Investigating the role of social media in the formation of intellectual deviation in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

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Investigating the Role of Social Media in the Formation of Intellectual Deviation in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

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ABSTRACT

Over the last few years, social media have witnessed a huge demand and use by all segments of modern society, especially the younger generation. Such platforms have become tools for exchanging ideas and opinions and forums for discussion. Generations which, in contrast to their predecessors, have been initiated into a society replete with social media. As such, these generations have had social media shape their lives and mould their way of understanding the world around them, and have also been earmarked for the religious terrorism and extremism which has resulted in shocking events such as 9/11, the Arab Spring, and the dawn of violent religious terrorists, such as ISIS (Jenkins, 2011).

This research will aim to combine these two facets of modern day life and assess how they influence and interact with one another in the minds of Saudi Arabia's youth. This is done by identifying the role and influence of social media on intellectual deviation: terrorism in Saudi Arabia and understanding its causes and explaining the part that social learning theory has in facilitating the recruitment of individuals through popular social media in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA). Social learning theory is effective in showing how relatives and friends are influenced by social media and allows us to determine whether these social platforms contribute to the propagation of terrorism, especially amongst close-groups.

A mixed methods approach is used to collect qualitative and quantitative data. The researcher conducted interviews with two official investigators in the Saudi Counter Terrorism Unit (CTU) and interviews with one of the families affected by the terrorist groups. The study also received 250 separate questionnaire replies from the general public by electronic survey to elicit their opinions and attitudes towards the phenomenon of terrorism. In addition, 50 questionnaires were received from investigators in the Saudi Public Prosecution Service and also from experts in criminology at Naif University, KSA.

The results of the current study indicate that important factors are: the recruitment of relatives and friends, family environment control, and the need for educational curriculum reform. This researcher also highlights the significance of activating community participation regarding the promotion of concepts of intellectual security through community awareness and internet monitoring. Such monitoring includes especially open websites, electronic games which target young minds and particularly combat games. Our

analysis shows that most of those who joined extremist groups were able to persuade a relative or friend to join them or support them at home through propaganda or financial support.

Our data analysis covers factors such as age and gender tests; independent samples, T-Tests, the analysis of variance (ANOVA) and multiple comparisons with Least Significant Difference (LSD). The researcher concludes that social media usage and terrorism factors cannot be separated from each other and gives some recommendations for further research in this domain, particularly in the area of encrypted languages which are heavily utilised among terrorist groups. Further discourse analyses should be carried out in this rich and important research domain.

DECLARATION

I, Ibrahim ALSaab, declare that this thesis entitled, Social Media and intellectual deviation: Terrorism in Saudi Arabia, was carried out by me and it is a record of my own research effort. This thesis is my own work. I hereby declare that this thesis submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Doctorate of Philosophy of the University of Limerick.

Signed _____   Date_____

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Publications Paper and Conferences

1- AlSaab, I. and Murray, L. (2018) 'The Linguistic Characteristics of social media and intellectual delinquency (terrorism) in Saudi Arabia from Practitioners' Perspectives', *Canadian International Journal of Social Science and Education,*Toronto,Canada:volume 18,issn 2356-847X .

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AQAP: Al-Qaeda on the Arabian Peninsula.

AQ : Al-Qaeda Organization

CIA: Central intelligence agency in United States.

CTU: Counter Terrorism Unit

ETA: separatists in Spain and the Chechen terrorists in Chechnya.

FBI: Federal Bureau of Investigation.

FOT: Family of terrorist.

FARC: Marxist-Leninist organization in Columbia.

HRH: His or Her Royal Highness.

ISIS: Islamic State of Iraq and Syria.

ISIL: Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant.

Investigator: specialists in the national security department at the Saudi Public Prosecution

KSA: Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

MMR: Mixed method research.

NAUSS: Naif Arab University of Security Sciences.

PUH: Prophet Muhammad (Peace be upon him).

SPP: Saudi Public Prosecution.

SNS: Social Network Service.

SM : Social Media

UL: University of Limerick.

CHAPTER 1- BACKGROUND TO THE CURRENT STUDY

The twentieth century is a digital era that witnessed an unprecedented proliferation of computers, mobile phones and other communication devices, which some parties exploited and misused for illegal purposes, including acts of terrorism. The younger generation, in particular, uses such tools for exchanging ideas and opinions in different forums, which could influence their intellectual understanding and structure. Social media may be the easiest and quickest way for proselytising and recruiting some supporters to the same terrorist-based ideas, becoming equally a powerful tool for change, decision-making and the formation of public intellectuality.

This being said, young people seem to be more vulnerable to such tools since they find it very difficult to distinguish between what is truth and what is falsehood, what is right and wrong, producing unwanted actions, extremism and terrorism. These deviant actions and behaviours have been described by Aseiry (2003) who gave some examples such as murders, bombing, intimidation and threats to security and peace.

The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia gives great importance to the issue of intellectual deviation at all internal and external levels in order to combat terrorism, amongst other things (Baitalmal, 2016).The causes of such deviation can be monitored through the close surveillance of suspicious websites and cooperation with international organizations. In addition to this, campaigns on the internet with the aim of increasing awareness about terrorism to stop young people from joining prohibited organizations. It may be also taken into consideration the great role of education in promoting the concepts of intellectual security and other organizations of counter terrorism in Saudi Arabia. For example Boucek (2008) indicates that: "to eradicate support for extremism is not one to be waged solely as a security contest but as one that will require a concerted effort by the entire state apparatus, from schools and mosques, to local and provincial administrations, the mass media, and social service providers and organizations"(p.6).

It is important to discuss the fact that the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia is currently battling terrorism. According to Meijer (2012), Saudi Arabia's history of combating terrorism dates back to the foundation of the Saudi Arabian state itself, by Ibn 'Abd al-'Aziz Saud in 1902. In Saudi Arabia, these efforts are known as the "struggle against extremism"; efforts which began with the Saudi government's response to the Ikhwan Revolt from 1927-1930.

Counter terrorism measures also had to be taken by Saudi Arabia when the Grand Mosque in Mecca was seized by Juhayman al-Utaybi and his group in 1979. More terrorist attacks took place in 2003, and since then Saudi Advisory Committees have set up rehabilitation programs in prisons in order to rehabilitate 'extremists'. In more recent times, a campaign has been established in Saudi Arabia to create "intellectual security" (ibid).

Similarly, to many other countries, Saudi Arabia´s "war on terror" has enabled the Saudi government to gain more control over the population. Resistance against "deviation" is the main method by which the Saudi Arabian government have sought to control the mind of its citizens. They continued battle waged against extremism has provided the Saudi state and the 'ulama' with new opportunities to infiltrate their tentacles deeper into the fabric of Saudi society and establish novel methods of controlling the status quo. One example of this is the "intellectual security" (called in Arabic *Al-Amn Al-Fikri*) campaign, created in 2007, which targets Saudi society in its entirety (Meijer 2012).

As part of this campaign, older religious terms have been modified and updated to suit a modern audience. "Science" has been employed to facilitate this purpose and the Nayif Chair for Intellectual Security Studies has been employed as part of the organisation of the programme. A considerable number of seminars and workshops have been devised to be offered to students and staff in universities, students and teachers in high schools, and family counselling providers, in addition to social workers. These educational programmes state that they will equip individuals with the ability to detect and eliminate deviation in all societal spheres (ibid).

As part of this campaign, older religious terms have been modified and updated to suit a modern audience. "Science" has been employed to facilitate this purpose and the Nayif Chair for Intellectual Security Studies has been employed as part of the organisation of the programme. A considerable number of seminars and workshops have been devised to be offered to students and staff in universities, students and teachers in high schools, and family counselling providers, in addition to social workers. These educational programmes state that they will equip individuals with the ability to detect and eliminate deviation in all societal spheres.

The influence of social media is embedded in the hidden ideology which is intended to recruit young people and sympathizers to reach specific aims. That ideology is redesigned and distorted as will be discussed in detail in the second chapter of this thesis.

Elsewhere, the dawn of the twenty-first century has also been remarkable for the upsurge in religious terrorism and extremism which has resulted in shocking events such as 9/11, the Arab Spring, and the dawn of violent religious terrorists, such as ISIS (Jenkins, 2011). Jenkins (ibid) is not alone in describing these events, experts in this area state that the evolution of terrorism is a feature of continuity as opposed to change; that mass-casualty bomb attacks have been a popular method of terrorism, and that radical extremism has always motivated terrorists (Quillen, 2002). Mohammad Feroz (2018) believes that terrorism is the primary challenge facing all countries today globally. Across the world, terrorism is the source of much fear, pain and suffering among innocent populations. Afghanistan is a country which experiences the destructive outcome of terrorism. Al-Qaeda is the most significant terrorist group emanating from the Middle East. This group was created in Peshawar Pakistan on the 11th August 1988. Al-Qaeda are a terrorist organization which have perpetrated terrorist attacks all over the world. The most notorious of all of these attacks is the September 11 attacks in America, leading to the deaths of many innocent victims. Mohammed (ibid) states that terrorist groups such as Al-Qaeda and ISIS exploit religious motives for their overall goals. They encourage members to be "activists" and persuade them to be a "martyr", without understanding the true concept of "martyrdom". Quartermaine (2016) argues that there is no other justification which makes death so attractive.

Our particular research aims to combine these multiple facets of modern day life and to assess how they influence and interact with one another in the minds of some Saudi Arabian youths. Social learning theory, for instance, has great importance in explaining the process of the expansion of terrorist organizations. Social learning theory states that individuals can learn deviant behaviour from major groups (Akers *et el*, 2016). Taking this into consideration, it can be concluded that the spread of easy-to-use apps can contribute largely to the deviant behaviour learned from major groups. In terms of the learning process, Freiburger and Crane (2008) argue that such behaviour is no different than any other type of learning, meaning it might go as smoothly and effectively as any normal learning would possibly go. Akers *et el* (2016) indicate that it is imperative to inspect the social context of terrorists' practices to realize the influence of technology on their activities. Akers *et el*,(ibid) conclude that social learning theory comes into play when learning takes place within close-groups such as relatives and friends in particular and as

explained earlier, here appears the gap in the available literature, which this study attempts to address and to fill.

This chapter presents the background to this study, and it also explains the research significance, knowledge gap and objectives in order to help us better address the main research questions of this study. The questions themselves are also presented and discussed. Furthermore, there is an overview of Saudi Arabia, the Saudi Public Prosecution service and Naif Arab University of Security Sciences in order to provide a better and clearer understanding of our research context. The final part shows the layout and structure of the thesis.

1-1 Background of the Study

This research project examines the ideology of terrorism. Previous research has shown that variations between radicalism, extremism, and terrorism have vanished in recent years (Robin Thompson, 2011b). Radicalization is a process by which individuals are exposed to extreme ideas and ideological messages, usually in relation to religious interpretations; these views often encourage delinquent behaviours in order to advance these extreme ideas (Bartlett and Miller, 2012). The most powerful motivators behind radicalization are socio-economic inequalities, oppression, discrimination and frustration with governmental bodies. It is possible for radicalization to advance to extremism. This is most clearly evident when radicalized individuals begin to employ violence and take part in illegal activities; for example, terrorism (ibid). Usually, their main aim is to bring about social, political and economic change. Movements toward extreme violence within these groups changes the group from what was initially a political movement into a terror movement (Bartlett *et el*, 2012). The history of terrorism in Saudi Arabia commences in the 1880s and reached its pinnacle with the Battle of Sibila in 1929; in addition to several other events in recent years. A central issue behind the Battle of Sibila in 1929 was the controversy concerning the concept of jihad as Holy War. Jihad is defined in many different ways throughout the Islamic world (AlMaawi, 2016). Lacroix (2011) states that many who wished to advance Islam considered jihad as the conquering of new territory for Islam; however, the Saudi Arabian view was that jihad meant developing stronger unity between territories which were already united. These alternating interpretations of the concept of jihad were strongly influenced by ideologically grounded Islamic interpretations. The creation of al-Qa'ida and their attempts to begin insurgency in Saudi Arabia (Thomas Hegghammer, 2010), highlights the origins of Osama bin Laden's declaration of jihad in

1996. Furthermore, understanding this background also explains the reasons behind al-Qa'ida's campaigns in Saudi Arabia from 1996 to 2002, in addition to the causes and development of the group's activities; for further information please refer to "al-Qa'ida on the Arabian Peninsula" (AQAP) from 2003 to 2006 (Thomas Hegghammer, 2010). Hegghammer (ibid) states that although there is a consensus that Saudi Arabia is an "al-Qa'ida country," and in spite of what has happened in Yemen, the jihad in Saudi Arabia can be considered to be a total failure thus far. There were no terrorist operations in Saudi Arabia in the late 1990s due to the fact that Bin Laden's infrastructure was too weak in this location (Hegghammer, 2008). Saudi Arabia's foreign relations with the U.S.A. were damaged post the 9/11 terror attacks in 2001; this was due partially to the reality that 15 of the 19 suicide bombers involved were Saudi Arabians. In spite of the Saudi monarchy's close connections to the West, the majority of the unofficial Islamic religious establishment encourages anti-Americanism and Islamic militancy, this group has a profound influence on Islamic societies (Saudi news, 2018). Prados and Blanchard (2007) reported that after the US-led war on Iraq, the U.S.A. withdrew its military forces stationed in Saudi Arabia in August 2003. The U.S.A had maintained military forces in Saudi Arabia for ten years before this decision was taken; their presence had always been highly controversial in such a strongly conservative Islamic country. One of the most influential reasons provided for the 9/11 attacks by Osama bin Laden was the very presence of these American military troops in Medina and Mecca; the two holiest cities in Islam. On May 12, 2003, suicide bombers killed 34 people, including 8 Americans, at housing compounds for Westerners in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia. Al-Qaeda was suspected (Prados, 2005). Saudi Arabia's commitment to anti-terrorist measures was questioned by the U.S.A and several other countries. The American Congress also highlighted rumours concerning Saudi Arabia's alleged financing of terrorist organizations (Blanchard & Prados, 2007). Saudi Arabia: terrorist financing issues. Library of Congress Washington DC Congressional Research Service. The Saudi government arrested a large quantity of suspected terrorists; however, overall not much was done to limit Islamic militancy in the Kingdom. A spate of attacks occurred against Westerners in 2003 and 2004 (Boucek, 2008).

In this context, Researchers and politicians had different views on the causes of intellectual deviation. Some of them attributed it to economic statuses such as poverty and unemployment. However, the validity of this view is weakened by the fact that intellectual deviation does not only exist among the poor and the unemployed and not only in poor

countries. It is found among rich people and wealthy countries as well. In recent decades, the first ideological extremism accompanied by excessive violence that appeared blatantly was in the Juhayman's group who occupied the honourable Kaaba and shed blood in it on the first of the sacred month of Muharram in the year 1400 AH. They attacked the sanctity of place and time in a state that raised the slogan of monotheism and the application of Sharia. Their motivation was not the economic issue; it was a complete misunderstanding. Likewise, the Takfir and Hijra groups that appeared inside the Egyptian prisons did not emerge because of poverty alone but also injustice, torture, and wrong thinking. Some of them attributed this to educational, psychological, social, and intellectual reasons. However, the investigation is a comprehensive view of why all these reasons had a role in creating intellectual extremism and expanding its circle (Daghi, 2016).

The greatest threat to security is intellectual deviation. It is the start of a fall into the pit and astray from the right path. It is also the most serious intellectual deviation, with the most impact when done in the name of Islam. In addition, it is among the most serious challenges confronting the Islamic community is the spread of the occurrence of emerging intellectual deviation, apart from a moderation-oriented approach to the thought that was the main trigger of the beginnings of strife and war as various ideologies and deviant trends. Wali et al. (2020) conducted a study on the function of social media in the spreading of intellectual deviations. The primary findings indicate that Twitter, Snap Chat, and YouTube are the most popular social media platforms. The respondents confirmed that these media facilitate the development of intellectual deviations and that social networks are utilized to spread inaccurate information. The report advised using various techniques to monitor social media and restrict any sites that violate Islamic principles or Saudi culture.

The basis for establishing security and stability in a community is to safeguard young people's minds and ideas. Wali et al. (2020) point out that the most critical component of preserving safety is a healthy worldview and mental deviation. Its purpose is to spread cognitive beliefs, spiritual foundations, and ethical, societal, and standards of ethics. Without even a doubt, all psychological and mental abnormalities originate from such a distorted perspective. Since intellectual safety seems to be the only way of ensuring a country's security and stability, it's vital to maximize social media's capacity as just a tool for attaining both physical and social consistency. AlHamad and AlAmri, (2021) claim that both on an internally and externally level, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia places a high value

on intellectual safety, as demonstrated by Prince Faisal Bin Mishaal bin Saud bin Abdul-Aziz, who lately proffered "the intellectual safety prize" to all scientists, academics, scholars, and students, both men and women, to encourage the notion of intellectual stability.

1-2 Research Objectives

This study investigates the connection between the Linguistic Characteristics of social media and intellectual terrorism in Saudi Arabia, since the use of SNSs has spread extensively among young people in Saudi Arabia over the last few years. An additional goal is to examine the extent to which social media does disseminate intellectual influences and the way it promotes terrorism. Additionally, this study attempts to explore, the possible effective methods and ways of countering those social media and the deviant thoughts they disseminate resulting in terrorism. Finally, are there any statistically significant differences due to the variables of age, societal position and educational achievements, workplace, length of proselytization process, for example. In order to successfully these objectives, the following specific research questions have been formulated:

1-3 Research Questions

In this study, there is one primary research question and five sub-questions:

Primary question:

"What is the potential role of social media in the formation of intellectual deviation (Terrorism) in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia?"

Sub-questions:

In order to answer the primary question, the following sub-questions are to be investigated:

- What are the linguistic characteristics of terrorism which disseminate intellectual deviation via social media in Saudi Arabia?

- What is the role of social media in disseminating intellectual deviation?

- What is the role of the current reality of official and community organizations countering extremist thoughts disseminated on the social networking sites?

- What are the possible effective methods and ways of countering those social media and the deviation thoughts?

- Are there particular factors that are perceived to impact on social media usage in Saudi Arabia according to the variables of gender and age?

1-4 Overview of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia otherwise known in Arabic as "al-Mamlaka al-Arabiya as-Saudiya", a name coined from the ruling family's name, Al-Saud, is the homeland of the Arab people and historical birthplace of Islam. The Kingdom occupies about 850,000 square miles making it the largest State in the Middle east and the Arabian Peninsula (Lacey, 2011). Mufti (2000:p1) reported that geographically, Saudi Arabia borders many countries in the Middle east, flanking Jordan, Kuwait and Iraq borders in the North; Qatar and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) borders and the Persian Gulf in the east; the Aqaba Gulf and the Red Sea in the North-East and West respectively; Bahrain and Yemen borders in the South; and the Sultanate of Oman border in the South-East frontier. There are 14 administrative emirates which are spread over five main geographical regions, namely, Al-Wosttah region (Centre); Al-Sharghiyah region (East); Al-Janoob region (South); Hijaz region (also called "Algharbiah") sited in the West along the Red Sea and this region is composed of the holy cities of Makkah (Mecca) and Madinah (Medina), Jeddah (second largest city in Saudi Arabia) and Taif (also called the summer capital of Saudi Arabia); and the Al-Shamal region (North) (see and Figure 1.1). The capital city of Saudi Arabia is Riyadh which is the largest city in Saudi Arabia and is in the Najd province in the middle of the Kingdom (General Authority of Statistics, 2019).

figure 1. 1 Map of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (Gulf insider, 2017)

According to the general Authority of Statistics (2019) the population of Saudi Arabia at approximately 34.218 million, 12.1 million of whom are non-native citizens. The age

group that constitutes the largest proportion of the population is between 35-39, being composed of 42.9% female and 57.1% male due to the large number of male expatriates working in the country. WHO (2006) reported that contributing to this high number of male expatriates was the discovery of oil in the 1930s, when Saudi Arabia was rapidly transformed into a rich economic state which positively impacted the wellbeing of Saudi Arabia. In this regard, Walston, Al-Harbi and Al-Omar (2008) states that Saudi Arabia is a major force in the Middle east. Results of this economic progress are remarkable developments in the industry, healthcare, and economic sectors which eventually boosted the living standards of Saudi citizens (WHO, 2004). Such positive developments have contributed to the progressive migration from rural to urban areas, leading to urban population growth, for example, in Riyadh capital city where the population is estimated at 8.2 million (WHO, 2006; General Authority of Statistics, 2019). Given this circumstance, Saudi Arabia citizens have experienced some sociocultural transformation that reflects the lifestyle of the modern world while also preserving the traditional Arab-Islamic culture (WHO, 2002). Officially, Abdul-Aziz bin Saud (known as Ibn Saud in the West) founded the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia in 1932 (Al-Rasheed, 2010). The State religion is Islam which entails total submission to the will of Allah and practiced in accordance with the teachings of the Quran (Islam's holy book), whereas the official language is Arabic (ibid). Regarding Islam, the majority of the Saudi population subscribes to the Sunni Islamic doctrine, specifically the Hanbali Islamic school of thought (madhab). Owing to the presence of the two holiest sites in Islam situated in Makkah (Masjid al-Haram) and Medina (Al-Masjid al-Nabawi), the Kingdom is often referred to as "The Land of the Two Holy Mosques". Further, Saudi Arabia adopts a system of government which can be described as an Islamic total monarchy. Therefore, Islam practically influences almost every aspect of mundane and everyday life in Saudi Arabia and it is the main reference point for Saudi Arabian policy and politics (The Middle East Institute, 2009). Accordingly, Saudi Arabia's constitution follows the Shariah (Islamic Jurisprudence) in which the Quran and the Hadeeth (of Prophet Muhammad) are the main sources of legislation (Esposito, 2011). In the Saudi Arabian system of government, the Shura council convene meetings in consultation with Islamic scholars to deliberate on important state affairs in accordance with the standards of the Islamic Shariah (Harbi, 2014). Harbi (ibid) goes on to state that the Majlis al-Shura, or Consultative Council, is a legislative body that advises Saudi Arabia's King on important issues. The council currently has 150 members who are appointed by the King for four-year renewable terms. Based on their previous

experiences. Ali, Liu and Humedian (2004) report that many factors influence culture, including ethnicity, faith, educational attainment, economic status, and the environment. With respect to Saudi Arabia, the cultural norms entail a blend of Arab traditions and Islamic religious practices since Islam is the official State religion.

