known as New World Information and Communication Order (NWICO). Tanner (2013) has described a number of cultural imperialism claims.

Cultural imperialism is perceived as a byproduct of imperialism and a direct result of economic, military and technical predominance of empires, no matter whether these empires are old or new. Moreover, cultural imperialism represents the world system as comprising a strong dominant media center, or U.S. media, and much weaker or dominated peripheries (non-U.S. countries). Thereby, what the U.S-based transnational media corporations (TNMCs) do, necessarily influences what happens everywhere else. Cultural imperialism indicates that audio-visual trade between rich and poor countries is not reciprocal and that the United States is the most influential and weighty source of entertainment media worldwide (Tanner, 2013).

Carlsson (2003) maintained that global flows of news and information were the core of several debates in fora on a global scale during the 1970s, and she likened these debates to a protracted trench battle. The very concept of free flow of information was "formulated in the USA in the final throes of the second world war" (Carlsson, 2003, p.6). Nordenstreng (2013) maintained that the NWICO in general terms should not be solely observed as a high political act by governments but foremost as a project of what is known as citizens' organizations where media scholars and professionals play an important role. Lee (1986) stated:

> The domination endured by the poor of the world as a result of oppression by the powerful is a reality that degrades the whole of humankind as such. Hope for equality and justice is at the root of the struggle of every social group for the well-being of its members. (Lee, 1986, as cited in Charusmita, 2012, Understanding the NWICO debate section, para. 1)

This statement, according to Charusmita (2012), represents the concerns Third World countries experienced and eventually led to the demands of having or establishing of the New World Information and Communication Order.

The concept of a New World Information and Communication Order (NWICO) became a paramount argument in the debates about global media policy starting in the 1970s and lasting until the 1990s (Zhang, 2011), covering the era between the heights of decolonization to the collapse of Soviet communism (Nordenstreng, 2013). The debates started in diplomatic fora of the developing countries and developed to professional and academic circles, especially among the Non-Aligned Movement countries (NAM) of the South or the Third World. These nations were the main political forces establishing the NWICO debates that, later on, became an integral part of the arguments on the role of media in society and the world at large (Nordenstreng, 2010; Nordenstreng, 2013). Actors who played a role in demanding and creating the NWICO were not limited to governmental bodies and academic experts but also extended to non-governmental organizations, the most important among which was an international and regional organization of working journalists (Nordenstreng, 2010). This paradigm provides a "systematic line of thought about globalization with reference to how rich countries exploit the rest using communication technologies" (Zhang, 2011, p. 113). The result of NWICO was that less developed countries tried to cut down their dependence on the flow of media coming from powerful countries (Eijaz & Ahmad, 2011).

The New World Information and Communication Order was developed as a campaign in parallel with the contemporaneous campaign for a "New International Economic Order," revealing the close links between the struggle against both the

economic and symbolic consequences of imperialism (Sparks, 2012). These debates came

to a head in the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

(UNESCO), with developing nations demanding to have roles and directions of media

flow from certain countries to others reversed. The United States of America and the

United Kingdom ended up pulling their membership from UNESCO and castigating

those world organizations that felt the need of having the distribution of products the

West under their political control. The pullout of the major international sponsors of

UNESCO resulted in weakening the political and financial resources of UNESCO, even

though these two countries rejoined the UNESCO later on (Astaben, 2013).

The concerns pertaining to the inconsistency between developing and developed

countries, uneven flows of media, market domination, distortion of content, cultural

alienation, and barriers to democratization, as well as lack of awareness and lack of

cooperation between nations when it came to communication and information sector,

were identified later on in what is known as MacBride Report, titled *Many Voices, One*

World (UNESCO, 1980). This report identified the previously mentioned problems and

provided recommendations for overcoming them as well (Charusmita, 2012). The

NWICO was established through three stages, the first of which was ideologically-driven;

the second stage was designated as more important than the first and served as the

connection between the ideology presented in the first stage and the reality that was

established in the third stage, which gave the concrete shape to the NWICO debate

(Charusmita, 2012). However, the influence of the MacBride Report, as noted by

Nordenstreng (2010), began to decline mainly due to the fact that UNESCO, the main

sponsor, stopped printing the report as it shifted its attention to other topics; it was

reprinted in (2004) by a prominent American publisher as a way to assert that the report is not out of memory and that it still needed to be used in university courses in the new millennium.

At the heart of media and cultural imperialism and NWICO is the concern of media globalization that was intensively examined by more recent media scholars who created theories on media globalization, defining it, and trying to explain how it works and what its goals are.

Media and Cultural Globalization and Glocalization

Globalization, a paramount facet of the media industry, has been intensely studied by media scholars. At the general sense, the term globalization, according to Grossberg, Wartella, and Whitney (2005) is not the simple process of circulation of things; no matter whether these things are media productions or other goods, such as films, cars, t-shirts or weapons, distributed around the globe through communication and trade networks. The term globalization is more about the awareness of one's place within the whole world, and it is tightly connected with the global processes of economics, politics and culture. Robertson noted that globalization can be conceptualized as both the condensation of the world and the intensification of the consciousness of the whole world (Grossberg et al., 2005). Moreover, globalization is defined as post-Cold War economic, political and cultural trends that were facilitated by the system of the new world that came to existence and unified after the collapse of the Soviet Union. This new system was also expedited by the rise of the capitalist system, increasing political interdependence and the spread of liberal democracy. Globalization with all of the previous facilitating factors is further fostered by the invention and spread of the World Wide Web, which increasingly makes

the world a global village. Waters defines globalization as a "social process in which the constraints of geography on economic, political, social and cultural arrangements recede, in which people become increasingly aware that they are receding and in which people act accordingly" (Waters as cited in Grossberg et al., 2005, p. 423). Tanner (2103) noted that globalization refers to the sum of economic, political, cultural, and technological processes, the effects of which lead to be greater integration, interdependence and interconnection between countries. Finally, Giddens (1994) understood it as the intensification of the global relations that connect distant localities in a way that happenings in local spheres are shaped by the events taking place miles away and vice-versa. It appeared as a buzzword in the 1990s and is probably most pervasively used at the level of media industries (Jan, 2009), and it was a broader term that replaced media imperialism after the collapse of the communist Soviet Union and expansion of the market economy paradigm (Rodrigues, 2009).

According to Banerjee (1998), the term globalization sustained its broader and more dialectic sense and was interpreted as both a homogenization and heterogenization process starting in the late 1980s through the 1990s. Media globalization in particular is a process in which the economic, political, cultural, and social relations of the whole world progressively become mediated across time and space (Rantanen, 2005). It was also defined as a constriction of media ownership and is usually dominated by a small number of powerful transnational media conglomerates that own and control a diverse range of traditional and newer forms of media (Bagdikian, 2000). Moreover, it refers to a variety of complex and usually contradictory social and economic developments that have been taking place for centuries (Havens & Lotz, 2012).

As a process, media globalization represents one of the most complicated and dynamic questions facing media scholars in this century. Globalization works as a tool for change and is well established in the media industries. And yet, globalization in the media industry is more applicable in some sectors, such as videogames and blockbusters; and it tends to be more domestic in other sectors, such as newspaper and television (Havens & Lotz, 2012). Media globalization has come to light due to the convergence of old and new media technologies in addition to the convergence of old and new media organizations that resulted in the formation of new powerful conglomerates (Devereux 2007). Out of a number of studies examining globalization, Held (2000) recognized four patterns in these studies. The first is that globalization is marked by homogenization of economy and culture, and the second is that there is significance of increased connectedness and sharing of cultures. The third pattern is that the view denies the existence of globalization and emphasizes the continuation of unregulated capitalism, and the fourth pattern indicates that there are consequences of contemporary global interaction that, in fact, are complex, diverse, and unpredictable (Rodrigues, 2009). Nuviadenu (2005) noted that the forces currently mastering globalization produce groundbreaking levels of human linkage in the world community.

Giddens (2002) described globalization retrospectively as influenced by the advent of satellite communications, which, in turn, has had a dramatic impact on breaking away from the past and modernizing the world. Giddens adds that globalization is a complex set of processes pulling away power from local communities, reviving local cultural aspirations, and creating new economic and cultural spaces within and across nations. Giddens (2002) disagreed with those who stated that nation states lose power as

the world becomes more globalized. Instead he argued that nation states are still powerful, and especially that political leaders can play an important role in these nations.

A key feature of media globalization is its constant presumption of a decrease in the significance of other kinds of identities, such as the ethnic, the local, the regional, or the national, in the everyday lives of people. Facilitated by technological growth, media globalization also helps reduce both space and time between individuals, societies, and nation states (Devereux, 2007). Jan (2009) stated that the process of globalization "is often portrayed as a positive force which is unifying widely different societies, integrating them into a global village, and enriching all in the process. It is variously described as an inevitable by-product of human evolution and progress…" (p. 66). It is, however, not necessarily a natural development coming out of the ordinary communication and interaction of people and cultures around the world (Jan, 2009). According to Eijaz and Ahmed (2011), the extension and growth of media and the debates over its impact and influence of media globalization split the world into centers and peripheries. Media globalization and its influence on developing countries concerned scholars who contended that it had become a difficult concept on various levels. Eijaz and Ahmed (2011) noted that globalizing media content is increasingly becoming a threat to the sovereignty of developing countries, notwithstanding that media globalization has often come up against a number of hurdles and challenges, chief among which are cultural barriers. Challenges to globalizing media differ among the different types of media, however. Differences in languages across the world are one of the most difficult challenges for any type of media product designed to reach global markets (Havens & Lotz, 2011; Jan, 2009). Discussions over globalization and globalizing media usually

entail discussions over cultural globalization as a corollary of globalization.

Kumaravadivelu (2008) defined cultural globalization as "the process of cultural flows

across the world and how contacts between people and their cultures—their values, their

ideas, and their way of life— have been mounting and deepening in unprecedented ways

(as cited in Tanner, 2013). Tanner (2013) noted:

> Cultural globalization refers to face-to-face and mediated
>
> interactions between people from many different countries, the
>
> exposure of people to values and ideas other than their own, the
>
> mixing of these values and ideas, and the means by which ways of
>
> life are changing and hybridizing as result of these integrative
>
> process. (p.38)

The process of globalizing media is usually associated with the process of

localization. Most scholars tend to believe that globalization is interlinked with

localization and usually refer to them as glocalization (Servaes & Lie, 2008). Tomlinson

explained that despite the fact that the experiences of people's everyday lives are usually

local, they are increasingly shaped by global processes, especially through mass media

linking globalization and local cultures (Rodriguez, 2009, p. 4). Nevertheless, Servaes

and Lie (2008) argued that though globalization is a great chance for cultural enrichment,

most globalized products are stripped of their cultural values in order to make the product

more marketable, which enables the product to be more appealing to other cultures.

Localization offers the opportunity for multi-cultural interpretation of products, which

leads eventually to the loss of the original product's identity and so simplifies the

processes of intercultural communication (Servaes & Lie, 2008). Deuze (2005) noted that

the binary tension between globalization and localization resulted in the liquid modern

state of affairs in which journalism, norms, ideologies and formats are rapidly and

continuously changing (Wasserman and Rao, 2008, p. 168). Glocalization, according to

The Longman Online Dictionary (2014) is about relating to the connections or

relationships between global and local business problems, and the relationship between

the mutually formative and reinforcing competition between global and local products

and preferences. According to Wasserman and Rao (2008), glocalization takes various

forms in different countries and the pace may also vary even from one medium to

another.

According to Khondker (2004) the term glocalization per se was modeled on a

Japanese word (dochakuka) that principally meant adapting techniques of framing one's

own local conditions. It was first generated in the world of business and originally was

adopted to refer to localization of the global (Khondker, 2004). Intrinsically, the word

glocalization originated from the Japanese business practices that started gaining

popularity within the management circles in the Western world, particularly in America.

This popularity was attributed to the then escalating domination of Japanese cars in the

United States (Global Media Global Culture, 2010). Moreover, the use of the word

localization in the English language is mostly attributed to Professor Roland Robertson,

who was interested in sociology-related areas, such as religion, sociological theories and

cultural sociology. Robertson was interested in the Japanese language and found that the

word glocalization in the Japanese language was first of all used in the marketing

industry and indicated that products of Japanese should be localized or, in other words,

should be made suitable to local taste and interest but concurrently maintain their global

application and reach. Thereby, the term glocalization became popularized (Khondker, 2004, Global Media Global Culture, 2010).

Because it is concerned with the relations between two cultures, glocalization was suggested to be another form of the hybridization process. It evolved from the idea that circulating market products have to include properties of the targeted international markets. Glocalization is based on the conception that businesses do not want to be conceptualized or perceived as invading foreign products to the local cultures and populations that would be more likely to reject them if the internationally-produced products had nothing in common with a local environment. Thereby, in order to ensure growing status in other countries, businesses should provide products that are well integrated in the host culture (Global Media Global Culture, 2010). Sucháček (2011) noted that glocalization encompasses two processes: globalization and localization. Whilst localization pertains to particular human beings, organizations, individual subjects and communities, globalization is more of a planetary process. Thereby, globalization is mostly interpreted as the proper strategy thinking globally but acting locally.

