

ABSTRACT

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THE IMPACT OF SOCIAL MEDIA SITES ON MUSLIM ADOLESCENTS

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This study will examine the online behaviors of two samples of adolescents, ages 12-19, who identify as Muslim. One sample will come from Riyadh, Saudi Arabia and Atlanta, Georgia and complete a 27-item questionnaire. The researcher will investigate how both samples utilize social media and if they are more or less inclined to showcase socially aggressive behavior and political activism as a result.

THE IMPACT OF SOCIAL MEDIA SITES ON MUSLIM ADOLESCENTS

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

KSA – The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

GCC – Gulf Coast Countries

SM -Social Media

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Albrithen and Briskman (2015) examined social work ethics in Saudi Arabia by surveying 141 professionals in the field. Slightly more than one in five, 20.5%, stated that they encountered cultural differences with their clients. Foremost among the cultural differences encountered were the ever-present Western influences on the social attitudes and demeanor of Arab and Muslim teens. Dennis, Martin, and Wood (2017) conducted an eight-nation, 6,000-interview survey of media use in the Middle East, and found that 97% of Saudis between the ages of 18-24 use the internet. The researchers found that this cohort spent, on average, three hours per day using social networking sites. The vast majority of the respondents used multiple social networks, including Facebook (88%), Twitter (84%), Instagram (51%), WhatsApp (95%), and YouTube (52%).

Statement of the Problem

Online communication resources, among them Facebook, SnapChat, Twitter and YouTube, provide a free platform for people of all ages to exchange ideas and enable better communication (Coulson, 2013). Wormald (2015) tracked internet usage by adolescents, and reported an increase to 95% in 2012 from 73% in 2000. This increase in online communication has been a growing cause of concern for educators, who report

that adolescents are influenced by the images they view online, and display increasing levels of anger, anxiety, and depression (Pantic, 2014).

Okeeffe, Clarke-Pearson, & Council on Communications and Media (2011) warned about the influential nature of online advertisements on social media platforms. In particular, they urged parents and educators to become more familiar with issues including cyberbullying, depression, online harassment and sexting, in order to help curb deviant behavior. Likewise, the Canadian Paediatric Society (2003) warned parents about the risks of increased internet use and the “promotion of hatred or violence through web sites targeting a specific group, such as women, homosexuals, and religious or ethnic groups.” (p. 304). Rudorean (2015) also warned about the predatorial online recruitment of adolescents, especially those who do not fit into the mainstream community, into groups that sponsor terrorism and violence.

This study investigates how social media content can influence the attitude of adolescents who use online communication, posts, blogs and video displays to communicate to others. This study further examines how Muslim teens in Gulf Cooperation Council countries and in Western countries are influenced by social media to engage in civil and political unrest, with the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the United States chosen as representative examples. Brown, Guskin, & Mitchell (2012), working with the Pew Research Center’s Global Attitudes Project, concluded that during the Arab Spring, Arab adolescents and protesters overwhelmingly utilized social media to broadcast incidents of police abuse and social rioting. Wolfsfeld, Segev, & Sheafer (2013) found that social media interaction and social networking did not itself incite political unrest;

rather, the political climate in the country encouraged more social media interaction. In essence, the more dissatisfaction was felt by Muslim adolescents, the more likely they were to engage in political protests.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to investigate the impact of social media on the political activity and aggressive social behaviors of Muslim adolescents who reside in the urban areas of Atlanta, in the southern American state of Georgia, and in Riyadh, the capital of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

Research Questions

This study is based on the following research questions: First, what is the relationship between social media usage and political activity among Muslim adolescents living in Saudi Arabia and the United States? Second, what is the relationship between social media usage and aggressive social behavior among Muslim adolescents living in Saudi Arabia and the United States? And third, is the relationship between social media usage and political activity, or between social media usage and aggressive social behavior, affected by gender, age or location?

Hypotheses

With consideration for the objectives of this research and the available data, the following hypotheses will be tested:

H0_{R1}: There is no relationship between social media usage and political activity among Muslim adolescents living in Saudi Arabia and the United States.

H1_{R1}: There is a statistically significant relationship between social media usage and political activity among Muslim adolescents living in Saudi Arabia and the United States.

H0_{R2}: There is no relationship between social media usage and aggressive social behavior among Muslim adolescents living in Saudi Arabia and the United States.

H1_{R2}: There is a statistically significant relationship between social media usage and aggressive social behavior among Muslim adolescents living in Saudi Arabia and the United States.

H0_{R3}: Age, gender and location do not have a statistically significant impact on the relationship between social media usage and political activity, or between social media usage and aggressive social behavior.

H1_{R3}: Age, gender and location have a statistically significant impact on the relationship between social media usage and political activity, or between social media usage and aggressive social behavior.

Significance of the Study

As advocated by Dill and Zambrana (2009), there is a growing need to include race, class, and gender in sociology and social work studies. Western researchers have often overlooked Arab youth and instead focused their research on larger minority groups, including African Americans and Latinos.

The Pew Research Center reported that Muslims represented 1% of the American population, or 3.3 million, in 2015 (Mohamed, 2016). By 2050, the Muslim population is projected to increase to 2.1% of the overall population, or 8.1 million American citizens. As this population continues to increase in the United States, more school-related and community-related personnel will need to familiarize themselves with Muslim teen culture, especially as it continues to be effected by the changing face of technology.

“Social media sites such as Facebook and MySpace offer multiple daily opportunities for connecting with friends, classmates, and people with shared interests” (Okeeffe, Clarke-Pearson, & Council on Communications and Media, 2011, p. 800). The increased use of social media networks, especially among the adolescent population, has been known to have various disadvantages and risks.

This increased use of online communications has been a cause of concern for researchers and educators, who report that adolescents are influenced by the images they see, and display increasing levels of anger, anxiety, and depression (Pantic, 2014).

This study seeks to propose solutions aimed at curbing aggressive social behavior, and any attendant threat of political unrest, among Muslim adolescents in Atlanta and Riyadh. Owing to the increase in America’s Muslim population to 2.1% by 2050. This study helps to determine the behavioral use of internet communication tools among teens based on age, gender and location.

This study aims to reduce intensity of aggressive social behavior among Muslim teens. The formulation of corrective policies to guide the use of social media among teens is an important contribution of this study.

This study on the role of social media in inspiring aggressive social behavior among Muslim adolescents helps highlight the influence of technological change among teens. The findings here encourage needed action by government institutions to make informed decisions about how to properly regulate the use of social media communication tools. Furthermore, this study contributes to a deeper understanding of how Muslim teenagers perceive violent media, and how those perceptions are used by religious authorities to propagate political unrest.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Research has depicted that access to violent content through social media among Muslim adolescents leads to aggressive social behavior. According to research conducted by commonsense media on the Influence of Social Media on Teenagers, it was found that an estimated 75% of teenagers residing in the U.S. are susceptible to peer pressure from Social media. This makes these adolescents vulnerable to violent content (Ramasubbu, 2015). Furthermore, with the growing risk of Muslim adolescents, developing aggressive social behavior from politically inclined content, social media usage among Muslim adolescents is bound to become a public security concern in the United States. Muslim adolescents expressing aggressive social behavior need intervention to control usage of social media content. The quality of content delivered through social media, influences the quality of one's behavior

Historical Perspective of Social Media

The concept of social media originated in 1971, when the first email was sent from one computer to other computers. The Bulletin Board System (BBS), which transmitted that first email, was developed in 1978. The BBS was the first social media system that was developed to connect users with one another via the internet (Boyd & Ellison, 2008). In the same year, Computer Engineers developed "Usenet," a social media

site that allowed users to share news and humorous posts, and study recently published articles. The concept of sending a message in realtime, as if one was on a telephone call, was first put into practice in 1988 with Internet Relay Chat (IRC). IRC – or instant messaging, as it is now known – was developed to share links and files between professional colleagues in the field and those in a distance setting (Hendricks, 2013).

