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Abstract

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Keywords: Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Internet Usage, The Factor of Attitudes, The Pattern of Relations

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Abstract

This article endeavors to investigate the effect of technology adoption on the social changes acknowledged in the realms of Saudi Arabia in the context of the issue that has recently seen a ginormous usage of internet access, particularly in the last decade. Adopting a mixed methods approach, 300 young people aged between 18 and 30 years were sampled from two universities and one high school in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, who later took part in both questionnaire surveys and in-depth interviews. The objective entailed implying that web browsing caused temporal shifting, thus making real-time social communication distanced, and revealing any changes in the traditional values/norms. The study indicates a significant shift in women's social relations in KSA, with internet usage allowing them to break traditional norms and alter cultural acceptance and social relationships.

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Introduction

The fundamental issue of technological progress and two-way connections between social and family relations is related to multiple factors. As suggested by Kim and Colleagues (2011), the real economic impact of these shifts would most probably be somewhere between an optimistic forecast and a dystopian prediction. In contrast to this, with the general availability of the internet, such claims have also appeared around the corner, taking people to a

preferable world and others pointing out that the future could be a more chaotic and different one than we are used to. This research focuses on the new peak of internet connection in Saudi Arabia: a highly relevant issue that doesn't leave room for minor challenges.

The emergence of the Internet will cause a multifaceted phenomenon which is constituted of technology, amusement, and information that are looked up on the Internet. The positive and negative



effects of social media on family relations are evaluated and proved that the usage of online activities destroys real-world social relationships substituting them with virtual social interaction (Campanelli, 2008). Thus, the studies focused on Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD, 2002) countries dominate the research in this area, and the applicability of this research to countries that follow a traditional kind of model rather than a Western one, like Saudi Arabia, is an open question. In Saudi Arabia, internet use as a dual phenomenon may result in two mutually interrelated consequences. First of all, it alters the pattern in which time is utilized, however, it can also reduce real-life social relationships. The second function of media is informational where people become aware of broad subjects pertinent to family life and social norms. Hence, the internet might lead to changes in our ostensible relationships because it may distort our perception of what constitutes time, hence giving way to the introduction of new ideas and norms. The impact of technological change is reflexive which depends mainly on the type of interaction tools and the perceived value of the technology (Venkatesh and Davis, 2000; Venkatesh et al., 2011).

This research investigates the shifts in the relationships of Saudis after increased use of the internet particularly in Saudi Arabia that blends together the new technologies and the old family home structure. This particular study is aimed at realizing how these kinds of transitions are occurring and how internet usage is becoming more and more consistent. Also, it is about the influence of internet usage on Saudi families and society. It is also focused on the social and cultural advantages that Saudi girls gain from these technological advancements, reinforcing the relationship that exists between technology and culture.

Objectives

1. Internet usage patterns among young in Saudi can be explored through a questionnaire survey.
2. Explore the social concerns and norms that are borne out of internet usage in Saudi Arabia.

3. Investigate the role of internet availability in enhancing cultural and social inputs that Saudi women enjoy according to the perspective of older and younger generations.

Literature Review

The internet evolutionary process has had a series of changes of which Saudi Arabia is still a beneficiary. In the beginning, the internet was mainly intended for technically skilled people, with its limited access being a non-factor. After 2000, though, great technological leaps were made, and with the development of broadband and fixed-wireless networking, internet access was no longer a problem (Carter, 2008). Because of that, the use of the internet increased significantly, especially among the younger generation who had computer technology surrounding them their entire life (Kraut et al., 1999).

Internet's Effect on Domestic Relations and Social Bonds

This phenomenon of the fast-growing usage of web pages has led to apprehension about its influence on family relationships and general social life. The Internet has been the reason for traditional family structures to be viewed as a threat, these people point the finger at this online phenomenon, but also one of the changes reflecting the broad scale of societal structures, such as globalization (Pearson, 1999). Initially, it was thought that people would not talk to each other much and would turn emotionally isolated due to internet use (Vitalari et al., 1985). Although internet usage and family structure have a multifaceted interaction, the main factors that affect this relationship include parenting styles and the nature of internet activities. This chapter revealed the scope of this theory and left me greatly skeptical, but I am inclined to say that the internet possesses those two qualities and is only one of a number of factors leading to the change of traditional models. From the early work, we might have at least two main ideas to emphasize during the discussion. Moreover, the Internet as a tool for intra-familial communication has shown a decline (Nie et al., 2002) and the overall level of socialization as well has increased (Kraut et al.,

2002). One more slight variation of both of these arguments is that the Internet is increasingly playing a role in the process of socializing thereby replacing some of the aspects with new ones.