Interpretation of the terms glocalization and localization was also extended to the media industry. As Havens and Lotz (2011) explained, localization encompasses recreating the outer frame of the media production to be compatible with the targeted locale and includes language and setting translations. From among the many concepts and notions inherent to the process of globalizing media is the concept of co-production. Co-production, the most successful methodology of balancing cultural barriers that are usually inferred as hurdles to the globalization of media, seeks to create a "business arrangement, in which the production staff and creative workers from more than one

country work together on a project with the aim of distributing the final product in each participant's home market" (Havens & Lotz, 2011, p.236). Additionally, Havens and Lotz (2011) contended that localization is a step utilized by global media organizations attempting to overcome the barriers posed by worldwide cultural differences. Havens and Lotz (2011) stated:

> Localization refers to a range of institutional and textual
> arrangements that rework foreign content to be more culturally
> relevant for domestic viewers. Dubbing and subtitling are forms of
> localization…. It stems from the recognition that all media products,
> even those designed by global conglomerates, have to compete with
> a different and unique mixture of rivals in every local market.
> (p.238)

Challenges to globalizing media products can be overcome through coproduction, which might serve as an effective instrument to bringing cultural realities and the different societal desires into balance in order to make the best use of a potential international market. Nonetheless, Hovens and Lotz (2011) found it works more effectively in films and television than in music and the print industries. According to them, music and print media industries are usually recognized as domestic media productions and so cannot produce as much non-domestic revenues as films and television programing that goes global.

Hybridity

Discussions over globalization and glocalization are usually associated with discussions of the issue hybridity. Hybridity has become an important concept within

cultural research, theory and criticism. Kraidy (2002) noted that premature discussions over hybridity came to the surface during the 18th century within the context of interracial contact that was a product of the overseas conquest and population displacement in Britain, the United States of America and France. These discussions were mainly concerned with the obvious impurity of white Europeans who mated with the non-white races they colonized. However, it gained a new meaning in the wake of the decolonization movements that sprang up during the beginning in the 19th century and reached their peak in the post-World War II decades. Kraidy (2005) noted that hybridity has recently gained visibility in international media and communication studies, which have employed the term hybridity to depict mixed genres and identities. According to Kraidy, the growing use of the notion of hybridity scaled up the importance of its use in intercultural and international communication. As Kraidy (2002) noted, a merely descriptive use of hybridity entails two predicaments, one of which is ontological. Kraidy explained that a descriptive approach perceives hybridity as a clear product of global and local interactions and it should be understood as a communicative practice constituted by and constitutive of sociopolitical and economic arrangements. Nonetheless, the current use of hybridity risks using the notion as a sheer descriptive device for cultural mixture. It has also entered a number of academic areas ranging between traditional disciplines, such as literature, anthropology, and sociology, to interdisciplinary arenas, like performance studies and postcolonial theories (Kraidy, 2002). According to Lull, (2000), hybridity or the process of hybridization occurs when cultural forms actually are transferred through time and space to interact with other cultural settings and forms and influence each other, eventually producing new cultural

forms and altering the general cultural settings (Global Media Global Culture, 2010). Kraidy (2002) noted that hybridity was subject to a number of critiques, which claimed that the concept of hybridity mirrors the life of theorists more than the sites of actual communities where they came from.

Gender Role Representations

According to Signorelli (1990) the gender portrayals media provide raise concerns regarding their vast influence on children's socialization processes (as cited in Thompson & Zerbinos, 1995). This concern is brought to higher levels due to children's increased watching of television at earlier ages (Thompson & Zerbinos, 1995). When children lack the pre-existing schemas of anything related to social life, they resort to television to learn about what they lack in their mental schemas. One of the schemas children lack and learn about from television is relationships between people, particularly gender role representations. However, television presentations also build on the themes of gender relationships children observe in their families. But sometimes, children learn more from television about gender relationships and roles due to their parents' ignoring discussions of some of these gender-related issues (Tonn, 2008, Gökçearslan, 2010). McGhee and Fruch (1980) argued that children's programming is pervasively dominated by sex-role behavior stereotypes (as cited in Tonn, 2008). Children usually pay more attention to same-sex characters in television and they learn about their gender roles through the representations they see in television shows and films. In this case, the role parents play in their children's understanding of gender role is less effective when compared to peers and media influence (Gökçearslan, 2010).

With reference to girls' representations in U.S. media, Healy (1994) maintained that girls were frequently represented in the media as having more beautiful bodies and dressed in sexy and skimpy clothing. They were depicted in television programming to be the center of other's gaze (as cited in Thompson & Zerbinos, 1995). Studying the changes in gender role representations in children's cartoons in the pre-1980s and post-1980s, Thompson and Zerbinos (1995) reported a number of recognizable changes took place in the representations of gender roles in the cartoons they analyzed. With regard to this paper's focus, females were stereotypically represented as needing advice and protection, warmer, emotional, affectionate, romantic, sensitive, frail, and more domestic than males. However, within the genre of adventure cartoons, females were no longer stereotyped with the above descriptions. Instead, they were portrayed as intelligent and more self-assertive.

Not only were media globalization and localization of interest but also the influence media have on people, which encouraged scholars to develop a number of theories to explain this phenomenon. Media scholars have developed a cluster of theories to predict and explain the various influences of media.

Media Effects Theories

Social Learning Theory

Because media are recognized for having substantial and diverse influences on people and the construction of social realities, media were heavily studied by scholars who attempted to explain how social learning theory and cultivation theory inform our understanding of media effects (Bandura, 1971; Gerbner, Gross, Morgan & Signorielli, 1987). Social learning theory, which was relabeled as social cognition in the 1980s and

1990s (Miller, 2005), combines both behavioral and cognitive approaches to learning, suggesting that both internal and external factors are pivotal (O'Rorke, 2003). Albert Bandura was the major developer of social learning theory and he based his theory on the idea of observational learning proposed by Miller and Dollard in 1940, who suggested that when humans are encouraged to learn a particular behavior, they do so by observing models and being positively motivated and reinforced when imitating those models (Miller, 2005).

Observational learning per se might be understood as the process by which consumers of a represented behavior can learn a new behavior by simply observing the representation (Baran and Davis, 2012). Miller and Dollard (1940), according to Baran and Davis (2012), described the fundamental idea of observational learning by noting that individuals behave in a particular way and then shape their behaviors according to the reinforcement they actually receive on the behavior they exhibited. Baran and Davis (2012) noted that observational learning refers to learning from models that people find in their environment, including friends, family members or figures who regularly appear in public life, like those people read about or see or hear. Modeling these figures can be understood as the mechanical reproduction of the behavior (as cited in Miller, 2005).

Social learning theory stands on a number of concepts that clarify how the process of observational learning works. Inhibitory effect, to start with, takes place when individuals see models being punished for performing a certain behavior and so individuals will mostly be discouraged from imitating the performed behavior. Conversely, disinhibitory effect is when media depict a reward for a threatening or prohibited behavior which consequently elevates the chances of having the depicted

presentation be imitated by consumers or viewers (Baran & Davis, 2012). According to

the postulations of this theory, individuals are presumably able to predict whether they

are going to be rewarded or punished for performing a particular behavior based on the

observed characteristics of the model (Miller, 2005). Bandura (1977a) pointed out that

observers are usually competent to know their ability and likelihood of successfully

performing a behavior through what is known as self-efficacy (as cited in Miller, 2005).

Moreover, Bandura, Gruce, and Menlove (1966) argued that some models become so

attractive to individuals of all ages that the efficacy and likely outcomes of adopting the

modeled behavior are not adequately considered. Most prominent among these

problematic models are the televised ones, as viewers start to learn the embedded

behavior regardless of whether or not they are given additional incentives to do so (as

cited in Bandura, 1971, p.7).

A key factor in social learning processes is an individual's identification with the

models an individual imitates. While Bandura (1969) mentioned that individuals

identifying with models refers to the process by which people pattern their thoughts,

feelings or actions after a model, Miller (2005) noted identification has been a remarkable

addition to the social penetration theory. Miller suggested that identification is a status

whereby individuals feel a strong psychological connection to a model and social

learning is more likely to take place when this occurs. And yet, the problem with the

process of identification is that it is difficult to recognize and pinpoint the sources of the

emulated behavior, especially since children, in particular, are regularly exposed to

several models, including teachers, adults in the immediate neighborhood, companions,

and a wide range of prestigious models presented mainly through television and films

(Bandura, 1969). The identificatory process is known as "the occurrence of similarity between the behavior of a model and another person under conditions where the model's behavior has served as the determinative cue for the matching responses" (Bandura, 1969, p. 217). Baran and Davis (2012) noted that imitation, after all, is different from identification in that it is a direct mechanical reproduction of a modeled behavior.

Cultivation Theory

In addition to social learning theory, cultivation theory was also studied and tested by media scholars. Cultivation theory was developed in the 1970s and explained the influences of watching television over many years (Morgan & Shanahan, 2010; Hammermeister, Brock, Winterstein & Page, 2005; Shrum & Bischak, 2001; Potter, 1994, Gerbner, Gross, Morgan & Signorielli, 1986). Cultivation theory is built on the presumption that the television as a ubiquitous and consistent source for portraying the lifestyle of American society became the primary source of information on how the social world works (Shrum & Bischak, 2001; Hammermeister et al., 2005). It assumes that the impact of television serves as an indirect source for constructing social reality and will replace the direct experience in doing so (Gerbner, Gross, Morgan, & Signorielli, 1994). Its central argument is that heavy viewers of television are more inclined to exhibit tendencies of forming and believing in televised social realities, moreso than light viewers are (Potter, 1994). Heavy viewers will tend to perceive the real world in ways that are compatible with the most common recurrent messages of the fictional worlds in television (Hammermeister et al., 2005).

However, cultivation theory received a wide range of criticism (Miller, 2005; Shrum & Bischak, 2001). Among the critiques cultivation theory received was its weak

and limited effects, which indicate that the influences of watching television turn out to be weak and limited when other relevant demographic factors come into play (Miller, 2005). Addressing the critique cultivation theory received, Gerbner and colleagues made some refinements to cultivation theory, primarily by developing the theories of mainstreaming and resonance (Miller, 2005; Shrum & Bischak, 2001; Gerbner et al., 1986). Explaining the meaning of mainstreaming Gerbner et al., (1986) stated:

As successive generations grow up with television's version of the world, the former and traditional distinctions become blurred. Cultivation thus implies the steady entrenchment of mainstream orientations in most cases and the systematic but almost imperceptible modification of previous orientations in others; in other words, affirmation for the believers *and* indoctrination for deviants. That is the process we call *mainstreaming.* (p.24)

According to Shrum and Bischak (2001), the meaning of mainstreaming provided by Gerbner and colleagues was the view that cultivation effects were believed to be moderated through the experience of people's lives. Therefore cultivation theory is more applicable to those whose life experiences are divergent or inconsistent with the world of television. They are more likely to be influenced by the messages of television.

Resonance on the other hand is defined as the fact that receiving and adopting the set of television messages is more likely to take place when the individual's environment is similar to and reinforces the set of televised messages they are exposed to on regular basis (Miller, 2005; Gerbner et al., 1986). Children, as niche audiences, are granted a significant portion of television programming, and cultivation theory scholars carried out

a remarkable number of studies attempting to explain the influence of different genres on children.

Children and Media Content: Violence

Generally speaking, media have achieved a ubiquitous nature in our lives and children are using media all the time. Media in the lives of children started with radio, which eventually moved to television, videogames and computers (Cyphernet, 2014, para. 1). Children are exposed to media in general and television content specifically, which is accelerated by the burgeoning role of technology in the lives of children who interact with media on a daily basis (Wartella, 2012). Children's television, as a term, was defined by Alexander (2001) as the "programs targeted primarily to children and designed to attract a majority of viewers who are children" (p. 495). Viewing television has been argued to have both positive and negative influences on children, and it might have negative effects on very young children's and preschool children's cognitive and behavioral development (Theodosiadou & Markos, 2013). In regard to children as a special television audience, Valkenburg and Janssen (1999) noted that while children in the past have always been assumed to be passive recipients on whom television has measurable influence, they are increasingly considered active and motivated explorers rather than passive recipients. The scholars added that based on the assumptions of uses-and-effects perspective, children evaluate critically what they see on television.

Most of the research on the media influence on children focused on the influence of having children view violent content. Groebel (2001) noted that the quantity of aggressive media content children consume increased with the arrival of television. Children are considered a delicate group of media consumers because they tend to be

susceptible to easily absorbing and imitating the content they consume. This is largely

attributed to the assertion that children at early ages are not able to differentiate reality

and fantasy (Gentile, 2003). Grossberg et al., (2006) noted children up to five or six years

are inclined to communicate with television as though it is their magic window on the

world. This window allows children to see the world before they have to interact with it

(Baran & Davis2012). As children grow older, they become more competent in making

meanings of television programming. Grossberg et al. (2006) stated, "As they grow up,

children viewers acquire the ability to understand the narrative contents, distinguish

among program genres and formats, and correctly interpret the production forms (such as

instant replays) of television" (p.156). Today, children's experiences are mediated by the

screen technologies and children might go through their first real fear when watching a

scary movie (Wilson, 2008). The messages that are conveyed through media content in

general and children's programs in particular are easily received by children and have

become an integral part of their internal world, so much so that these messages end up

directly or indirectly affecting children's future behavior (Villani, 2002). Children's

cartoons, in particular, were found to be among the most violent TV programs, showing

nearly three times the amount of violence per hour as adult programs (Wilson et al.,

2002). Therefore, the way generations of children might engage in violent behaviors has

aroused the attention of scholars who concluded that this phenomenon is attributable to

the morals instilled in children's minds while viewing children's programs (eg., Slotsve,

Carmen, Sarver, &Watkins, 2008; Kerish, 2005). Wilson et al. (2002) stated, "Concern

about the impact of TV violence on children has become one of the nation's most

prominent issues during recent years" (p. 5). Additionally, Groebel, (2001) argued that

media play a key role in developing cultural orientations and world views through the global distribution of global stereotyped images.