Geocities, developed in 1994, was the first social networking site. It allowed users to register their personally created webpages online and to link to other groups and individuals based on their areas of interest and location. That same year, “TheGlobe.com” site was launched. It allowed users to group themselves with each other according to interests and hobbies (Boyd & Ellison, 2008). These sites allowed users to create their profile according to their interests and to communicate via instant chat with other users (Hendricks, 2013).

Friendster represented the next step in the evolution of social media, allowing users to instantly chat with others, share pictures, post personal content, and create groups or circles of friends. MySpace developed soon after, and was the first social networking site to register 1 million users (Boyd & Ellison, 2008).

LinkedIn, launched in 2003, introduced the idea of using a social network to connect business professionals based on their career orientation, rather than just their social preferences. In 2004, Facebook expanded beyond its start as an online directory of students at Harvard University to connect current and former collegiate students to others based on their networks of friends and common interest. Today Facebook has more than 170 million users (Hendricks, 2013). In recent years, other social media platforms have

been developed and created their own large following. These new platforms allow users to interface with others through texting, video calling, voice messaging, voice calling, and sending live or pre-recorded data to others in their network.

However, due to a lack of opportunities provided to heterogeneous societies, the course of adolescent development may profoundly be shaped by influencing the supports available and timing for key development for coping with these transitions.

Recent studies have found that youth spend a considerable portion of their time engaging with social media sites (Best, Manktelow, & Taylor, 2014). Social media – in particular Instagram, Twitter and Facebook – is widely used by teenagers. A survey in 2009 revealed that 73% of teenagers online use social networking sites.

Many professionals believe that social networking sites should be embraced, as they allow teenagers to learn in new ways. Many parents, however, remain fearful about the negative effects of social media and about the safety of their children's social development. Today's youth are the first to grown up with these communication technologies, which continue to experience rapid development. It has also been studied that the adolescent usage of social media networking sites is not only due to the social media networking sites. To understand social networking sites as social information systems, features of social networking sites must be taken into account by the researchers (Jones, Eathington, Baldwin, & Sipsma, 2014).

The enormous development of social networking sites has substantially affected human behaviors and lifestyles. Relationships and thoughts have been transformed. Youth spend a substantial amount of time online, even in front of their parents. Their

conversation with friends on networking sites is often more than with the friends sitting in front of them.

Social Media and Political Activity

There is already a body of literature on the relationship between the internet and politics. The internet has been identified as the ideal media for influencing the engagement and participation of citizens (Casteltrione, 2015). The role of social media has evolved over time and has today become an important platform for political discourse (Zaheer, 2017). After examining political participation among university students, Zaheer (2017) posited that many of the individuals who have regular political discussions in their daily lives are regular users of social media for political purposes. The influence of social media is not limited to mere opinion, but stretches to political participation and voting decisions (Zaheer, 2017). Zaheer identified two schools of thought in the debate about the relationship between social media and political participation. The first is the argument that people often form opinions based on the political imagery of candidates, and that this imagery is heavily determined by social media. The second, contrasting school of thought is that voter intent, as an important aspect of politics, cannot be entirely persuaded by social media. Zaheer (2017) argued that social media is not itself enough to change ideologies, political activity and engagement patterns of consumers.

Other scholars have identified relationships between social media and political activity. Political activity and participation are defined as the engagement of citizens in activities or events which might influence the government, officials or its policies. Such

engagement can be either online or offline. Hsieh and Li identified a positive relationship between online political expression and political participation. They found that both online and offline political engagement improved for individuals who used social media for political expression (Hsieh & Li, 2014).

In general, the offline political participation of social media users is influenced by their exposure to social media. According to the Pew Research Center (2013), frequent Facebook users are more likely to be politically engaged than infrequent users. Furthermore, there is evidence that demographic factors including age and gender influence both offline and online political participation (Wen, Xiaoming, & George, 2013).

Social media has also been posited as an equalizer. With social media use influencing political engagement, especially among the youth, some studies have found that it might help stem or even reverse political inequality patterns (Xenos, Vromen, & Loader, 2014).

According to Bakker and De Vreese (2011), the role of traditional media and the internet in relation to the political participation of the youth is not a simple blanket subject. Their study rejects the idea of duration (longer social media use resulting in greater participation). Instead, they find that certain types of media encourage political participation more than others (Bakker & De Vreese, 2011).

For Muslim adolescents, the relationship between social media and political participation is mediated by various issues. In Britain, Muslim use of social media can be thought of as disrupting dominant discourse about Muslims and Islam, as well as

producing and disseminating media communications through various web forums (Stoner-Church, 2017). Similar patterns are visible in Scotland and the United States, where Muslim political participation in media is seen as a counter to the negative imagery that is rampant about Muslims (Finlay, Hopkins, & Sanghera, 2017).

Howard (2010) presents social media as advantageous and ideal for the political participation of Muslim adolescents. This point of view is substantially informed by the events leading up to and during the Arab Spring. Generally speaking, information and communication technologies are responsible for the fragmentation and contestation of political and religious authority, thus giving dissenters a voice in the Muslim public sphere (Kaposi, 2014). In investigating the relationship between political participation and, respectively, social media and internet use among youth in Kuwait, Howard (2010) found that compared to traditional media, social media has far fewer restrictions (Howard, 2010). Social media offers a virtual public sphere for youth to inhabit, offering them a space for the exchange of ideas, debate and social interaction. It can also, therefore, serve as a space for political practice and the challenge of the status quo (Howard, 2010).

Social Media and Aggressive Social Behavior

There has already been substantial research into the issues of media use and exposure and their effects in terms of aggressive social behavior. Huesmann (1986) presented a development theory to explain the relationship between increased exposure to media violence and increased aggressive behavior. Even though exposure to violence

through the media can result in aggressive social behavior, there are differences between individuals caused by the various intervening variables (Huesmann, 1986). While that study is dated and mainly deals with television as the example of media exposure, it is easy to draw parallels to social media use today. Various researchers have published articles that relate offline aggressive social behavior to online activity.

For instance, the work of Patton et al. (2014) connects the two. According to their study, while some forms of online aggressive social behavior are limited to the online environment, others are related to offline acts of violence. The researchers found that the youths are avid users of social networking sites, and mainly use these sites to explore issues that are important to them in their offline lives (Patton et al., 2014). A study by Boxer et al. (2013) also brings similar ideas to the fore. According to the researchers, observing violence stimulates violence, both among younger children and older youths. (Boxer et al., 2013). Aggressive behavior among youths, for instance, has been shown to be related to their exposure to ethno-political violence. Though the psychological relations remain unclear, it is possible that youths observing ethno-political aggression might lead to later aggression or aggressive behavior (Boxer et al., 2013).

The presence of ethno-political violence in a youth environment changes the tendency to violence toward proximal groups. Basically, when exposed to ethno-political violence from outgroups, youths tend to behave more aggressively (Boxer et al., 2013). The implication here, especially for Muslim adolescents, is that the more they receive or view violence by outgroups especially violence that is ethno-politically related – the likelier they are to behave in a manner that can be characterized as socially aggressive.

This is especially significant for social media use because a significant amount of abuse happens online, just as it does offline.

These studies gain greater significance when considered in the context of the current environment of Islamophobia and race hate on social media today. Awan (2016) identified both positive and negative trends in the use of social media. While the vast majority of people who use social media sites like Facebook do so for innocent reasons, a growing number from virtual communities and hate groups that primarily share a violent and racist narrative (Awan, 2016). Törnberg and Törnberg (2016) also found a similar narrative in their analysis of representation of Muslims in social media. Muslims are portrayed as a homogenous group, often embroiled in conflict, extremism and violence (Törnberg & Törnberg, 2016). The representation patterns of Muslims on social media are similar to, and sometimes even more extreme than, those that exist in traditional media (Törnberg & Törnberg, 2016).