According to Livermore (2020) there are five basic pillars in Islam (i.e., believe in Allah and Prophet Muhammad, establish the prayer, give the zakat, fasting and performing the pilgrimage to Mecca for those with the ability) which shape Muslims culture and produce a sense of wellbeing, fulfilment, health and a source of guidance for them. Islam encourages education of both male and female in accordance with the injunctions from the Quran and direct teachings (traditions) of Prophet Muhammad (Koburtay *et el*, 2020). Indeed, centuries after the birth of Islam, we witness a huge shift in a learning culture in which the Islamic world became a centre of learning due to the establishment of schools, universities, and libraries which became known as the golden age, leading to outstanding scholarly contributions in the field of Astronomy, Physics, Art, Philosophy and Medicine, which are remarkable accomplishments of that era (Bassiouni,2012). In this regard, Falagas, Zarkadoulia and Samonis (2006) report that the Islamic Golden Age relates to an era in the history of Islam, which took place between the 8th century and the 13th century, during which the vast majority of Islamic nations were governed by caliphates and science. During this period, economic growth and cultural endeavours thrived. This era began with the rise to power of Abbasid caliph Harun al-Rashid (786–809) and with the creation of the House of Wisdom in Baghdad; in which, intellectuals from many different countries, and from a variety of cultural traditions, operated together to translate the world's known knowledge at that time into Arabic. Falagas et al. (ibid) goes further that throughout the Golden Age, the major Islamic capital cities of Baghdad, Cairo and the Spanish cities of Córdoba and Granada, were the most important centres intellectually for science, philosophy, medicine and education. Islamic rulers invested greatly in scholars. Some of the most well-known scholars and translators, for instance Hunayn ibn Ishaq, earned salaries equivalent to those of professional athletes in the modern world (today/in present time) (EL Ghazi & Bnini, 2020). It is often argued that many of the achievements of the Islamic Golden Age were founded on those made by the Egyptians, Hebrews, Persians, Greeks and Romans. As such, translators were invited to Baghdad, where scholars examined the past and generated the future. Their achievements led to developments in all sectors of science. The governors of Islamic Spain, in order to eclipse Baghdad, searched

for scholars who brought about innovations in the areas of science, medicine, technology, philosophy and art.

The Saudi Arabian education system has been revolutionised since its creation in 1925. Prior to this, education took place in mosques and Qur'anic Schools, where students were taught to write and read Arabic and to recite passages from the holy Qur'an (Alsharif, 2011;Wenr, 2020) However the current education system, was created by the Directorate of Education, who devised and installed the precursor to the current system in 1925 (Alsharif, 2011). Al-Harthi (2014) states that King Abdul-Aziz established the Directorate of Education prior to the unification of the whole country and the proclamation of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia in 1932. Alqassab (2020) indicates the creation of this education system highlights the King's emphasis on education, despite the fact that this was a newly established country which had to deal with many varied local and international situations. The Directorate of Education was tasked with the responsibility of creating schools and offices throughout Saudi Arabia. Alqassab (ibid) goes on to argue that the first public schools were opened in 1930; however, only male students could attend. The first school for girls (Dar al-Hanan School) opened in 1955 in Jeddah, and the first public secondary school for girls opened in 1964.

English is the only foreign language taught in Saudi Arabian schools. In response to complaints that not enough students were being trained to meet the demands of the petrochemical industry, English was first adopted as an educational subject in Saudi Arabia in the late 1950s. In 1957, the Ministry of Education convened the first educational conference to discuss concerns concerning the quantity and standard of education in the Kingdom, with the primary goal of expanding elementary, intermediate, and high school offerings (Elyas and Picard,2018). Al-Johani (2009) also highlighted that English was introduced in the 1930s, once oil had been discovered, but was only used within business settings. The Saudi government waited until the 1950s to introduce it as part of the educational syllabus. At the beginning, the English language was taught only in intermediate and secondary schools as a compulsory subject. Initially, the Saudi Arabian government was opposed to the teaching of English at elementary schools, due to the fear that learning English may affect a student's learning of Arabic. However, due to the importance of English, the education system evolved. Since 2010, English is taught in lower levels of schooling as well (starting from the 4th grade of elementary school, when

students are 10 years old). Following on from this description of the research setting, we will now look at the significance of our study and end with the main research questions.

1-5 Social Media in Saudi Arabia

Terrorist groups often target social media to communicate with and attract new potential followers of their ideologies (Hossain, 2015). Social networking sites receive considerable attention by Saudi Arabians, especially the social networking sites, YouTube, *WhatsApp*, *Instagram, Facebook, Twitter* and *Snapchat*. These and many other sites are very popular among members of the Saudi community; both old and young. According to the Ministry of Saudi Arabia's Communications and Information Technology Commission (2016), the internet first began to grow in the Kingdom in 1994 when educational, medical and research institutions were given internet access. After this, the internet was opened to the wider Saudi community, with the first public access to the internet in 1999. When it first appeared, a massive electronic revolution took place in society and across Saudi institutions. This helped the internet to spread; it began to be used in all fields and disciplines and walks of life, especially in the areas of telecommunications, technology and media (ibid).

1.5.1 Saudi Social Media Users

According to global media insight (2020) at present, Saudi Arabia has the biggest presence on social media globally (see Table 1.1). This country has 40.2 million mobile users, with mobile penetration currently at 116% of the total population. The main reason behind the large amount of social media users is due to the high amount of smartphone ownership. In excess of 84% of the population of Saudi Arabia live in urbanized areas, with high speed internet connections. (for more details see section 3.1).

Social Media Platform	Users (in million)	Percentage %
YouTube	26.25	76
WhatsApp	24.52	71
Instagram	*22.45*	65
Facebook	21.41	62
Twitter	*20.03*	58
Snapchat	*15.54*	*45*

Table 1. 1 social media platforms in Saudi Arabia: Source: Global media insight (2020)

The growing interest of Saudi Arabians in communication and its increasing influence in their daily lives, such as the increasing Saudi interest in social media, has led to a dramatic

increase in the number of social media users in the Kingdom. For instance, the number of active users has doubled in recent years from 8.5 million users to 12.8 million in Saudi Arabia. At present, the amount of active Saudi Arabian internet users has reached 25 million, which represents 72.38% of the population of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (Ministry of Communications and Information Technology, 2020). GASTAT (2019) have published the "Saudi Youth Development's Survey, 2019", which shows that 98.43% of young people use social media, with men representing 98.63%, and women 98.22%. The amount of young people influenced by social media is 35.83%; with 36.81% of these individuals being male and 34.80% female. The usage of popular social media platforms in Saudi Arabia are discussed later in greater detail in chapter 3. Here, in the following section we will offer an introduction to an important theme of our research, namely intellectual deviation.

1.6 Intellectual Deviation and Its Impact

Intellectual deviation is any act which seeks to change the values, systems and traditions of authentic communities; or alter religious and moral values," or religious norms or standards of appropriate behaviour" (Shibani,1993:p21 cited in Alrehaili, 2014). Our God, the almighty, has warned us of the dangers from deviations in belief and thought; such as the dangers of exaggeration and extremism through people's direct speech. This is clearly stated in the Quran when God states: "*Say "O people of the Scripture. Exceed not the limits in your religion (by believing in something) other than the truth, and do not follow the vain desires of people who went astray before and who misled many, and strayed (themselves) from the Right Path*", (Al-Ma'ida:77).

According to Al-Khatib (2004), intellectual deviation is excluded from ideologies concerning what is right and what is wrong; it instead seeks to spread ideas that are misleading. This is done in order to discredit people's objectives, goals and interests in illegal and illegitimate ways, in order to obtain and achieve specific goals. This can hinder the security and stability of a nation state, and can spread violence, extremism and terrorism. Intellectual deviation is very destructive since it distorts nations with their identities. It demolishes the meaning of originality and strengths. Therefore, any nation which must contend with this issue finds itself in a difficult position out of nowhere and often these countries are unable to successfully overcome this problem (Nazmi, 2009). In this regard, Al-Shahri (2011) states that e-terrorist groups centre upon manipulating the emotions and feelings of people, particularly young people, using a variety of techniques.

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The first technique that these groups use is motivational language. This means that they try to encourage readers to do something about the supposed problem. Further to this, they also highlight international actions which have occurred against Muslims. They connect these actions in a random way to issues occurring within Islamic countries, particularly in relation to decisions made by Islamic and Arab governments. They use this as evidence to show the weak submission of Islamic states to Western countries. Al-Shahri (ibid) goes on to argue that by using these such techniques, these groups try to promote and encourage acts of violence. They stress that these acts will atone for actions taken against Muslims worldwide. They write up all of these ideas and copy and paste them in a range of groups and forums online, so that many people read them. Further to this, they also send out this information to large e-mail lists of groups who are interested in receiving such material. Al-Alami (2011) indicates that it is possible to separate the use of the internet by these groups into three main functions: Firstly, these groups use the internet as a form of media. This means that they can mobilise morals, incite supporters and carry out all manner of internet campaigns online. This is a form of psychological warfare. Secondly, these groups use the internet as a method of communication and coordination used by group members in a variety of means. Users can also use encryption methods to protect themselves. Thirdly, these groups can use software and internet services to educate and train their members; in addition to sharing ideas with one another concerning how weapons and explosives can be created, and how security can be overcome. Al-Astal (2011) states that the interaction with social media is well known; however, it can also destroy a society. It is possible to do this by changing how humans relate to one another and allows people to have direct contact. Additionally, it also gives rise to other issues, for instance isolationism, the hiding of personality, addiction and the alleviation of the restrictions and limits that control human behaviour. Consequently, this behaviour also changes standards and controls. As such, the quantity of porn sites operating online have grown and this has led to the destruction of human morals, values and ethics; in addition to the growth of vices, crimes and slanderous conversation (ibid). It has also eradicated the common values, norms and ethics of humankind (Guneta, 2011). Al-Astal (2011) concludes that social and political problems continue to grow due to these sites, including terrorism via mail which is popularly used by terrorist groups. Further to this, there are now websites which challenge the authority of countries and their policies, in addition to websites which are against religions and try to break down the stability of a state. Electronic sites have developed in state borders but have not been useful due to broadcast and spy satellites.

1.7 The Linguistic Characteristics of Extremism in Online Environments

Social media enable users to communicate with one another in a virtual environment around the world. This allows people with various nationalities, cultures, and locations to interact with one another anytime anywhere. As such, communities (of various practices) have developed online, and the members of these communities share information whenever they wish. Social networks contain a variety of features which have been exploited by terrorist recruitment groups. These have been explained by the Arab Centre (2015) as follows:

1. Online environments enable social communication with others in all languages and cultures from around the world.
2. The lack of control over communication between the parties who communicate.
3. Communication is private and is mostly encrypted and multilingual.
4. Young people participate frequently in communication of this kind.
5. The spread of intellectual sites related to takfiri symbols have increased. These symbols are often accompanied with attractive inflammatory speech and are spread by adherents of these ideas. Takfir (labelling someone as a non-believer) is one of the most dangerous manifestations of extremist thought. It results in bringing disbelief on others and then shedding their blood, honour and money(Amin, 2016).
6. The new extremists know that the symbols of the takfirist ideology are only available to the public through websites which promote their ideas and attract followers.
7. Extremist discussion forums are the fuel for the intellectual struggle of extremist ideology against their opponents. Indeed, some of these websites have almost a quarter of a million visitors on weekends.

All of these characteristics relate directly to the Saudi Arabian context and examining the linguistic characteristics of the communication is helpful to understand this issue more clearly. Looking closely at the linguistic characteristics or features of the discourse that takes place among terrorist groups is very useful. In fact, discourse analysis can reveal more about these groups. Firstly, there are specific purposes and effects that the language used can have. Secondly, the type of language used can implement certain cultural rules and conventions which the individuals involved in these groups consider when communicating with one another. In communication of this nature, values, beliefs and

assumptions are anchored and made ready to act upon; these are in turn linked with social, political and historical contexts. According to Cohen et al. (2014), the linguistic correlates of strong emotions related to a group might be an indicator of the strength of the positive or negative sentiments that are present in a text, or give other indications related to the emotions that are expressed. Sentiment and affect analysis techniques can be used to detect and investigate the use of first-person plural pronouns ("we" and "us"), in addition to the use of third person plural pronouns (e.g., "they" and "them"). There are some more difficult areas when examining linguistic characteristics. The issue of vocabulary variation is arguably the most difficult problem to contend with when dealing with natural language in online data; in particular, when utilising keyword-based approaches. Vocabulary variation refers to the usage by several people of different terms to refer to the same thing. For example, there are many different ways to express appreciation. There are literally hundreds, if not thousands, of ways to express appreciation in a language, and it would be very difficult for them to be all listed as a priority. It must also be noted that language use is productive (especially in social media), which means that new expressions are invented and modified continuously. Consequently, even after the compilation of such a list, the list would quickly become outdated due to the creation of new expressions in a short space of time (Karlgren, 2006). In the context of this study, the research will attempt to select some of the major linguistic features that would describe the jargonic language that these groups use to communicate and implement their ideas and plans. From this standpoint, it is imperative to shed light on the most important linguistic characteristics of terrorism used in social media by terrorist groups to spread extremist ideas.

Understanding the linguistic characteristics that occur in these communications can help to prevent the growth of terrorism. The use of radical rhetoric represents a risk factor associated to Jihadi radicalization. Jihadi groups assume a specific vocabulary which is then used as a distinctive way of communication between the members of the group. Therefore, two kinds of linguistic factors can be distinguished in the measurement and these will be described as follows: firstly, the linguistic factors that identify a group as radical versus a non-radical one (for example, the common usage of first- and third-person plural words) will be explored later in chapter 2. Secondly, the linguistic factors that identify a radical group with a specific ideology (in the case of Jihadi groups, this would be the usage of words related to Islamic terminology; and the names of groups like ISIS, Al-Qaeda, etc.). Khosravi *et al*, (2016) found that the most repeated themes used by

terrorists were (in order): God, Islam, ISIS, violence, punishment, the West, non-believers, Jihad, the names of ISIS's Middle Eastern, marriage, friends, high school, sport and words related with dating. This shows that words related to religion and anger were frequently repeated by these ISIS followers. A review of previous literature shows that social media is increasingly being used as a platform for extremism and violent discourse (Ganesh and Bright, 2020). Terrorist organizations also use social media to spread their propaganda and attract fighters. The important linguistic theme is also explored in the literature review and also in chapter 6.

1.8 Significance of the study

Academically, research of this kind is extremely important and interesting for a wide variety of relevant reasons. Firstly, it will be possible to use youth as a sample for this study, thereby including the opinions and experiences of the generation who first experienced the development of social media and gaining their unique insights (Briant, 2015). Secondly, undeniably, terrorism has been studied from many points of view, but what distinguishes the current study is that the study was attempted on several samples such as youth, practitioners, the general public and one of the families affected by the terrorist groups to obtain more views on this phenomenon. Finally, the upsurge globally in terrorism and religious extremism is specifically connected to ISIS' and Al-Qaeda usage of social media. The terrorist attack on Paris in 2016 was organised on social media platforms showing the wide influence social media is having on every facet of modern society (Harmanşah, 2015).Therefore, this is the appropriate time to conduct this research as its subjects are having such a dramatic impact on our daily world.

1.9 Statement of the Problem

As aforementioned, social media has dramatically altered the minds, behaviour and ideas of today's younger generations. This has, in turn, led to the creation of a deep generational chasm between young people and older generations. Younger people devote a considerable proportion of their lives to social media, which they use to socialise, connect with interests and hobbies, join groups and develop ideas on certain subjects. This provides a great scenario towards the higher relevance of social learning theory. While this can be liberating, there is no doubt that this can also lead to many dangerous activities, as much of this interaction is unsupervised. Social media has also resulted in the creation of modern-day phenomena, such as cyberbullying, plots by deadly sexual predators to exploit children

and all types of criminals and dangerous individuals who abuse the freedom of social media to corrupt the minds of vulnerable young people with poisonous and often violent ideas. (Kelly-Holmes & Pietikäinen, 2013) state that media is often used to draw individuals "around a group, regional, linguistic, or ethnolinguistic identity". The use of Arabic, some foreign languages and the Islamic religion is used by violent terrorist groups, such as ISIS and Al-Qaeda, as a rallying call to radicalise all vulnerable Muslim youths to their cause.

1.10 Research Gap

Vacca (2019) argued that the influence of high-end technology, and other studies emphasized end-to-end encryption upon the spread of terrorism worldwide. However, there is a significant aspect concerned with the language used within a close-group. This aspect appears to have gone unnoticed and unattended to although close-group social learning can contribute easily reprogramming people's mind and directing and unifying their thoughts and actions specifically those within a close circle, be it relatives, friends, or acquaintances. Investigating this aspect in the Saudi society in particular is what makes this study exciting and productive. In the Saudi society, not only are technological developments significant, but also how extremists may employ particular rhetoric to manipulate their followers and recruit those with their circle to deceive government counterterrorism entities and effectively carry out attacks. The dissemination of extremist content is just as important as how it is disseminated; therefore, this study aims to investigate terrorist efforts in cautiously selecting encrypted means of communication used with a close-group community and how the contents of these means are utilized as recruiting propaganda. This study builds upon the social learning theory to investigate close-group social learning, which can facilitate the recruitment of people within a close circle by inducing extremism via differential reinforcement and imitation in the Saudi society using social media

1.11 The Rationale of the Study

This study was inspired by the need to identify the various factors that influence youth's ideas of joining terrorist groups through social media. Identification of factors affecting young people are important to combat terrorism and protect society. The psychological events involved in terrorism are known for a long time. Many scientists tried to explain why ordinary individuals become terrorists through diverse psychological theories such as the supposed cause, comradery attitude, imitation, cult recruiting, and crisis response

(Bongar *et al.*, 2006). The findings of this study should contribute to the general knowledge in this area by providing information about the role played by social media in intellectual terrorism. In addition to the factors that affect youth's to believe and support extremist ideas, the study adds to the literature regarding counter terrorism in Saudi Arabia, which might help the decision makers at the Ministry of interior to develop their plan regarding fighting terrorist organizations , where little materials are initially found relating to this area, therefore, making this study a valuable contribution. The researcher will explain the contributions of this study in summary of this study in the last chapter.

1.12 Saudi Public Prosecution (SPP)

The Saudi Public Prosecution (SPP) is an independent judiciary which specializes in the investigation of crimes in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. This judicial body is also composed of criminal investigators who carry out judicial functions and have judicial immunity and it was created in the era of King Fahd Bin Abdul Aziz Al Saud on 30/06/1989, competent bodies were established to provide security and justice throughout the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. These were created in accordance with scientific and civilised principles which took into consideration the preservation of human rights and dignity, and the eradication of anything that violated these rights or dignities. Shari'a rules derived from the Quran and the Sunnah also influenced the creation of these bodies. The order of the General Investigation and Prosecution Commission was issued by Royal Decree No. (M / 56) dated 30/05/1989.On 06/06/1993, a Royal Decree was issued appointing the President of the Investigation and Prosecution Commission and forty-four members thereof. In addition, the Commission began to exercise its powers regarding the public prosecution before the judicial authorities, supervision of prisons and the role of arrest and supervision of the implementation of penal provisions on 15/9/1996, the Commission began its mandate regarding the investigation of crimes, in 2015, some articles of the Commission of Inquiry and Public Prosecution were amended, including the amendment of the rank of the members of the Commission of Inquiry and the equalization of their salaries with the salaries of judges in the Kingdom and the judicialization of the work of members of the Investigation and Prosecution Commission. On the 17/06/ 2017 AH, corresponding to June 17, 2017, Royal Decree No. (A / 240) was issued to change the name of the Investigation and Public Prosecution Commission to the Public Prosecution. The President is called the Attorney General, directly connected to the King (PP, 2018).