Children show varied tendencies towards violent behaviors in diverse facets of real life, home and school environments. The reasons why children tend to react violently appear to depend on different motives and situations. Children are known for being sensitive receivers and fast consumers of whatever is being presented on television. Cantor (2002) noted that "children imitate televised words and actions from an early age" (p.1). Nevertheless, parents tend not to keep an eye on the films and cartoons their children watch and the violence embedded within these texts. According to Aust and Everhart (2007), "With each film containing at least seven violent incidents, it is important for parents to understand the need to watch these films with their children and discuss the realities of the violence" (p.17). Therefore, parents need to learn how to talk to their children about media and have alternatives to deal with the negative impacts media violence can have on their children. (Cantor 2002 p.6)

Due to the progressive importance of observing effects of media violence upon children, Cantor stresses the importance of studying media violence. Cantor (2002) posits that researchers of media violence should investigate the potential of children developing violent behaviors after watching violent characters and actions and the possibility of controlling other possible violent behavioral influences (p.1). According to him, "They also control for other factors, such as previous aggressiveness, family problems, and the like," (p.1). Reasons for people's misunderstanding of media violence research, Cantor (2002) writes, is that "most public discussions of the problem focus on criminal violence and ignore the other unhealthy outcomes that affect many more children" (p.1).

Bogart (1972) published a study reviewing different research papers and studies discussing the issue of the overarching impact of television and film on the audience, adolescents and children in particular. Bogart (1972) wrote, "A third interpretation, of the observed study, disputed the premise that the symbolism of mass media is emotionally arousing for the audience, that it is meaningful even when the meanings are hidden" (p.293). This argument suggests that meanings presented on television shows are processed whether they are directly or indirectly presented.

Cartoons and Disney movies are the focus of several studies that investigate the influence of violent scenes on the so-called mental wellbeing of children. Bogart (1972) believes that violence is ubiquitous in children's cartoons and reported that Gerbner (1970) found:

> Violence is shown by TV as the characteristic form of handling
>
> conflicts. Two thirds of all leading characters in TV dramas are
>
> involved in violence, half of the characters commit violence
>
> themselves. More characters are shown as victims of violence than as
>
> aggressors, but only 8 percent who commit violence escape
>
> retribution. (Bogart, 1972, p.499)

Additionally, Aust and Everhart (2007) concluded, "With only a small percentage of characters rejecting acts of violence, children may conclude that violence is acceptable" (p.18). Children might not be able to distinguish between what is and what is not acceptable if they do not see how other non-violent characters reject the violence taking place in the movie. As such, children are more likely to imitate the behavior since they do not have full knowledge of the potential severe repercussions of violent behavior

(Aust & Everhart 2007). Coyne and Whitehead (2008) reported, "A child who views vast amounts of violence on TV is likely to form new scripts concerning violence and then to strengthen these scripts each time they view more. When faced with a situation that may or may not involve violence, a person will rely on the cognitive scripts they have in memory to guide their behavior" (p.383). Disney films are extremely popular among children, with some children viewing programs over and over again. Although Disney films usually contain some form of ''moral message'' at the end, this does not protect children from the violence they view (Coyne and Whitehead (2008).

Disney movies and the violence embedded within the scenes has been the subject of a number of studies. Yokota and Thompson (2000) studied violence in 74 G-rated animated films shown in U.S. cinemas from 1937 to 1999. Although suitable for a ''general'' audience, Yokota and Thompson (2000) found many examples of violence in these child-friendly films. Their results indicated that at least one violent act was present in each of the 74 G-rated animated programs (as cited in Coyne and Whitehead, 2008). Violence was frequently initiated by the bad characters (74%) and the rest by good characters; however, the acts committed by good characters were often justified. Children's cartoons have been documented to be some of the most violent TV programs currently on the air, showing nearly three times the amount of violence per hour as non-children's programming (Wilson et al., 2002, as cited by Coyne and Whitehead 2008).

Although children's cartoons are aimed at both genders, boys showed higher levels of adopting violent behaviors after being exposed to televised violence. Bogart (1972) argued that "Children, especially boys, became more aggressive after exposure to more violent programs, but neither the motivations of violence, the consequences of

violence, the understanding of these variables predicted latter aggressive responses" (p.501). Furthermore, it has been contended that affects could become evident over longer time periods—a contention that pushed scientists to study short-term and long-term effects of exposure to violence in television programs, cartoons and films directed to children. Coyne and Whitehead (2008) noted, "Viewing acts of violence in the media may increase the risk of short-term and long-term negative effects on viewers, particularly in children" (p.383). They state that, "A recent longitudinal study found that exposure to media violence at an early age was related to aggressive and criminal behavior for both males and females 15 years later" (p.383).

Engaging in violent behavior was not the only impact reported of children watching violent characters and actions, even though most research focused on physical violence, aggression and indirect aggression. Coyne and Whitehead (2008) reported several cases of social alienation and desensitization as effects of children's exposure to television violence. Thereby, the media industry tried to eliminate or at least scale down the undesired effects of violence. Within the concerns of societal and official reactions to violence depicted in television, Bogart (1972) stated:

> Since 1952, congressional hearings have periodically probed into
> television's content and its effects on young people. Senator Estes
> Kefauver's subcommittee on juvenile delinquency heard alarming
> testimony from psychiatrists like Frederic Wertham, who forcefully
> expressed their conviction that television violence can lead children into
> displays of aggression and even to acts of violence or irrationality that
> directly imitate what they have seen on the screen. (p.493)

In this regard and as noted by Aust and Everhart (2007), the American Psychological Association suggested that parents should play a role in explaining the reasons behind characters' adopting of violent actions and provide children with other possible nonviolent solutions for similar situations. In sum, studies and research suggest that children's viewing of violent actions and characters on television, regardless whether for short or longer periods, might lead the children to engage in violent acts that might not be equivalent, in terms of type or outcome, to those they viewed.

In Gulf countries, as in other Arab states, most local broadcasters operate under the control of state regimes that censor content and are able to shut down channels that violate a regime's media policy. However, this is not the case for satellite-distributed television and for most international sources and channels. Among the hundreds of Arabic channels, LBC, MBC, Al Arabiya and Al Jazeera are the most prevalent channels, and they attempt to assess the entire spectrum of views and offer various views (Kraig & Gockel, 2005). In their report, Kraig and Gockel (2005) noted that United Arab Emirates (UAE), Qatar and Lebanon top the list of those states that have strong links to U.S. and European media. In these channels, a large portion of their programming, especially cartoons targeting children, is from U.S. production companies. However, there are no studies that explain how these cartoons influence the children in these Gulf countries.

Broadcast Media in Arab Countries

According to Al Bab website, channels in the Arab countries until the 1990s were government owned and strictly controlled. However, with the spread of satellite television in the 1990s, the situation changed and the privately-owned and non-governmental channels introduced livelier programs. These channels aimed at a pan-Arab

audience and also adopted a professional approach to news and other affairs. The spurring of these channels is made possible by the emergence of the global telecommunications revolution. With as many as 300 satellite stations in 2007, privately-owned channels are still emerging (Dajani, 2007). As noted by Dajani (2007), the first catalyst of broadcasting in the Arab region started in Egypt in 1990 and was followed by the Middle East Broadcasting Center (MBC). MBC was created with Saudi petro dollars and is personally financed by Sheikh Walid al-Ibrahim. The Al Jazeera channel was first financed as a start-up by Qatar's Shiekh Hamad with $140 million. It was among the first channels that started around 1996, and many of its staffers were brought from the BBC which had launched an Arabic TV channel a couple of years earlier. Despite the fact that Al Jazeera is financed by the Qatari government, it was granted an unprecedented level of editorial freedom. Al Jazeera began to gain attention in the West during the 2003 Iraq War and in 2006 it launched its Al Jazeera English channel (Dajani, 2007)

Yemen and Broadcast Media in Yemen: An Overview

Yemen is located at the southwest part of Asia and is second largest country in the Arab Peninsula. Around 26 million people live in a total area of 203,849 square miles. Fully 99.1% of the population are Muslim, with an estimated 65% of the population being Sunnis and 35% Shia. The other category includes different religions, such as Jewish, Hindu and Christians, many of whom are refugees or temporary foreign residents (Facts Monster website, n.d).

A brief description of broadcast media in Yemen is provided by Hestler and Spilling (2010). According to them, Yemen has three state-run television channels in addition to several repeat channels. The different programs are broadcast from Sana'a

and Aden. Currently, there is access to various types of satellite TV programing. Hestler and Spilling (2010) stated:

> The availability of satellite dishes is spreading fast, bringing
>
> Western television shows and news coverage to Yemeni
>
> homes. Yemenis enjoy watching soap operas and comedy
>
> shows, many of which are filmed in Egypt or Syria. Sporting
>
> events are also popular, as are cartoons. (p.97)

In Yemen, Internet penetration is among the lowest in the Arab region with two main providers of Internet service: TeleYemen and YemenNet, which are operated by the Ministry of Telecommunications. Yemeni citizens do not have full access to Internet content due to the government's controlling and filtering of websites to restrict access to pornography and some anti-Islamic websites (Hestler and Spilling, 2010).

As shown above, the available studies on either of the discussed issues did not take into consideration the influences of media in Arab countries. Yemen, in particular, has been ignored and left out in any of the research on international media and its influences on audiences. This study attempts to extend the research of media impacts on children by examining a particular type of media made in foreign countries and broadcast to children in Yemen.

Chapter 2

Methodology

In this study I examined representations of gender roles in two popular cartoons aired in Yemen and their relevance to the conservative Yemeni culture. The following research questions guided this investigation:

RQ1: What are the salient gender representations of women and girls in two popular cartoon series aired in Yemen since the 1990s?

RQ2: To what extent do these female gender role representations resonate with the Muslim Yemeni culture?

RQ3: Given these representations, how could these representations drive the Yemeni girls' perception of their peers' lifestyles in Western cultures?

Female gender role representations are concerned with the way girls are depicted in cartoons through character attributes, behavior, physical appearance, roles females play, and values that are associated with the female characters. These representational attributes were examined in relation to a set of cultural and social considerations comprising religious practices, moral standards, and attitudes towards the role of girls in society.

In comparison to other Muslim Arab cultures, Yemeni culture has been described as a more conservative kind of culture because it poses more restrictions on girls' behaviors and roles in society. And yet, although girls still can play a relatively more prominent role in the society than they used to, there are still areas where they cannot go due to societal considerations. Hybrid identities are applicable to the way girls develop their own personalities so that they comply with their own society's cultural norms and

concurrently keep up with the female representations they watch on television through cartoons.

To investigate these issues, I followed the interpretive paradigm to understand the influences of media on children. According to Morgan (1983), the interpretive perspective stresses the importance of subjective meanings and social-political, as well as symbolic, actions in the processes through which humans construct and reconstruct their reality. The fundamental proposition of the interpretive paradigm is that individuals act toward things on the basis of the meanings that things have for them, that meanings arise out of social interaction and are developed and modified through an interpretive process (as cited in Orlikowski & Baroudi, 1989).

In addition to emphasizing socially constructed realities, interpretive research acknowledges the close relationship between the researcher and what is being examined, as well as the situational constrains shaping the process of exploration (Rowlands, 2005). Methodologically, the interpretive perspective, according to Orlikowski and Baroudi (1989), is premised on the belief that the intricacies of social processes cannot be captured in hypothetical deductions, covariance, and degrees of freedom. Rowlands (2005) noted that within interpretive research methodologies, researchers do not have to predefine dependent or independent variables and do not have to test hypotheses. Walsham (1995) noted that it alternatively aims to produce an understanding of the social contexts of the phenomena and the process whereby a phenomenon influences and is influenced by the social context (as cited in Rowlands, 2005). Interpretive researchers abstain from embracing the idea that social research can be entirely divorced from the researchers' values, community, and society.

In accordance with phenomenology, researchers should not try to scale down the influence of value on the process of conducting research to produce more objective studies. Interpretive researchers tend to stand for the impossibility of separating values from doing scholarship and they believe that values, either personal or professional, are the lens through which social phenomenon are examined (Miller, 2005).

In the present study I examined two sets of cartoons that are produced in foreign countries, specifically the Western countries and Japan. The cartoons are dubbed into Arabic, aired in Yemen and are popular among teenage Yemeni girls. The first cartoon is *A Little Princess Sara* (Nippon Animation production), which was aired in Yemen during the mid-1990s, but is still occasionally aired on some children's channels. The cartoon was produced in Japan by the Nippon Animation Company in 1985. The second cartoon is *Totally Spies* (Marathon Animation production)*,* a French/Canadian production of the Marathon Production Company and it has been aired in Arab channels since the 2010s. This analysis explored a set of eight episodes out of the total number of the two selected cartoons, four episodes of each cartoon. From the cartoon *A Little Princess Sara* (Nippon Animation production) I analyzed Episodes 2, 17, 25, and 41, which keep track with the fluctuating events of the plot and consistency of the characters' representations. From the cartoon *Totally Spies,* I selected four episodes of the first three seasons, which are available online in both Arabic and English languages. The analyzed episodes were Episode 18 "Evil Boyfriend", Episode 36 "Mommies Dearest", Episode 58 "Forward to the Past," and Episode 69 "Creepy Crawly Much." Because I adopted thematic analysis, to be selected as a theme, a certain category of interrelated ideas had to have been

repeated three times or more in the selected episodes, no matter whether these ideas were featured in visual or linguistic signs.

I focused on these two particular cartoons because they are so popular among Yemeni teenage girls who to some extent have presumably identified and wished to be like the main characters. The present study called for a textual analysis of the two cartoons. I accessed these cartoons through YouTube and other online websites. While the *Totally Spies* cartoon consists of six seasons with a total of 156 episodes that started airing in 2010, *Sara: A Little Princes*, spanning 46 episodes, was first aired in the early 1990s. Out of the overall number of episodes of both cartoons, I selected four episodes of each. For *Totally Spies*, the four episodes chosen were the only ones available that featured a version dubbed into Arabic. For the series of *A Little Princess Sarah,* the four selected episodes were chosen to pursue several changes in the plot and development of the characters.