While much research has gone into how violent media increases violence, Greitemeyer (2011) examined the other side of the coin. This study looked into how pro-social media might increase pro-social outcomes and reduce anti-social outcomes like aggressive social behavior (Greitemeyer, 2011). The increased exposure to pro-social media increases the accessibility of pro-social thoughts, empathy and helping behavior, and further decreases the possibility of aggressive behavior and aggression-related cognition and affect (Greitemeyer, 2011).

The relationship between social media use and socially aggressive behavior has also been noted in the radicalization process. Radum (2011) described radicalization as

starting off with individuals who are frustrated with their lives, society or the foreign policies of their government. A typical pattern involves these people meeting other like-minded individuals and together going through a series of events or phases which ultimately result in terrorism. Social media, especially in the context of increased abuse and Islamophobia, poor policies and general negative images from society, coupled with its relatively unregulated nature, might just be the perfect facilitator for meetings of such like-minded people, and almost inevitably result in socially aggressive behavior.

Afrocentric Perspective

Social media is an important tool for societies to interact and collaborate virtually. With the rapid advancement in the digital information interchange mediums, the flow of information cannot be stopped anywhere in the world. Two important concepts related to Afrocentric perspective are spirituality and significance of self-knowledge. Both are important to consider with the advancements in technology for their promotion and understanding. It is important to establish a balance between materialistic and spiritual matters for people. There has been a phenomenal growth in the number of social media users in Saudi Arabia. A recent study found widespread Twitter use, despite the restrictive Islamic policies of the country (Collins, Baiardi, Tate, & Rouen, 2015). Saudis use these tools to interact with the world and to express themselves. Saudi Arabia has one of a high number of internet users. There are around 2.4 million internet users and 40 percent of Twitter-based Arab users are Saudis. The country has a conservative society and people are inclined to listen to the spiritual leaders for seeking guidance. Social

media provides a way to establish strong spirituality based educational and knowledge sharing. Social media users proactively use it to spread spiritual knowledge and establish knowledge seeking virtual communities. Social media provides an efficient manner to share up to date information about interests of the users.

The second concept of seeking self-knowledge is important to consider for everyone individually as well as collectively. Social media provides a way to its users to exchange useful information that can be helpful for them to enhance self-knowledge. Saudi youth is keen to learn all new ways of knowledge interchange and means of communication including social media. Universities in Saudi Arabia provide its students to establish online portals for interacting with international researchers and students. The research-based collaboration provides the opportunity of performing knowledge exchange with the community of researchers. The researchers through social and digital media remain in contact with other potential students and academia across the globe. This connection would possibly explain why the usage of networking sites has increased in Saudi Arabia. As it relates to social media, users tend to seek out likeminded individuals in order to form a band of connectedness. This connectedness and survival of the group hold the utmost importance for these individuals. Ultimately, users of networking sites fall in line with cooperation (usage), collective responsibility (engagement with other users), and interdependence – all of which are concepts based on the Afrocentric perspective.

Saudi authorities try to regulate it and keep an eye on the negative elements who can misuse it. The special political turmoil and subsequently developing crisis in the

region had made it mandatory for Saudi authorities to remain on high alert (Albrithen & Briskman, 2015). It is important to understand that social media and its facilitation to establish virtual communities to interact unconditionally is not fully aligned with the Saudi culture and civilization. With the perspective of spirituality and also local Arab norms Saudi government had taken steps to limit some features associated with the use of social media.

In the modern world, all nations including Saudis need to acquire ourselves with knowledge in order to become educated and civilized. Smartphones and gadgets have become an integral part of Saudis' daily lives and they have become dependent on these small-sized devices in many ways. Smartphones have become a basic necessity of almost every Saudi person who knows to read and write. Today, living in the digital information age it has become vital for Saudis and all other nations to find out ways of exploring the most advanced learning and business specific options.

Theoretical Framework

General strain theory examines how the social, cultural, economic and environmental strains – the differences caused by conflicts that exist in society – can lead to deviant behavior in a population. The theory is often used in the field of criminology, and Agnew (1992) is credited with formulating the term. Zhang et al. (2014) defined a strain as the result formed from conflictions in the environment from “(1) two differential cultural values, (2) discrepancies between aspiration and reality, (3) perceived differences

between one's own status and that of others, and (4) a crisis situation and lack of coping abilities" (p. 338).

Agnew, Brezina, Wright, and Cullen (2002) argued for the inclusion of additional cultural and social factors, specifically peer abuse and negative emotionality/low constraint. Agnew (1992) argued that anger and overall negative feelings predicted criminal behavior. Criminal behavior is thought to be a reaction to the feelings of lowered inhibition, caused by anger, and the need to remove the presence of strains that lead to the delinquent behavior, such as the need to escape an abusive home by pickpocketing money from tourists.

Social media is a major part of life for the youth, and much of their identity, social and otherwise, is influenced by the experiences they undergo on social media, as well as those that they go through in real life that are projected onto social media. Social media has been identified as one of the biggest determinants of political participation and activity, as well as of socially aggressive behavior. This study therefore centers on social media's role in aggravating attitudes among adolescents who use online communication tools to express aggressive social behavior in a quest to address political unrest. The general strain theory has been used to supplement this study.

Strain refers to a relationship in which other people are not treating someone as they would like to be treated. Strain is likely to increase delinquency if it is high in magnitude, if it is seen as unjust or associated with low social control, or if it provides incentive for coping in delinquent ways (Agnew, 2010). This study uses the strain theory as a basis for describing how social media mediates the behavior of Muslim adolescents

and their likelihood for socially aggressive behavior or political participation. Social media communicates and influences Muslim adolescents' experiences and sources of strain, including failure to achieve goals, the disjunction of expectations and achievement, the removal of positive stimuli and the presentation of negative stimuli. This study examines how social media engagement among Muslim adolescents determines political participation or socially aggressive behavior through these strains, through a comparison of the experiences of Muslims in Atlanta and Riyadh.

General strain theory has proven to be multicultural sensitive and has been used with African American (Jang, 2007; Jang & Johnson, 2003) and Chinese citizens (Bao & Haas, 2009; Mazerolle, 2009; Zhang et al., 2014) populations. Bao and Haas (2009) argued that societal change in China – primarily China's move from a purely Communist regime to a social-capitalist economy, and the introduction of new technology – created both social and individual strains on the youth. Bao and Haas (2009) found general strain theory to be more cultural inclusive than other theories, and found it “appropriate for understanding how specific reforms and the sharp rise of delinquency are related manifestations of a larger process of social change in contemporary China” (p. 287).

In their study of an African American population, Jang and Johnson (2003) examined how the added variable of religiosity predicted deviant behavior. Their findings indicated that people who had a strong religious foundation were less likely to display anger and were able to display coping mechanisms. The theory was selected because it appears to be the most culturally sensitive for examining the trends of delinquency

among Arab and Muslim adolescents, and the possible strains created in the realm of social networking.

The theory of behaviorism and social learning focuses on the reciprocity between social contexts and individuals. This closely links to how individuals relate to social media, as with the case of the thesis paper, and later gets to uncover the human development process across the lifespan. At the macro level, human behavior and social environment, the youth are influenced by experiences they undergo on social media in a major part of their growth span. With regards to this thesis paper, one of the biggest determinants of political participation which affects the youths' aggressive social behavior will be their experiences on social media as they grow up. Some of the concepts which closely connect to this study is that imitation and reaction to stimulation shape behavioral learning. Muslim teens develop new attitudes based on consumed content from social media, especially citing an example of how political unrest can stir deviant behavior, as reaction to stimuli.