According the Public Prosecution in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia that Jurisdiction shall, in accordance with Article 3 of its Law: Investigate crimes and conduct investigations by filing or keeping the case in accordance with the regulations, prosecute before judicial authorities in accordance with the regulations, enact the re-appeal of judgments, supervise the implementation of penal provisions, observe and inspect ships and places of detention and their places of residence in sanctions, listen to the complaints of prisoners and detainees, verify the legality of their detention, and the legality of their stay in prison or detention centres for those without a legitimate reason. The SPP must also carry out any other functions assigned by the Saudi government. The year 01/12/2011 saw the transference of the jurisprudence of the control and investigation in criminal law to the Trebchirha Monitoring and Investigation Commission. This includes the prosecution of crimes such as bribery, forgery and crimes established in the Royal Dec. (M / 4) / 43 and dated 17/06/1958 e) to the Investigation Commission and public prosecution. In addition to the Royal Order issued on 12 February 2019, the powers of investigation of customs cases have been transferred to the Public Prosecution office instead of the General Customs Authority.(Ibid)

1.13 Naif Arab University of Security Sciences (NAUSS)

Naif Arab University for Security Sciences (NAUSS) was established in 1978 as part of an Arab plan to create the first Arab university specializing in graduate studies, research and training in all areas of security. The university is an Arab organization based in Riyadh in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. It is the academic body of the Council of Arab Interior Ministers and provides postgraduate studies, training, academic research and service to the entire region of Saudi Arabia in all areas of security. The university also receives full support, both material and non-material, from the government of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. Naif University is also fortunate to be directed and supervised by HRH Prince Abdulaziz bin Saud bin Naif, Minister of Interior, the Chairman of the Supreme Council of NAUSS and Their Royal Highnesses and Their Excellencies of the Arab Interior Ministers (NAUSS, 2019)

Naif University provides a thorough education on all of the most serious security issues in the Arab world by creating extensive training programs, graduate programs and research opportunities for Saudi Arabian students. In doing so, the university is preparing the future generation of Saudi security experts, leaders and innovators in the Middle East. The university also hosts two important security bodies which are as follows: the Centre on

Higher Educational Ethics and Academic Research and the Arab Society for Forensic Sciences, which have the following colleges (Ibid)

1   The College of Criminal Justice
2   The College of Social Sciences
3   The College of Administrative Sciences
4   The College of Forensic Sciences
5   The College of Strategic Sciences
6   The College of Computer and Information Security.

1.14 Structure of the thesis

This research has seven chapters, and the structure is explains below and summarized in Figure 1. 2.
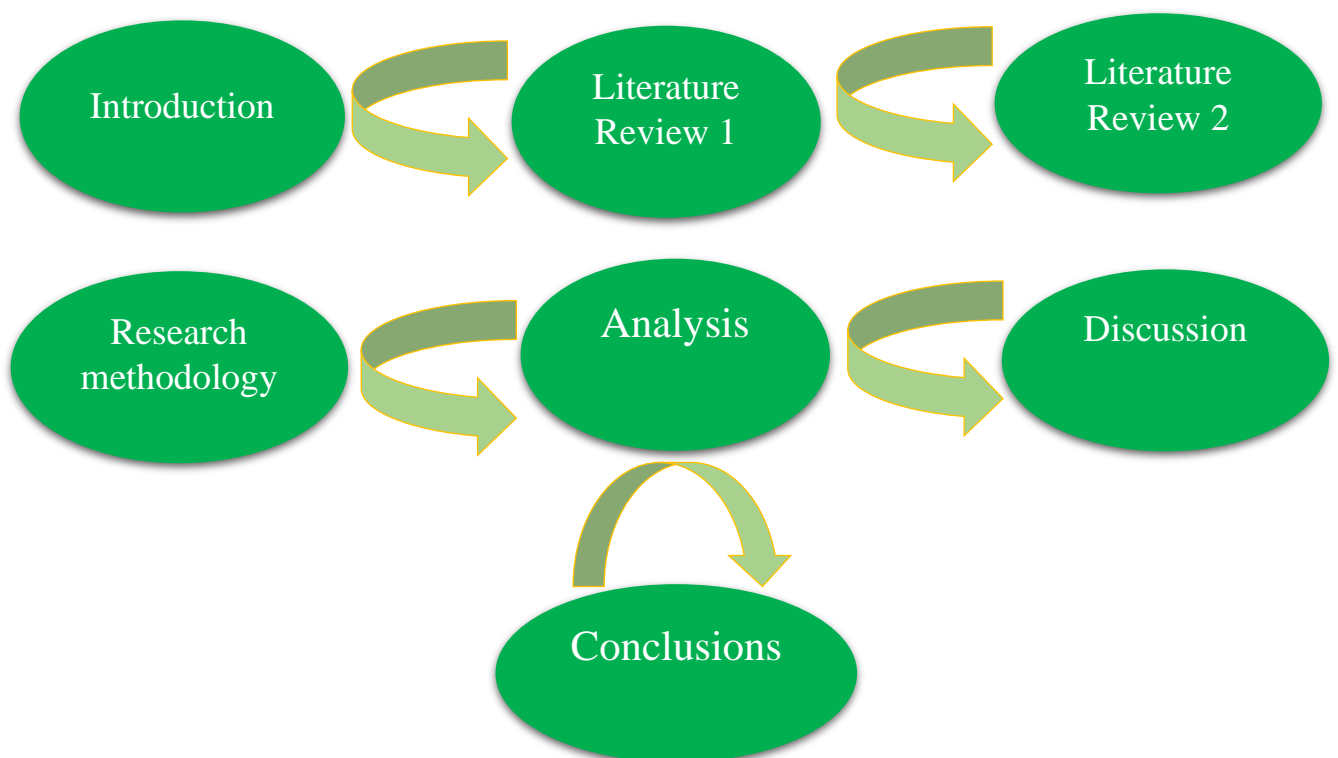
figure 1. 2 structure of thesis

Chapter 1 introduces the background to the study, the significance, statement of the Problem of the study and the research gap, as well Objectives questions main research, Overview of the Saudi Arabia, Saudi Public Prosecution (SPP) and Naif Arab University of Security Sciences (NAUSS),which are the main headings to be discussed below. Chapter 2 reviews literature related to intellectual delinquency: terrorism is the first of two

chapters devoted to reviewing the literature review and presents the relevant studies. It covers the definitions of terrorism and its types, extremism, radicalism, intellectual delinquency, causes of terrorism, and history of terrorism in KSA. In addition, it includes contextual details concerning historical context The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia Islam and the Question of Existential Identity, Terrorist Attacks in Saudi, ISIL in Saudi Arabia and ISIL attacks against Saudi Arabia. Chapter 3 discusses social media and online terrorism and provides a review of the literature related to social media and online terrorism. It provides an overall understanding of the role of social media in terrorism and Social Learning Theory. This chapter discusses social media in general, social media and the Internet, social media and intellectual terrorism, popular social media platforms in Saudi Arabia, with a focus on Twitter, YouTube, and Telegram. In addition, this chapter focuses on Youth Brainwashing and Persuasion, terrorist Encrypted Languages, role of science and technology in terrorism, which have the potential to affect the outcomes of this research. Chapter 4 presents the methodology and delineates the procedures followed for the pilot study, data collection and the questions of the studies by presenting the mixed methods research including: stating participants for each aspect, qualitative data collection instruments (questionnaires and semi-structured interviews) and the means of including ethical considerations. In addition, it explains the process of selecting the population and the sample of the study to give comprehensive details about the process of data collection in the current study. Chapter 5 shows the results and analysis. It presents the results of the statistical analysis of the data collected (questionnaire) in this study from participants based in Saudi Public Prosecution, Naif Arab University for Security Sciences and the general public. It documents response rates and sampling size. In addition, it provides a detailed thematic analysis of the results from two investigators at the National Security Services Department in SPP and one of the families affected by the terrorist groups interviews. Chapter 6 discusses the research findings from Chapter 5 in light of the existing literature reviewed in Chapters 2 and 3 the aim being to extend knowledge in the studied area. Chapter Seven provides the conclusions and recommendations for future research. It also notes the limitations of this study, including the contributions of the research.

1.15 Chapter Summary

This chapter served as an introduction to the current study. It draws on the general image of Saudi Arabia location, population, and culture. Further, the importance of linguistic characteristics of extremism, intellectual deviation and its impact was highlighted,

especially through social media. Following that, both the practical and theoretical aspects of significance of the study were highlighted. The research gap and the rationale of the study were also presented. In addition, this chapter provided information about Saudi public prosecution and Naif Arab university of Security Sciences. Moreover, the problem of the study was then reviewed based on a variety of sources and previous studies. This problem was expressed as a series of questions the study attempted to answer. Finally, this chapter concluded with a brief introductory outline of the overall structure of the thesis.

The following chapter provides definitions of terrorism, extremism, radicalism, and causes of terrorism and explores the role of linguistic characteristics of terrorism in the formation of intellectual deviation via social media in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

CHAPTER 2- Terrorism and intellectual deviation

2.1 Introduction

Building on the opening remarks and contextualization set out in previous chapter, this chapter will provide an overview and further the discussion of terrorism and intellectual deviation in Saudi Arabia context. September 11, 2001, attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon marked a pivotal change in international politics. The attacks signaled the rise of non-state actors and their impact on global security (Thompson, 2011).Thompson (ibid) indicates that the differences between radicalism, extremism, and terrorism have disappeared over the years. To this end, the chapter is divided into two sections. The first section presents the definitions of terrorism, extremism, radicalism and causes of terrorism, the linguistic characteristics of terrorism and characteristics of the jihadist rhetoric, along with the list of some of the world's wealthiest and most dangerous terrorist organizations and how they make their money. The second section focuses on Al-Qaeda, ISIS in the Arabian Peninsula as well as attacks against Saudi Arabia, terrorism and Counterterrorism in Saudi Arabia since the establishment of the state until the present day. This section further assesses the role of the Saudi government in counter terrorism and intellectual deviation through establishing several intellectual research centres to counter terrorism and extremism and spread awareness in the community.

2.2 Definitions

This section includes the descriptions of the terminologies that will be addressed in the chapter, namely terrorism, extremism, radicalism, and causes of terrorism. According to Al-Arab (2012), the distinction between terrorism, extremism and radicalism might be quite controversial due to the prevalence of extremism and terrorism for the same goal. However, it is possible to show the difference between them, given that extremism is linked to thought and terrorism is linked to reality. The same source confirms that extremism is related to ideas far from what is usual and what is socially and religiously recognized. Those ideas are not necessarily associated with violent physical behaviours in the face of society or the state. However, whenever extremist thought turns into violent patterns of behaviour, such as attacks on freedoms, murder, or the formation of armed groups that are used to confront society and the state, it turns into terrorism. These terms will be discussed in more detail in the following section.

2.2.1 Terrorism

Terrorism requires a definition that is acceptable globally since the fight is a global one Therefore, a good definition is one that condemns the act and provides prosecution of criminal acts without unnecessary discrimination.

One has to look at the broader sense when defining terrorism. Governments and international organizations have not been able to come up with a universal definition(Horgan, *et el* 2012). Terrorism is the use of indiscriminate violence, or the threat of using violence, to create fear among a group of people to achieve a financial, political, ideological or religious goal. Terrorism refers to the violence against non-combative targets (ibid). Jenkins (2014) supports that it is important to define terrorism in international law because this makes it possible to condemn acts of violation against human rights, provides a distinction between private and public violence, offers ways to protect deliberative politics and the state, and promotes global security and peace. Therefore, there is need to establish a precise and accurate definition of terrorism (Jenkins, 2014 pg. 47). Jenkins (ibid) is not alone in defining terrorism, as a number of experts in this area state that terrorism involves its condemnation and criminalization as the act of expressing repugnance at the action, shaming and stigmatizing people that commit the actions and are associated with terror groups. Criminalization of terrorism might prove valuable in the fight against it as specific values receive condemnation. For agencies to put up a fight against the vice, they need to know the scope of the act and what activities constitute the crime (McCann and Pimley, 2018). Lombardi, and Chin (2014) believe that terrorism encompasses issues such as boundaries and domestic jurisdiction. This affects response rates across borders and problems of terrorists crossing borders illegally without having travel documentation.

There is no *consensus ad idem* on the definition of terrorism. Different countries and governments use different definitions. Governments and legal systems have found it difficult to come up with a universally binding meaning of the word terrorism (Matusitz, 2013). The main reason it has been difficult is that the word invokes both political and emotive responses. Title 22 Chapter 38 U.S. Code 2656f defines terrorism as "premeditated, politically motivated violence perpetrated against non-combatant targets by subnational groups or clandestine agents" ("22 U.S. Code 2656f - Annual country reports on terrorism", 2010). Matusitz (2013) states that terrorism includes the use of violence or the threat of violence when pursuing ideological goals. Additionally, governments, non-

state actors, and undercover personnel can propagate terrorism. Matusitz states that terrorism reaches more than the immediate target victims, the terror is usually aimed at the society at large. Terrorism includes crimes illegalized by legislation-*mala prohibita* and crimes deemed morally wrong-*mala in se.*

The United Nations, in previous years, failed in its attempts to define terrorism (Bartlett and Miller, 2012). Member states had different opinions on the use of violence in the context of national liberation and self-determination (Matusitz, 2013).The divergent opinions have hindered the development of a universal, all-encompassing definition of the word. The present practice by the international community has been the adaptation of various conventions that define and criminalize terrorist activities (Alarid, 2016). Matusitz (2013) concludes that the main definition of terrorism by the United Nations is criminal acts that intended to cause a state of terror in the general public by a group of persons for political purposes are in any case unjustifiable whatever the considerations of a political, philosophical, ideological, religious, racial, ethnic or any other consideration that may be invoked to justify them. Matusitz (2013) concludes that, the main definition of terrorism by the United Nations refers to the criminal acts that are intended to cause a state of terror in the general public by a group of persons for unjustifiable political, philosophical, ideological, religious, racial, ethnic considerations and purposes

2.2.2 Extremism

The literal definition of the word is the quality of being extreme. Additionally, it involves the advocacy of extreme measures or views (Thompson, 2011). The term has morphed in its adaptation to the political and religious realms (Flores, 2017). Extremism refers to beliefs that are beyond the acceptable mainstream attitudes that a group of people holds. The people, who often use the term, use it in a pejorative manner (Alarid, 2016). It can also be used in a condemning sense. Examples of political agendas considered extreme include; far-left politics, far-right politics, fanaticism, fundamentalism, and radicalism (Flores, 2017). Researchers into the phenomenon have been able to note that extremism is not an isolated case and that it occurs across a broad spectrum ranging from mild interest, an obsession to fanaticism (Flores, 2017). Flores (ibid) goes on to that in as much as different extremist group hold different ideologies, they do share common identifiable characteristics; they often are against compromise with the opposing side, they advocate and sometimes use violence to meet their goals, they are entirely sure of their position,

they are usually nationalistic, they are intolerant to dissent within the group, and they tend to demonize the opposing side.

There are different explanations for extremism. Some analysts have associated extremism with lack of self-identity. For someone who engages in extreme behaviors, they first lose respect for themselves, which opens room for self-hatred which is destructive to the individual. Individuals lack self-worth and become bitter about life, thus harboring the feelings of revenge towards other people and towards life as well. Extremism is, therefore, more of an illness than an ideology or tactic (Vardanyan and Kuleshov, 2015). Since it bears the characteristics of a psychological disorder, medical specialists believe that it is curable. Has the features of a psychological disorder, medical specialists believe that it is curable?

Besides, there is another view that extremism is an outlet for emotions by groups that have gone through severe insecurity, oppression, resentment, humiliation, rage, and loss. Exposure to the above factors makes people irritable, leading them to adopt strategies that heal their experiences and situations (Kaplan, 2017). In this case, victims of oppression use the vice to pass a message to their oppressors and punish them for causing them agony. Some researchers consider terrorism as means used by extremists to seize power. Extremists are mostly people with views that diverge from those of the authorities and the general population. They thus use excessive force to force more people to adopt their views and opinions and to show off their power.

2.2.3 Radicalism

Currently, there is no NATO definition of the term radical or any of its derivatives, such as radicalism or radicalization, listed in the 2007 edition of Allied Administrative Publication No 6 (AAP-6), NATO Glossary of Terms and Definitions (English and French). AAP-6 is the NATO reference document of the Military Committee Terminology Standardization Programme (MCTSP) that provides official NATO definitions of terms under NATO Standardization Agreement (ATANAG) 3680. The term radical or any of its derivatives is also not defined in the Department of Defense Dictionary of Military Associated Terms (2008,March 4), the U.S. Department of Defense's (DOD) counterpart to NATO's AAP-6, drafted to ensure the standardization of military and associated terminology under DOD Directive 5025.12 (August 23 1989),Standardization of Military and Associated Terminology (Pick et el, 2009).

Radicalism refers to the process by which political movements and individuals wish to alter a particular system or institution drastically. Historically, radicalism has given rise to political liberalism (Thompson, 2011). The term has undergone changes over the centuries to its present state. The term can be used in politics and about ideologies. Political radicals tend to be liberal and demand certain changes within the society (Calhoun, 2012). Ideological radicalism looks at various social and religious systems and finds ways to change the present system (Perkins, 2011). Some of the radical ideologies include radical Islam.

Social, political and economic inequalities drive radicalism (Nawaz, *et el,* 2012). Radicalism stems from a need for change. Most of the radical changes in society have come from the need to make the society equal for all (Perkins, 2011). Radicalism is not violent at its root (Calhoun, 2012). Radicalized individuals however, might start using violence and terror to further their cause (Crook, 2014). When people use violence to propagate their cause, they cross over into extremism. People have gone further to divide radicals into three main categories, passive radicals, active radicals and violent radicals (Perkins, 2011). Violent radicals believe in violence to change a system. Passive radicals protest in various ways such as avoiding voting, protests and lobbying groups (Crook, 2014). Radicalism is not inherently negative; it is how the people who identify as radicals use the means available to them to meet their goals.

Radicalism can stem from several factors depending on the circumstances that individuals or groups have. Firstly, radicalism can be a result of personal grievance, where individuals may resort to retaliation on an outside party or the government because of perceived or real harms (Davenport, 2017). Due to feelings of offense, individuals are more prone to violence. Secondly, a group of people that feel marginalized or harmed by another or by the government might decide on revenge. This group could be a group that one is part of or one that he/she sympathizes with. The attack takes the form of group revenge (Blakemore, 2016). Groups become violent when they are denied their rights to practice their beliefs, or when they are invaded and targeted unfairly. Thirdly, individuals may become radicalized as a result of participation in activities that narrow their thinking and social circle, thus making them insensitive to violence. The cause of this is mainly blind adherence to one's social, religious and political beliefs without invoking reason, (Pruyt, E. and Kwakkel, 2014). People begin by volunteering to carry out non-violent activities on behalf of their groups and proceed to commit criminal activities. Familial and romantic

love is also a causal factor for extremism. Most radical groups originated from groups of friends who shared similar ideas and decided to advance them (Jongman, 2017). Influential figures take advantage of the people's love for them to influence them into joining their groups.

2.3 The Linguistic Characteristics of Terrorism

According to Alhussin Alsamdani, (2017) the linguistic characteristics of Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP) discourse exhibits an intentional way of systematically presupposing religious truths to ensure self-legitimisation by means of the manipulation and distortion of divine truth and/or religious authenticity. Another referential strategy is the creation of the Mujahedeen in relation to their positive (religious) attributes as follows:

1- This category defines the 'self' by expressing religious qualities, e.g., 'the pious', 'the virtuous', 'the patient' and 'the pious youth'. This strategy is closely linked with predications that express the Mujahedeen's sincere and legitimate intentions of aiding the oppressed and working for the good of the Islamic religion.

2- The construction of the 'self' by its association with Jihad. Spatialisation is an important strategy, e.g., 'the mujahedeen of the Arabian Peninsula' and 'ħaramayn Brigades'. The spatialisation strategy dwells on the sacred in these references and avoids the official names of places and states because they do not recognize borders.