A Little Princess Sara is based on the novel A Little Princess by Frances Hodgson Burnett and tells the story of a rich man's daughter who is brought to live in a girls' seminary--'Miss. Minchin Select Seminary for Young Ladies'--located in London. The series' crisis takes place when the girl's father dies and she is forced to live as a servant in the seminary. She passes through difficult times and is eventually found by her father's mining partner who recovers her from this miserable life. The *Totally Spies* cartoon is a fast-paced comedy starring three female Beverly Hills teens Sam, Alex and Clover, who unknowingly become international undercover agents for the World Organization of Human Protection (WOOHP).

For data analysis, I conducted a textual analysis that focused on the main characters for each series. I conducted a thematic and visual analysis. The thematic analysis focused on the cartoons' main characters' personalities and the way they were depicted and the visual analysis focused on the characters' dress styles. These images were coded according to the following characteristics: the nature of girls' representations, behavior, physical appearance and what values were associated with the depicted characters of females.

It is important to note here my positionality as a researcher. I spent most of my life in the Yemeni culture and several of the discussions and facts of the Yemeni culture come from my background and experience. Drawing on this personal experience was necessary due to the severe lack of sources and materials that discuss the Yemeni culture. As a child, I watched the cartoon *A Little Princess Sara* from the age of 10 until I was 12 years old. The cartoon *Totally Spies* was aired later in time after I finished my bachelor's degree. As such, I am familiar with the Yemeni dress codes of the last 25 years, the Western dress codes depicted in the cartoons, and the hybrid codes that came to surface in the Yemeni culture in the last ten years.

All the attributes were coded and analyzed in accordance with the conservative Yemeni culture to eventually link their compliance or conflict with the local Yemeni culture and traditions that girls there have been taught. These cultural traditions were analyzed in accordance with a set of Yemeni attributes and norms, such as the girls' expected behaviors, physical appearance, how they understand their idea of beauty and their role in society. I examined the episodes online and kept noting the most recurrent themes that comply with the previously noted attributes. To be taken as a theme, the code

must have been repeated three times across all of the streamed episodes of all the examined cartoons. Themes were worded in a short phrase and then explained as depicted in the cartoons. Later in the thesis, each identified theme is discussed in relation to the extent of its resonance with the conservative Yemeni culture and my interpretation of its potential influences on Yemini girls watching them.

Chapter 3

Findings and Discussions

Findings

This chapter presents the answers to the research questions proposed for this

study, as well as the relation between the first and second research questions:

RQ1: What are the salient gender representations of women and girls in two popular

cartoon series aired in Yemen since the 1990s? And RQ2: To what extent do these female

gender role representations resonate with the Muslim Yemeni culture?, I answer them

both concomitantly through the discussion of dominant themes. The findings with respect

to the third research question (RQ3) regarding the way the identified themes could

possibly drive the perception of girls in the Yemeni culture of the lifestyles of their peers

in Western cultures is to be discussed in the last section of the findings part of this

chapter.

Before discussing the findings, it is worth noting that the cartoons' titles are

somewhat changed in the localized version. The title *A Little Princess Sara* is turned into

Sally and the title *Totally Spies* is shortened to *Spies*. As for the English versions of the

titles, the title of *A Little Princess Sara* is a direct indicator of Sara, the main character's

personality. Sara is an approximately eight-year old girl whose father is devoted to grant

her every luxury of life. When Sara arrives at the seminary, the other students call her

princess. While some call her "princess" out of love due to her good deeds, others call her

a princess to mock her because they are jealous of the privileges she is granted. When

Sara arrives, she gets a princess-like room as her father instructs the seminary's

headmistress to prepare one for her, and is afforded a special maid for her convenience.

And yet, the term "princess" also indicates the way princesses are expected to behave and look. In this sense, princesses are expected to be stylish, elegant, and are anticipated to display high morals and act respectfully and kindly with others. Changing the cartoon's title from *A Little Princess Sara* into *Sally* might not reinforce the noteworthy multiple "princess" connotations of the original title in the local Yemeni context.

The English version title of *Totally Spies* connotes certain qualities a spy should obtain. Usually spies are anticipated to be quick and sharp-witted, confident, cunning, fearless, and they are expected to be able to aptly deal with unexpected occurrences and circumstances. In the localized version, the title *Spies* is not likely to evoke qualities different than those noted above. However, it is worth noting that the word "*Spies"* in the English title is gender neutral, it is not in the localized Arabic version, though. In the Arabic title, feminine pronouns are added to the word "Spies" to denote female characters. The first prong of the title "*Totally"* denotes the spies' capability to worthily and competently fulfill their tasks with no possibility of error and failure.

In the following sections, I present the answers to the research questions in two sections. The first section includes answers to the first and second questions through a set of identified themes which describe the female gender representations in the cartoons and the way these representations resonate with the Yemeni culture. *A Little Princess Sara* cartoon showcases women and girls as more domestic, nurturing, modest, and dependent on others. In contrast, the girls in *Totally Spies* were represented as more independent, liberal, and courageous. The extent to which the identified representational attributes resonate with the Yemeni culture is explored in the second section of this chapter. The analysis revealed that the majority of the representations that were identified as being

depicted in the cartoon *A Little Princess Sara* resonate with the Yemeni culture. Conversely, the representations depicted in the *Totally Spies* cartoon were identified as dissonant with conservative Yemeni culture.

Representations of Roles of Women in Society

In *A Little Princess Sara,* Sara and other females, be they girls or women, are represented in a limited set of traditional roles in society. Besides Sara, regular characters include Miss Minchin, the seminary's headmistress; Amelia, sister of Miss Minchin; Becky, a girl maid; and Molly, the cook's wife; in addition to the other girl students. In the selected episodes, these females played the roles of teachers, students, chefs, maids, and wives. This might not be surprising since it is indicated through the various episodes that the focus of the cartoon is on how to raise girls and educate them to be good ladies or wives of officials and well-to-do men. In episode 25, for example, Miss Minchin commands girl characters to get prepared and behave well as they are expecting a visit from the Mayor's wife. In this example, girl characters are required to dress well and be good students in class as the mayor's wife is visiting to check on the French classes in the seminary. As a matter of fact, the majority of the characters in the cartoon *A Little Princess Sara* are women and girls. The male element is limited to James, the main cook, and Peter, the driver of the horse cart.

In contrast, female roles in the society represented in the cartoon *Totally Spies* are not as varied, but are more non-traditional roles compared to the traditional roles that are usually assigned to women. To start with the role of the main girl characters--Sam, Alex, and Clover--in addition to being high school students, they play the role of spies who work for an international organization and are relied on to do important tasks and

missions. In the episode "Forward to the Past," the main three girl characters--Sam, Alex and Clover--are engaged in a fight with a number of girls who work with a group of men in a gang. Eventually the three girls operating as spies win the fight and complete the missions they are assigned. However, the selected four episodes focused on the main characters and do not include many other female representations except for the girls working with the gang. Although the three girls--Sam, Alex and Clover--in *Totally Spies* are high school students, their life in school is not emphasized or portrayed as frequently as their role and life as spies.

Comparing the two cartoons, the role females are represented to play in society are drastically different at the two different points in time. In *A Little Princess Sara,* females represent a set of traditional roles associated with females, like teachers, maids, servants and wives. These roles place women in positions of serving, nurturing, and taking care of others rather than leading or taking actions for their own self-interest. In their roles of teachers, they are portrayed as independently leading others, but in this case they are leading children rather than adult men and women, which parallels the role of a mother in a traditional family.

However, in *Totally Spies*, girls are represented to enjoy and practice a more liberal set of choices in the style of life they lead and roles they play in society. The characters are not restricted to the traditional roles that were associated with women in the past. In this sense, the significance of the term role is inclusive to the main job of the three girls who work as spies for the WHOOP organization. The girls' choice in leading their life is inclusive to their occupation as spies, and this central fact dictates the girls' choices of the place they live in, the places they go, and the way they spend their time.

The Representations of the Female Characters

Emotional Dependence on Family and the Need for Help to Survive

In *A Little Princess Sara,* the main characters in the cartoon are shown to be needy of their parents' presence or adults' help. In the second episode of the cartoon, Sara is shown to burst into tears when her father leaves her in the seminary for the first time, which indicates a strong relationship between the two. The strength of the relationship is implied throughout the second episode as Sara goes doll-shopping along with her father who tries his best to find the doll she wants and not any other. Later on, when Sara's father passes away, she is forced to endure difficult life conditions because she cannot live alone. Although the girls in the seminary are living away from their families, it is indicated that the purpose of leaving the girls in the seminary is not only for education but also for teaching girls how to be well-behaved in all aspects of daily life. In this cartoon, girls are mostly kept indoors and are supervised by the elders, including Miss Minchin, the headmistress of the seminary and her sister Miss Amelia. When Sara and the other maid Becky go outside the seminary unsupervised, it is only to do grocery shopping or fulfill other tasks they are assigned as maids.

Girls as Independent, Individual Decision Makers

In contrast, girls in *Totally Spies* are presented as more independent who do not seek the help of adults to survive in life and are totally independent from their families when they make decisions. The characters' relations with their families are only present in one of the four analyzed episodes. In this episode, the characters' reactions to meeting their mothers and the expression of significant feeling of missing their mothers indicate that the girls have gone a long time without seeing their parents. Girls in the *Totally Spies*

cartoon are represented as independent in regard to the kind of life they are leading even though they are adolescents. They are also physically and emotionally stronger than might be expected of adolescents. They are physically strong enough to engage in fights and win these fights, and emotionally strong enough to lead their lives and make decisions without their mothers' guidance. Some examples of the decisions girls independently make are where to live, which boy to have a relationship with, and the style of life they want to lead. Girls are also represented as adventurous and outgoing more than the way girls are represented in *A Little Princess Sara.* The three girls are adventurous in the sense that they do not feel intimidated by any of the difficult missions they are assigned and they like trying new solutions to successfully finish their jobs.

While in *A Little Princess Sara* the young girls are kept mostly indoors unless they are escorted by the headmistress or her sister when leaving the seminary, girls in *Totally Spies* go shopping, swimming, and work out together and are not supervised by any members of their families. Even when they are assigned a mission, girls are sent all alone with no senior spies from the WHOOP organization. Whenever they are needed for a mission, the *Spies* are always brought to Jerry's office, where he starts instructing them and explaining the mission they are required to do, and he provides them with tools they might need to use during their mission.

Engaging in and Performing Violent Behaviors

In the episodes selected from the first cartoon, *A Little Princess Sara,* no single act of physical violence is performed or committed. However, verbal violence is identified as the headmistress of the seminary keeps insulting and scolding *Sara* if she fails in fulfilling the tasks she is assigned as a maid. As a matter of fact, girls in the

cartoon *A Little Princess Sara* are being educated so that they become elegant and well-behaved ladies in the future. In contrast, several acts of physical violence are depicted in each of the analyzed episodes selected from the *Totally Spies* cartoon. This is congruent with the fact that in this plot, girls are entitled to protect the world and so have to regularly fight with their antagonists. Girls in *Totally Spies* are highly trained to perform self-protection and martial arts movements that are usually associated with strong bodies and well-trained people. In Episode 58 "Froward to the Past," girls are involved in a high profile violent fight with other men and women after which they achieve victory due to their experienced and well developed fighting skills [Figure 17]. Also, in Episode 18 "Evil Boyfriend," in addition to the regular fighting acts the three spies usually perform in each episode, Sam, the intellectual of the spies group, skillfully and aptly avoids lasers that are protecting a highly secured and valuable formula while her boyfriend stands aside waiting for her to get him the formula [Figure 19]. In Episode 36, girls engage in a fast-paced fight with their mothers, who have been made use of by anti-WHOOP people [Figure 18]. This shows that *Spies* girls are represented as more aggressive and are more involved in and linked to violence.

Gender Relationships

In the cartoon of *A Little Princess Sara,* the depiction of girls' and women's interaction with males is remarkably restricted. Interaction with the other gender is limited to men as workers who are only doing their duties, such as working in the kitchen, selling vegetables in the market, driving horse carts or working as private servants in the seminary.

In the second episode, the only presence of the other gender is Sara's father, and the boy who is hired to drive Sara's private horse cart. In Episode 17, it is limited to the boy cart driver and the male cook. While the characters of the boy cart driver and the male chef appeared frequently, other male characters that appeared in the selected episodes are limited to the French language teacher and some officials who visited the seminary in Episode 25. The officials who visited the seminary appeared for a very short time and did not speak to the students or the headmistress. However, the headmistress consults with the French teacher on how to show the students a good level of competency in the French language. Consequently, direct bodily contact with boys and men is limited. So, when the French teacher holds Sara's hand, it is more of a fatherly relationship between the student and the old teacher of the French language; the boy cart driver appears again to provide a service and a personal space is always maintained between the girls and him [Figures 9, 10, 11].