The micro level of behaviorism and social learning theory, the curriculum explores human development on a life span stretch. This is where Muslim teens upscale their newly acquired attitude, to mature from normal social behavior to aggressive social behavior. The outcome is that they get to prolong the strain of violent content, to extend of motivating Muslim youth to participate in politics. The first impact of this micro level, is felt at the family systems whereby boundaries, communication, roles, family structure get to influence the functioning of the family. The element of psychosocial development is also affected in that through time and social contexts, the life stages are greatly

affected. This theory is relevant to this study based on grounds that (i) it is compatible with general strain theory and (ii) elaborates development stages of how social media use impacts Muslim teens' behavioral self. Muslim teens learn and acknowledge violent content, express in the form of political unrest. They process this information with indifferent attitude. Overtime, this attitude develops into deviant behavior, which is socially aggressive behavior.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

This study utilized a cross sectional survey to highlight the results generated from an experimental sample of participants from the metropolitan communities of Riyadh, Saudi Arabia and Atlanta, Georgia. A sample group of 209 individuals completed a survey for this study, 170 from Riyadh and 39 from Atlanta. The survey aimed to shed light on how both populations consume and interpret what they view on social media networks. In addition, the survey examined if factors related to geography, age and gender influenced how adolescents communicate and utilize social media networks.

Sample

The study compared the answers given by two samples of adolescents ranging in age from 12 to 19 and self-identifying as Muslim. The sample was comprised of 135 male students and 74 female students at middle schools and high schools in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia and Atlanta, Georgia. This researcher utilized social networking apps as well as in-person interactions to encourage potential participants to complete the survey. There were a total of 107 surveys collected via social media from Saudi Arabia, and 39 surveys collected through face-to face contact at the Mohammed School in Atlanta.

Instruments

These instruments for this study were created from a closed-ended, 25-item questionnaire that was available in both Arabic and English, as well as an informed consent form that included demographic information.

Dependent Variables

For this analysis, the dependent variables were variables reflecting different types of political activity and aggressive social behavior. The relevant survey questions are described below. Appendix A shows the completed questionnaire.

Political Activity. Four survey questions were asked that covered the frequency of exhibiting different types of political activity. Each question was rated on a 6-point ordinal scale, coded “1” (daily) to “6” (never). The questions were:

- “Have you ever used social media sites to read an article or viewed a video about politics in the United States?”
- “Do you use social media sites to read articles or view videos about politics in the Middle East?”
- “Have you ever used social media sites to read an article or viewed a video about social justice or social unrest?”

- “Have you ever used social media sites to read an article or viewed a video where someone was protesting a government?”

The political activity composite variable from these four survey questions also serves as a dependent variable.

Aggressive Social Behavior . Three survey questions were asked that covered the frequency of exhibiting different types of aggressive social behavior. Each question was rated on a 6 point ordinal scale, coded “1” (daily) to “6” (never). The questions were:

- “Have you ever used social media sites to read an article or viewed a video where two or more people were fighting?”
- “Have you ever used social media sites to read an article or viewed a video where someone was being bullied in a school?”
- “Have you ever tried or seen someone perform a dangerous stunt in public?”

The aggressive social behavior composite variable from these three survey questions also serves as a dependent variable.

Independent Variables

Use of Social Media . The key independent variable in this analysis was the survey question asking about the frequency of social media usage. The survey asked respondents how often they checked each of the five primary social media sites: Facebook, Instagram, SnapChat, Twitter and YouTube. Each was measured on a 6-item ordinal scale, which was recoded to “1” (never check) to “6” (check daily). A social media composite score was also created as another independent variable.

Control Variables

Location. The location variable was indicated by either Saudi Arabia or the United States.

Age. Research indicated that subtle differences can exist between younger and older adolescents, especially between those in middle school and those in high school or college. Respondents were asked to identify their age (12 to 19), which was then coded into three age groups: 12 to 14, 15 to 17, and 18 to 19.

Gender. Gender was analyzed to determine any potential impact. For this study, males were coded as 0, and females were coded as 1.

Procedure

Following approval from the Institutional Review Board of Clark Atlanta University, this researcher met with students, teachers and community members to recruit research participants. An informed consent form was completed prior to the administration of the survey. All participants were able to access an online version of the assessment from Google Docs in either Arabic or English. The online packet contained an introduction letter, also available in both Arabic and English; the informed consent form; and the 25-item questionnaire, which included demographic information. Data collection occurred in Riyadh and Atlanta during the summer and fall of 2017, after the Ramadan and Eid holidays. The information was presented to the director of the Mohammed School in Atlanta before distribute the survey to the students. The data collected was analyzed during the fall of 2017.

Data Analysis

The data was analyzed using SPSS. Frequencies were produced for the key variables in the analysis. All of the variables in the analysis were either nominal- or ordinal-scaled variables. Spearman's rho correlation was therefore used to analyze the variables and to search for statistically significant relationships at the $p = .05$ significance level, in order to answer Research Questions 1 and 2 and to test the associated hypotheses. For Research Question 3, three composite variables were created by summing the values across the relevant survey questions for each respondent. The composite variables are social media usage, political activity and aggressive social behavior. Pearson's R correlation was used to analyze the correlation between the composite variables and gender, location and age groups. Scatterplots were also presented to show the overall relationships based on the composite variables.

Limitations of the Study

This study had a few limitations in its design. A power analysis was not conducted on the survey, and a proper estimate of the appropriate sample size needed to justify statistical significance remains unknown. Secondly, the study was conducted during the summertime, when many students were not readily available. And lastly, the survey was placed online in Arabic and English, and therefore a controlled testing environment could not be guaranteed.

CHAPTER IV

PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS

Social media usage metrics include measures to indicate how frequently social networking sites such as Facebook, Snapchat or Instagram are used by individuals from a defined demographic population. Social media usage may impact individuals' social behavior, both positively and negatively. On the other hand, social media usage may be affected by demographic variables including age, gender and location.

In addition, excessive social media usage may have behavioral consequences for individual users, depending on the nature of content and media shared through social media. As a result, a high level of negative social media usage may be related to a high degree of increased negative behavior. This chapter presents findings on the relationships between social media usage and political activity and aggressive social behavior among Muslim adolescents in the United States and Saudi Arabia. This chapter also presents findings on the impact of age, gender and location on these relationships. SPSS Version 24 was used to analyze the data.

Sample Characteristics

Tables 1, 2 and 3 show the basic demographics of the survey respondents. Table 1 shows that approximately 65% of the survey respondents were male.

Table 1 Gender of Respondent

Gender	N	Percent
Male	135	64.6
Female	74	35.4
Total	209	100.0

Table 2 shows a fairly even distribution of respondents across age groups. However, the age 18 and 19 cohort accounted for more than two-fifths of the respondents.

Table 2 Age Group

Age	N	Percent
12 - 14	63	30.1
15 - 17	57	27.3
18 - 19	89	42.6
Total	209	100.0

Table 3 shows that slightly more than four-fifths of the survey respondents were located in Saudi Arabia.

Table 3 Location of Respondent

Location	N	Percent
Saudi Arabia	170	81.3
USA	39	18.7
Total	209	100.0

Tables 4 and 5 show a summary of the survey questions used as independent and dependent variables.

Table 4 displays the summary of ratings for the various types of social media usage. The table shows that Facebook usage was much lower than other social media types, with nearly 80% indicating that they “never” checked Facebook. Snapchat and Instagram were the preferred social media types, with roughly 70% usage on a “once or twice a week” or “daily” usage basis.

Table 4 Usage of Social Media Independent Variable

Frequency of Checking:	Daily	Once or twice a week	Every few weeks	Once or Twice a month	Every few months	Never
Facebook	4.3%	3.3%	3.8%	2.4%	6.7%	79.4%
Instagram	51.2%	18.7%	2.9%	1.4%	1.0%	24.9%
SnapChat	63.6%	9.6%	3.8%	1.0%	0.5%	21.5%
Twitter	26.8%	12.4%	2.9%	5.3%	2.4%	50.2%
YouTube	48.3%	12.0%	6.2%	1.4%	0.0%	32.1%

Table 5 displays the summary of answers to the survey questions concerned with political activity and aggressive social behavior.