3- Reference to the 'self' is made in terms of an association with Jihad as both a doctrine and a practice, al-mujāhidīn 'the mujahedeen', ahl al-jihād 'people of jihad' 'the youth of jihad' and 'the Mujahed youth', etc. Through further positive attributes of altruism, engaging references such as these are closely linked to the relevant persuasive strategy of mythologising the Mujahed and the martyr.

4- Use plural nouns in references, e.g., 'ħaramian brigades', 'the mujahedeen brigades', 'the mujahedeen troops', 'the mujahedeen cells' or using the metaphors 'lions' and 'beacons of dignity'; the positive actionyms 'reformers' and 'preachers of', etc. These references are abundant in statements on jihadist operations and confrontations with security forces.

5- The use of the person plural pronouns 'nahno' means 'we' and 'us'; these are used ubiquitously to systematically denote the innermost 'self' circle in the assumed Muslim community. Such pronouns refer in a way that could relate to either the speaker alone, or to the entire AQAP mujahedeen. AQAP speakers perceive

themselves as part of a 'shared we'; thereby, reflecting the jihadist identity using statements regularly predicated to identify and illustrate this perception. AQAP is a licenced establishment which copies Al-Qaeda's central practices with regard to their structure and military strategies. The main method which AQAP utilises to recruit new members is to target groups of Afghani returnees, in addition to their family members and friends (Hegghammer 2010a). AQAP military units are thought to have operated autonomously in Saudi Arabia and Yemen from 2001 to 2003. One of the first of these units was under the leadership of a Sudanese veteran, known as Abu Hudayfa. The cell led by Hudayfa conspired to plant explosives at the Prince Sultan Airbase in 2002, prior to Hudayfa´s arrest on the 18th of June, 2002. Abd al-Rahim al-Nashiri was the leader of a second cell for AQAP. The membership of this cell included Yusuf Al-Uyayri, a Saudi native who was a veteran of the Afghan was and had also fought in Somalia in 1993.

6- The use of second-person possessive pronouns by the AQAP mujahedeen, who also use constructs such as 'your brothers' and 'your sons'. Such kinship relationyms are also affixed with the first person in references: 'our brothers' and 'our sons to further strengthen the relationship between members.

2.3.1 Characteristics of the jihadist Rhetoric

Rhetoric is composed of three areas: message, style and credibility (Ashraf, 2012). Herrick, (2013) has enlarged these three areas into six different segments which are as follows; planning, audience engagement, motivation, interactiveness, persuasion and addressing contingent issues. These areas will be discussed in more detail in the sections which follow.

1- Planned Rhetoric

Effective rhetors construct their discourse based on the message they wish to deliver. Thus, they research the necessary material, construct arguments, arrange these for best effect and choose a style of delivery (Herrick, 2020). It is imperative that the planning process remains obscure and unseen to the audience and can only be be suggested from the actual rhetoric. This is extremely relevant in relation to Al-Qaeda, as issues such as the timing, message content and delivery methodology have the ability to offer clues concerning the planning and goals of the material disseminated (Ashraf, 2012).

Al-Qaeda's rhetoric often occurs simultaneously with action. The activities which take place are actually mentioned and discussed in the material which the group disseminates.

In the same way that terrorist 'strikes' are planned, so are the written pieces of communication spread around after the attack. A good example of this is terrorism which took place in the Madrid transport network in 2004 (Gunaratna, 2004). It is quite obvious that these attacks were carried out in part in order to influence Spanish election results. This is abundantly evident in the description after the attacks, that they were carried out in order to punish the Spanish people for their government's support of U.S. policies and action in Iraq: "In Madrid, precisely two and a half years after the attacks on New York and Washington, we announce our responsibility for the attacks. It is in response to your cooperation with Bush and his associates, the criminals" (cited in Ashraf, 2012, p. 134).

The message put forth was very obvious and immediate. At the time, the majority of Spanish people did not support Spain's support for the war in Iraq. Thousands of Spanish people gathered together to express their opposition to the war in Iraq in February and March 2003, with 91% participants in Milan, Madrid and Barcelona (News, 2003). The main opposition party in the Spanish elections held an anti-war stance and Al-Qaeda regarded Spain as the 'weakest link' in the coalition at that time(Ashraf, 2012).

These events in Spain came to the attention of Al-Qaeda sympathisers, who saw that this was a good location to plan an attack. This sort of pre-planning in relation to rhetoric was also evident in Bin Laden's address to the U.S. prior to the presidential elections which took place in October 2004 (Jacobs, 2004). Jacobs (ibid) states that in this piece of rhetoric, Bin Laden sought to have an effect on the elections by highlighting the voting scandal which had occurred in the previous election.

bin Laden also underscored the shortcomings of the American president, his failure to act in the face of the 9/11 attacks. Bin Laden could have possibly watched the Michael Moore movie '9/11'. He referenced George Bush Jr.'s focus on the children's goat story was more important at the moment when planes were crashing into the Twin Towers in New York (Ashraf, 2012). Ashraf (ibid) indicates that this was a very carefully constructed piece of rhetoric, which had been planned and thoughtfully put together. In it, Bin Laden showed a sensitivity to time, indicating research, planning and stylistic choices (the linguistic link between goat, butting, ramming and aircraft) to achieve a political impact.

2- Motives and Rhetoric

Rhetoric is created in order to bring about certain aims; these aims are based upon the reasons behind the creation of the rhetoric and are brought about by combining one's Self-

motives with the obligations of an audience (Herrick, 2020). The reasons and goals behind the creation of rhetoric are hidden and obscured, or else reduced in order to fit within, for example, traditions and legal rules. Rhetoric should hardly ever be accepted as truth; this is of particular relevance in relation to determining motives, where a critical and sceptical approach is prudent (Medhurst *et al.*, 1997).

Al-Qaeda had made attempts in the past to be straightforward when delivering a message. In part, this is because of its aim to be considered an ethical and ideological superior group. However, it is also clear that rhetoric is of considerable importance in the strategy of this group politically. It is obvious thought that the utilisation and exploitation of rhetoric is implicit within Al-Qaeda. Sometimes, Al-Qaeda issue statements which could be construed as being critical of fellow jihadists; for example, the issue of Hamas leadership of Gaza. At the surface level, Al-Qaeda must maintain a nonaggressive stance towards a fellow Jihadi group; however, it has also needed to undermine Hamas' policy of a local jihad (Mendelsohn, 2009). In turn, this had also undermined Al-Qaeda's notion of a global Jihad centring on the Palestinian cause (ibid). Ayman al Zawahiri's response revealed that he asks mujahedeen to work with their mujahid brothers to reform their organization and direct it to endorse the rule of Shari'ah, take the path of jihad and resistance and to hold onto the lands of Islam. And if they don't succeed, they must know that they are slaves of Allah and not slaves of any organization, movement or group" (cited in Ashraf, 2012, p. 136).

On the outer level, the answer is not critical of Hamas or Palestinians. The inner or implicit meaning, however, communicates that Hamas is moving away from the 'true Islamic' conditions listed by Zawahiri; as such, Hamas members must either convert Hamas to Al-Qaeda's ideology or reject it (Ashraf, 2012).

3- Interactive Rhetoric

Rhetoric is an interactive process which occurs between a rhetor and an audience, and it is interactive both in terms of dialogue and action. Rhetoric can be composed to elicit responses, or can be a response to something (Herrick, 2020). Al-Qaeda has participated in many interactive, fast-paced and dramatic rhetorical discourses with their opponents, making the communication of this group one of the most interesting cases in the history of ideological movements. Al-Qaeda's response to the perceived exploitation and vulnerability of Muslim peoples was to issue fatwas in the middle of the 1990s. When Al-

Qaeda did not gain the desired response to this, the group changed their tactics and began violent terror attacks, culminating in the 9/11 attacks in the U.S. (Ashraf, 2012). In Islam, a fatwa, is a formal judgement or ruling in relation to Islamic law and is provided by a qualified legal scholar (called a mufti). Normally, fatwas are given in response to enquiries from individuals and from Islamic courts. Fatwas are considered to be authoritative decisions; however, they are not treated as binding judgments. As such, anyone who requests a fatwa and does not agree with the analysis is allowed to procure another opinion (Britannica 2016).

Osama bin Laden and four other terrorist group leaders issued a fatwa on the 22nd of February, 1998, asking Muslims to kill Americans and their political and military allies(Smyth, 1998). This was a very significant fatwa as it encouraged all Muslims to kill civilians. Magnus Ranstorp has discovered that the fatwa came about due to the growing US led confrontation with Iraq, in addition to the death and suffering resulting from UN-imposed sanctions (Ranstorp, 1998). Ranstorp (ibid) emphasizes that this fatwa indicates the general political astuteness of Bin Laden and knowledge of local, regional, and global problems and is also a method of waging psychological warfare against his opponents instead of a warning of actual attacks occurring. In addition, other observers do not believe that the fatwa is credible. Bin Laden, he notes, selectively and erroneously quotes verses from the Quran and from Muslim history calling for civilian killings, an act strictly prohibited by Islamic law and denounced by scholars (ibid).

After the invasion of Afghanistan and the ensuing "War on Terror", Al-Qaeda began an interactive discourse with its target group which sought to assure them that it had tempted the Americans into a fight and now that they were 'fighting the war' on behalf of all Muslims. The group emphasised that the war was not just between Al-Qaeda and the global "crusaders", but it was a war against all Muslims and adherents of Islam. One communication from Bin Laden nostalgically reflected on the successes of the "Afghan mujahideen brothers", and stated that these were once asked, How are you going to fight the Soviet empire?, and the Soviet empire at that time was a mighty force that terrified the entire world that NATO used to shake in terror in the face of the Soviet Empire. So where is that powerful power now that God has sent us and our brothers, the Mujahideen?(Bin Laden, cited in Lawrence, 2005).

4- Religious Persuasion

Rhetoric seeks persuasion either through the use of argument based on appeals to reason, or to emotions, or through compelling somebody to take action; usually inciting the use of force. These rhetorical techniques and styles are widely utilised in all material created by Al-Qaeda in its effort to persuade and recruit (Ashraf, 2012).

Most of the discourse on Jihad seeks to present ideas which persuade the reader that AQAP's jihadist mission is legitimate. The basic legitimate arguments are always based on religious authority as an acceptable basis for legitimacy between the speaker and the assumed audience. Therefore, Sawt al-jihad reminds the audience of the Quranic and Hadith texts that state the obligation of jihad and fighting in Islam. Afterwards, some content, which is juristic in nature, is also presented to debate whether jihad is a defensive, collective duty for the community or an offensive permanent duty for the individual. This is due to the fact that several Muslim lands are under the occupation of perceived infidel forces and/or local apostate rulers (Alhussin Alsamdani, 2017). The discursive practices manifested in Sawt al-jihad confirm a notable correlation between jihad and tawhid, 'the profession of faith', so as to express the view that jihad is the practical profession of faith. By ranking jihad equal to the profession of faith, jihad is then constructed as both a means to an end and, simultaneously, an end in its own right. It is a means to an important variety of goals, but the principal two are the eviction of the Crusaders from the Arabian Peninsula (Saudi Arabia) and the establishment of Islamic rule (ibid). According to Bin Laden's statements prior to 9/11, he was sure that the U.S. would be compelled to leave the Middle East if it faced severe aggression and violence in these countries. Bin Laden founded this belief on the behaviour of the U.S. in the past in similar situations abroad, for example, in Somalia. Bin Laden stated that the Americans left after some resistance from weak, poor, unarmed people whose only weapon is the belief in Allah Almighty, and who are not afraid of lies in the fabricated American media. We learned from those who fought there that they were surprised to see the low spiritual morale of the American fighters as opposed to the experience they had with the Russian fighters. If the U.S. really believes that, and brags, it still has this kind of intensity, even after all these successive defeats in Vietnam, Beirut, Aden, and Somalia, and then let it go back to those who await its return (Bin Laden, cited in an interview with Peter Arnett for CNN, 1997).

Al-Qaeda's rhetoric constructed the international dispute between the West and Islam as unjust and cruel. Meanwhile, Bin Laden justified and glorified the 9/11 terrorist attack and

assumed responsibility for encouraging this attack. He stated that the attack had occurred because of the words and writings of Al-Qaeda. Bin Laden even emphasized that what Al-Qaeda preached inspired and stimulated defense of our brothers and sons in Palestine, and to free our holy shrines. (Bin Laden, *Messages to the World*, 2004, p 107).

The emotive words used in Al-Qaeda's discourse shows how it is different to other terrorist organizations as it promotes ideology over action. As such, the group is able to unite a dispersed community of people internationally to support its goals (Ashraf, 2012). Ashraf (ibid) states that this means that traditional counterterrorism measures, which target individuals and groups structures, are not as effective in combating Al-Qaeda than these would be against a conventional terror network. As such, it can be concluded that the success of Al-Qaeda's rhetoric is, partially, responsible for its growth and development.

ISIS can easily pull many people into their world of terrorism due to their online presence. Recruits are brought into the fold from the comfort and security of their own home. It occurs easily and anonymously from behind a computer screen. The recruiters use very personalized efforts and take advantage of the young people's need to do something important with their lives; most new recruits are outsiders in society (Geiger, 2015). The rise in terrorism and growth in these groups could possibly be related to the inability for Muslims to integrate into the Christian West; terrorist groups target this group excessively. The common hatred towards the United States and the West has made many Muslims angry, as they feel that the Middle East has been destroyed. The Dutch terrorist, Israfil Yilmaz, described in his *Tumblr* blog that: I am for the attacks in France, just as the French government is all about bombing and terrorizing innocent Muslims in Iraq and Syria (and elsewhere), (Hall, 2015).It can be argued, however, that the success of terrorism in this current age is because terrorist groups have never used "corporate" methods before.(ibid).

2.4 Causes of Terrorism

According to Horgan, et al. (2012) terrorism is not an ideology such as communism or capitalism. Terrorism is an approach used by various groups use to achieve specific goals. Most extremist groups usually use terrorism in asymmetric power struggles, where the weaker groups use terror tactics to fight a more powerful state. Terrorism stems from terror and the main goal that pushes extremist groups into terror tactics is the fear that such tactics instill fear in the population. In addition to this, terror attacks provoke the state into using violence to combat the threats, acts of terrorism followed by acts of force by the state

become a cycle and the predictability of the state's action means that the cycle becomes a difficult scenario to disrupt (ibid). Collins (2014) believes that state-sponsored terrorism is also a legitimate terror tactic. Nations use terrorism in other states to safeguard their interests. Stack (2017) states that Iran is the foremost state sponsor of terrorists which supports Hezbollah in Lebanon to fight against the Israel government. The United States has also supported the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt against Gamal Abdel Nasser who headed a communist government (Byman et el, 2010). Kipfer et el (2013) argue that terrorists have different goals. However, an underlying factor in their operations is the justification of their actions based on the perceived social and economic or political inequalities. They borrow inspiration from religious and spiritual frameworks. Many terrorist conflicts have underlying characteristics, the weak and the disadvantaged in the society fight the strong, such as the political outcasts fighting the political elites. Some conflicts are based on ethnical divisions such as the Irish Republican Army. Additionally, criminal terrorism has also manifested itself in various countries (Levi, 2010; Randol, 2012).The Medellin Cartel used acts of terror to instill fear in the locals and the government not to interfere with their narcotic trade business (ibid). Other reasons that groups use terrorism include a belief in a change of the socioeconomic situation in a given country. The Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) believes in communism and as such uses terror to fight the existing regime (Von Beyme, 2016). Religious terrorism is perhaps the most identifiable form of terrorism globally. Different extremist groups draw motivation from a divergent interpretation of religious texts (Egiegba Agbiboa, 2013). Egiegba (Ibid) says that Al-Qaeda and ISIS use religion to justify their use of violence against non-believers. The two groups seek to establish different forms of governments within the countries that they operate. Any government or groups of people who oppose their goals are the enemies of these groups (Heath-Kelly, 2012). Von Beyme (2016) states that the groups thus use violence in the propagation of what they view to be the right action. The goals inform the various ways that the terror groups operate. Some terror groups adopt a conservative perspective. The main aim of the conservative perspective is to stop or resist social, political, and economic changes (Davenport and Moore, 2012;Von Beyme, 2016).Other groups use a revolutionary perspective to provoke change. A good example is the Basque separatist group in Spain (Carey, 2010; Horgan,*et el* 2012).

2.5 10 Richest Militant Groups and Their Propaganda

Below is the list of some of the world's wealthiest and most dangerous terrorist organizations, how they make their money, as viewed in the chart below 2.1. The list was created by Forbes Israel based on interviews with security experts and counter-terror specialists, as well as reports and analysis from international NGOs, academic and government organizations, and think-tanks. It brings to light estimated numbers behind the top ten wealthiest terrorist organizations from the State Department list of Designated Foreign Terrorist organizations (Forbes International, 2014).

	Organization name	Annual turnover	Main funding sources	Purpose
1	ISIS	$2 billion	Main funding sources: oil trade, kidnapping and ransom, collection of protection and taxes, bank robberies and looting.	The establishment of an Islamic State in Iraq, Syria, Jordan, Lebanon and Palestine, the Muslim holy war against the infidels, Crusaders (i.e. Christians) and the Jews.
2	Hamas in	$1 billion	taxes and fees, financial aid and donations (especially Qatar).	Militant struggle against the state of Israel and the establishment of a Palestinian Islamic state from the Mediterranean See to the Jordan River
3	Farc in Colombia	$ 600 M	Drug production and drug trafficking, kidnapping and ransom, mining of minerals (especially gold), fees and taxes.	Elimination of the capitalist regime and the establishment of a Marxist-socialist welfare.
4	Hezbollah in Lebanon	$500 M	financial assistance and donations (especially Iran), production and trafficking of drugs	Militant struggle against the state of Israel in southern Lebanon
5	Taliban in Afghanistan and Pakistan	$ 400 M	drug trafficking (mainly production of opium and heroin), sponsorship fees and taxes, financial assistance and donations.	jihad against Soviet units in Afghanistan
6	Al-Qaeda in Afghanistan	$ 150 M	financial assistance and donations, kidnapping, ransom and drug trafficking.	global jihad against the Christians and Jews and the formulation of a unified Islamic front against Western-secular forces
7	Lashkar-e-Taiba in Pakistan and India	$ 100 M	financial assistance and donations	Immediate release of Kashmir India and integration with Pakistani Kashmir under Islamic rule.

	Organization name	Annual turnover	Main funding sources	Purpose
8	**Al Shabab**	$ 70 M	kidnappings an ransom, illegal trade and pirate activity, sponsorship fees and taxes	Removal of foreign forces from Somalia and the establishment of an Islamic caliphate
9	**REAL IRA In Northern Ireland, Ireland ,UK**	$ 50 M	Smuggling and illegal trade, aid and donations	Release of Northern Ireland and the creation of a united Irish state, which includes Northern Ireland and Ireland
10	**Boko Haram in Nigeria, Cameroon**	$ 25 M	kidnappings and ransom, fees and taxes, protection, bank robberies and looting	To fight secularism and Western influences, overthrow of Christian-secular and the establishment of Islamic law in Nigeria

Table 2. 1 The list of some of the world's wealthiest and most dangerous terrorist organizations

2.6 Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP 2003-2007)

One of the central goals of the campaign of Osama Bin Laden was to topple the Saudi Arabian monarchy, separate Saudi Arabia from the Western world and prevent its internal reform. The global outcry against the September 11 attacks in the USA, and the subsequent invasion of Afghanistan by the USA, aided Al-Qaeda to change their focus against Saudi Arabia (Cordesman and Obaid, 2005). Cordesman and Obaid (ibid) state that the group which is known as Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Gulf, implanted an infrastructure composed of safe houses, ammunitions depots, cells and support networks. Al-Qaeda maintained a considerable organization throughout the entire period that the Saudi government focused on the backlash of the 9/11 attack. The Saudi government focused on bringing in weapons through Yemen; thereby, strengthening the Saudi kingdom's ability to withstand insurrection initiated by Al-Qaeda.

According to Hegghammer (2006), a debate began in the AQAP which posed the question of whether or not the Saudi Arabian military forces should participate in the turmoil at home or abroad, particularly in relation to Iraq. Iraq was an unusual situation, as attacks were perpetrated there by both jihadists and other groups; and these other groups often held a nationalist or resistance agenda. In contrast, the attacks in Saudi Arabia were exclusively undertaken by jihadists and perpetrated against both American and Saudi Arabian targets. Hegghammer (ibid) notes that a heated debate exploded in Saudi Arabia due to this issue, as some Saudis bore some sympathises toward the jihadi activities in the Arabian Gulf, while others did not. Often, many Muslims were maimed, injured and killed in these attacks due to the attacks themselves, or subsequent clashes with Saudi military forces. This caused

a lot of pain and consternation inside the kingdom. The AQAP network responded to this public debate by disseminating a quantity of articles in Sawt al-jihad, and these articles posited the idea that the Saudi response was correct and helpful for the Iraqi jihadist cause.