However, in the *Totally Spies* cartoon, the presence of males is more visible in the different episodes. One of them is Jerry, the head of the WHOOP organization for which the girls work. Other males are involved with the girls in the several fights represented. There are other examples of male characters that take part in the episodes. For example, in Episode 18, Sam (a female character), immediately develops a crush on first sight on a boy she runs into in the school corridors. She starts, in a relatively short time, dating him and with bad intentions he fools her to make use of her skills to get him a secret formula. In Episode 36, the spies group goes to a spa and in that episode, Alex and her mother are patrons in a massage session with male massage professionals. The depicted picture of Alex and her mother having a massage session definitely violates Yemeni cultural norms

with regard to the interaction of both genders. In the Yemeni culture, no one is allowed to touch the woman's body except her husband. Even fathers and brothers are not allowed to touch their daughters' or sisters' bodies in a way similar to massaging. However, fathers and brothers can shake and hold hands with their daughters and sisters; they can joke and even hug them but certainly this excludes any sexual intentions. Also Clover's mother starts a relationship with the anti-WOOHP man and gets kissed in front of her daughter—who denounces the kiss and the whole relationship. Episode 69 starts with Sam and Clover having boyfriends and Alex desperately looking for a boyfriend. Although Sam and Clover try to console her, they run to their boyfriends when the boyfriends call them, and the two girls leave their friend Alex behind alone. In the same episode, Alex—a female character—starts two successive love relationships with two boys just to spend time with them; she stops her love relationship with the first because he is "boring." In two different episodes, Sam and Alex invite their boyfriends to their apartment and spend time together.

In contrast to *A Little Princess Sara*, the three spies are physically touched by men, including the girls' boyfriends, massage professionals or the antagonists the girls fight in the four selected episodes. In Episode 36, as noted earlier, Alex and her mother go for a massage session and get massaged by a male professional. Alex and her mother do not put on massage towels to reduce direct bodily contact [Figure 16]. Moreover, in Episode 18, Sam has a date with her boyfriend at the beach, holds her boyfriend's hand, and hugs him [Figures 13]. Similar actions are repeated in Episode 69 when Alex is hugged by her boyfriend [Figure 12]. In the same episode, Alex brings one of her

boyfriends to her living place [Figure 14], and the same action is depicted in Episode 18 when Sam invites her boyfriend to her apartment [Figure 15].

This contrasts with the depiction of girls and women in *A Little Princess Sara*, where girls have no interest in initiating relationships with boys and their interaction with the other gender is highly limited. The girls in *Totally Spies* enjoy a more liberal style of life, are interested in initiating relations with the other gender and sometimes their life quality is evaluated by whether or not the girls have boyfriends.

Dress Codes Indoors and Outdoors

Girls and women in *A Little Princess Sara,* are dressed in modest unrevealing clothing that covers most of their bodies and only reveals their hands and hair. In the four episodes analyzed, Sara, the seminary headmistress, and the other female characters are dressed in long dresses that do not suggest their body shape. No significant difference in dress style is noticed across the different settings in the cartoon. No matter whether they are indoors or outdoors girls and women adopted the same dress styles: long, somewhat loose and non-revealing clothing. Also, when leaving homes, girls and women put on coats and long jackets, if available. Moreover, when girls wear short skirts, they also put on knee-high boots [Figures 1, 2, 3 and 4].

Nonetheless, in the other cartoon, *Totally Spies,* girls' clothing is revealing, tight and suggests the shapes of the girls' bodies. In this cartoon, girls are shown to wear swimming suits, crop tops, short skirts, skinny jeans or pants, and spaghetti-strap tank tops. These styles of clothing are not only adopted by the spy girls but also by their mothers and other girls who appear occasionally during the selected episodes. In the "Mommies Dearest" episode, Alex and her mother appear in a bikini [Figure 8], and

Clover's mother appears in a one-piece swimming suit [Figure 7]. Episode 58 starts with the girls wearing crop tops and short skirts along with knee-high boots [Figure 5]. Later on in the same episode, when girls go back to the 1970s era, they had to adopt clothing styles that suit the 1970s. Therefore, girls change their clothes to crop tops and long trousers, which are to a considerable extent descriptive of their bodies [Figure 6]. This shows that girls in the *Totally Spies* cartoon are represented to practice much more liberal styles of clothing than girls' clothing is represented in the *A Little Princess Sara* cartoon. As noted above, whether girls are indoors or outdoors, no noteworthy differences are recognized in the clothing styles in both cartoons.

Values Conveyed: (Clashing and Reinforcing Values)

According to Harshman (2006), values comprise "beliefs and attitudes that guide behavior and relationships with others. They are often unspoken as well as difficult to universally define." *A Little Princess Sara* cartoon stresses values like helping others, patience and tolerance. For instance, in Episode 41 girls in the seminary start celebrating a Halloween party with Halloween-special games, one of which is playing with small candle-boats made of walnut shells. According to the beliefs associated with the game, if one of the candle-boats drowns, the owner of the boat may not have a fortunate life. One of the girls, named Lavinia, tries to swamp Sara's candle-boat but ends up swamping her own candle-boat. A value that is delivered through such a plot event is that doing or intending to do ill-behaviors to others will always come back to the doer.

The four selected episodes of *Sara* convey the value of patience toward others' insults and invectives, no matter whether the transgressors are older or of similar age. When Sara becomes a maid in the seminary because of losing funding due to the death of

her father, she is frequently insulted and humiliated by the headmistress, the female and

male chefs, and some of the students in the seminary. Although she is often insulted, Sara

never replies to those who insult her and is always tolerant of their abuse. Sara is shown

to represent how girls can always be good and well behaved no matter how difficult their

situations are.

Values that are conveyed through *Totally Spies* are confined to helping friends in

difficult situations and committing to the mission until achieving victory. The value of

showing and providing support is not limited to helping friends. In the "Mommies

Dearest" episode, girls keep looking for the reason their mothers changed their behaviors

and started attacking their own daughters. Although the girls—Alex, Sam and Clover—

had to fight their mothers to stop the attacks, girls are completely fine and good with their

mothers after they resolve these issues. In the "Creepy Crawly Much" episode, when

Alex is forced into a relationship with the antagonist, her friends, Sam and Clover, keep

looking for ways to help her out of the predicament. Also, when Sam and Clover think

that Alex is making bad choices of whom to have as a boyfriend, they keep drawing her

attention to the fact that the boys she chooses are not the most appropriate and available

choices for her.

Values are also enacted through linguistic features. All of the observations

discussed in this section about linguistic features correspond in both versions of the

cartoon: the English and the localized Arabic version. In *A Little Princess Sara*, girls and

women alike often used a formal language and addressed others with the appropriate

titles. When talking to the headmistress, teachers, servants and other adults, girls at the

seminary always used titles, such as Mr., Miss, Mrs., and teacher. Sometimes, the

headmistress and servants at the seminary addressed the students with the title Miss. Also, girls used the titles Mr., Mrs., or Miss when talking to shopkeepers or sellers.

In *Totally Spies,* however, girls used informal language when either talking to one another or when talking to the WHOOP organization head, as they referred to him by his first name with no title. In Episode 69, Alex is captured by the antagonist and he forces her to be his girlfriend or what he calls "his queen"; she then asks him to kiss her to give the relationship more depth, which was merely a contrived part of a plan to escape from him.

Resonance of the Identified Themes with the Muslim Conservative Yemeni Culture

The two analyzed cartoons took two different approaches to represent female gender roles. As indicated in the above discussed themes, significant and considerable differences were identified in the way female gender was represented in the two cartoons that were aired in 1990s and 2010s. The differences are recognized across all of the identified themes, starting from the roles females are represented to play in society and ending with the values they convey through their actions and behaviors.

A discussion of the extent to which these representations resonate with the conservative Yemeni culture follows as to answer the second research question: To what extent do these female gender role representations resonate with the Muslim Yemeni culture? Due to the lack of valid sources that discuss the Yemeni culture, some of the description of the Yemeni culture is based on the researcher's experience and background as a Yemeni female. The Muslim conservative Yemeni culture is best conceptualized as a culture in which people's lifestyles and choices in life are greatly controlled by Islamic laws and societal and familial traditions and customs, and deviations from this lifestyle

are neither easily nor quickly accepted. Under styles of life and choices go the notions of

general dress codes, gender roles in society, the lives Yemeni females lead, familial

relations, values of society, use of language, and the interaction between both genders.

These traditions, customs and rules usually restrict the choices Yemeni girls make in their

lives, such as what to wear, whom to marry, what type of careers to pursue, how to

behave in public and indoors, and how to interact with the other gender.

Typically, the roles females play in the conservative Yemeni society, which are

considered culturally appropriate and acceptable, are still to a considerable extent

traditional roles. Basically, Yemeni females are highly and foremost recognized as

mothers and housewives. According to Boxberger (1998), the symbolic role of women in

the Yemeni culture is as repositories of family honor, which consequently entails posing

restrictions on women's autonomy. With regard to the traditional kinds of roles females

can play, Yemeni women and girls can be teachers, nurses, doctors, ministers and

employees in public or private institutions and companies. Notwithstanding that, some

women and girls work in jobs that are perceived as untraditional, such as hairstylists and

salespersons in regular shops, malls, and supermarkets. Generally, these jobs for women

are still unwelcome by a considerable group of Yemenis, both men and women.

Boxberger (1998) noted that in addition to granting women the right of education,

Yemeni women are granted the same right as men to participate in the political sphere

and run for parliamentary posts. Some women are involved in politics, some are

engineers, doctors, lawyers, and some work on their own or in private industry.

And yet, women's opportunities to participate in public life are still limited

largely due to the traditional attitudes regarding women's nature and their place in the

Yemeni society (Boxberger, 1998). Because of the fact that direct interaction between women and men who are not relatives is not allowed, Yemeni females started enrolling in the police force so that they could work exclusively on women-related issues and work in women's prisons. In the Yemeni society, relatives who are allowed to have body contact with women are only fathers, brothers, husbands and nephews; immediate relatives like cousins are excluded in this case. Still, few traditional Yemeni families allow their daughters to seek employment in such police force jobs. Enrolling in the police forces does not mean that women can work in police stations, join the army, or work in the traffic police department. These female employees are only brought into action when dealings with women are needed. Usually, women are not involved in work or jobs that require physically strong bodies, such as being soldiers who are involved in armed clashes or wars.

Comparing the roles females are represented to play in the two cartoons to the Yemeni culture, the level of their resonance with the Yemeni culture is relatively different. The roles females, girls and women alike, play in *A Little Princess Sara* are to a great extent pertinent to and compliant with the roles females play and can play in Yemeni society. Teachers, students and wives of officials are the roles that are portrayed and represented in *A Little Princess Sara,* and these correspond to what females traditionally do in Yemen.

However *Totally Spies* is a completely different case, as girls are represented to play more aggressive and violent roles as international agents who have to regularly engage in violent fights to eventually conquer all. These types of roles are not an option for females in traditional Yemeni culture. As previously noted, it is not acceptable for

females to enroll in jobs that require strong physical ability or direct body interaction with men, as was done regularly by the three main characters of the *Totally Spies* cartoon.

No matter whether females are little girls, old women, single or married, most Yemeni females are always supported by family members. In the regard of little girls and single women, they must live with their families: mothers, fathers and brothers. So, the presence of familial support and help is crucial to the way girls in Yemeni society are raised. Living alone, even when reaching the age of eighteen, is certainly not an option for Yemeni females practicing traditional Yemeni values. The only time when such girls are allowed to begin living outside their families' houses is when they get married. The kinds of jobs Yemeni females can choose is also dependent on their families' approval, so girls cannot choose a job that does not correspond to their families' beliefs of what is considered a good job for women. When women are divorced or widowed, they have to return to their families' original house unless the divorcees or widowed women are too old. The way families function in Yemeni society was discussed by Hestler and Spilling (2010), noting that Yemenis place great value on family ties:

> A Yemeni family may consist of a whole collection of
> relatives who live under the same roof. Very few people in
> Yemen live on their own. Grandparents, widows and
> divorcees are all taken under the family wing. However, the
> number of family members living under the same roof is
> decreasing. Some men move into their own house when they
> marry. This gives the new wife more freedom to run her own
> household. (p.75)

Therefore, in relation to the representations of females in the selected cartoons, girls living alone or leaving their families' houses for short times contrasts with the way girls in traditional Yemeni culture lead their lives. Although girls in *A Little Princess Sara* are shown to return to their families' houses on summer breaks, they still have to spend long times away from their families. In contrast to the representations of girls in this cartoon, girls in *Totally Spies* are represented to lead a life completely independent from their families. Even when the three spies—Sam, Alex and Clover—are visited by their mothers, they do not spend much time together and, eventually, the girls go back to their independent lives. With that said, both of the representations are not in accordance with the lives of girls in Yemeni culture. As noted, a family is crucial to the life of girls and the way of bringing them up. It is also worth mentioning that Yemeni girls' relationships with friends also have rules, most important among them is that girls cannot go to a sleepover at a friend's house. Thereby, neither the free and liberal style of life girls in the *Totally Spies* cartoon lead nor the girls' living in a seminary at an early age away from their families is consistent with the way girls live in traditional Yemen culture.

As noted previously, girls in the Yemeni culture are not associated with violence. Generally, girls are perceived as soft human beings and always need the protection of men who normally surpass girls and women with regard to physical strength. Discussing how children are raised in the Yemeni culture, Hestler and Spilling (2010) noted that girls are taught to be patient, loving, modest, and helpful. However, boys learn that they must protect the women of their family and stand up for the family honor. In urban areas, boys might learn how to conduct a business deal or ride a motorcycle, girls, on the other hand,

learn how to operate modern cooking appliances. Also, in rural areas, girls learn how to sew and cook when boys learn how to operate or repair a diesel pump (Hestler and Spilling, 2010). Thereby, the way girls are represented in *A Little Princess Sara* highly correlates with the style of life Yemeni girls lead. Nonetheless, the violence girls frequently engaged in in the cartoon *Totally Spies* does not correlate with the conservative Yemeni culture in which girls are not subject to or involved in violence if at all possible. Because Yemeni girls are not usually associated with violence and although they can join police forces, they cannot, in any case, serve in or join the army, work as traffic police, or engage in armed clashes or fights with men. In the Yemeni culture, girls mostly have to stay home if they have nothing to do outside home, such as going to school, college, doing work appropriate for women, visiting friends or shopping for their needs. Therefore, even if girls start showing tendencies toward violent actions; when surrounded by their families, these behaviors are usually noticed and mended as soon as possible. Notwithstanding that, this does not necessarily mean that violent instances are not likely to occur among girls of any age, but they are rare. Yemeni women work in the police force only to perform the needed work and interactions with same gender offenders. Hence, regarding the theme of girls engaging in or performing violent behaviors, while the representations in *A Little Princess Sara* correspond with the Yemeni traditions and customs, the depictions in *Totally Spies are* completely unassociated with the Yemeni culture due to the violent fights the three girls frequently engage in.