Table 5 Political Activity and Aggressive Social Behavior Questions

Activity	Daily	Once or twice a week	Every few weeks	Once or Twice a month	Every few months	Never
Q12: Ever used SM to read article or view video about US politics?	5.7%	10.0%	7.7%	6.2%	17.2%	53.1%
Q13: Ever used SM to read article or view video about Middle East politics?	11.0%	13.4%	10.0%	7.2%	17.2%	41.1%
Q14: Ever used SM to read article or view video about social injustice or unrest?	7.2%	13.4%	12.9%	7.7%	10.0%	48.8%
Q15: Ever used SM to read article or view video where 2 or more people were fighting?	11.5%	13.4%	10.5%	9.1%	19.1%	36.4%
Q16: Ever used SM to read article or view video where someone was being bullied at school?	6.2%	10.0%	7.7%	12.4%	12.0%	51.7%
Q17: Ever used SM to read article or view video where someone was protesting a government?	5.7%	8.1%	6.7%	8.6%	14.4%	56.5%
Q18: Ever tried or seen someone perform a dangerous stunt in public?	7.2%	8.6%	8.1%	5.7%	22.5%	47.8%

Survey respondents indicated low activity for each question, with approximately 60% to 70% answering “never” or “every few months.” The questions with the highest frequency of activity – approximately 20% to 25% indicating “once or twice a week” or “daily” – related to social injustice or unrest, people fighting, and Middle East politics. Table 6 shows the descriptive statistics for the composite variables.

Table 6 Composite Variables

Statistic	Social Media Usage	Political Activity	Aggressive Social Behavior
N	209	209	209
Mean	17.12	18.42	13.60
Median	16	20	15
Mode	25	24	18
Std. Deviation	6.09	5.44	4.12
Minimum	5	5	3
Maximum	30	24	18

Analysis Results

All the variables in the analysis were either nominal or ordinal scaled. Therefore, the data were analyzed by SPSS using the Spearman's rho correlation procedure. Using the social media and political activity composite variables, Figure 1 shows the overall relationship between social media usage and political activity.

Figure 1 Scatterplot Between Social Media Usage and Political Activity Overall

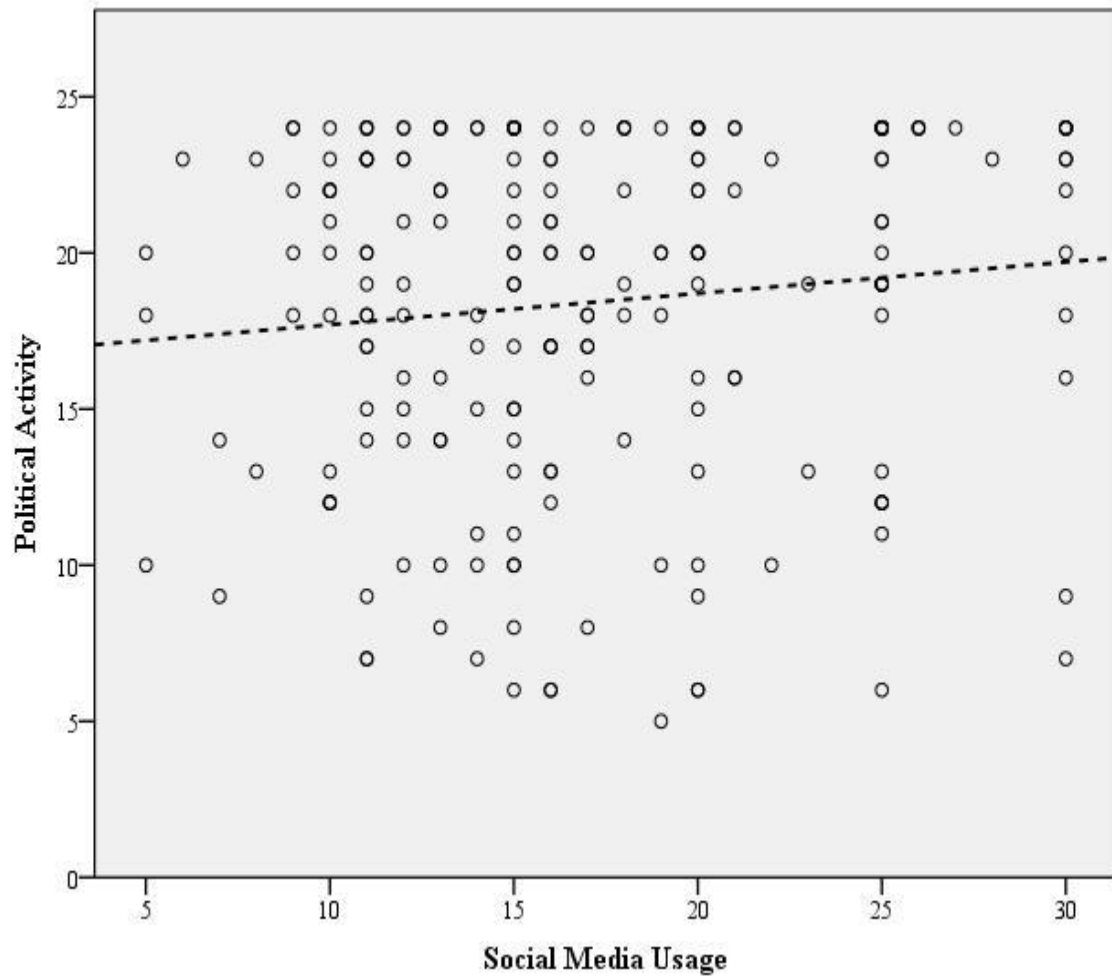


Figure 1 showed a weak positive Pearson correlation between social media usage and political activity that was not significant at the $p = .05$ level but was significant at the $p = .10$ level ($r = .11, p = .10$). This indicated that as social media usage went up, political activity also went up.

Table 7 shows the overall Spearman's rho correlations between social media types and types of political activity.

Table 7 Spearman's Rho Correlation Between Social Media Usage and Political Activity

Political Activity	Type of Social Media Usage				
	Facebook	Instagram	SnapChat	Twitter	Youtube
Q12: Ever used SM to read article or view video about US politics?	.175*	0.044	0.018	0.076	0.128
Q13: Ever used SM to read article or view video about Middle East politics?	-0.034	0.013	-0.030	0.108	-0.001
Q14: Ever used SM to read article or view video about social injustice or unrest?	0.020	.137*	-0.014	0.036	0.096
Q17: Ever used SM to read article or view video where someone was protesting a government?	0.086	0.115	0.058	0.111	.152*

** Significant at the .01 level.

* Significant at the .05 level.

The Spearman's rho (r) values in Table 7 show that three of the four political activities had statistically significant correlations with social media usage:

- There was a statistically significant positive correlation ($r = .175$, $p = .011$) between Facebook usage and reading articles or viewing videos about American politics, meaning as Facebook usage went up, reading articles or viewing videos about American politics also went up.
- There was a statistically significant positive correlation ($r = .137$, $p = .049$) between Instagram usage and reading articles or viewing videos about social injustice or unrest, meaning as Instagram usage went up, reading articles or viewing videos about social injustice or unrest also went up.

- There was a statistically significant positive correlation ($r = .152, p = .028$) between YouTube usage and reading articles or viewing videos where someone was protesting a government, meaning as YouTube usage went up, reading articles or viewing videos where someone was protesting a government also went up.

The hypothesis for research question 1 (RQ1) stated that there is a statistically significant relationship between social media usage and political activity of Muslim adolescents who live in Saudi Arabia or the United States (H_{1R1}). A review of the results in Figure 1 and Table 7 suggests there is sufficient evidence to reject the null hypothesis and accept the hypothesis H_{1R1} .

Research Question 2 (RQ2), meanwhile, examined the relationship between social media usage and aggressive social behavior of Muslim adolescents living in Saudi Arabia or the United States. Using the social media and aggressive social behavior activity composite variables, Figure 2 shows the overall relationship between social media usage and aggressive social behavior.