Initially, the chief leader in Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Gulf was Yusef al-Uyayri; al-Uyayri was second in command to Osama bin Laden in this region; al-Uyayri was the only regional leader who reported to Bin Laden (Cordesman and Obaid, 2005). Al-Uyayri's plan was to create an organization, instead of plotting premature attacks. Al-Uyayri was an ideologically driven man, and, as such, he had worked carefully and patiently in order to generate a network of grassroots jihadists. Al-Uyayri's primary tool for this was propaganda, due to the fact that he had a considerable amount of experience both writing and posting information online, beginning with the rise of classical jihadism in Chechnya. Al-Uyayri oversaw The centre of Islamic Studies and Research (CISR); a centre which created its own ideological material and strategic plans for the jihadist community worldwide (T. Hegghammer, 2010b). Al-Uyayri's lieutenants reported directly to him. These lieutenants established five autonomous cells which focused exclusively on operations in Saudi Arabia. Due to the fact that all terrorist activities in Saudi Arabia have originated from these five cells, Saudi forces managed to exploit intelligence information that they acquired and launched a large campaign against these underground jihadis in Saudi Arabia (Cordesman and Obaid, 2005). Cordesman and Obaid (ibid) state that the Saudi government managed to infiltrate one of the cells, and once this has been achieved, it was possible to infiltrate three of the other cells one-by-one and thereby destroy four of the five cells in totality. The remaining members, including the over-arching leadership, took refuge in the final remaining fifth cell. While never fully established, the fifth cell became the most prolific cell in Saudi Arabia after the other four cells had been destroyed. This cell was responsible for most of the major attacks throughout 2004, including the December 29th attack which targeted the Saudi Interior Ministry and Security Recruitment Centre. The following table shows the Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula:

Name	Position	
Yusuf Al-Uyayri (2003)	The founder and first Leader	killed in a chase with Saudi police in northeast Hail on 02 Jun 2003.
Khaled Al-Hajj (2003-2004)	The second Leader	killed by the police in Riyadh on 15 March 2004

Abdulaziz Al-Muqrin (2004-2004)	Third Leader	killed with three of his companions after police hunted in Riyadh
Saud Al-Otaibi (2004-2005)	Fourth Leader	After fighting a bloody three-day gun battle with the security forces he killed with14 terrorists in Rass city-AL Qassim and five wounded and dozens of casualties on the police side
Saleh Al-Oafi (2005-2005)	Fifth Leader	killed on 18 August 2005 in Medina, where he blew himself up after being surrounded by security
Fahad Al-Juweer (2005-2006)	The sixth and last Leader	killed In Riyadh shortly after his predecessor on 28 February 2006

Table 2. 2 The AQAP structure in the Arabian Peninsula

2.6.1 The Al-Qaeda Organization (AQ)

After the defeat of the Soviet Union in Afghanistan, other countries were encouraged to become involved in Afghanistan in order to learn how to replicate the defensive tactics used by the Afghanis for military campaigns against these countries' other enemies. Three prominent individuals (Dr. Abdullah al-Azzam, head of the Jordanian branch of the Brotherhood, an intellectual architect of the Jihad against the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan; Umar Adb al-Rehman, the spiritual leader of radical Egyptian Islamist group Al-Jihad; and Osama bin-Laden, son of a Saudi construction magnate of Yemeni origin) established Maktab al-Khidamat in 1984, an organizational fore-runner of the Al-Qaeda organization. This group was created to recruit new members from Arab countries to the group, and also to gain financial support for Afghanistan's jihad plans against the Soviet Union (Katzman, 2005).

In 1988, toward the end of the Afghan war, Azzam and Osama termed the Islamist volunteers network inherited from the Afghan war, Al-Qaeda; meaning "the base" or "foundation". Azzam and Osama, however, held differences concerning the future use of Al-Qaeda (Elias and Sanborn, 2012). Azzam wanted the group to be a rapid reaction force to help supressed Muslims around the world. Bin Laden, alternatively, aimed to use Al-Qaeda against the liberal and secular despotic regimes in the Middle-East, with the ultimate goal of restoring the Islamic caliphate (Katzman, 2005). Bin Laden eventually became the undisputed leader of Al-Qaeda after Azzam was assassinated in Pakistan in 1989 ((Kean

and Hamilton, 2004). Osama Bin Laden led a new group of Jihadists in the mid-1990s, and there was a dramatic change in the tactics of this new organization and in their scope of enmity. Bin Laden's global jihadism first emerged in the first half of the 1990s. His animosity was fuelled primarily by the deployment of U.S. troops in Saudi Arabia during the Second Gulf War. Bin Laden regarded this a form of invasion. Bin Laden left Saudi Arabia for Sudan, where he started to reorganise his transnational networks of militants, focusing in particular on those who could not return to their home countries. The failure of various classical jihadist struggles in different countries along with failed revolutionary Islamism in Egypt and Algeria drove these jihadi communities to join Bin Laden's ever-evolving Al-Qaeda, with its untried global mission (El Fadl 2001; Hegghammer 2010). Starting in 1992, Bin Laden strongly objected to the U.S. military presence in Saudi Arabia. He interpreted their presence as the occupation of the holy land by crusade forces, and Bin Laden developed an increasingly anti-American worldview from there on. Bin Laden's anti-American rhetoric was further fuelled by the American efforts to deter the Mujahedeen from being a force of power Bosnian War. Finally, Bin Laden embarked on total anti-American jihad. This move is regarded by socio-revolutionaries as Bin Laden's means undermining local regimes. Classical jihadists, however, considered this move as a logical extension to their struggle against the U.S. as an oppressive anti-Muslim power (Hegghammer 2010). Al-Qaeda is energised by a dynamic member network emanating from the Arab world, Africa, Western Europe and Southeast Asia. Followers of global Jihad are nodes (influential people) in large networks of individuals connected by links (network connectors). Relationships which contain many links in the network form what is known as a hub (a centre of activity). Since 1998, al-Qaeda have issued fatwas concerning the killing of Americans and Jews around the world. According to the 9/11 Commission Report (2004), Al-Qaeda's global network consists of four clusters which are formed around several nodes. Estimates concerning the number of nodes in the network have not been established. Data released by the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) estimates that around 110,000 people have been trained in Al-Qaeda camps between 1989 and October 2001. Approximately 20,000 people have graduated from these training camps between 1996 and 2001. Cited in Hendropriyono (2009), in 2003 Robert Muller , who is Director of the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), explained before the American Congress that hundreds of the network members who form the nodes related to Al-Qaeda live and operate in the U.S.

Hegghammer (2006) provides a compelling categorisation of Al-Qaeda's structural organization. He has organized these categories into 5 separate groupings:

1. At the top of Al-Qaeda presided Bin laden and al-Zawahiri. Both had symbolic status in the newly emerging local circles and, therefore, exerted formidable ideological influence.

2.The second category are the jihad scholars, who (unlike scholars of the palace) issue fatwas clarifying what is legitimate in the struggle against infidels. This category includes Abu Qatada al-Filistini, Nassir al-Fahad, Ali al-Khudair, Umar Abdul-Rahman, Abu Muhammad al-Maqdisi and Abu Basir al-Tartusi, amongst others.

3. The third category is composed of strategic thinkers who write books or articles explaining the best ways of implementing jihad. Brooke (2008) argues that jihadist strategic debates must have existed long before and fed into strategic studies as an independent jihadi genre, which then fully emerged after 9/11. The most popular strategist thinkers include Abu Musab al-Suri, Abu umar al-sayf and AQAP's Yusuf al-Uyayri. There are also other strategic thinkers who are known only by their pseudonyms (e.g. Abu Bakr Naji, author of 'The Management of Savagery').

4. The fourth category is composed of active militant organizations, such as AQAP, which execute operations and publish their own media products that justify their operations. The online platforms of these organizations also publish statements, and audio and video recordings that cascade down from Al-Qaeda's central leadership.

5. The final group in this complicated hierarchy is composed of grassroots radicals. These are thousands of anonymous jihadists. From this category emerge the muscle fighters and suicide bombers. Grassroots radicals can be active online as participants in radical forums and social media platforms, usually with fake identities.

One intriguing sub-category of jihadists which belongs to the final category of grassroots radicals is composed of devolved jihadists or lone wolves (Rosler 2010; Byman 2015). Devolved jihadists are amateur individuals or small ad hoc groups, i.e., untrained, unfunded freelancers. They are radicalised, mostly online, to conduct terrorist attacks. This is a peculiar tactic of global jihadism. Several online magazines are dedicated to this goal, such as ṣadā al-malāḥim (this can be translated as 'Echo of Battle'), and AQAP's recent magazine, Inspire. Magazine's such as Inspire are devoted to inciting lone wolves to launch terrorist attacks on targets wherever they are located, such as airliners and transport systems (ibid).

It became the core mission of Al-Qaeda after the Gulf War in 1991 to portray the U.S. forces' stay in Saudi Arabia, as aforementioned, as the occupation of the holy land by crusade forces (Elias *et el*, 2012). Al-Qaeda launched a campaign against Western and American targets worldwide at the hands of Bin Laden's brothers-in-arms (Hegghammer 2006). Global jihadism crystallised during this period, and Al-Qaeda's organizational structure, operational activities and recruitment witnessed a dramatic increase (Hegghammer 2010). Bin Laden's organization attracted many frustrated classical jihadists, who were no longer struggling for state power in a particular country, but instead seeking to target U.S. interests globally. Table 2.3 presents a summary of the attacks attributed to Al-Qaeda between 1995 and 2004:

Year	Date	Location	No of Killed
1995	13 November	SANG HQ in Riyadh bombed	7 U.S citizens were killed
1996	25 June	Housing complex in Al Khobar	Bomb kills 19 U.S. soldiers, wounds nearly 400 people at US military
2003	12 May	Suicide bombers attack housing compounds for foreign workers in Riyadh	35 are killed, including nine bombers, and 200 wounded
	14 June	Mecca	Kills 5 Islamic militants and 2 security agents
	28 July	Al Qassim	kills 6 militants and 2 police
	23 September	Raid in Jizan	kills Al-Qaeda operative wanted by the FBI
	3 November	Mecca	Clash with terrorists and kills two and finds large weapons cache
	8 November	Suicide bombers blow up Riyadh compound housing foreigners and Saudis	18

Table 2. 3 The attacks attributed to Al-Qaeda between 1995 and 2003

Hegghammer (ibid) goes on to list many additional Al-Qaeda affiliated attacks on civilians, which increased significantly from 2004 onwards; as detailed in the table below. In 2004, 26 Saudi religious scholars signed and released an open letter calling on Iraqis to fight Americans and instructed them to consider this as jihad. Two days after this letter was released, Prince Bandar, the Saudi Ambassador to the United States, released an official statement making it clear that the letter from these scholars did in no way represent the beliefs and attitudes of the Government of Saudi Arabia, or the senior religious scholars in that country.

Year	Date	Location	No of Killed
2004	28 January	Riyadh	kills 1 Al-Qaeda and 5 police
	21 April	Riyadh	kills 5, including 2 senior police officers in attack on government
	1 May	Yanbu	5 Westerners killed in attack on oil office, 4 attackers and 1 policeman die. Some 50 people are injured
	20 May	Al Qassim	Police battle militants killing 4
	22 May	Riyadh	Terrorists kill a European
	29-30 May	Khobar	7 Saudi policemen and 22 civilians are killed. 50 hostages are taken
	6 June	Riyadh	Terrorists kill a European working for the BBC
	8 June	Riyadh	Gunmen kill American, of Vinnell Corp
	12 June	Riyadh	An American killed. Al-Qaeda claims responsibility.
	18 June	Riyadh	Kidnappers behead Lockheed Martin employee Paul M. Johnson Jr
	03 August	Riyadh	A European engineer shot dead
	30 August	Jeddah	N/ A
	15 September	Riyadh	A European engineer, is killed in an attack claimed by Al-Qaeda
	26 September	Jeddah	A European shot dead
	18 October	Riyadh	3 terrorists killed
	04 November	Al Qassim	2 security personnel were wounded in a shootout preceding the arrest
	09 November	Jeddah	1 wanted terrorists killed and capture three others after a shootout
	17 November	Al Qassim	1 security officer is killed and eight officers wounded
	27 November	Jeddah	1 terrorists killed
	06 December	Jeddah	Militants storm the U.S. consulate , killing 5 US employees and 3 gunmen
	29 December	Riyadh	killed 7 suspected Al-Qaeda shot dead (Ministry of Interior and special forces recruitment office bombed in Riyadh)

Table 2. 4 The attacks attributed to Al-Qaeda 2003

As this chronology shows from the above table 2.4, the coordinated car bombings and many Al-Qaeda affiliated attacks on civilians were directed at destabilizing the Kingdom by targeting the 7 million foreign workers on whom the Saudi economy is partially reliant. They also were focused on American citizens, in an effort to compound the tensions created by 9/11 and to cause division among Saudi Arabia and the U.S. In many cases, however, innocent Saudi Arabian nationals were killed as well (Cordesman, 2016).

The relationship between Pakistan and Al-Qaeda became a major source of concern in the United States after the events of 9/11. Evidence has come to light to show that Pakistan was in contact with Al-Qaeda before the 9/11 attacks (Elias 2012). Elias (ibid) believes that the Taliban in Afghanistan gave sanctuary to Osama bin-Laden after the ISI's approval.

Coordinated attacks against the U.S. led to the deaths of almost 3,000 lives and led to the initiation of the war on terror. This instigated the American invasion of firstly Afghanistan, and then later Iraq. Osama Bin Laden remained at large and physically elusive the best part of a decade (Lawrence, 2005) . On May 2, 2011, U.S. Special Forces raided an Al-Qaeda compound in Abbottabad, Pakistan, and killed the world's most wanted terrorist: Osama bin Laden (see Figure 2.1). The entire operation, which lasted only 40 minutes from start to finish, was the culmination of years of calculated planning and training (Marks, 2018). Marks (ibid) states that in America, the assassination of Osama bin Laden was considered to be a significant victory for the U.S. government and also retribution for the suffering of the American people. For the 9/11 survivors and families of the deceased victims, the death of Bin Laden symbolized justice and retribution. The terrorist leader was both a leading figure within Al-Qaeda, in addition to a figurehead who attracted supporters and recruits internationally.

figure 2. 1 Osama bin Laden killed

According to Fatimah, Siti (2019), the death of Osama Bin Laden influenced the overall existence of the Al-Qaeda movement. Bin Laden was a philanthropist who donated his finances to the Mujahidin and he had mythical status among supporters due to his involvement in the war against Russia. Ayman Al-Zawahiri, who was once Bin Laden's

right-hand man, replaced Bin Laden after his death. Al-Zawahiri had also once led the Egyptian Islamic Jihad group; however, his charisma was different from Bin Laden's. As such, the organization changed and eventually the existence of the Al-Qaeda came to an end; leading to the creation of ISIS in 2014. Here, in the following section we will present more details about ISIS.

2.6.2 ISIS/DAESH Organization

The origins of ISIS are closely bound up with Ahmed Fadel Nazal al-Khalayleh of Jordan, whose nickname is *Abu Mus'ab al-Zarqawi*, who is widely regarded as the founder of the organization. Abu Mus'ab al-Zarqawi's began as a jihadist in 1989 when he went to Afghanistan to join the Mujahideen's fight against the Red Army. In spite of his desires to demonstrate his religious convictions on the battlefield, he arrived in Afghanistan only to witness the war's ending without having any substantial involvement in the war (Weaver 2006; Warrick 2015).Instead, Zarqawi remained in Afghanistan as a journalist, and used this opportunity to build a wide network of Muslims determined to continue the fight against Islam. In 1992, he returned to Jordan and teamed up with his spiritual advisor, Abu Muhammad al-Maqdisi. This pairing advanced Zarqawi's ideological understanding of Islam and strengthened his commitment to the strict worldview supported by Salafism. In 1994, Zarqawi and Maqdisi were both arrested for the possession of guns and incendiary devices. While imprisoned, Zarqawi recruited people to a new fighting group he was forming, and he quickly gained the respect of other detainees for his charisma and leadership (Warrick, 2015). Warrick (ibid) states that Jordan's King Abdullah made an amnesty plan available which allowed Zarqawi to be freed from prison in 1999. At this stage, Zarqawi had a plan in place and collaborated with Osama bin Laden to receive blessing and support from this terrorist leader. Reports provide evidence that the meeting did not go well for Zarqawi. Weaver (2006) indicate that Zarqawi offended Bin Laden with his lack of care and compassion when it came to killing Muslims. Bin Laden was also put off by Zarqawi's arrogance and disrespectful behaviour. Zarqawi's vulgarity, criminal history and tattoos also did not create a good impression for Bin Laden. In spite of all of these drawbacks, Bin Laden was impressed by Zarqawi's initiative and drive and agreed to finance him. Bin Laden provided Zarqawi with money to establish a training camp in Herat in western Afghanistan (Gerges, 2016). Zarqawi's contacts and experience enabled the terrorist cell to grow fast; however, in 2001, he was forced to leave Afghanistan due to the U.S. invasion. Zarqawi spent the next two years travelling between Iran, Jordan and

Iraq to further expand his network. In early 2003, he established Al Anbar the Jamaat Tawhid wal Jihad in Iraq; this group would become the forerunner of ISIS (Gerges, 2016).Within 4 months of the U.S. invasion, Zarqawi's network organized attacks on the UN headquarters, the Jordanian embassy in Baghdad and at the Imam Ali Mosque, which is a Shiite shrine, in Najaf. Further to these shocking attacks, Zarqawi played a role in the increase in everyday violence all across Iraq. Zarqawi's signature mark was the videotaping of hostage beheadings, and the occurrence of this rose significantly, in addition to suicide attacks and truck bombings in Iraq. This sent a strong indication to Jihadists globally that Iraq was now the epicentre of the Jihadi struggle, thus many new Jihadists travelled to Iraq (Warrick, 2015). Many new recruits joined from around the world. In competition with Zarqawi, Bin Laden decided that he wanted to "own" the Iraq jihad, in order to remain relevant while continuing to hide from the United States. Due to these developments, in the October 2004 issue of Muaskar al-Batar (The Sword Training Camp), Zarqawi pledged himself and his group to Bin Laden, renaming his group Al-Qaeda in the Land of Two Rivers after eight months of negotiations (Zelin, 2014).

An enormous issue which divided the two men at the time was the extensive violence committed against Shia Muslims. Al-Qaeda had encouraged aggression against Shia, Jews, and "Crusaders" (Westerners); however, Bin Laden had never fully accepted Zarqawi's strategy on this cause. In spite of this, Bin Laden realized that Zarqawi was the most capable leader to advance the Jihadi movement. As such, despite their disagreements, Zarqawi swore allegiance to Osama bin Laden in 2004, and his network became an official wing of Al-Qaeda in Iraq, with the official title of Al-Qaeda Iraq or AQI (Pool, 2004). Zarqawi was killed in a U.S. attack in June 2006. Abu Ayyub al-Masri, also known as Abu Hamza al Muhajir, replaced Zarqawi as the leader of the group. Abu Ayyub al-Masri enacted the plan that Zarqawi had for AQI, therefore, Zarqawi's death rendered his pledge of allegiance to Bin Laden as null and void. As such, the group were not subordinate to Al-Qaeda for a significant period of time (Zelin, 2014). In October 2006, Abu Ayyub al-Masri announced the establishment of the Islamic State of Iraq (ISIS). This proclamation was extremely shocking and upsetting for Al-Qaeda, who had warned Zarqawi against this idea. This led to the separation of ISIS from Al-Qaeda, accompanied by disputes and fractures between the individuals involved in both groups (McCants, 2015). Celso (2016) claims that Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi acted as a deputy to Abu Umar al-Baghdadi and Abu Hamza al-Mujahir in Al-Qaeda's Iraqi operations. He became the leader of the group in 2010 after

U.S. forces killed the overarching ISIS leadership. Al-Baghdadi's authority over ISIS led to its growth and expansion into Syria during the Arab Spring, when Assad launched repressive measures which turned a non-violent protest movement into an armed insurgency. Fuelling al-Baghdadi's goals and vision for the group was the fact that he was a religious scholar with a Master's degree in Islamic studies. Al-Baghdadi's 2005-2009 imprisonment at Camp Bucca could have increased his religious zealotry and anti-Shia orientation. Pollack (2013) concluded that, Sadly, the failure of the Obama regime to secure a long-term security agreement with Maliki's government, in addition to the withdrawal of U.S. troops in 2011, provoked sectarian tensions which threatened a full-scale civil war. The Americans exercised a roll in the formation of Iraq's major political groups. With the U.S. now absent, Maliki's dictatorial leadership, enormous tensions arose between the Sunni and Shia communities. His deployment of security services to punish Sunni opponents, led to confessional fears of Shia domination. According to BBC News (2016) the division between Sunni and Shia Muslims is one of the oldest and most comprehensive issues in the history of Islam. Sunni and Shia Muslims have peacefully co-existed for most of recorded history. Furthermore, these two groups share a considerable amount of beliefs and cultural practices. They hold differences, however, in relation to the application and understanding of Islamic doctrine, ritual, law, theology, and religious organization.