Internet Use Impact on Social Relationships

Internet use has a considerable effect on family relations whose main function might be removed from direct person-to-person conversations and replaced by new social patterns (Zhou, [2011](#)). The use of the family computer, its integration into family life, and changing access methods are the issues that might inflate the internet's effect (Cummings et al., [2002](#)). At first, the research meant a decline in family time, but recently, a complicated relationship instead, that is determined by parental engagement and adolescents' internet literacy, was established. (Kraut et al., [2006](#)). Four points explain the consequences of internet usage among adolescents: upon examination of the mass displacement, cost increase, rich get richer, and social compensation models (Lee, [2009](#)). The respective studies, although some result in lower social contacts and loneliness while the other ones provide social benefits. The effect of online activities and the individual factors on the internet and socialization interaction is determined by the nature of activities on the internet and the individual attributes (Merchant, [2006](#)).

Evolution of Internet Use among Young Kids

The path that the internet use by children follows, up to a certain age provides multiple moments of reflection about the relationship with society, with family, and the culture of the world. First of all, user groups were of higher age, and they were more likely to have higher incomes because of expensive technology barriers and internet usage mostly being done in a work environment (Boyd, [2017](#)). Due to the fact that surfing the web has become cheaper, there are more hotspots, and it is easier for people to use their smartphones, internet usage among kids has increased. Social networks such as Facebook or Twitter are developing into a context where the young have new forms of communicating as well as expressing their identities (Valkenburg & Peter, [2005](#)).

Revolution of Saudi Culture through Internet USAGE

Although rebelling against the concept of leaving original family members is common in the Western approaches to human movement, it is not the general practice in other parts of the world. For instance, the marriage rule in the Kingdom is that the group remains at 44 and once married one of the partners must move to another group which is usually a female (Alolyan, [2015](#)). Ultimately, the creation of personality and behavior acknowledged to be commonly true in many Western narratives (Bahr and Pendergast, [2006](#); Laursen et al., [1998](#)) is not actually universal. Ultimately, it's the Internet that grants socializing, self-discovery, and expressing who we are; however, its influence on family dynamics and cultural values is too varied to be either positive or negative. Learning these patterns requires us to think about not just cultural norms, but gender inequality, and socio-economic divisions in different societies around the world. This study is to verify how the internet is believed to be today facing the impact on the Saudi family and society.

Research Methodology

This research is designed to see how the Internet impacts families and relationships in Saudi Arabia. The model is based on three factors: attitude towards internet exploitation, family, and social relationships. The research is designed to consider both qualitative and quantitative (mixed method) approaches. The research design comprises questionnaires that are online and offline, as well as semi-structured interviews, and the sample size of 300 participants is mostly young adults who are under 28 years old. The idea is to have an exhaustive piece that will present different voices and views concerning the growing influence of the Internet on Saudi society. Of 300 students among whom males are 75% and marital status is 84% non-married answered the questionnaires in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia. The intention of this study is to explore the influence of the Internet on family relationships, private lives, and social interactions, with the majority of the participants

being undergraduates. The study's methodology has its limitations which include the difficulty of outcome combination and taxonomy building.

Ethical Consideration

Funding: The research did not receive any project-specified grant from any of the funding agencies represented by the government, business, or charity sector.

Compliance with Ethical Standards: The research was carried out according to ethical standards as defined via the 1964 Declaration of Helsinki as well as later amendments. The Institutional Review Board of the Academic Ethics Committee (AEC), where this study was submitted, issued an ethical approval.

Conflict of Interest: The author stated that there was no conflict of interest.

Informed Consent: All procedures were conducted after obtaining informed consent from the individual(s) who was/were part of the study. Participants were introduced to the aims of the research, the voluntary basis of their participation, and the confidentiality level of the survey. They specifically gave written agreements to take part in the research study. To build the rapport, anonymous names were used by the researcher.

Data Accessibility: Authors are expected to just enclose the data collected in this study as well as their work outcomes. The data are available for rechecking and ethical principles of complaints against double-

anonymous refereeing are taken into consideration. Researchers have access to the original data collected during this study and are committed to adhering to the principles of data transparency and accessibility. Therefore, the original data are available upon request for review purposes.

The Questionnaires

This work entailed completing the questionnaires, with the sample composed of 300 students from secondary schools and universities in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia. We initially aimed to determine their online behavior and how they believe it can specifically affect family relationships, private lives, and social interactions. The study involved 300 young participants, where 75% were males, 20 to 28 a general age range dominant (71%), and 84% of it non-married. The most common students were undergraduates (85.3%). The family sizes were divided into two parts: 92%. 0% with less than 10 members.

Preliminary Analysis

The initial assessment of reliability with Cronbach's alpha gave values that were below the desired 0,70 threshold. Consequently, some items were excluded due to the fact that the number of items to be analyzed was from 55 to 51. Six-factor factor interpretation showed an acceptable factor loading close to 0.5 which signifies practical significance.