Figure 2 Scatterplot Between Social Media Usage and Aggressive Social Behavior Overall

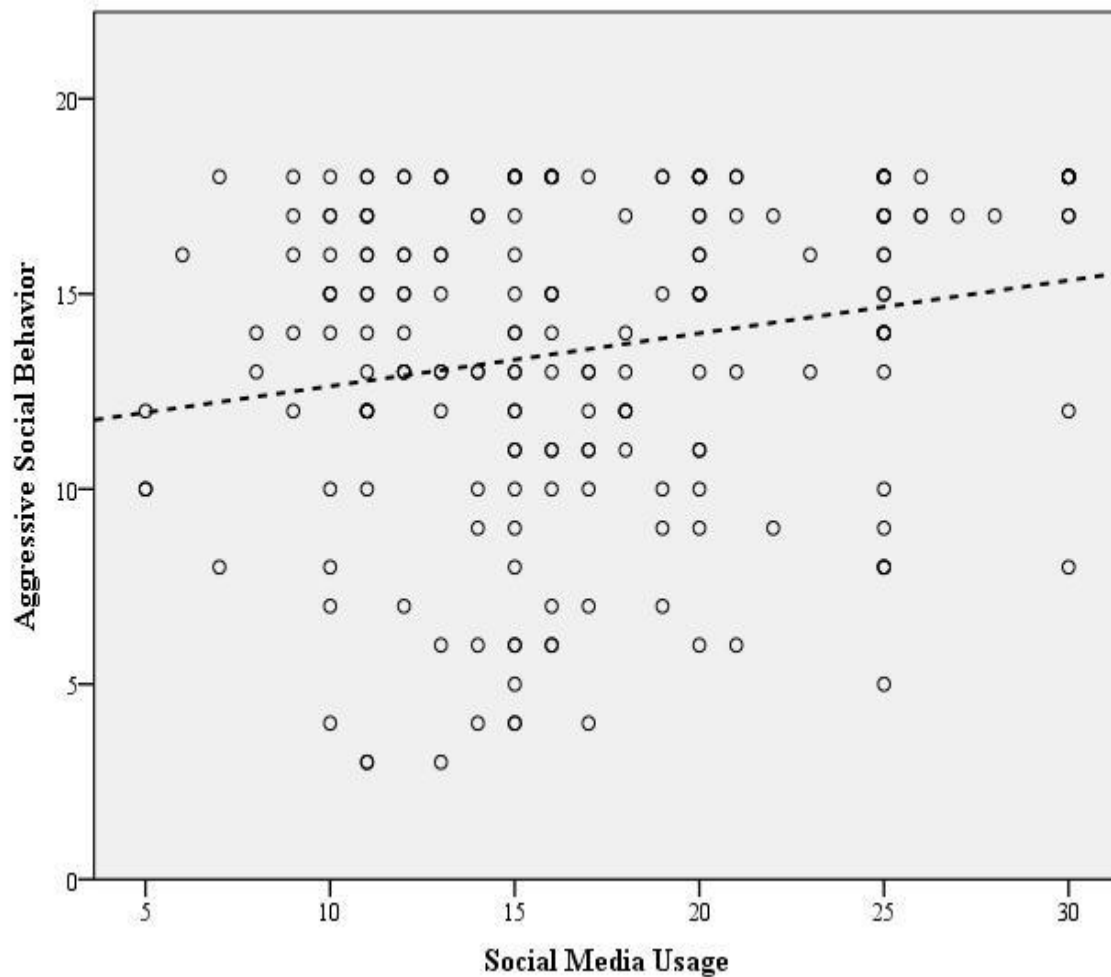


Figure 2 indicates a stronger Pearson correlation between social media usage and aggressive social behavior ($r = .20, p = .004$). This indicates that as social media usage went up, aggressive social behavior also went up.

Table 8 shows the overall Spearman's rho correlations between social media types and types of aggressive social behavior.

Table 8 Spearman's Rho Correlation Between Social Media Usage and Aggressive Social Behavior

Aggressive Social Behavior	Type of Social Media Usage				
	Facebook	Instagram	SnapChat	Twitter	Youtube
Q15: Ever used SM to read article or view video where 2 or more people were fighting?	0.044	0.134	0.110	0.059	.148*
Q16: Ever used SM to read article or view video where someone was being bullied at school?	0.092	.242**	0.104	0.073	0.107
Q18: Ever tried or seen someone perform a dangerous stunt in public?	0.054	0.114	0.001	0.008	.263**

** Significant at the .01 level.

* Significant at the .05 level.

In Table 8, Spearman's rho (r) values show that all three types of aggressive social behavior had statistically significant correlations with social media usage:

- There was a statistically significant positive correlation ($r = .242, p < .001$) between Instagram usage and reading articles or viewing videos where someone was being bullied at school, meaning as Instagram usage went up, reading articles or viewing videos where someone was being bullied at school also went up.
- There was a statistically significant positive correlation ($r = .148, p = .032$) between YouTube usage and reading articles or viewing videos where two or more people were fighting, meaning as YouTube usage went up, reading articles or viewing videos where two or more people were fighting also went up.
- There was a statistically significant positive correlation ($r = .263, p < .001$) between YouTube usage and trying or seeing someone perform a dangerous stunt

in public, meaning as YouTube usage went up, trying or seeing someone perform a dangerous stunt in public also went up.

Research Question 2 (RQ2) stated the hypothesis that there is a statistically significant relationship between social media usage and aggressive social behavior of Muslim adolescents who live in Saudi Arabia or the United States (H1_{R2}). A review of the results in Figure 2 and Table 8 suggests there is evidence to reject the null hypothesis and accept the hypothesis H1_{R2}.

Lastly, Research Question 3 (RQ3) asked if the relationship between social media usage and political activity, or between social media usage and aggressive social behavior, is affected by gender, age or location. Using the composite variables, Table 9 shows the Pearson correlations between social media usage and political activity and aggressive social behavior for gender, location and age groups.

Table 9 Pearson Correlation With Social Media (SM) Usage

		Correlation Between SM Usage and:		
		Political Activity	Aggressive Social Behavior	Sample Size (n)
Gender	Male	0.143	0.260**	135
	Female	0.044	0.077	74
Location	Saudia Arabia	0.157*	0.196*	170
	USA	0.099	0.399*	39
Age Group	12 to 14	0.208	0.208	63
	15 to 17	0.065	0.212	57
	18 to 19	0.022	0.196	89

** Significant at the .01 level (2-tailed).

* Significant at the .05 level (2-tailed).

Table 9 Pearson correlation values indicated the following significant results:

- Gender had a statistically significant impact on the relationship between social media usage and aggressive social behavior. Specifically, the Pearson correlation was positive and significant for males ($r = .260$, $p = .002$), but was not significant for females. Gender did not have a significant impact on the relationship between social media usage and political activity.
- Location had a statistically significant and positive impact on the relationship between social media usage and both political activity and aggressive social behavior.

- For political activity, the relationship was significant for Saudi Arabia ($r = .157, p = .040$), but not for the United States.
- For aggressive social behavior, the relationship was significant for both Saudi Arabia ($r = .196, p = .011$) and the United States ($r = .399, p = .012$).
- Age did not have a statistically significant effect on the relationship between social media usage and either political activity or aggressive social behavior.

Research Question 3(RQ3) stated the hypothesis that age, gender and location have a statistically significant impact on the relationship between social media usage and political activity, and between social media usage and aggressive social behavior (H1_{R3}). A review of the results in Table 9 suggests there is sufficient evidence to reject the null hypothesis and accept the hypothesis H1_{R3}.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY AND DISCUSSION

The aim of this study was to investigate the impact of social media on the political activity and aggressive social behaviors of Muslim adolescents living in the urban areas of Atlanta, Georgia and Riyadh, Saudi Arabia.