The vast majority of the 1.5 billion Muslims around the globe are Sunnis; in fact, most estimates categorise between 85% to 90% of the world´s Muslims are Sunni. The term "Sunni" comes from the phrase "Ahl al-Sunnah", or "People of the Tradition". The tradition referenced by this phrase, is the set of cultural traditions based on the life and teachings of the Prophet Muhammad. The basis of these teachings also includes things that the Prophet said, did, agreed to or condemned. Shia Muslims compose around 10% of all Muslims globally, and their population is thought to be in the region of 154 and 200 million people. In the first centuries of Islam, the Shia belief was created through a group known as "Shiat Ali", which means the "Party of Ali". This group believed that Ali was the rightful heir to the Prophet Muhammad as leader (imam) of the Muslim faith after his death in 632(Ibid).

In 2011, the Arab Spring in Tunisia and Egypt led to the fall of both the Ben Ali and Mubarak regimes in these countries; these movements created tremors in Syria and resulted in the Sunni protests in Hama, Homs, and Daraa. Using the same approach as his father Haffez, Bashar used extreme coercion to dampen the protests (Celso, 2016). Al-Tamimi

(2014) argues that the Syrian protest opened up the opportunity for a dramatic expansion of the network, encouraging him to relocate his central command to areas dominated by rebels near the Turkish border. Al-Baghdadi had planned to establish a transnational Islamic state. With the support of thousands of jihadists from around the word, he had aspired to utilise the Iraqi-Syrian emirate that he had created to eliminate Shia "apostates" and "Zionist-Crusaders". Warrick (2015) states that in April 2013, it came as a surprise when al-Baghdadi announced the merger of ISI with the al-Nusra Front, under the title of the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (translated as "Islamic State of Iraq and al-Sham", or ISIS). Al Jawlani and did not accept the merger. In response to this, al- Baghdadi created his own military representatives in Syria. In 2013 and 2014, ISIS managed to conquer the al-Raqqa province in Syria. After continued success in Syria, ISIS sought to establish its dominance once again in Iraq. On June 29, 2014, the first day of the holy month of Ramadan, ISIS declared itself as a caliphate with Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi as the caliph; all Muslims were asked to swear their allegiance to him. According to the Guardian (2014) the English-language online magazine Dabiq is produced by Al-Hayat. Included in this magazine is second-level content, such as live reports from the battlefield and many localised messages. Third-level content is created by individual fighters who describe their own personal accounts, or at least they seem to be that way (ISIS Social Media, 2015).The posts are written from a personal perspective, with highly-charged emotional language. This level is crucial when aiming to appeal to a specific target audience. Fourth-level content in the magazine is composed of re-posted and translated content written and translated by key people who disseminate information in these networks ((Melchior, 2014).

ISIS communication such as this had been very effective, for example, when ISIS conquered Mosul in June 2014, the group had already foreseen that they would disseminate 40,000 tweets in a single day (see figure 2.2 below), (Time, 2014). Melchior (2014) confirms that this meant that any post relating to Baghdad on *Twitter* that day automatically bore an image of an ISIS flag among the first results. During that period, another app known as "*The Dawn*" was still functioning and analysis has shown that most of the tweets sent that day were disseminated from Al-Hayat using the *Twitter* accounts registered through the app (The New York Times, 2015). Geiger (2015) point out that ISIS offers dreams, pure religion, adventure and opportunities for those who want to be part of the fantasy. The Guardian (2015) also reported that ISIS puts forth an image of itself as a powerful religious militant group, and recruits really believe that they are serving Islam

and Muslims globally by becoming part of the group. The group's consistent usage of social media has gained the attention of many potential recruits, in addition to increasing its visibility in the Western media, helping to spread its message widely and make it a very popular group.

Where are ISIS supporters tweeting from?
Top locations claimed by Twitter users supporting ISIS in 2015 *

Location	Value
Saudi Arabia	866
Syria	507
Iraq	453
United States	404
Egypt	326
Kuwait	300
Turkey	203
Palestinian Territory	162
Lebanon	141
United Kingdom	139
Tunisia	125

* sample size 20,000
@StatistaCharts   Source: Brookings Institute

i100   from The INDEPENDENT   statista

figure 2. 2 Penetration of leading social networks in KSA as of 3rd quarter 2017-(The Statistics Portal, n.d.)

Communication within the group occurs mainly through the use of social media apps (Steasman, 2014). These apps are available throughout the world and are very useful; *WhatsApp* and Telegram offer very efficient group chat possibilities (see Figure2.3). Additionally, ISIS now has coded its own messenger app, known as Alrawi. This app is used mostly to share very important information (The Guardian, 2014). Further to these apps, communication is also enabled over *Twitter* through the use of specific hashtags. In the microblogging platform, it disseminates important information for citizens in the caliphate. Evidence shows that a new curriculum has been put in place for the University of Mosul relating to the teaching of philosophy, English and French literature; the subject of tourism is no longer taught. ISIS has also disseminated information relating to children's vaccination timetables, updates on the availability of electricity and information in connection to medical supply shortages (Firth, 2015).

Penetration of leading social networks in Saudi Arabia as of 3rd quarter 2017

WhatsApp	73%
YouTube	71%
Facebook	66%
Instagram	54%
Twitter	52%
Facebook Messenger	40%
Snapchat	39%
GooglePlus	32%
Skype	24%
LinkedIn	24%
LINE	20%
Pinterest	16%

Share of population

Sources
We Are Social; GlobalWebIndex
© Statista 2018

Additional Information:
Saudi Arabia; GlobalWebIndex; Q2 and Q3 2017; 16 to 64 years

figure 2. 3 Penetration of leading social networks in KSA as of 3rd quarter 2017-(The Statistics Portal, n.d.)

Another strategy which has been used by ISIS/ISIL on social media is documented in figure 4. This was the penetration of leading social networks in Saudi Arabia as of the third quarter of 2017. In figure 2.4, a portion of a *Facebook* page created by ISIL is documented to show how this group use social media for the purpose of recruitment propaganda (Melchior, 2014).

figure 2. 4 Facebook created by ISIL – (CEP, 2018)

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Mainly, ISIS/ISIL use social media to generate and cause confusion; making this also an issue which is very difficult to tackle. As Senior National Security Analyst Juan Zarate has stated: "We have not quite figured out how to not only counter the narrative but to interrupt that cycle of radicalization" (CBS News, 2015). ISIS has sought to demonstrate in Syria how they have "learned the lessons" of Al-Qaeda's failures, making them capable of holding onto power in the Anbar province and leading to the defeat in the Iraq War. When Abu Musab al-Zarqawi was leading Al-Qaeda and the jihadist insurgency in Iraq, the Al-Qaeda fighters exhibited extreme brutality towards Sunni Arab locals. This led to the "Anbar Awakening" that resulted in the formation of the anti-Al-Qaeda Sahwa movement, during the period when there was a surge in U.S.-led troops in Iraq (Al-Tamimi, 2014).

2.7 Terrorism and Counterterrorism in Saudi Arabia

Saudi Arabia is the main target of Daesh (ISIS) and other terror groups because it is the birthplace of Islam and home to the Two Holy Mosques. Saudi Arabia continues to expand and intensify its counterterrorism initiatives, as terrorism remains a major threat to the safety and security of our citizenry and the global communit (The Embassy of KSA 2019,P,1). As previously mentioned in chapter 1, the history of terrorism in Saudi Arabia begins in the eighties of the nineteenth century, leading to The Sibila Battle of 1929 and many more recent events, which we will discuss that in more details the below as per chronological order.

2.7.1 The Sibila Battle of 1929

Saudi Arabia is often represented as an exemplar of a 'true Islamic' society, although this has been challenged since the very inception of the country. Saudi Arabia's political policies have sparked heated debate, often resulting in violence against the state; such as the Ikhwan case in 1927. According to AlMaawi *et al.*, (2016) Ihkwan is the Arabic word for 'brothers', and this group was the most powerful military force which supported Ibn Saud. As such, the Ikhwan had a considerable influence in establishing the rule of Ibn Saud over the majority of the Arabian Peninsula. In spite of the fact that the Ikhwan played a central role in Ibn Saud's rise to power, there were members within the Ikhwan who did not trust Ibn Saud and were uneasy about his rise to power. Criticism of Ibn Saud reached its pinnacle in 1927 with the Ikhwan Revolt. In the Ikhwan Revolt, a splinter group of the Ikhwan, together with radical Arabian tribesmen, attempted to undermine Ibn Saud's rulership by conducting raids across the Saudi Arabian borders into Iraq and Kuwait. The

main source of the Ihkwan's distrust of Ibn Saud was based upon fears concerning Ibn Saud's goal to modernise Saudi Arabia, and create bonds and connections with non-Islamic countries; for example, Britain (Vassiliev, 2000). At the time, the name 'Ikhwan' had very positive connotations and associations in the Arabian Gulf. To hold the status of 'Ikhwan' meant that a man was celebrated for his martial prowess, courage and bravery. The Ikhwan's defining ethos was expressed in a statement which they made before entering into battle, which was as follows: "I am a brother who obeys God and pays all attention to one God". It is important to note that this ethos was fundamentally apolitical, in that the Ikhwan's primary loyalty was to God, and not to any man-made political entity or set of arrangements (Ismail, 2010:39). Therefore, the nature of the disagreement between Ibn Saud and the Ikhwan rebels also had an influential role on the whole situation. Ismail states that (2010: 41), one major source of disagreement was the fact that this rebellious splinter group within the Ikhwan were opposed to all forms of monarchical rule. This dislike for monarchy was based on the fact that they considered the post of monarch as impossible for a human being to bear, leading to their corruption; as such the concept of a monarch was thought to be prohibited in Islam and un-Islamic. In addition to this grievance, they did not want any dealings with the English, as this nation had colonised and dominated Iraq and several other Gulf States. When Ibn Saud made alliances with former enemies and un-Islamic and untrustworthy powers, the Ikhwan felt betrayed by the newly formed Saudi state. Originally, the Ikhwan had been created to reflect traditional Saudi Arabian life, in addition to living a lifestyle based upon severe austerity and asceticism. The conflict between Ibn Saud and the Ihkwan began as a cultural dispute, but transformed into a political clash. The disagreement grew due to the Ihkwan's strong views on matters of culture and religion. The Ihkwan became a threat to other Arabian tribes and the inhabitants of cities and villages as Saudi citizens embraced change and welcomed modernization and urbanization (Ismail, 2010: 42).Furthermore, the Ihkwan also rejected the influence of external political and cultural forces in Saudi Arabia; this increased to the extent that the Ihkwan accepted the idea of 'Jihad' as legitimate in Islam. Al-Mutlaq (2010:148-58) and Asseri (2009:51) both state that the term 'Jihad' can be interpreted in many different ways. The fourth category of Jihad is employed in this study as this is the category adopted by the Jihadist groups with which the Saudi state is currently in conflict. According to this definition, as classified by Muslim jurists, Jihad is the intense effort of the sword, which corresponds to conflict with the enemies of the Islamic community in circumstances where believers are persecuted and their freedom curtailed. This understanding of 'Jihad'

supports fighting against any forces which seek to destroy the progress or stability of Islam. As such, it is permissible for any Muslim to bear arms and fight anyone, anywhere, in order to protect and preserve Islam. Due to this, countries are permitted to allow their citizens to fight in order to defend Islam in any other Muslim nation which is thought to be under threat. The idea of 'jihad' is very controversial both ideologically and religiously in Saudi Arabia, and is also problematic in other Muslim countries (AlMaawi, 2016).

Disagreements over this idea have led to the continuance of armed struggles, despite the emergence of the Saudi state. The Ikhwan's cultural, political, and military conflict with Ibn Saud is still very relevant today as it represents the beginning of conflicts which have impacted Saudi Arabia to the current time period.

2.7.2 The Grand Mosque (Al Kaaba) Attack of 1979

According to Tristam (2018) the seizure of the Grand Mosque in Makkah in 1979 is a seminal event in the evolution of Islamist terrorism. Yet the seizure is mostly a footnote in contemporary history. The Grand Mosque in Makkah is a massive, 7-acre compound that can accommodate some 2.5 million worshippers at any one time, especially during the annual hajj, the pilgrimage to Mecca centred on circling the sacred Kaaba in the heart of the Grand Mosque. The attack was led by Juhayman al-Utaybi, a fundamentalist preacher and former member of the Saudi National Guard, and Mohammed Abdullah al-Qahtani, who claimed to be the Mahdi, who, according to Islamic belief, will appear at the end of times to rid the world of evil and injustice. The two men openly called for a revolt against the Saudi monarchy, accusing it of having betrayed Islamic principles and sold out to western countries. The militants, who numbered close to 500, were well armed, their weapons, in addition to their coffin arsenal, having been stashed gradually in the days and weeks before the assault in small chambers beneath the Mosque (ibid). They called themselves after the Ikhwan in a symbolically resounding gesture. This modern Ikhwan has been described as an extremely pious organization, although it was a radicalized terrorist clique in fact. They were often referred to as al-Jama'a al-Salafiyya al Muhtasiba the late 1960s, they were founded in Medina and led by Juhayman al-Utaybi. Muhammad al-Qahtani was sympathetic to Juhayman and declared himself the Mahdi (spiritual leader),with his followers being Saudis, Yemenis, Egyptians and others Arabs (Vassiliev, 2000: 296; Rudolph, 2009:36; Hegghammer, 2010:3). Tristam (2018) states that the Saudi Army and National Guard took two weeks to recapture the mosque, using tear gas and live ammunition. Thousands of pilgrims were taken hostage, and officially 255 people died in

the fighting, including pilgrims, Islamists, and soldiers. Sixty-three of the militants were captured alive, tried in a secret court, on the morning of Jan. 9, 1980, publicly beheaded by sword on orders of the king in eight Saudi cities' public squares, including Makkah. Tristam (ibid) states that there are 41 Saudis among the sentenced, seven Yemen, three Kuwaitis, one Sudanese, ten Egyptians and one Iraqi. Hegghammer (2010: 4) claims that the Makkah events prompted the Saudi regime to give more power to the Ulama (clerics) and more political space to Islamic activists. In order to regulate unrest and to correct radical Ikhwan ideas, the Saudi state gave certain power to the Ulama. Therefore, the Saudi government tried to implement sharia law, which would give them more power within and outside the country. This event marked a symbolic response to the political and religious status quo that would reverberate in the following years, resulting in global jihadism, characterized by grandiose local and foreign extremist terrorist attacks (Hegghammer and Lacroix, 2007). Saudi Arabia adopted both hard and soft measures to encounter these violent extremist trends and succeeded in the development of counter-terrorism strategies. The Saudi state took both hard and soft power measures and developed counter-terrorism strategies to deal with these violent extremist trends.

2.7.3 Khobar attacks 1996

Khobar Towers 1996 bombing was a terrorist attack on a U.S. Air Force housing complex in Dhahran, Saudi Arabia, on June 25, 1996 (Pearson, 2011). The bombers drove a tanker truck packed with 5,000 pounds (2,268 kg) of explosives near the complex and then jumped into waiting vehicles, escaping just before detonation. The explosion, which was so loud that it was heard some 20 miles (32 km) away, left a crater, 85 feet (26 meters) wide and 35 feet (10.6 meters) deep. Nineteen U.S. service members were killed, and some 372 people were injured (ibid). Riedel (2015) who asserts that, four of the men indicted by the United States in the Khobar case, Abdelkarim Hussein Mohamed al-Nasser, Ahmad Ibrahim al-Mughassil, Ali Saed bin Ali el-Hoorie, and Ibrahim Salih Mohammed al-Yacoub, were still on the FBI's list of most-wanted terrorists. As a result, the four bombers were made to confess in public by way of television and other media and they were later executed in May 1996.

2.7.4 September 11th 2001 attack

Saudi Arabia's relationship with the United States has been tense after the 9/11 attacks, the public was told Al-Qaeda acted independently with no state sponsors. But the White House

never let it see an entire section of Congress' investigative report on 9/11 (Sandbox Network Inc, 2018). Bin Laden proceeded to actively command the bombing against U.S interests in Saudi Arabia as we mentioned early, as well as the 9/11 attacks. This made him not only a target of Saudi security agents; he was a wanted man internationally.

As a result, after these attacks, Saudi Arabia found itself under a huge backlash of Western diplomatic pressure, critical statements and expectations to strictly act against insurgents jihadist at home and abroad. Saudi Arabia was committed to developing strategic cooperation with the U.S (Cordesman and Obaid, 2005:161). That was because the majority of Al-Qaeda suicide bombers and insurgents were found to be from Saudi Arabia by the end of the 1990s (Hegghammer, 2010). Al-Rasheed (2002) and Hegghammer (2010) indicates that because bin Laden was denied the opportunity to engage in the Iraq war against Saddam Hussein, he became bitter towards the Saudi Government and the Saudi Royal Family. Moreover, he was willing to discredit the government, like other former Sahwa rejectionists, who in the stance of the Saudi state on fighting Saddam Hussein, claimed that it was inappropriate to use non-Muslim forces to defend Saudi lands. The goal was to frustrate and hurt as much as possible the Saudi leadership while US troops were harbored by the state. Hegghammer (2010) states that this has resulted in mass arrests of extremist suspects, especially former foreign fighters in Afghanistan, Chechnya and Bosnia. Cities like Riyadh have endured the repercussions of such bombings. Hegghammer (ibid) goes on note that the arrests later strengthened many young Arab men's radicalization and rebelliousness, which later led to more violent action by Al-Qaeda militants and other groups claiming to be Al-Qaeda.

2.7.5 ISIS attacks against Saudi Arabia (2014-2016)

As the figures in Table 2.5 show, 2015 witnessed the largest number of shooting attacks by the Islamic State on Saudi targets, while 2014 and 2016 show fewer attacks and no cases reported in 2013. In 2014, the Saudi government jailed 800 people affiliated with the Islamic State (Firth, 2015). Similarly, in 2015, the Saudi security forces arrested more than 1,300 Saudi nationals and over 300 foreigners being suspected of connection to the Daesh/ISIL organization. Saudi security forces' firm response to domestic security threats is very typical and aligns with the first hypothesized strategy of counterterrorism, which is enacting strict criminal law and enforcing that law by arresting terrorists and preventing them from carrying out attacks on Saudi targets (The Washington Institute, 2018).

On such grounds, the study includes the first hypothesis of Saudi Arabia's implementation of strict criminal law enforcement that includes safeguarding the homeland, surveillance of borders and residential territories to prevent terrorists' attack (MarketWatch, 2015). It is also remarkable that most of the suicide incidents target Shiite mosques and security forces. In terms of targeting Shiite mosques, the ISIL aims to provoke Sunni Muslims against Shiite while it classifies security forces as infidels who protect infidel rulers (START, 2009-2018).

Year	Date	Incident
2014	January 5	Four militants and three security forces including a Saudi general were killed at the 'Judayat Aran' border post near Iraq.
	August 25	Saudi security forces arrested eight Islamic State commanders.
	November 3	Seven people were injured during a shooting at a mosque in al-Dalwa in the Eastern Province
	November 22	A Danish citizen was killed in Riyadh.
2015	March 29	Some militants attacked a security patrol in Western Riyadh injuring two.
	April 8	Some militants attacked a security patrol in Eastern Riyadh killing two.
	May 8	Some militants attacked a security patrol south of Riyadh killing one
	May 22	A suicide bomber attacked Ali bin Abi Talib mosque in al-Qudeih village, Qatif governorate, killing 21 people and injuring more than 80.
	May 29	A suicide bomber killed four people near Imam Hussain mosque in Dammam.
	July 4	Saudi security forces raid in Taif resulted in the killing of an officer and a militant, and the arrest of three militants.
	July 14	Saudi security forces raid near Abha resulted in the killing of a militant and his father, injuring two other individuals.
	July 16	A militant murdered a relative in the security forces, and then injured two people with a suicide bomb detonated at a checkpoint in Riyadh.
	August 6	A suicide bomb at the Saudi Emergency Forces mosque in Asir killed 15 people and injuring 33 others.
	September 23	Two militants killed a relative in the security forces, two civilians and a police officer.
	September 26	Saudi security forces killed two militants. 2016 January 28 33 militants were arrested by Saudi security forces. Among the group were nine Americans and three Yemenis.
	October 26	A suicide bomber killed two, injuring many others in a Shi'ite Ismaili mosque in Najran.