Table 1

Primary Analysis

Measure	No of Items	Cronbach's Alpha
Impact of the internet on individuals	0.596	15
Impact of the Internet on Family Relationships	0568	19
Impact of the internet on the society	0.718	13
Wellbeing measure	0.758	8

Table 2

Descriptive Analysis

	Mean	Std. Deviation	Skewness		Kurtosis	
	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Std. Error	Statistic	Std. Error
Family Relationship/Attitude	4.01	.66	-.69	.14	-.16	.28
Internet impact.	2.86	.71	-.16	.14	-.26	.28
Individual identity	2.53	.67	.25	.14	-.04	.28
Social relationship/Attitude.	3.19	.64	.02	.14	-3.0	.28
Wellbeing.	3.82	.61	-.44	.14	-.00	.28
Culture impact.	4.02	.64	-.52	.14	-.11	.28

This section presents the mean and standard deviation for six factors: The Forming and Attitude of Family Relationships, The Internet Effect, The Individual Identity, The Social Relationship/Attitude, The Well-being, and Cultural Issues. For the purpose of analysis, all variables were evaluated on the basis of different data obtained through specially designed items.

- Family Relationship/Attitude: Students usually made positive comments regarding their family relations (Mean = 4.01).
- Internet Impact: In total, people had stated a near-neutral effect that was observed for the internet (Mean = 2.86).
- Individual Identity: Responses reflected the non-existent influence of the internet on personal identity (Mean = 2.53).
- Social Relationship/Attitude: Sometimes, this thought process made the participants feel inclined to think differently than the people around them (Mean = 3.19).
- Wellbeing: On average, the group enjoyed life having an average rating of (Mean 3.82).
- Cultural Impact: In general, internet users endorsed that the internet could be used to transform traditions and smash barriers (Mean = 4.02).

The young Saudis research reported that gaming and social media shipping have led to unsettled social relationships. Attributes of population such as gender, age, education, and status of marriage did not lead to any clear results. In-depth research aims to uncover the root causes of the problem statement

Qualitative Analysis

Qualitative analysis utilizes the data of semi-structured interviews of randomly chosen women in Saudi Arabia and questionnaires they have filled out earlier. The procedure for the interviewees' selection was rather purposive and snowball sampling due to the practical limitations. The interviews were set to record diverse views that included all age groups in order to provide a possible comparison of observations from the younger and older respondents.

Family Structure

Among those interviewed, an important issue that emerged is how they already see being out without the internet as not just normal but also mandatory. The interviews showed that people had fears about the effect of internet use on family relations, and some of them even claimed that it caused family members to forget their duties, mainly the adults. Another subject happening at the home level is related to the phenomenon when some people are always on the internet, especially men, who ignore their family duties, leading to their (in this case, the men's) wives' resentment.

"My aunt's husband spends all his time in the virtual world." He is a mature adult, but he spends his time on the internet. He behaves as if he doesn't have children or a wife. My aunt is perpetually moaning about such disregard.

Likewise, Eman said that the husbands' internet use led to neglect and misunderstanding in the

relationships, as the spouses were physically present, but the men were not.

"I have heard nearly all of my friends grumble over the internet since it disturbs their marriage life, and they might quarrel later! Sometimes when I talk to my husband, though he is on the internet or on the phone, he continues replying to me but does not understand what I have said.

Family Links

The next major theme in the overall structure of family relations was the views and opinions of family links. The point here, however, starts beyond the impact on the family structure to the download on the linkages within the family.

Reduction in family time - "The internet has eliminated the periods when we used to sit together like before" (Sarah).

"The internet has gone to loosen up family bonds. Every one of us is now quite lonesome and not together with each other" (Monerah).

The process of atomizing social relations - "everyone lives in their own world" (Fozeh).

It is difficult for me to concentrate on them - my children sit with me, but I cannot say that they are really there. The subject idea is based on the transition of the old rules and ideology (the truth of thereof cannot be verified, obviously, but the idea was commonly said by philosophers of that time). Hence, the internet is not just being labeled as the culprit because it is new or the latest change, but rather it is because of its power to draw the attention of many and to be accessed even at the conventional social times of the day (e.g. mealtimes).

Social Interaction

This part analyses the main themes to confirm what

social impacts the internet presented to people facing the struggle of traditional Saudis and how people described they would rather spend time online instead of face-to-face interaction. A host of interviewers say that young people are not conventional anymore, they find the basic routine of social or family gatherings boring. Of the younger respondents:

"I don't like to go out with my family." (Bushra)

I would say "friends no longer attend parties and 'thinned-out' wedding receptions as before (Fatimah)

The people don't seem happy to attend those gatherings like they used to, instead, they prefer to rely on their own sources of entertainment. The research data shows that there is a tendency to use online communication within families, with younger respondents like Hana and Sarah using social networks to communicate with each other. However, the elderly noticed the decline of face-to-face communication caused by oversized internet consumption, which symbolizes a transition into more interpersonal entertainment.

Conclusion

The present article deals with the family understanding and the internet usage patterns in Saudi Arabia which is one of the countries, where the cultural, social, and technological reality is changing dramatically. The study discovered that decreased time at in-person communication sites such as usage of the internet contributed to heavy internet use while the majority of female users relished in internet anonymity to dodge social restrictions. The study underscores the necessity of an interdisciplinary approach in the studies of human interaction in the digital era, as the complexity of this process is going to be difficult to grasp if we don't have the ability to see the different sides of the problem.

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