Summary of the Study

This study identified the impact of each type of social media usage (Facebook, Instagram, SnapChat, Twitter and YouTube) on the various types of political activity of Muslim adolescents living in Saudi Arabia and the United States. This study also examined if the relationship between social media usage and political activity, or between social media usage and aggressive social behavior, is affected by gender, age or location. An analysis of this study suggests a strong association between usage of social media and political activity among Muslim adolescents living in Saudi Arabia and the United States. This study shows that there is a statistically significant relationship between social media usage and political activity. According to the analysis, at least one of the social media types has an impact on at least one of the various political activities. Overall, a

statistically significant positive relationship was found between the usage of one or more types of social media and one or more of the various political activities. Moreover, the analysis found a statistically significant relationship between social media usage and aggressive social behavior among Muslim adolescents living in Saudi Arabia and the United States.

The findings of this study provide evidence that at least one of the social media types had an impact on at least one of the types of aggressive social behavior. The study found that all three types of aggressive social behavior showed statistically significant positive correlations.

This study also examined whether age, gender or location had a statistically significant impact on the relationship between social media usage and political activity, or the relationship between social media usage and aggressive social behavior. The findings of this study showed a significant association. Analysis of the data showed that at least one of the demographic variables had a significant impact on the relationship between usage of social media and political activity or aggressive social behavior.

Gender was found to have a statistically significant impact on the association between social media usage and aggressive social behavior. Location had a statistically significant impact on the association between social media usage and both political activity and aggressive social behavior. Age, by contrast, did not impact either relationship.

Implications of this Study

Social media's importance cannot be denied in any country nowadays. Its importance at the social level is acknowledged by all segments of communities, and various political movements started to device social media specific policy to spread their political agendas. It is a clear indication that how political activists and leaders tried to use social media to magnify the political movements and their implications during Arab Spring. The recent wave of ethnic protests in the Southern part of United States had adverse effects on social media usage. The researchers investigated the clear connection between negative attitudes of individuals with the level of usability of social media. The Arab Spring clearly indicated that open usage of social media fueled the fire of anger and enmity between various stakeholders. Social media was found to increase the level of anger among political activists , and many political movements resulted in the promotion of militancy and subsequent civil wars.

Considering all these aspects illustrated in this study, it is one of the ways to suggest the implementation of social media management and regulation at the state level. For instance, Saudi Arabia's clear policy of regulating the social media at governmental level can be a point of further research. The information uploaded by social media may be first screened by authorities before it becomes public. There are certain business aspects which are to be considered in suggesting such regulatory policy. The fact of the matter is that despite the positive aspects of social media, it is important to spread its weak points. These social media websites have developed an encrypted web-based system to facilitate business processes. However, most of these social media companies

have their headquarters based in the United States which is no doubt a liberal democracy. The management of social media considers it important to protect the right of information and their business interests. The US liberal policy facilitates them to promote this concept and business model. There can be other models of mass media or social media regulation at the state level which can be acceptable to human rights organizations as well as national security experts of concerned countries. Particularly, the countries which are not developed and their population is not as mature as the educated community of developed countries, need time to educate their citizens about avoiding negative usage of social media.

The regulation of social media can help control terrorist activity and the ability of lawless individuals to carry out inhuman activity. The recent history indicates that terrorism and acts of violence had hit the entire world in one way or other. The tackling of terrorism is a matter of concern for every country, and these lawless elements may use technology and social media to spread their propaganda. There are many countries who are trying to deal with this problem covertly and secretly. But, terrorism is a real time challenge and threat to the entire globe and every human being. Every human being's security is most important and it is far more important than the business interests of a social media incorporate. The global and regional countries have to consider the regulation of social media by the mutual corporation. This study can be presented as a secondary source to develop an adequate regulatory framework and it can be combined with first-hand information acquired by concerned authorities.

The findings of this study suggest that social media can lead to aggressive behavior, and therefore it follows that aggressiveness can possibly be reduced if social media applications are able set certain boundaries aimed at curbing excessive use of social media.

In addition, this study can help social workers facilitate the Saudi and American governments' promotion and implementation of policies and regulations for Muslim adolescents who frequently use social media. These policies might be better informed if they were to be based on the social media use trends that have been explained in this study.

In order to curb aggressive behavior, the findings of this study suggest that certain social media content should be properly examined by social media managers before being disseminated. Violent content should not be made available, and certainly not to certain age groups. These varying types of violent content might affect the behavioral intentions of adolescent users. Social work professionals should make the recommendation that the government of Saudi Arabia create a department that only works with and regulates social media and websites, in order to efficiently and comprehensively crosscheck possible violent or aggressive published content.

Future research could aim to compare Hollywood's age-tiered access to content and social media's nearly limitless access to content. Such research could investigate how to implement correlated age coding and boundaries for the materials they sponsor or allow on their platforms.

In effort to contain the impact of Muslim adolescents on political activity, a corrective approach should be taken to incorporate both the Muslim and non-Muslim perspective in terms of how they can influence Muslim adolescents to express aggressive social behavior through social media usage. Information on this should further influence the direction of research, by providing a platform to test impact of deviant behavior based on age, gender and location. This future study will help study how religion conversion, beliefs and practices can play a role in aggressive social behavior through social media practice. The political realities and relationships between the US and Saudi Arabia must be taken into account when looking on how to control social media use. This way, it makes it possible to observe how aggressive social behavior manifests itself, based on gender factors.

A correlation of the variables and impacts should help determine findings of the study above, on the basis that the limitations of the overall study can help provide substantial information on the impact of age in necessitating aggressive social behavior. Inclusivity of other test variables outside age, gender and location can best propose and advice additional policies, which may later stronger foundations in terms of how to properly examine the patterns of social media usage. As a result, it will be the responsibility of the social media managers to come up with a social media guideline, to control what content should be made available to adolescents, without affecting their behavioral intentions.

APPENDIX A
INTRODUCTION LETTER

DATE

Dear Students and Parents

My name is Ghadah Bin Humaid, I am from the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and I am a Graduate Student at Clark Atlanta University. I want to research how social media (Facebook, SnapChat, Twitter) have influenced the way you communicate and exchange information. I also want to know if social networking has influenced your behaviors both positive and negative. I am looking for teenagers between the ages of 12-19, who are Muslim . You are receiving this letter because you reside in the Atlanta area and attend schools or mosques in this area.

If you choose to participate in this survey you will need to complete a questionnaire, and a permission form. The questionnaire should only take 15 minutes to complete. Your responses will be respected and will not be shared with your parents, teachers, or other officials. Your personal information and all answer sheets will be sealed in a locked box. Only my professor and myself will be able to access this information.

Thank you for your time,

Ghadah BinHumaid, B.A.

Graduate Student of Social Work

School of Social Work

Youseung Kim, Ph.D., MSW

Assistant Professor & Thesis Chair

School of Social Work

APPENDIX B
CONSENT FORM

The Impact of Social Media Sites of Arab and Muslim Adolescents: A
Comparison between the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the United States of America.

You are invited to be in a research study that investigates the how adolescents use social networks and their reaction to the images they view online. You were selected as a possible participant because you are a Muslim adolescent, between the ages of 12-19, who resides in the Atlanta and/or Riyadh metropolitan areas. We ask that you read this form and ask any questions you may have before agreeing to be in the study. This study will be conducted by the School of Social Work at Clark Atlanta University.

Background Information

The purpose of this study is to investigate the impact of social media on the behaviors, cognition, and acts of violence committed by Muslim adolescents who resided in the United States of America and in Gulf Coast Countries (GCC) countries. The study will examine the changing attitudes regarding online communication and social networks used. Additional details regarding the potential influence of social media interactions have on acts of violence and social misbehavior committed by Muslim youth.

Procedures

If you agree to be in this study, we would ask you to do the following things. You will be asked to complete this consent form and complete the demographics questionnaire, containing 30 questions. The questionnaire should not exceed 15 minutes to complete. You will need to return your completed survey to Researcher.

Risks and Benefits of Being in the Study

The study doesn't have any direct physical or psychological risks. Participants will be asked to answer questions. They will be given a coded survey and demographics form, which will not contain their personal information. The names of the participants will remain separate. Participants will not have to submit any bodily fluid or undergo any psychological tests as part of this study. The benefits to participation are: Participants will help to contribute to the limited research that focuses on Arab and Muslim adolescents in their daily interactions with one another. Secondly, it will help researchers to understand the influence of the content on social media and how this is could explain the changes in social norms and behaviors of this generation.