With regard to the Yemeni females' dealings with the other gender and as noted by Hestler and Spilling (2010), as members of the Muslim Yemeni culture, Yemeni

females tend to veil themselves in front of men who are strangers. Also, in more

patriarchal families, generally men assume tasks that require contact with the public, such

as shopping in the market for daily household provisions (Hestler and Spilling, 2010).

That said, it is important to understand that this indicates that Yemeni females are

presumed to keep strict limits when dealing with men who are strangers. Within the

Yemeni conservative culture, men who are strangers are those who have no family

kinship with the females, and in some cases even cousins are excluded from these family

kinships. Certainly, these limits and veiling from male strangers entail that girls do not

interact with boys for unnecessary reasons, such as talking on the phone or doing online

chatting with them, or engaging in emotional or love relationships with males of either

the same or older age. Although these norms are followed across the Yemeni nation,

people living in rural areas adhere to these rules relatively more stringently than people

living in urban places. Girls in the Yemeni culture usually have gender segregation in

every single part of everyday life; they study in separate schools and have separate

sections in restaurants, cyber cafés and coffee shops. However, it is only in public

universities that girls have their first chance to integrate with boys, but they still have

separate seating areas in each classroom (Shamlan, 2013).

The issue of Yemeni girls falling in love and having relationships with boys was

discussed in a report entitled "Do not Fall in Love in Yemen" in the *Yemen Times*

newspaper, one of the three most prominent English language newspapers in Yemen.

Shamlan (2013) concludes that love relationships are associated with shame and it proved

hard to discuss the issue with girls. Interviewees agreed that it is difficult for both genders

to confess their admiration or love to the other gender due to societal constraints. In

accordance with some stories provided in the report, girls found by their families to be in love relationships get grounded and their cell phones are confiscated.

This shows that females are brought up with strict rules regarding involvement in love relationships. Reporting on the males' perception of these rules imposed on females, Shamlan (2013) noted that men stated they are not willing to marry a girl who was involved in prior love relationships. Interviewees noted that the rules of restricting females' interaction with the other gender are totally compliant with Islamic teachings. However, some interviewees disagreed with what are described in the report as ultra-conservative rules (Shamlan, 2013). El Guindi (2009) reported that according to Islamic laws, it is a must to regulate and desexualize behavior and interaction between both genders outside marriage relationships. In Islam, both genders, men and women alike, need to regulate and control both bodily and interactive space between themselves, and they must endure this contextualized desexualization of interaction to eventually make public interaction possible (El Guindi, 2009).

With this noted about the Islamic and societal rules regulating interaction between both genders in Yemen, comparing the resonance of the females' representations in both cartoons reveals the following. As discussed above, females' interaction with the other gender in the first analyzed cartoon, *A Little Princess Sara,* is limited to the necessary activities involved in shopping from male sellers or asking the horse-cart driver for help. This kind of representation is consistent with the way girls are supposed to deal with the other gender in the conservative culture of Yemen. Nonetheless, the way girls are represented in the cartoon of *Totally Spies* is totally disparate. The three main characters in the latter cartoon are depicted to have no need to abide by any rules that restrict their

dealings or relationships with the other gender. Girls do not set any limits in their relationships and dealings with boys; they initiate love relationships with boys who these girls have no prior knowledge of. Also, the three girls do not oppose direct bodily interaction with boys, and they hold their boyfriends' hands and hug them. Girls are shown to emphasize the importance on having boyfriends in their lives.

Thus, compared to the rules of the conservative Yemeni culture, be these rules Islamic, societal, or familial, the females' representations are totally discordant, considering how initiating relationships with boys in the Yemeni culture is highly associated with shame.

As noted above, the culture of females' clothing or the agreed upon dress code in the Yemeni culture necessitates that, when outdoors, girls and women have to dress in the most modest way possible. Their clothes should not be tight, attractive and sexy in themselves; they should not reveal or suggest the shape of their body parts except for the face and hands. Dress codes adopted by females in the Yemeni culture are highly compliant with how Muslim women are commanded to dress. A holy Quranic verse reads: "… and not expose their adornment except that which [necessarily] appears thereof and to wrap [a portion of] their head covers over their chests" (Chapter 24: 30). Also, this verse exactly details to whom females can reveal their adornment and whom to veil themselves from as the verse continues:

> ". . . and not expose their adornment except to their husbands, their fathers, their husbands' fathers, their sons, their husbands' sons, their brothers, their brothers' sons, their sisters' sons, their women, that which their right hands possess, or

those male attendants having no physical desire, or children who are not yet aware

of the private aspects of women."

According to the Seekers Hub Global website, adornment (*Zeena)* is divided into

three different categories: mental, intellectual and physical; adornment in the

aforementioned verse refers to the physical part of the word.

Consistent with the Al-Tabri heuristic book for interpreting Quranic verses, the

word adornment in this verse refers to the apparent and hidden part of the women's attire

that beautifies them. Whereas the unobserved adornment refers to any kind of jewelry

that women usually wear, such as earrings, bracelets, necklaces or anklets. The apparent

part of the word adornment refers to the clothes that cover women's body, which

necessarily is the only clothes and feminine forms that cannot be hidden, with the

exception of the face and hands (Al-Tabri, as cited in Islamic Library Website)--

[Researcher's translation]. Thus, women cannot wear any form of attractive, descriptive

and revealing clothes. Going back to the description of the way females dressed in *A*

Little Princess Sara it is notable that the represented styles of clothing are, to a

considerable degree, consistent with the dress codes in the Muslim conservative Yemeni

culture. Comparatively compliant with the dress code in the Yemeni culture, girls and

older women in the cartoon always wear long, somewhat loose, and non-revealing dress.

Almost always, females wear dresses that cover their bodies, starting from their neck

down to their legs. If girls were represented to wear short dresses, they always put on

knee-high boots that covered their legs. However, what is not consistent with the dress

codes in Yemen is that neither older women nor girls cover their hair. According to the

Islamic sharia (laws), girls have to start wearing a scarf or head rap (*hijab)* at the age of

puberty, but girls in the traditional Yemeni culture have to wear scarfs when outdoors when they are 11 to 12 years old.

The values female conveyed in *A Little Princess Sara* are centered on trying their best to do no harm to others, tolerate the difficult situations of life, and never leave home because of difficult circumstances. As Sara endures so many insults from the headmistress when *Sara* becomes poor, she never leaves the seminary and she still considers it her own home, lest she be homeless. As all of the above values might be applicable to any culture, the last one is mostly pertinent to traditional Yemeni culture. Generally in orthodox Islam, and therefore in Yemen as a Muslim country, girls cannot leave their families' houses to live alone before they are married; in fact it is considered an extreme shame to do so. Thus, the value of sticking to home relates, to a considerable extent, with the way Yemeni girls are brought up. Regarding the cartoon *Totally Spies* and the values conveyed through the selected and analyzed episodes, the value of helping and standing by others and friends is considered a good value to practice. But few of the events through which this value is practiced resonate with the Yemeni culture. The value of supporting and standing by others, friends included, is three times depicted through events that are related to the girls' choosing boyfriends and initiating relationships with them. In other times it is communicated through events in which any of the three girls are in need for help when all of them are engaged in physical fights. With regard to the first case and as noted by El Guindi (2009) in Islamic rules, interaction between the two genders must be limited and desexualized and these rules are commonly applied in the Yemeni culture. Mowlana (1989) noted that a major canon of orthodox Islam is *amr bil al-ma'ruf wa nahy an al munkar* (enjoining good and prohibiting wrong). This particular

precept requires individuals of the Muslim community to take on the responsibility of directing each other to learn and do what is good and ethical and avoid evil (as cited in Yin, 2009, p. 84). Girls in *Totally Spies* are supportive of each other to have and enjoy love relationships, and compared to this Islamic rule these depictions of girls are disparate with how the girls in Muslim Yemeni society should act. Applying this rule in situations similar to those depicted in the cartoon—when friends know about each other having love relationships with boys or encouraging each other to have such relationships—in Muslim societies, such as the Yemeni society, girls should try their best to prevent their friends from initiating and having such love relationships because these relationships are religiously and socially wrong activities. Thus, the value of personal freedom in engaging in several love relationships with boys is not associated with the values girls are raised with in traditional Yemeni culture.

Both versions of the cartoon, English and Arabic, were analyzed and compared to account for any possible significant changes in the dubbing process. However, the process of translating the English version into Arabic is found to be fairly literal and no remarkable difference has been noted. Thereby, the use of formal and informal language is similar in both versions of the cartoons. In the Yemeni culture, girls are taught to always use titles before talking to older people. They should maintain space and respect whenever dealing with those higher in age and position. Hence, they would use titles such as teacher, doctor, professor, uncle, or aunt before the person's first name. Moreover, the respectful way of talking to adults is also a remarkable characteristic of the Yemeni girls' interaction with others. A respectful way of talking is characterized by never replying to the other adults with a high tone of voice, never using inappropriate words when talking

to adults, even if the adults deal in a bad manner. Comparing the language used by the girl characters in both of the selected cartoons, it proves that the representations in the first cartoon are more resonant with the Yemeni culture.

In comparison, the way girls speak to adults in *Totally Spies* is characterized by informality. For instance, in the episode "Mommies Dearest," the three girls make fun of the way Jerry, the head of the WOOHP organization, deals with his mother. Also, Alex in the episode titled "Creepy Crawly Much" asks her abductor to kiss her, although it was for the sake of misleading him to free herself. These ways of talking to adults and the kind of words like kissing and having a boyfriend are totally unassociated with the style of life girls in traditional Yemeni culture are supposed to lead. As noted, a pre-marital relationship between boys and girls is completely not acceptable in the Yemeni culture. Thus talking about having a boyfriend or issues like kissing are accordingly not allowed and acceptable in the Yemeni culture. However, all of the discussion above regarding the life of females in the Yemeni culture does not rule out the fact that exceptions for each of the noted issues do exist.

The many depicted representations of sexual and romantic relationships of teenagers, dress codes, interaction with adults and between two genders, and the gender roles in general, might not be perceived in the same way across cultures. For instance, boys and girls living in the same cultures in which the cartoons were produced might have the capacity of judging whether these depictions are realistic or ironic, especially for those representations depicted in the *Totally Spies* cartoon. However, viewers in other cultures, such as girls in the Yemeni culture, would be more likely to accept some of the depictions as valid representations of the way girls live in Western countries, such as the

dress codes and the interaction between the two genders, as they are raised with the notion that Western cultures are more liberal than their culture. Thereby, the cartoons may have their own influences on Yemeni viewers as these viewers might think they are getting more familiar with the life of their peers in other countries, which eventually may have its impacts on the style of life they want to lead, including breaking many of the rules posed on them by their own culture. Some representations can also be stripped of the fantastical context and are understood as more realistic. For example, although the codes of romantic relationships in the *Totally Spies* cartoon are mostly presented in a humorous and fantastic context, it may not be understood as a mere fantasy or humorous. Rather, to Yemeni girls, such depictions about girls in the Western countries and the United States are not without a realistic aspect because Yemeni youth typically adopt the notion that girls in the Western countries do have romantic relationships, even as teenagers.

Discussion

As noted, pertaining to the media influences on children, studies have examined how media touch on children's perceptions of reality and behavior development. While some studies observed the excessive violent behaviors being depicted in children's programing, others sought to investigate the influences of sexual content in children's media. Notwithstanding that these studies covered many children's media-related issues, almost all of these studies investigated the influences of cartoons effects within the same culture where these children's programs were produced. None of these studies pertained directly to children from other cultures, which might have different values from those embedded in the cartoons. In regard to the children's media in Arab Muslim countries,

particularly in Yemen, the overwhelming majority of children's cartoons are produced in foreign countries that are considered more liberal nations whose values are drastically different from those of children and families in Yemen. When being aired in Yemen, U.S. and Western cartoons in general are dubbed into Arabic so they are more appealing to children than those which have Arabic subtitles and English dialog. Zitawi (2003) noted that in the Arab world, regardless of a large market and a high index of illiteracy, the process of dubbing of feature films or TV productions has been slow. Although competing pan Arab stations have been mushrooming, with an estimated number of 280 stations in 2005, these pan Arab failed to trigger an increased interest in the practice of dubbing media productions, except for in children's cartoons (Zitawi, 2003, as cited in Maluf, 2005). Moreover, the present study illustrates that female gender role representations in contemporary foreign-produced cartoons are radically different from the female gender role representations in foreign cartoons produced during the early 1990s.

This paper investigated the changes that occurred in female gender role representations in imported cartoons and focused on the resonance of the representations depicted in them to the conservative Yemeni culture. As the literature review indicates, the flow of media around the world is uneven, which eventually led to the development of the New World Information and Communication Order (NWICO). NWICO argued against this unbalanced flow of media between First World countries and what had been known as Third World countries. Notwithstanding that these arguments and debates developed in the 1960s and despite the fact that the countries perceived then as Third World countries are mostly changed, the unequal flow of media production continues to

exist as a problem. Children's media, specifically cartoons in Arab countries, including Yemen, are imported and localized through the translation of language solely. *Scooby Doo, Totally Spies, Power Rangers, Hover Champs, Dora the Explorer and SpongeBob* are a few examples of the cartoons that are popular among Yemeni and Arab children and are aired on children's channels around the clock. As a matter of fact, U.S. cartoon channels, such as Nickelodeon and Cartoon Network have Arabic speaking versions that air the same U.S.-distributed cartoons, with the sole difference of the language used. The way children's media in Yemen are dominated by imported productions is a clear example of how media and culture globalization and imperialism function. With all of these cartoons carrying within them significantly different cultural norms and values, these cartoons also provide representations of both genders regarding the roles they play in society and the behaviors both genders should aspire to.