	February 8	A car bomb explosion targeted some Saudi armed forces in the AlAzizyah district of Riyadh.
2016	January 28	33 militants were arrested by Saudi security forces. Among the group were nine Americans and three Yemenis.
	February 15	Some militants killed a retired Saudi security official in Jizan Province. April and in al-Dawami district.
	April	Some militants killed a senior Saudi security officer in al-Dawami district.

Table 2. 5 Islamic State Shooting Attacks in Saudi Arabia (2013–2016)

2.8 The role of Saudi government in counter intellectual deviation

Intellectual deviation is when someone adheres to an exaggerated set of thoughts, beliefs or behaviours. These ideas may be grounded on certain religious, political, economic, literary or artistic ideologies. Adherents follows these ideologies due to their belief that they are following and believing the absolute truth. In doing so, the individual creates a gap between themselves and the society in which they inhabit and belong to (Borai 2002). He adds that this can lead to intense alienation of the individual in question who follows this stringent belief system and damages the practice of community interactions which allows individuals to be productive (Borai 2002). Borai (ibid) and several other experts on this topic believe that all theoretical universal human experiences are, either partially or in full, based upon theoretical foundations, concepts and meanings; this is due to the fact that these beliefs bring about manifestations of all forms of human behaviour (Ziadah et al , 2007). Almaliki (2006) states that social phenomenon is rarely devoid of a community of communities, in spite of the fact that its causes, forms and means of expression can vary and differ from one society to another, and also from one culture to another. Almaliki (ibid) surmises that intellectual deviation does not arise from a vacuum; it does not emerge from nowhere. Research studies have shown that intellectual deviation can come about due to multiple reasons, and these are dependent on the time, place and culture in which the intellectual deviation arose. It is important for the researcher to discover these reasons so that intellectual deviation can be prevented, and the minds of community members thereby protected. Many of the reasons for intellectual deviation overlap and interrelate with one another; thus, it is difficult to separate some reasons from one another. Aseiry (2003) discusses the greatest risks associated with intellectual deviation and the negative impacts that these can have on society and the lives of individuals:

1- This way of thinking negatively affects the doctrines of nations, religions, and society. It is contrary to Islamic law, in addition to the basic belief of moderation which is the foundation and one of the pillars of Islam.

2- It is a means by which heresies, polytheism, witchcraft, and atheism can be published and disseminated in a society; thereby, corrupting and destroying faith.

3- This way of thinking distorts the image of Islam and its noble values of compassion, justice, tolerance and consensus (Shura). This, in turn, leads to the alienation of Islam and prevents people from gaining the chance to learn about Islam and, perhaps, convert. Most disturbingly, intellectual deviation leads to acts of terrorism which undermine the security and stability of societies and countries; furthermore, this also leads to this discrediting of Islam and its alienation.

4- Intellectual deviation can destabilise the principles of the nation, thereby encouraging people to be hesitant about convictions of faith. This can result in issues such as secularism, Communism and modernity, in addition to Western publications which are contrary to Islamic beliefs. These are all ideas which undermine Islam and call into questioning its validity for the current times that we are living in. In addition, it also makes commentators question the relevance and suitability of Islam in relation to people's lives and living conditions.

5- Intellectual deviation corrupts and threatens the five pillars of Islam, and it also creates conditions and rules that violate its sanctity. It is a means to bloodshed, crime, violation, loss of money and the damage of people's property. Terrorist operations are carried out by people who seek to scare and intimidate individuals, or even cause their death; in addition to the destruction of their property and money.

6- Intellectual deviation leads to social fragmentation and separation in society; thereby causing a weak society. Further to this, it divides people into different groups, threatens national unity and sows seeds of hatred and division among the various classes of society. It leads a society into ignorance through the adoption of social sectarianism, classism and tribalism.

Al-Shahri (2011) states that the sources of social imbalance that formulate deviant ideology are initiated by the following:

1- People who hold extremist ideas and a strong desire to exclude others. This may come from a belief they hold that they are the only ones who understand certain facts and realities.

2- Those with extremist ideas have a one-way view of facts and reality. According to these people, everything has only one face and one path which is their own way and path.

Those with extremist ideologies never want to give up or lose an argument and they refuse to engage in meaningful open conversations with others. As such, extremism can be divided into three levels, which are as follows: the mental and cognitive level (this includes the lack of ability to meditate and think); the emotional level; and finally the impulsive behaviour and behavioral level (this includes the practice of violence towards others) (Aref, 1981 cited in Smadi, 2016).

As such, it is clear to see that intellectual deviation is contrary to the creation of strong, stable and peaceful groups and societies. It also causes harm to individuals and societies and is in opposition to Islam's moderate centrist approach to extremism and exaggeration. This is applicable to all aspects of religious life, social advancement, national security, and political and economic stability. It is dangerous when one group tries to assert their beliefs over everyone else in a society without any thought(Alrehaili, 2014).

Islam strives to protect human rights and allow a person to be able to choose their own religion, while encouraging them to truly think about and search for the truth. Muslims are also encouraged to protect and defend Islam and prevent its opponents from doubting its tenets and spreading negative ideas about it. Intellectual deviation is totally opposed to the five necessities advocated by Islam as required for every human being. These are as follows: religion, life, regeneration, money and a brain. Islam seeks to constrict the presence of deviants intellectually in society as they endanger society with regard to religion, individuals' minds, people's money, their bodies and their overall well-being. As such, the thoughts of intellectual deviants endanger the sanctity of the human psyche, the infallibility of their funds, and the core beliefs of Islam, which need to be protected and preserved (Aseiry, 2003).

A piece of evidence to support Islam's fight against intellectual deviation in society is reflected in the Holy Quran in a quote given by the prophet Mohammed: *"Invite the way of your Lord with wisdom and good instruction, and argue with others in a way that is best. Indeed, your Lord is most knowing of who has strayed from His way, and He is most knowing of who is [rightly] guided"* (An Nahl:125). Another relevant piece of evidence in this matter is the quote from the Holy Quran: *"There shall be no compulsion in [acceptance*

of] the religion. The right course has become distinct from the wrong. So, whoever disbelieves in Taghut and believes in Allah has grasped the most trustworthy handhold with no break in it. And Allah is Hearing and Knowing" (Al-Baqara:256).

These Quranic verses give clear advice on how to deal with those who are intellectually deviant in society. Another instruction in the Holy Quran states: *"call, mankind, O Muhammad (s), to the way of your Lord, [to]His religion, with wisdom, [with] the Qur'ān, and fair exhortation, its [the Qur'ān's] fair exhortations, or with gentle words, and dispute with them by way of that which, that is, by way of that [manner of] disputation which, is best, such as calling [them] to God by way of His signs and calling [them] to His definitive arguments. Truly your Lord knows best, that is, He is fully knowledgeable [of], those who stray from His way and He knows best those who are guided, and will requite them."* (Quranopedia.com, no date). Allah commanded Mohammed to speak gently, as He commanded Musa and Harun to do when he sent them to Pharaoh, as He said: *"speak to him mildly, perhaps he may accept admonition or fear"* (TA-HA:44).This means that possibly the Pharaoh would repent and save himself from God's judgement and ultimate destruction. This is also reflected in God's statement to the children of Israel, that *"whoever slays a person, unless it is for a murder or for spreading mischief in the land, it would be as if he slew all humans; and whoever saves a life, it would be as though he saved the lives of all humans"* (Al Maidah:32). God states in this verse to the children of Israel that whosoever kills another human being for other than manslaughter or corruption in the earth, it shall be as he had killed all mankind and whoever would save someone's life, saves all of mankind.

Clearly the values, principles and objectives of Islam are inherently against all forms of violence and violent extremism and promote justice, peace, the equality of human beings and non-discrimination. In this regard, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia stresses the importance surrounding the issue of intellectual security in all internal and external levels. This is represented in the efforts made by the Saudi government to establish several intellectual research centres in order to counter terrorism and extremism, while also promoting the concept of intellectual security to all. The following strategies have been adopted by the Saudi government:

1- The Saudi Ministry of Interior established the General Administration of Intellectual Security in 2000. This was constructed in order to achieve excellency in countering extremism in all its forms and manifestations; while also promoting

the values of moderation, national unity, preventing ideological deviations in Saudi society, confronting and addressing deviancy and develop national belonging. This agency was also created in order to highlight to interested entities the efforts made by Saudi Arabia to counter terrorism and integrate with other relevant interested entities to counter extremism at local and global levels.

2- The King Abdul Aziz Centre for National Dialogue was established in 2003, and this centre focuses on the culture of dialogue and seeks to disseminate dialogue among society members in all its categories. This is done in order to sustain public interest and preserve national unity through a number of objectives. These objectives include national issues of social, cultural, political, economic, educational and others. The society then transmits information through the channels of intellectual dialogue and mechanisms; thereby encouraging community members and civil society organizations to contribute and participate in national dialogues. In doing so, members can contribute to the formulation of the correct Islamic discourse based on moderation and, thus, help to create an environment conducive to a culture of dialogue (Kacnd, 2020).

3- Saudi Arabia created the Intellectual Warfare Centre in 2017, and this centre is affiliated with the Saudi Ministry of Defence. This centre is associated with an international project to overcome terrorism and extremism worldwide. This centre confronts extremism and promotes a true understanding of Islam. The centre also fights terrorism using social media campaigns in several languages (English, French and Arabic) (Alarabiya news, 2020).

4- The Global Centre for Combating Extremist Ideology (Etidal) is a global centre which was established on the 21st of May 21, 2017, during the Arab-Islamic-American summit meeting in Riyadh. This centre is also located in Riyadh, which is the capital city of Saudi Arabia. The mission of this centre is to strengthen the confidence of the people and governments in confronting the enemies of humanity. This centre tackles issues of intellectual deviation by distributing counter-extremist ideology. The centre also encourages and spreads the principles of tolerance and moderation; and promotes opportunities for world peace. The centre also refutes extremist rhetoric, in addition to combating terrorist activities and curbing their impact. Finally, the centre also promotes international cooperation in combating extremist ideology (Etidal, 2020).

5- The Prince Mohammed bin Naif Counselling and Care Centre, operates under the umbrella body of the Ministry of Interior (MOI). This institution is a typical example of the philosophy behind the stance of the Saudi Arabian Government regarding soft power-based counter-terrorism measures. This centre could be criticised from a reflective and critical stance as state power; one which promotes an ideology that is meant to influence the political path of individuals (Herring, 2008). In reality, the Centre is a prison for those who have committed non-lethal terrorist offences, or who have participated in high-risk Islamic activism without yet carrying out acts of terrorism. The centre advocates a reformative ethos, and states that it is committed to "de-radicalising" those who have to spend a term in the centre. Its approach embodies everything that relates to the state's soft power strategies against violent extremism and the ideologies that support it. In a document presented at the International Centre for Political Violence and Terrorism Research (ICPVTR) (2010), the centre states that it aims "to assist those individuals that have espoused takfiri beliefs" to "repent and abandon terrorist ideologies". According to Ashour Ashour (2009), takfir is the act of accusing a Muslim of abandoning Islam (or the perceived correct Islamic teachings) and becoming an infidel or an apostate (murrtadd). This process can be violent or peaceful in nature. The centre aims to "de-radicalise" extremists and extremist sympathisers by making them participate in intensive religious debates and undergo deep psychological counselling. According to Horgan, J. and Braddock (2010), the centre seeks foremostly to bring about behavioural change that could lead to disengagement and possibly de-radicalisation. The centre believes that this occurs through a changing the belief system of the person admitted to the centre. The de-radicalisation strategy attempts to deepen knowledge and behavioural skills using several programmes delivered by specialist advisers and rehabilitation courses; in doing so, the centre is more than a prison.

2.9 Conclusion

This chapter explored different aspects of terrorism and reviewed a number of key issues related to the origins and nature of violent extremism in the Saudi state, concepts of terrorism, extremism, radicalism, causes of terrorism and the linguistic characteristics of terrorism and richest militant groups around the world. Accordingly, it highlighted the major assumptions and practices underlying different jihadist Rhetoric, and their impact

on terrorism. It also addressed different classifications of characteristics of the jihadist rhetoric, types of rhetoric, variables affecting strategy choice in their message. In fact, by establishing a sympathetic environment with them from youth and others in all the world, the linguistic characteristics of Al-Qaeda discourse exhibits an intentional way of systematically presupposing religious truths to ensure self-legitimisation. This is achieved by means of the manipulation and distortion of divine truth and/or religious authenticity. In fact, by establishing a sympathetic environment with them from youth and others all over the world, the linguistic characteristics of Al-Qaeda discourse exhibits an intentional way of systematically presupposing religious truths to ensure self-legitimisation by means of the manipulation and distortion of divine truth and/or religious authenticity.

This chapter further aimed to provide an in-depth examination of Terrorism and Counterterrorism in Saudi Arabia, Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP 2003-2007), and insurrection initiated by Al-Qaeda and ISIS in Saudi Arabia. It show how this group was created and how it recruits new members and gain financial support from sympathizers. Finally, this chapter explored the role of the Saudi government in counter intellectual deviation and the efforts made by the Saudi government to establish several intellectual research centres in order to counter terrorism and extremism.

Bearing this in mind, I strongly advocate for the decision makers at the Ministry of interior to develop their plan regarding fighting terrorist organizations through social media. The next chapter therefore examines social media and online terrorism and the extent to which terrorist groups use the platform to recruit more members.

CHAPTER 3- SOCIAL MEDIA AND ONLINE TERRORISM

3.1 Introduction

As was seen in Chapter 2, different aspects related to the definitions of terrorism in general as well as Al-Qaeda, ISIS in the Arabian Peninsula, the jihadist rhetoric, intellectual deviation and history of Terrorism in Saudi Arabia have been discussed in detail. Here, in this chapter, we discuss a variety of topics related to social media and online terrorism, including the background to social media, definitions of social media and the Internet, brainwashing and persuasion to turn ordinary individuals into terrorists via social media. So, the main focus of this chapter is on the dark web of terrorism and the extent to which encrypted languages are used among terrorist groups to recruit more members and deceive security entities. Afterwards, it outlines and discusses the most popular social media platforms in Saudi Arabia, with a focus on *Twitter, YouTube*, the application of the social learning theory as a tool of terrorism expansion especially within close-groups such as relatives and friends.

3.2 Social Learning Theory

Albert Bandura noticed the first notion of imitative response as a learning tool by 1971 (Deaton, 2015).As quoted by Deaton, it is known that people observe, imitate and model others' behaviours. Therefore, interactions, observations and dynamic modelling have been shaping human behaviour ever since, and it is no different in the social media era. Social media has expanded the range of possible interactions and communication in a way that everyone can be connected at any time, location and age. Therefore, the possibilities of acquiring modelling behaviour have also expanded, as Deaton says "social media can be used to enhance learning, and … provides a sandbox where imitative behaviours are not only encouraged but are equally rewarded and shared" (Deaton, 2015, p. 1). Vickers, Field and Melakoski (2015) argue that communication has become interactive, immersive and omnipresent. Since social learning does not differentiate between positive and negative behaviours, terrorist organizations may take/advantage of the expansion of social media and therefore using it as a recruitment tool. In former times, modelling was one of the most successful ways of learning. However, it is almost inevitable in the social media era. Visual and auditory stimuli are heavily used, accompanied by sensory stimuli of interacting with electronic devices, providing more significant opportunities for symbolization and memory creation (Deaton, 2015). Weiman (2006) states that the expansion of terrorism throughout

social media has made its presence notable in networks such as *Instagram*, *Twitter*, *Youtube* and *Facebook*. Furthermore, by enhancing visual contact and communication with vulnerable individuals, terrorist organizations can efficiently recruit members (McNamee, Peterson, & Peña, 2010). Although terrorist organizations' focus has expanded lately, it is known that they have a more substantial effect on those that do not feel connected to society or feel that they have a religious obligation (Buttenfield, 2004). Bandura (1971) indicated that it can happen individually, or it can have a connection with a given network of friends and relatives. Once a given individual starts to work for these organizations and adopt their principles, they will provide an example for the others. They can cause the incentive motivational effect mentioned by Bandura (ibid). In that way, the emotions can be strongly related to environmental and behavioural stimuli and provide the necessary ties to promote long-term involvement with terrorism. Once terrorist organizations reach a vulnerable individual, the whole network of this person is reachable. As highlighted by Bandura (ibid), reinforcement occurs within a social context and is hugely influenced by punishments and rewards (p.24). Awan (2017) concludes that it can have different effects according to nature and frequency that one's performances were reinforced before, or, in other words, when there are settings that facilitate the access of terrorists. Once a given individual is reached, it will have access to others in the same social context and vulnerability that may be felt to be positively reinforced. Therefore, it explains why these given subpopulations are more prone to being affected by terrorist rhetoric.

The fact that social learning theory is being negatively affected by social media in a terrorism-promoting way is something that was never studied before and a gap that needs to be filled, especially close-group social learning. It is a theory with a strong background and settings that point out it is affecting the expansion of terrorism not only through supposed rhetorical self-justification and rewarding but through modelling learning that makes individuals within the same group behave similarly. Thus, friends and family are most likely to engage in such activities together and this is what will be discussed in the context of Saudi society.

3.3 Background to Social Media and Online Terrorism

According to Lieberman (2017), social media terrorism is very pervasive. Their plethora of vices sneak through every angle of the social media networks. With terrorism via social media increasing at an astonishing rate in recent years, Saudi Arabia and the United States of America have taken intensive action in order to prevent this modern phenomenon from

growing (Vidino, 2009). Hart (2013) states that this is an enormous and difficult task for these two countries. Perhaps the approach employed by the government is not technical enough as there are more gaps to fill when it comes to fighting international insurgents in Saudi Arabia. Hegghammer (2006) believes that Saudi Arabia has been accused of funding international terrorists, perhaps the reason why it is not easy to combat the extremists. Kohlmann (2006) argues that the United States of America is fighting a very difficult and vicious war against social media terrorism. The U.S. employs a defensive strategy, as opposed to following the actions of enemy terrorists online. The centrepiece of their online system is the *Maginot Line* which electronically protects important infrastructure from attacks online. This system is operated by the American Department of Defence and the Federal Aviation Administration. It must be stated, however, that terrorism continues to grow and develop due to the fact that terrorism cannot be challenged by the administrative passivity of Western governments (Odihr, 2014). As such, terrorists consistently re-develop and re-arrange their methods to exploit the incredible range of possibilities available via the internet. Dhami and Murray (2016) indicate that the big economies of the world did not give the proper attention to the upsurge of the ISIS terrorist group and other radical groups on social media at the beginning of the twenty-first century. The terrorist groups took the place of supporters for young people by creating interpersonal relationships with them and many other groups. But one may not easily know the danger associated with communicating with a profile that spreads content related to terrorism. So, terror groups such as ISIS devise an effective method of attracting people. With the creation of social media, in addition to other forms of mobile communication, entirely new and innovative methods of communication became available to terrorist associations globally. As such, these groups now had the ability to communicate and recruit new members via mobile phones (Doherty, 2010). As highlighted by Hegghammer (2008) the local government of Saudi Arabia reported that there are several means deployed by the jihadists to support the recruitment of more members and followers with the advent of the Internet. They are motivated by pan-Islamic nationalism, inspired by relatives and friends who have gone before them to Islamic state in both Iraq and Syria.