Confidentiality

The records of this study will be kept private. In any sort of report we might publish, we will not include any information that will make it possible to identify a participant. Research records will be kept in a locked file; only the researchers will have access to the records. The records collected will be kept for a period up to 12 years, upon which they will be shredded and data records will be erased.

Voluntary Nature of the Study

Your decision whether or not to participate will not affect your current or future relations with the researcher, or Clark Atlanta University. Your participation in this study is completely voluntary. You have the freedom to withdraw at any time without affecting those relationships previously identified. If you decide to withdrawal your answers will not be counted in the final written report, but will be retained for a period not to exceed 12 years. If you decide to withdrawal, you can contact the researcher via phone or email as indicated at the bottom of this page.

Contacts and Questions:

The primary researcher conducting this study is Ghadah Bin Humaid. You may ask any questions you have now. If you have questions later about the research, you may contact the researcher at: Phone: 470-786-2472, Email: G-BINHUMAID@hotmail.com. Her academic advisor is Dr. Youseung Kim, MSW at: Phone: 404-880-8450, Email: ykim@cau.edu. If you have any questions now, or later, related to the integrity of the

research, the rights of research subjects, you are encouraged to contact Dr. Georgianna Bolden at the Office of Sponsored Programs (404) 880-6979 or Dr. Paul I. Musey, (404) 880-6829 at Clark Atlanta University.

You will be given a copy of this form to keep for your records.

Statement of Consent: I have read the above information. I asked questions and have received answers. I consent to participate in the study.

Signature _____ Date: _____

Signature or Parent of Guardian _____ Date: _____

Signature of Investigator _____ Date: _____

NOTE: Children under the age of eight (8) require the permission of their parent(s) or legal guardians to participate in any type of research; those over the age of eight (8) require permission from their parent(s)/legal guardian, in addition to their Assent to participation.

PLEASE consider the attainment of informed consent as a process within the research design that requires your attention. The consent/assent forms that are approved by the IRB committee will be stamped as such and returned to the researcher and must be utilized throughout the research study.

APPENDIX C
DEMOGRAPHICS FORM

CODE: _____

INSTRUCTIONS: Please circle the best response for each question. Some questions ask for one answer and some will ask for more than one response.

Background Questions

- 1) What is your gender? (Please circle one)
 - a. Female
 - b. Male

 - 2) What is your age? (Please circle one)
 - a. 12
 - b. 13
 - c. 14
 - d. 15
 - e. 16
 - f. 17
 - g. 18
 - h. 19

 - 3) What is your current grade level? (Please circle one)
 - a. 7th
 - b. 8th
 - c. 9th
 - d. 10th
 - e. 11th
 - f. 12th
 - g. College

 - 4) What is your ethnic background? (Please circle as many as apply)
 - a. Arab/Middle Eastern
 - b. African American/Black
 - c. Asian
 - d. South and Southeast Asian
 - e. Caucasian/ White
 - f. Hispanic/ Latino
 - g. Other (Please Specify)
-

- 5) What is your geographic background? If you have a passport which country or countries do you hold citizenship?
- Arab/Middle East (You are from or have parents from a Middle Eastern country)
 - Africa (North and Central Africa, You are from or have parents from Cameroon to Somalia and up to Egypt)
 - Africa (South, You are from or have parents from Equatorial Guinea to South Africa)
 - Asia (North and Central, You are from or have parents from Turkey to Afghanistan and up to Mongolia)
 - Asia (South and Eastern, You are from or have parents from Pakistan to Polynesian Islands)
 - Europe (You are from or have parents from a European country)
 - North America (You are from or have parents from Canada to Panama)
 - South America (You are from or have parents from Columbia to Chile)
 - Other (Please list)_____
- 6) Which religion do you practice?
- Islam
 - Christianity
 - Judaism
 - Other (Please Specify) _____
- 7) How many hours a day do you spend using your smartphone or tablet?
- 1-3 hours
 - 3-6 hours
 - 6-9 hours
 - 9 or more hours
- 8) What applications do you use most often? (Circle all that apply)
- Facebook
 - Instagram
 - Podcast
 - SnapChat
 - Twitter
 - WhatsApp
 - YouTube
 - Other Blogs
 - Other Vlogs
 - Other Internet forums

- 9) Please indicate how often you check the following social media sites? (Place an X in the box for each)

Frequency	Facebook	Instagram	Snap Chat	Twitter	YouTube
Daily					
Once or twice a week					
Every few weeks					
Once or twice a Month					
Every few months					
Never					

- 10) Who do you communicate with when you are using social media? (Circle all that apply)
- Friends
 - Classmates
 - Family members
 - Strangers with similar interest
 - Anyone online
 - Myself
- 11) When you get on a social media site do you? (Circle all that apply)
- Watch videos
 - Look at pictures
 - Post information
 - Read information posted by others
 - Comment on the pages or opinions of others
- 12) Have you ever used social media sites to read an article or viewed a video about politics in the United States?
- Daily
 - Once or twice a week

- c. Every few weeks
- d. Once or twice a month
- e. Every few months
- f. Never

13) Have you ever used social media sites to read an article or viewed a video about politics in the Middle East?

- a. Daily
- b. Once or twice a week
- c. Every few weeks
- d. Once or twice a month
- e. Every few months
- f. Never

14) Have you ever used social media sites to read an article or viewed a video about social justice or social unrest?

- a. Daily
- b. Once or twice a week
- c. Every few weeks
- d. Once or twice a month
- e. Every few months
- f. Never

15) Have you ever used social media sites to read an article or viewed a video where two or more people were fighting?

- a. Daily
- b. Once or twice a week
- c. Every few weeks
- d. Once or twice a month
- e. Every few months
- f. Never

16) Have you ever used social media sites to read an article or viewed a video where someone was being bullied in a school?

- a. Daily
- b. Once or twice a week
- c. Every few weeks
- d. Once or twice a month
- e. Every few months
- f. Never

- 17) Have you ever used social media sites to read an article or viewed a video where someone was protesting a government?
- a. Daily
 - b. Once or twice a week
 - c. Every few weeks
 - d. Once or twice a month
 - e. Every few months
 - f. Never
- 18) Have you ever tried or seen someone perform a dangerous stunt in public?
- a. Daily
 - b. Once or twice a week
 - c. Every few weeks
 - d. Once or twice a month
 - e. Every few months
 - f. Never

Section 2- Please indicate how often you do the following by circling one response.

- 19) If I see a political video or read a political argument, I will share it with others online.
All the time / Sometimes/ Rarely /Never
- 20) If I see someone breaking the law, I will consider doing the same act soon.
All the time / Sometimes/ Rarely /Never
- 21) I will research an event that is happening overseas or in another community and try to raise awareness with others about that event.
All the time / Sometimes/ Rarely /Never
- 22) I will continue to use a social media site even if my parents say I can't.
All the time / Sometimes/ Rarely /Never
- 23) I look for stories online that people say are too political.

All the time / Sometimes/ Rarely /Never

24) I will post a blog or vlog on social media site where I discuss my opinion on an issue.

All the time / Sometimes/ Rarely /Never

25) I look for stories online that people say are bad for society.

All the time / Sometimes/ Rarely /Never

26) I look for stories online that people say are a waste of time.

All the time / Sometimes/ Rarely /Never

27) In the last 6 months, have you done any of the following? (Circle all that apply)

- a. I have been told to leave a classroom.
- b. I have served time ISS (In-School Suspension) or the Principal's office.
- c. I have had my phone or tablet taken away from me for bad behavior.
- d. I have been on punishment for acting out in public.
- e. I have been arrested or held by security.
- f. I have been asked to join or look up information about a gang.
- g. I have been asked to join or look up information about a political group.

Thank you for your responses!

CODE: _____

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