  As Devereux (2007) noted, media and cultural globalization has the potential of producing a decline in the significance of different kind of identities, such as ethnic, local, national, or regional identities, in the everyday lives of people. The reduction of space and time between individuals and societies is a corollary of media globalization. So, having the Western and Japanese media exported to the Arab world, including Yemen, helps facilitate the interaction between different cultures through the symbolic representations of people belonging to these cultures. Girls may consider these imported cartoons as a window into other cultures, which ultimately may have long-term cultivation effects and implications on their beliefs, behaviors and personalities. Media globalization and imperialism are usually perceived as direct factors of cultural globalization, which signifies face-to-face and mediated interactions between people

from various countries. The exposure of people to values and ideas generated outside

their own traditional cultural contexts results in changing and hybridizing people's ways

of life (Tanner, 2013). The primarily one-way interaction between the globalized cultures

requires a link to ensure effectiveness, which is only partially resolved through the

language localization of the developed countries globalized productions. Media

productions are localized through the translation of language and settings; the settings

include the locations and names. And yet, localizing the media production still has its

own limitations and implications that are to be discussed later. The cartoons analyzed in

the present research are only linguistically localized; neither the names of the characters

nor the locations and other settings of the cartoons are localized.

Still, the localization of the language in these cartoons proved insufficient in some

cases as it does not consider what is appropriate in the targeted culture. An example of

such insufficiencies of localization is the literal translation of Alex's request to kiss her

kidnapper when dubbing the cartoon into Arabic, which most Yemenis would considered

culturally inappropriate. The deficiencies of localizing in such a case may be attributed to

the lack of coproduction, which according to Havens and Lotz (2011), is essential for

balancing the diverse realities and desires of disparate cultures. So, localizing cartoons

through solely translating the language may result in undesired outcomes. This

problematic attempt at localizing the cartoons by merely translating from the original

language does not, to a great extent, affect the level of Yemeni viewers' acceptance of the

cartoons as a source of entertainment and in some cases a valid representation of the life

in Western countries.

Little research is available on female gender representations and how they changed over the years. According to the study of Thompson and Zerbinos (1995) on gender roles depicted in cartoons of the 1980s and post-1980s, girls are represented as being in need of advice and protection, are warmer, and are more emotional, affectionate, romantic and domestic than males. That depiction changed when young females were included in the adventurous genres of cartoons in which they are stereotyped as intelligent beyond their years and more self-assertive. While this study analyzed two sets of cartoons originally produced in two different major producing countries, the findings are to some extent compatible with the findings of Thompson and Zerbinos (1995), which focused on cartoons in earlier periods. However, with this study focusing on the resonance of the depicted female gender role representations to the conservative Yemeni culture, several layers of implications of these representations for the Yemeni culture unfold within each of the deduced themes. The following paragraphs explicate the potential implications of the themes for the Muslim conservative Yemeni culture.

Some of the representations in these cartoons are in conflict with the traditions of Yemeni women and girls and might result in changing the viewers' behaviors and beliefs. For example, in *A Little Princess Sara,* a representational attribute that is in conflict with the respective culture can be described as women's going into streets with uncovered hair. But most of the other representations do resonate with the traditions of Yemeni girls and women, such as showing respect for elders, speaking politely, and dressing modestly whether indoors or outdoors.

And yet, most of the representations depicted in the *Totally Spies* cartoons may be in conflict with the traditions Yemeni girls are raised with. For example, traditional

Yemeni media content would not depict women's unrestricted dealing with boys, engaging in love relationships with boys, and wearing revealing clothing and swimming suits in public. Viewing such representations, supported with similar ones in other cartoons, Yemeni girls may be inclined to imitate these behaviors, even if the Yemeni girls do not behave exactly as the characters in the cartoons do. So, for example with regard to revealing clothes, girls who are usually raised with restrictions on their ways of dressing, might start wearing clothes that traditional Yemenis would consider to be too revealing when indoors or in front of others or wear attractive outfits when outdoors. Generally in Islam, girls and women are encouraged to adopt certain dress regulations, which are usually associated with Quranic verses. In Chapter 33, a verse reads: "O Prophet tell your wives, daughters and believing women to put on their *jilbabs* so that they are recognized and thus not harmed" (33:56). In this sense, *jilbab* refers to a loose long shirtdress and the enjoinder extends to all believing Muslim women across time and history. Still, the specification of the Prophet's wives and daughters is just to distinguish their status (El Guindi, 2009). Hestler and Spilling (2010) briefly described the dressing traditions of Yemeni women:

> Many Yemeni women wear loose long tunics or dresses, and the
> majority cover their heads with shawls and veils. Most women
> wear leg coverings such as bloomers, slacks, or dark tights under
> their dresses or tunics. In many urban and even in some rural
> areas, women have adopted western dress (p.70).

Hestler and Spilling (2010) went beyond only explaining Yemeni women's outdoor clothing to explain how they tend to dress when indoors and on special

occasions. The researchers noted that younger Yemeni girls in urban areas, and even in

some rural ones, started dressing in a more Western style when indoors. When indoors,

young Yemeni girls wear jeans, T-shirts, and sweaters, and on special occasions, such as

religious festivals or weddings, women wear their loveliest outfits and traditional jewelry.

When going to parties, weddings and different women's gatherings, Yemeni females

would wear the most beautiful outfits they have, be they skirts, blouses, swart dresses and

different styles of vestidos. Nevertheless, they still have to put on their gowns or *jilbabs*

until they reach the gathering venue and only then they can remove gowns and reveal

their outfits. Moreover, Yemeni females tend to wear glittering silver that adorns their

neck, ankles, and the wrists and sometimes they wear silvery jewelry on their foreheads.

Yemeni clothing traditions in rural and urban areas might be significantly different; the

basics of the previously noted modest styles of dresses are common, though. In rural

areas, women adopt different styles of scarfing. In rural areas, they tend to wear one or

more scarves and a woolen shawl for weddings or when traveling beyond their villages.

These shawls are placed on the head in a variety of interesting ways and can enhance

their femininity (Hestler and Spilling, 2010). About women's dress in front of strangers,

Hestler and Spilling (2010) explained:

> As Yemen is a Muslim country, the women dress modestly and tend to
>
> veil themselves in the presence of strange men. The veiling of women
>
> is not always a rule in Yemen as it is in Saudi Arabia. Some younger,
>
> educated women in urban areas cover their heads but not their faces. In
>
> fact there are a few women who choose not to wear a veil at all. For a
>
> brief period in socialist South Yemen, urban women chose to adopt a

western style of dress and rejected the veil. Since unification, however,

the majority of women in Yemen today wear a form of head covering

in response to a growing conservatism. Women who choose to wear a

veil in Yemen do so because of tradition, not because they are required

to (p.70).

With all that said about the traditional Yemeni dress culture, and with girls

watching imported cartoons, Yemeni girls may begin to become dissatisfied over what

they might start recognizing as restrictions of their own decisions or personal freedom.

Tanner (2013) noted, "exposure to the worlds of outside can lead youth to feel

disappointed in themselves and their circumstances due to the structural barriers to their

emancipation (classism, racism, and sexism)" (p. 232). As he explained, globalizing

entertainment media show the world as a global shopping mall that is filled with

enthralled young consumers who have the ability to buy and own anything they want.

Tanner (2013) maintained that globalized TV shows and films might result in

encouraging youth to aspire to and dream of attaining a standard of living they will never

be able to attain. They may be encouraged to try to become what they can never be within

the boundaries of their traditional culture.

In regard to the first and second identified themes, when Yemeni girls watch such

depictions of what they may understand as realistic representations of how their peers

live in other countries, Yemeni girls might start aspiring to similar styles of life. Thereby,

resentment towards the rules they must abide by is likely to come to the surface. As noted

previously, girls' options for the roles they can play in Yemeni society are limited and

their freedom of movement is considerably limited by a set of religious, familial, and

societal norms. Because the female gender role representations in *A Little Princess Sara* are to a considerable extent similar to the conservative Yemeni culture, this cartoon is not likely to evoke feelings of dissatisfaction as might a more literal interpretation of the other cartoon, *Totally Spies.* Although both cartoons conveyed a sense of independence from family, girls in *Totally Spies* conveyed a far greater sense of independence from family observation and control. Hence, Yemeni girls, whose freedom of movement is subject to religious, societal and familial control, are likely to develop a sense of discontentment with parental and social control over their lives. Moreover, girls in *Totally Spies* are represented to lead an adventurous and treacherous double life, which is depicted through the dangerous and duplicitous spying jobs the main characters have – jobs that also break the norms of Western society for teenagers. Considering the traditional kinds of jobs Yemeni females are encouraged to occupy, they might aspire to jobs that break the daily routines and norms of their traditional culture and introduce young girls to more interesting everyday lives. Aspiring for a life similar to that depicted in the *Totally Spies* is not limited to the jobs only, it might also extend to the daily life because Yemeni girls are not granted full freedom of movement. Freedom of movement includes, but is not limited to, spending too much time with friends and sleeping over at their friends' houses.

Implications of the depicted dress codes and interactions with the other gender are also more prominent in the case of the cartoon *Totally Spies* cartoon. As previously discussed, the representations related to these two themes in the cartoon *A Little Princess Sara* are not significantly different from the conservative Yemeni culture except for the main characters' revealing their hair when outdoors. But in contrast to this cartoon, dress

codes and the nature of girls' interaction with the other gender in *Totally Spies* is entirely different from the dress codes of girls and women in the Yemeni culture. Girls watching these representations may start imitating some of the dress codes they see in the cartoon, although not completely or typically. As noted by Hestler and Spilling (2010), females in urban areas in Yemen and even in some rural areas have started adopting Western dress styles. With the girls in *Totally Spies* wearing revealing clothes and the way these clothes are used to show girls as more elegant and beautiful, Yemeni girls are more likely to develop a considerable level of admiration for these dress codes that are so clearly different than their culture's codes. However, the potential adoption of Western dress at this point is more of a marginal adoption of Western codes because the general dress code of the Muslim conservative Yemeni culture has lines that women appear not to be crossing in any case.

Females in the conservative Yemeni culture are expected to dress as modestly as possible and their dress should comply with the Islamic regulations and societal rules. When aiming to comply with the Islamic and societal rules and simultaneously trying to adopt some of the styles of dressing represented in *Totally Spies*, Yemeni girls might start modifying their own culture's dress codes in a way that satisfies their desires. Therefore, girls start modifying their *jilbabs (*gowns) to make them as attractive as possible while concomitantly complying with what can be accepted in the society. These modifications are not limited to the gowns, but also extend to the scarfs or head raps and veils Yemeni females generally wear when outdoors [Figures 21, 22, 23, 24]. Moreover, as a Yemeni female, I have noticed that girls in the past seven to ten years became more liberal in their clothing styles when they are among other women. Although it would be rare to have

girls wear crop tops, they would wear above-knee short skirts and dresses that reveal a larger part of their backs, which is still not acceptable in the Yemeni culture.

Similar to the implications of the dress codes for the Yemeni culture are the implications of the theme regarding the girls' interaction with the other gender. Viewing the girls' unrestricted interaction with the other gender and frequently engaging in romantic relationships, Yemeni girls are likely to develop a desire to experience falling in and out of romantic love and potentially to increase the level of their interaction with the other gender whenever possible. The depicted romantic relationships did not go beyond hugging, kissing, spending time together, hosting boyfriends in the *Spies* houses, and romantic touching. Sexual acts were neither depicted nor implied in any of the analyzed episodes of the *Totally Spies* cartoon. Nevertheless, the partnering patterns depicted in this cartoon are discordant with the patterns of traditional partnering in the Yemeni culture.

According to Hestler and Spilling (2010), in Yemen, most marriages are arranged by the foreseeable couples' families, and these marriages are rarely forced. According to Hestler and Spilling (2010),

> Family members play an important part in
> matchmaking and bringing together suitable couples.
> For example, in a small town, a young man might know
> a girl by sight, but he would have few chances of
> meeting her, as there is a greater segregation of the
> sexes than in Western countries. Therefore, he would

have to rely on the advice of his mother or sister, who

would know the women of the neighborhood well.

Hestler and Spilling (2010) provided a detailed description of marriage processes noting that mothers usually play the most important role in choosing who they believe is a suitable wife for their sons. In more traditional families, once the mother has decided on a girl, the mother discusses this possibility with her husband. If both agree upon the selected girl, they confer with their son. When all agree on the chosen future wife, father and son visit the house of the bride's family, speak to her father who in turn should discuss the matter with his daughter. The decision is not made on the same day; the prospective bride's family takes the time it needs to think the proposal over and respond with either approval or denial. If the bride and her family approve of the proposal, a date is fixed for the betrothal. The betrothal is a formal affair; the father and son, as well as a few relatives, deliver some gifts to the bride's house, such as clothes, dates and raisins. Fathers of the bride and groom agree on a bride price (dowry) for the bride and it is usually paid in cash. When all of these issues are agreed upon, the couples are officially engaged (Hestler & Spilling, 2010). Although these traditional partnering patterns prevail in the Yemeni culture where the mother chooses the bride for her son, there are some cases in which men can choose who they want to marry, such as a classmate or co-worker. Yet the men still have to get their families' approval since it is vital to have the betrothal and marriage complete.

These implications can be perceived as a form of hybridization of societies and cultures as members of certain cultures are more likely to develop hybrid personalities due to the intensive flow of media imported to their culture. The foreign cultural forms,

regardless of whether these forms are Western or Japanese, are transferred through space

and time and are intensely flowing to the Arab countries. Mainly, these cultural forms are

transferred through media productions: movies, music, television shows, and cartoons.

With regard to the focus of this analysis, cartoons carrying within them either American

or foreign cultural forms and behavioral norms are likely to influence Muslim children's

perceptions of the realities of other cultures, as well as influence their personalities. In

this case, the probability of Yemeni girls developing hybrid personalities increases due to

the lack of Arab productions that might enhance and reinforce the girls' traditional

cultural norms, including religious, societal, behavioral, and familial norms. The

probability of the previously discussed implications taking place is dependent on a

number of factors, some of which can be explained through the assumptions and concepts

of social learning theory and cultivation theory.

      According to the assumptions and concepts of the social learning theory, the

likelihood of viewers' imitating the behaviors depicted in television programming is

based on the feedback these behaviors receive. Hence, the likelihood of the viewers'

imitating the depicted behaviors increases when the behaviors receive positive feedback.

Conversely, the likelihood of imitating the depicted behaviors decreases if the behaviors

depicted in the media receive negative feedback. Thereby, the possibility of Yemeni girls

partially imitating the behaviors and representations they watch is based on their personal

understanding and perception of the feedback such representations and behaviors receive.

This is more applicable to the two themes of girls' relationships and dealings with the

other gender and the depicted dress codes more than the rest of the themes depicted in

Totally Spies. The three girls in *Totally Spies* are portrayed to enjoy their relationships

with the boys and are not seriously harmed by casual romance except for a few instances of disappointment with the kind of boys they chose to have a love relationship with. Thus, when Yemeni girls watch these depictions, they are more likely to perceive casual teenage romance as natural and are therefore more likely to imitate these behaviors. Yet within the program, the Yemeni girls' interpretation of the feedback the girls in *Totally Spies* receive regarding the styles of clothing they are depicted to wear would be completely positive. Because girls in *Totally Spies* receive no significant negative feedback due to the revealing clothes they wear, the internal thematic feedback mechanisms depicted in the cartoon would encourage Yemeni girls to imitate the represented clothes.

Again in this specific case, because Yemeni girls have certain limits on what they can and cannot neglect when outdoors, it is worth noting that Yemeni girls are most likely to imitate the represented styles of clothing when indoors or during special occasions when they gather together with women. Regarding their dress outdoors, Yemeni females might make a few changes to their traditional clothes so that they become more attractive. *Jilbabs* (gowns) Yemeni women should wear when outdoors should be simple enough not to attract the attention of men (less or more similar to Figure 20). Mostly, gowns in Yemen are black in color and to have more modernized ones, women would choose or design ones with more bright colors incorporated with the black color or have designs on the gowns that beautify them. However, dress codes vary from the traditional norms when indoors. The reason why it is important to discuss the possibility of Yemeni girls' adopting more revealing clothing styles when indoors is that, as Muslims, Yemeni females in general have to observe limits even when they are

surrounded by women. In Islam, women are advised to adopt concealing garments that cover their bodies except for what they would usually uncover when indoors, such as their hair, hands and feet. It is an extremely serious norm that females do not uncover between their navels and knees in front of one another except for extreme needs, such as medical treatment. According to the Islam Question and Answer website, it is agreed upon among Islamic scholars that women are not allowed to reveal the area between the navel and the knee when in front of other women, including mothers and sisters. Nevertheless, this does not mean that it is permissible for women to sit among other women with their bodies uncovered except the noted area.

All these implications are more likely to take place because Yemeni girls are now likely to watch several representations similar to those depicted in the cartoon *Totally Spies* through other cartoons and reality TV shows that are distributed on Arab children's channels. The implications of this can be explained in light of the assumptions of cultivation theory. The theory presumes that when individuals are subject to intensive representations through television that focus on certain issues, individuals start perceiving the world as similar to the representations they repetitiously watch. Thereby, it takes more than only one cartoon to have girls start changing their behaviors and adopting more Western norms that are different from their original cultural norms. The extent to which the cultivation influences are more probable to occur in a given country depends on several structural elements, such as the number of channels available, amount of time audiences spend viewing, and the overall amount of broadcasting time available to children. However, it largely depends on the multiplicity and diversity in the aired content, which is not necessarily associated with the number of channels available for

viewers. And as previously explained, children in Arab countries are bombarded with Western programming, American primarily, and so these representations all reinforce each other and increase the chance of influencing Yemeni girls.

The depicted representations resonate with the Yemeni girls' stereotyped understanding of what girls in "liberal" societies do in their lives. Mostly, Yemeni girls are taught that girls in Western countries have the freedom to wear whatever they want and desire, have the freedom to make friendships and love relationships with boys, can live on their own at an early age, and are more independent and self-assertive than the Yemeni girls can be. Thereby, these representations are more, but certainly not totally, realistic to the Yemeni girls than they are to the girls in Western countries. The presumption that these representations are more realistic to the Yemeni girls than to their peers in Western countries is also attributed to the fact that Yemeni girls watch cartoons similar to *Totally Spies* at the teenage and pre-teen years and they might not have the capacity to judge whether these representations are unrealistic or fantastic.

To sum up, the two selected cartoons: *A Little Princess Sara* and *Totally Spies* provide entirely different sets of female representations, the resonance of which with the Yemeni conservative culture is relatively different. While some of the representations in *A Little Princess Sara,* are relevant or similar to the norms of the conservative Yemeni culture, almost all of the representations depicted in the cartoon *Totally Spies* are significantly different from the norms of Yemeni culture. The extent to which these representations entail potential implications for the Yemeni culture depends on a number of factors, which include, but are not limited to, the intensity of these representations and the extent to which Yemeni girls can imitate the representations they watch, as well as the

normative limits Yemeni girls can never disregard. Although in general terms the findings of this study support, to certain extent, the previous research on gender role representations, the present study adds to the existing research as it attempts to reveal the relevance of these gender role representations to another culture that has heretofore received little research attention.

Conclusion

International media have triggered a substantial number of theories and studies that attempted to explicate media's importance, policies, strategies, and influences on viewers. Media have been used by major media producing countries to globalize their culture to other countries, which do not have as powerfully scaled and efficient media production systems as those of the major media producing countries. Generally, media in Yemen are substantially affected by the Western media, including children's media imported via satellite and the Internet. As a matter of fact, there is a severe lack in Arab produced cartoons and most of the cartoons aired in Yemen are produced in foreign countries, but are dubbed into the Arabic language, which makes them appealing to children who speak Arabic. Hestler and Spilling (2010) noted that in Yemen the availability of satellite dishes is spreading fast, bringing even more Western television shows and news coverage to Yemeni homes. Prior research on children's media and cartoons focused mainly on the effects of violent and sexual content. Some other research examined gender role representations and the way those representations changed over years. Research on gender representations also touched on the fact children learn about gender roles from the representations they watch on television, often due to their parents' failure to discuss issues of gender roles with their children. However, the available

research on cartoons and their influences on viewers failed to investigate the potential influences of cartoon programming on children from different cultures. Specifically, no research is done on how cartoons can deliver different cultural norms and representations when aired in cultures that are far different from those where the cartoons were produced.

As such, this study attempted to investigate female gender role representations in two cartoons imported into Arab countries and what implications these cartoons might potentially have for the conservative Yemeni culture. Also, this study attempted to examine the changes in gender role representations in the twenty years between 1990 and 2010. Findings of this study indicate a significant variation in the female gender representations across the two cartoons and the depiction of gender roles in society.

Females in *A Little Princess Sara* are depicted as more domestic, warm and dependent on adults, the depicted clothes are not revealing, and girls did not show tendencies towards engaging in violent behaviors. Also, the depiction of girls' interaction with adults is characterized by respect and appreciation, and females' dealings with the other gender are generally restricted to necessary needs.

In contrast, girls in *Totally Spies* are represented as more outgoing, independent from adults' care and control, and more aggressive and adventurous. The three main characters engaged in several love relationships, wore revealing clothes, and showed tendencies toward violence either as a main requirement of their job or to protect themselves. The extent to which these representations are not compliant with the norms of the conservative Yemeni culture is relatively different in each of the recognized themes.

Although some of the representations of the cartoon *A Little Princess Sara*
resonate with the life females in the Yemeni culture lead, representations in *Totally Spies*
are entirely discordant with the norms of Yemeni culture. The probability of the different
representations' influencing Yemeni girls and their lives, as well as the extent to which
Yemeni girls might partially or fully imitate the depicted representations, is contingent
upon several factors. Such factors associated with whether the represented behaviors
receive a positive or a negative feedback, as well as the girls' own understanding of the
depicted behaviors, even if no direct feedback is provided. For instance, because the
Spies receive neither positive nor negative direct feedback, Yemeni girls might
understand it as a positive thing since the *Spies* are not harassed due to their clothing.

However, it is worth noting that this study does not attempt to argue which of the
observed cultures is better or more appropriate than the other. Rather, it demonstrates that
in the age of globalization, media distribution between cultures potentially has an
influence on individuals. In this case the mediated effects are unidirectional, due to the
unbalanced flow of media between the nations. Influences are unidirectional because
Yemeni media are only locally aired, so girls in foreign countries might not be
knowledgeable about the life of girls in the Yemeni society.

The present study suggests that more emphasis should be applied to the process of
localization of globally distributed media products. Cartoons imported to Arab countries
and localized through translating the language might carry representations and depictions
that do not resonate with the life of people in the targeted Muslim and Arab culture.
Thereby, companies that do the localization process might adopt more rigorous
procedures to ensure minimization of the dissonance between the representations in the

imported cartoons and the targeted culture, no matter whether these representations are visual or linguistic. Such solutions might include stopping the literal dubbing of the original language into Arabic and choosing alternate words and translations to the language that resonate with the targeted culture as much as possible. With regard to the visual representations that are only slightly dissonant with conservative cultures, such as the Yemeni culture, it would be possible to black-out parts of the images that are considered unsuitable. However, in cases of extreme dissonance, similar to the *Totally Spies* cartoon, it would be very difficult to black-out such depictions since they are predominant within the cartoon. For cartoons similar to *Totally Spies*, a good strategy is to broadcast a warning note at the beginning of the cartoon calling for family discretion. Since there are many cartoons similar to *Totally Spies* aired in Arab channels, channels need to reconsider the cartoons they air and consider airing cartoons that reinforce representations that are more resonant with the Arab cultures. Currently, these cartoons are available through different channels but are still not as popular among children as the imported cartoons.

Because Western cartoons might not be targeting Arab audiences in the first place, it is the task of the companies that do the dubbing to also consider other ways to make the cartoons more resonant with viewers in the receiving countries. The companies should go beyond the process of translating the language of the cartoons into Arabic, to consider what is appropriate in Arab cultures. Hence, literally translating terms like kissing and boyfriends is completely inconsiderate to how girls are brought up in Yemen, as well as other Arab countries.

Ultimately, this study is not without its limits. Three imperfections of this research need to be noted. Foremost, although the researcher grew up in Yemen, she was unable to have a direct contact with females from the Yemeni culture as research subjects. Hence, the present study does not systematically examine the thoughts and perceptions of Yemeni girls who regularly view the cartoons. For this limitation, future research could survey girls and parents from the Yemeni culture per se, who could be asked about their perceptions of the selected cartoons. While questions directed to girls can focus on girls' perceptions of the representations depicted in the imported cartoons, questions targeting parents could focus on the parents' understanding and opinions of the representations, as well as how these representations might influence their daughters. Also, parents can be asked about what alternate solutions they might adopt to reduce the potential influences of these Western cartoons on their daughters.

The second limitation is more concerned with the cartoons selected for this type of study. Lack of accessibility to English and Arabic versions of imported cartoons and episodes, especially for the version dubbed in the Arabic language, resulted in a small sample of available cartoons. To further strengthen the argument about the overall impact of foreign-produced cartoons, future research can extend the scope into more than two different cartoons, and to different time periods and generations.

Finally, it was remarkably difficult to find valid sources on the Yemeni culture except for the few works cited above, which after all failed to provide a comprehensive account into the Yemeni culture and the life of females there.

Figures

The following pictures show the change in dress codes depicted in both cartoons. The first group is from the first cartoon: *A Little Princess Sara,* the second group is from the second cartoon*: Totally Spies.* All pictures are screenshot from the analyzed episodes.

(Figure 1)
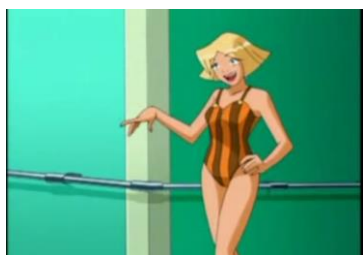

(Figure 2)

(Figure 3)

(Figure 4)

(Figure 5)

(Figure 6)

(Figure 7)

(Figure 8)

The following pictures show the variation in depicting females' interaction with the other gender.

(Figure 9)   (Figure 10)   (Figure 11)

[Pictures screenshot from *A Little Princess Sara*]

(Figure 12)   (Figure 13)   (Figure 14)

(Figure 15)   (Figure 16)

[Pictures screenshot from *Totally Spies*]

The below pictures show girls from the *Totally Spies* cartoon involved in high-profile

actions of violence.

(Figure 17)   (Figure 18)   (Figure 19)

[Pictures screenshot showing girls doing violent actions]

(Figure 20)   (Figure 21)   (Figure 22

(Figure 23)   (Figure 24)

[Pictures collected from google images showing Jilbabs in Yemen, Islamic dress codes,

is getting more hybrid]

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