However, there is no certainty in the number of ardent followers of these terror organizations. The government of Saudi Arabia is very resilient in terms of monitoring the communication between the extremists and the young people in the country. Social media applications, for example, *Twitter*, *Facebook*, *WhatsApp* and *Instagram*, have been shown

to be widely used forms of social media that terrorist groups utilize when seeking to communicate with young Saudi Arabian citizens (Bradshaw & Howard, 2017). This revelation provides evidence for the accusation that young people who have grown up in strict religious families, or who have had contact with religious theology in the formative years of their lives, are more willing to participate in developing their "careers" by attending the training camps of the insurgents (*ibid*). Globally, the efforts to develop strategies to limit the recruitment of new members by ISIS is ongoing. This has strengthened the safety of world communities. It is evident that ISIS and many other radical groups gain more visibility on social media platforms from day today. They keep recruiting young minds in order to continue perpetrating their social vices (Ozeren *et al.*, 2018) . The world's advanced countries have offered different gestures regarding the most strategic measures to implement to stop this menace. The measure is geared towards preventing the growth of social media terrorism in the world. In order to prevent the growth of social media terrorism, after the end of the European summit in Brussels in June 2017, *Twitter* and *Facebook* make frequent reports to authorities globally concerning the quantities of followers who are joining extremist groups on their social media platforms to prevent the spread of terrorist materials on the internet (Fattah, 2017). Lieberman (2017) purports that social media is a prolific platform for international terrorist formation which encourages the involvement of young people by insurgents via social media platforms began in 2010. The level at which their propaganda is being propagated is very pervasive, making it difficult to develop an effective method that can limit their activities on the social platforms. It is vital that the strategies employed by other nations around the globe are monitored so that successful strategies may be copied and utilized in other countries effectively. The strategy can also assist Saudi Arabia to garner experience in the aspect of crisis management. Bickert and Saltman (2019) contend that in 2017, as expressed in view above, the Global Internet Forum to Counter Terrorism (GIFCT) was founded. This forum saw the unification of *Microsoft*, *Twitter*, *Facebook* and *YouTub*e in their shared goal to tackle terrorism online and do whatever it takes to prevent terrorist groups from using their media channels to disseminate any information, such as propaganda, promotion of their groups, and exploitation of media online to bring honour to their acts of violence. This forum made considerable improvements online, but more obstacles remain. Terrorist groups continue to find new methods of communicating and disseminating destructive material online. Alyousef and Zanuddin (2017) conclude that there have been efforts made by the government of Saudi Arabia to curb the trend in the growth of the extremist groups

on their social media platforms. While Saudi Arabia has been alleged to be sponsors of international terrorist groups, like ISIS, Al-Qaeda, Taliban, they are still very much active in efforts made globally to monitor the spread of extremist groups on social media (Diaz, 2020). One may easily agree that internet and digital technologies have become widespread and easily available to terrorist groups. Therefore, government must continue at the local and international levels to monitor and fight terrorist organizations.

3.4 Social Media and the Internet

According to Ward (2019) globally, in the modern times we live in, social media is utilised in almost every facet of daily life, and there are more than 3 billion social media users. Social media is an ever-changing and ever-evolving web-based platform. According to the Pew Research Centre, social media users tend to be younger. Nearly 90 percent of people between the ages of 18 and 29 used at least one form of social media. Ward (*ibid*) believes that sharing media involves disseminating and finding photographic material, videos and the like. Users state that seeing photos and videos gives them the feeling of being physically present, which is otherwise lacking in the virtual environment. Furthermore, users include a description or title of the photo\video that they share. Photographic and video material is most commonly shared on Instagram, *YouTube*, *Snapchat* and *Vimeo*. It is also possible to locate social media applications devoted to the discussion of topical and interesting subjects related to the news, opinions, ideas and so on. The applications most widely used to have discussions such as these are Quora, Reddit and Digg. Ward (2019) is not alone in describing social media as being ever-evolving, experts in this area mentioned that the evolution of social media is a feature of continuity of the internet and technology. Aman and Jayroe (2013) confirm that the strength of social media is felt extensively across the universe. Across the globe, people of all nations and all beliefs may be contacted online by means of a variety of social media applications, for example, *Facebook*, *WhatsApp*, *YouTube*, *Twitter* and *Skype*. According to Aman and Jayroe (2013),the advantages of social media are enormous. One of such is that it enables humans to download and upload pieces of information in desirable formats that includes images, texts, and videos. These have further enabled increased communication and networking. The phenomenon of social media has been used differently with the aid of Web 2.0 devices and various technologies that support ICT. Nonetheless, for the sake of this discourse, terminology related to Information Communication Technologies, and Social Networking Sites have been used in the same way. However, the two differ absolutely from each other. Aman & Jayroe

(ibid) report that Information Communication Technology is a term used when describing the numerous kinds of technologies users utilize in assessing, storing communicating, sharing, creating, and controlling information in digital format. Computer software and hardware applications are not excluded. It also covers network hardware, telecollaboration, internet, mobile devices, telecommunication infrastructures, and computers. Although considerable interest has been recently discovered in human connection via social communication in all stages, the interest has driven the research in ICT innovation in sectors of social media and ICT combined (Bhimani, Mention, & Barlatier, 2019). These combinations resulted in the development of participatory technologies like Web 2.0. Social media has been accessible through different communication, participatory, mobile, and web-based technologies, and applications, bringing technology and social interaction together. Weimann (2008) states that there are several social media platforms and applications which are customized to perform different functions. Social media is utilised for a variety of functions, including social networking, dissemination of videos and photos, topical discussions, to create content and to review services, etc. Weimann (*ibid*) concludes that social networking is meant to connect with people via the internet; which is easily facilitated and, therefore, widely utilised. Examples of networks in this category are *Facebook*, *Twitter*, and *LinkedIn*. They are used to communicate anonymously since they can gossip, rant, make inquiries, snoop, and even bully with their identity protected.

3.5 Social Media and Intellectual Terrorism

As previously highlighted in chapters 1 and 2, Social networking outlets, including *Twitter*, *Facebook*, *YouTube* and others, are easily accessible and used for good as well as evil purposes. Around the world, terrorist groups consistently utilise social media to promote themselves, achieve their goals, gain recruits and disseminate their propaganda (Weimann, 2006). In response, governments globally have tried to prevent social media from being used by terrorists. Terrorists choose social media because it is cheap and provides convenient quick access to others. It was not very convenient for these insurgents to communicate with the people of interest in the past. However, social media enables terrorists to convey their messages to their target audience and connect with them quickly. Kampf (2014) states that terrorist groups have sought to develop themselves through these channels and to make their activities known. Terrorists are taking advantage of the world's interconnectedness through these networks and are using it to continue every treacherous act (Polizzi, Lynn & Perry, 2020). Attacks are streamed live to social media users as the

attackers themselves do with false statements. The high manipulative terrorist skills associated with the emergence of social media networks lead to dichotomous thoughts in viewers, which led governments to consider response steps such as limiting access to the conventional media (Weimann, 2008). Weimann (*ibid*) goes on note that social media is now a channel that these terrorists abuse to spread their activities. They now have the capability to convey their information straight to their potential audience spontaneously. Terrorists may also customize their recruiting pitch and send specific messages to individuals based on age, gender, location, or other factors. The psychological persuasion that the benefits of joining terrorist groups can have ended up facilitating terrorist success through supposed rewards (Crenshaw, 2000). Since the internet offers almost total anonymity, individuals are more likely to engage in questionable behaviour (Caplan, 2002). The communication style may also be different, which facilitates engagement in acts of terror.

3.6 Youth Brainwashing and Persuasion

The psychological events involved in terrorism have been known for a long time. Many scientists tried to explain why ordinary individuals become terrorists through diverse psychological theories such as the supposed cause, comradery attitude, cult recruiting, and crisis response (Bongar *et al.*, 2006). However, instead of merely compiling a single reason for terrorist conversion, researchers have found significant importance in persuasive communication. According to Bongar et al. (*ibid*), transmission and propagation is an integral part of terrorist acts and is almost guaranteed by international news media. Bongar et al (*ibid*) confirm that the public was already eager for real-time news years ago and became even more with the expansion of social media. From *Twitter* to *YouTube*, more than a billion users are exposed to information without any pause, which had some repercussions. As we mentioned earlier, social media is now present in almost every phase of our lives, which means young people are also present in this environment. Therefore, when easy real-time communication and strong terrorist persuasive communication would target young individuals looking for a purpose in life, the formula for disaster is ready. Blaker (2015) indicates that the youth can feel attracted to the terrorists for many reasons, including a sense of belonging, camaraderie, and purposeful activity. This strengthens Awan's (2017) remarks that many mechanisms of the social learning theory are being used to facilitate recruitment through inducing extremism through differential reinforcement, imitation, and association. In this regard Duffy (2003) states that the psychology of racism

states that once a person intellectually accepts false ideas concerning racial inferiority, these ideas are repeated within the person's thoughts; thereby, poisoning and corrupting this person's mind with racist ideas. Duffy (ibid) outlines how when such an indoctrinated person engages with individuals which are targets of extremist racism, this engagement may generated learned hate responses. Duffy believes that extremist rhetoric is extremely dangerous when it comes in the form of video games which people may use to act out violent fantasises. Duffy (ibid) underscores how repeated interaction with such extremist rhetoric, such as those found circulating on the Internet and in video games, can generate racist thoughts and behaviours.

Already known causes for the rise of terrorism, such as the demographic characteristics, are strengthened by psychological factors. Loza (2007) stresses the psychological characteristics of terrorism, such as personality traits associated with self-actualization, fulfillment, power, and direction to their lives; the thinking dichotomy that facilitates radicalization; the feelings of excitement and adventure or dissatisfaction with their personal lives and the belief system, which pledges that the Islamic religion is superior and must punish westerners. For many, there is no need for brainwashing. They early implanted ideologies in their brains, but still, social media are essential in their international spread. According to Borum (2004) *YouTube* is seen as an alternative to television, and therefore, one of the main channels of communication for terrorists. It is seen worldwide with very high view counts, including impacting terrorist videos with plenty of violence. Borum (*ibid*) goes on to highlight that most of the videos have English subtitles, which demonstrates plans for influencing the middle eastern youth. Since videos are a highly successful means of persuasive communications, terrorists can take advantage of psychological immaturity and the eagerness for adventure. The terrorists seem to target the young generation identity crisis, facilitating the high conversion rate. Borum (*ibid*) believes that propaganda has been successful long before Hitler's Germany, and it continues to be successful with terrorist organizations. However, through various means, propaganda is now made through tweets and videos that aim at perceived injustice, lack of identity, and sense of belonging, making it possible for many young individuals to engage in terrorist activities even if they have proper levels of education or living standards. United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (2012) reports that the emotional of the youngest is easily deceived by the feeling of being in debt with the Muslim people. As highlighted by the United Nations, recruitment is based on tailored propaganda to achieve vulnerable and

marginalized groups of society, which makes it easier to trigger feelings of injustice and exclusion. Also, the fact that young people hold a significant share of internet users makes them an easy target for propaganda delivered through games, cartoons and music videos. Schulzke (2014:p627) states that "video games provide violent non-state actors and organizations sympathetic to them with a means of presenting their grievances and displaying their fighting prowess in ways that advance the organizations' strategic goals". Furthermore, Olson, Olson, Kutner and Warner (2008:p133) indicate that there is a desire to "experience fantasies of power and fame, to explore and master what they perceive as exciting and realistic environments (but distinct from real life), to work through angry feelings or relieve stress, and as social tools".Plaisier and Konijn (2013) conclude that there is a positive correlation between adolescents' anger, frustration, and peer rejection on the one hand and preference for antisocial media content and cyberbullying, violent video games are more appealing to adolescents.

3.7 Terrorism on the Dark Web

According to Malik (2018) the internet is composed of the surface and the deep web, while the latter has always been the place where illicit acts concentrated, the terrorists have expanded to the surface web. In fact, most of the internet is composed of the deep web, where terrorist acts are planned, stolen credit cards are shared, drugs sold, and illegal porn accessed and viewed. Weimann (2016) states that the use of the dark web, which is within the deep web, by terrorists can be explained by the easiness of tracking the surface web, favoring the use of encrypted applications and language for protection. Everyone that uses the dark web is virtually anonymous; it makes the job of the counterterrorism institutions harder.

However, lately, terrorists have been able to expand to the surface web through social media. Graham (2016) explains that they tailor their language to reach different niches successfully and spread their propaganda almost freely since it became challenging to control the high number of accounts on *Twitter*, *YouTube*, and *Facebook*. They have multiple accounts on different websites and tailor their language to specific niches of society. Message encryption works in a way that only the sender and receiver can read the messages, limiting the action of the police. As highlighted by Dean, Bell and Newman (2012) different applications require different objectives and languages. The authors put *Facebook* into the "Virtual Recruitment Strategy" since the function is to maintain relationships between people and promote the formation of groups. Dean and Bell (ibid)

conclude that *Twitter* falls into the "Instant Communication Strategy," which means that posts in this social media are aimed at instant messaging and topic-level organization, which favors the strategic update on terrorist attacks. Last, *YouTube* falls into the "Cyber Training Strategy" because videos can be used to teach bomb and weapon crafts, train and plan without the videos being taken out before reaching an adequate number of views and being downloaded locally as well.

3.7.1 Encrypted Language Between Extremist Groups on Social Media

This researcher tried to explore the encrypted language among extremist groups through a review of some related studies associated with this research, but this was not possible due to its continuous updating and being limited to extremist leaderships. Taking this into consideration, it can be concluded that encryption is the process of encoding information using mathematical algorithms in order to guarantee that only authorized access will receive the information. According to Dave (2019) who indicates that there are various ways of encrypting a language, one of them makes it possible that the message is understood only by those who have the decryption key and reinforces the counterterrorism work of tracking illicit activities, it is called end-to-end encryption. Dave (*ibid*) is not alone in describing these various ways of encrypting a language between extremist groups. Experts in this area state that encrypted Language among extremist groups are not known to the public, but rather are limited to the leaders of the organization, which makes it difficult for governments to track. Rogers (2015) believes that encryption systems, in which only the sender and receiver information is available, is a security threat. Multiple countries believe that total privacy is a right. However, it can be used for terrorist purposes, for example, a known ISIS bomb-maker might use this technology to send an email from a tracked devise to a suspected radicalized person under investigation in New York, and federal law enforcement agencies in the United States will be unable to see ISIS' attack plans. However, as highlighted by Graham (2016) there is no difference between military-grade encryption and consumer encryption, making it hard for federal institutions to monitor their content. That justifies Graham's (*ibid*) claim that encryption can be useful if the companies are available to use their encryption methods to help the government in preventing terrorism. Nevertheless, the FBI supposedly once had to pay almost a million for someone to unlock an iPhone (Galloway, 2017). Furthermore, not only messaging apps are being used, but rather the terrorists have also been using encrypted languages to avoid government surveillance even in social networks (Mugarura, 2014). This use of encrypted

languages and applications to send messages by extremists was highlighted at the International Conference on social media, in 2020, when the importance of finding the halfway point between privacy and security was stressed. It is reported that the use of applications such as *Wickr*, *WhatsApp*, *Signal*, *Viber*, *Telegram*, *Facebook*, *Skype*, and *Protected Text* was used to release terrorist content and fundraise an attack in Bangladesh, that is an free online notepad with password and encrypt all your notes, access anywhere (Dave, 2019). Even though it could be possible to anticipate this attack with weaker end-to-end encryption, the same could not be done if they were using regional language encryption. This is why Dave (*ibid*) highlights that tech companies should recruit content moderators that speak the regional language since they can identify uncommon words. Nouh, Jason Nurse and Goldsmith (2019) all state that multiple studies have focused on identifying radical content through psycholinguistics and hashtags, however, much can be lost if the researchers and moderators cannot understand the encrypted languages. Therefore, the situation is getting more dangerous, but it seems like there is no clear and effective way of predicting, protecting, and stopping this type of communication on the internet. Another problem in trying to track terrorism on social media is that some programs offer a self-destruct function that keeps messages only for a limited time, guaranteeing anonymity (Magill, 2014). They are often used along with a router that hides the user's address. Graham (2016) indicates that encryption backdoors are effective, which means that the agencies will have to focus on software hacking in the future. If combined, encrypted language through encrypted apps being sent through encrypted routers in encrypted computers is just impossible to solve. In addition to this, the Dark Web is accessible only through software that allows such technology since the user internet protocol is hidden. For the dark web to work, encrypted data moves through random channels and computers that redirect the message to the next destination until it reaches the final point – and only then is it revealed (Malik, 2018). Malik (*ibid*) argues that the software used is called *Tor*, or *The Onion Router*, and was created by the US Navy at the end of the 20th century. The program encryption makes it that the anonymity of visited websites, operators, identity, and location remain protected. Among the differences between the surface web and the deep web is that it almost does not have search engines, and users of the surface web have few indexed addresses. In other words, someone has to know what they are looking for in order to find it, which facilitates terrorist work by keeping those who have no connections with them away. Malik (*ibid*) concludes that this high-end technology allows terrorists not only to promote radicalization and discuss attack

strategies, but it promotes "self-starter" terrorism, in which individuals are motivated to commit crimes in the name of the organization without necessarily needing to be planned by the group. There are many reported cases of individuals who were self-radicalized and decided to join the Islamic State, committing acts of terror, or attempting to recruit others (Carriere, 2016).

3.7.2 Deceiving Security Entities

High-end encryption and a large base of members allow terrorist organizations such as Al-Qaeda and ISIS to deceive security counterterrorism entities easily. Tracking terrorists down in the Deep Web means tracking without seeing the individuals behind it, or even where they are from. Federal counterterrorism entities can only observe the information; however, with encrypted language communication and end-to-end encrypted apps, it is tough to predict the actual location of the attacks (Manpearl, 2018). Much effort is being put into decrypting end-to-end encryption and finding the backdoor, but the biggest problem actually may be language encryption. According to Mendonça *et al.*(2019) argues that using language encryption, as mentioned earlier, means that the real meaning of the word is changed or that slangs are used. The creation of a dialect used for criminal and cyber-criminal purposes is called Criminal Slang Expression and may be an obstacle to automated interpretations and filtering of social media. In addition, even though someone may be tweeting about "school," "backpack," and "band," it actually may mean "temple," "bomb" and "group". Mencarini & Sensidoni (2017) who gave more examples such as the only way of actually understanding the real meaning of words is with an insider. Acronyms, abbreviations, and intentional misspelling are also known ways of getting through automated governmental scans. The use of such languages may deceive federal counterterrorism entities. One explicit tweeting "bomb" may not carry a bomb, and described locations may have no relationship to the real ones. Thus, terrorist efforts into using encrypted languages can be as successful as using end-to-end encryption with self-destructing function as it leaves agencies entirely in the dark when it comes to predicting anything other than the occurrence of an event.

3.7.3 Terrorist rhetoric and Mobile Applications

As we have seen in the previous chapters, the rhetoric of terrorism is very developed and a strong characteristic of their organizations. In fact, according to Conway et al.,(2011) terrorist rhetoric contains a more straightforward structure rather than non-terrorist rhetoric

and emphasizes affiliation and interpersonal rhetoric in order to mirror others. Conway (*ibid*:p180) highlights that "it is unlikely that terrorist rhetoric is designed to build rapport with stated terrorist enemies … it is likely to build rapport with sympathizers and potential or current recruits", which reinforces the fact that extremist rhetoric is aimed at recruiting followers. However, when analysing other factors, Conway (*ibid*) concludes that terrorist-style changes slightly near an attack, exaggerating their style and successfully linking their rhetoric with soon-to-be-committed violence. Thus, not only the rhetoric of terrorists in social media is so bright and defined that it can be used as a prediction tool. Lieberman (2017) indicates that successful terrorist groups also tailor their discourse to different groups of society according to geographic and demographic differences. For example, in places where modernization was too fast, or there is strong opposition to the government, their discourse will be talking about anarchy. In case the region faces resistance from foreigners, they will have a separatist talk, and when there are lacking resources, a materialistic approach (Horgan, 2004). Overall, they succeed at summing up the triggers for terrorism, such as weak states, inequality of power, corrupt governments, social injustice, ideological leaders, and discrimination based on ethnicities or religious origins. It is known that messages to English speakers are softer than those in Arabic, which portray jihad as a duty to the Muslims. In their propaganda, hour-long movies that depict ISIS as heroes are included (Lieberman, 2017a). Social media allows this content to be directly delivered to the destination. With regard to English speakers Bassnett, S (1980) highlighted that the messages use language which views jihad in a simple and concise way, by means of altering the meaning of a piece of source language into the target language. This is done by using simple and concise words that have direct equivalence along with new words or terms, foreign words expressed in target language or by utilising foreign words which match the target language pronunciation. Venuti (2017) provides a very clear explanation and states that, ideally, a translation must express the meaning of the original text in a brief fashion; all the while, maintaining the original atmosphere and emphasis. A translator needs to aim for the closest approximation in words, concepts and cadence to the original text. As such, a translator must scrupulously avoid adding long words or ideas which are not required by the text. It is not the goal of the translator to expand or to explain; merely to translate and maintain the spirit and force of the original.

Buttenfield (2004) states that one similarity connects all of the various forms of social media together, and that is that all these forms of media share strong terrorist rhetoric which

underscores unhappiness, injustice and duty. Buttenfield (*ibid*) believes that these forms of social media also seek to establish a sense of location and encourage users to commit themselves to the protection, nurturing and sustenance of environmental systems. Lieberman (2017) has shown how nearly 90 thousand posts and tweets are created every day to disseminate information. Saul (2015) demonstrated how jihadist rhetoric influences the creation of posts so that terrorists are able to gain the attention of the youth, such as one post which aimed to glamorize life in ISIS as 'utopia', by means of an image entitled 'jihadi bride'. This post contained a photo of a bride with several other women posed seductively around a BMW. The image (see figure 3.1), tried to connect Jihad with power and unity among male members; fighters were shown to be enjoying a family celebration. Images such as these are used to recruit new members from around the world and appeal to these new members who might be afraid of what they will lose by joining ISIS. Saul (*ibid*) indicates that ISIS's attempts to glamorize its image were damaged recently, when a document was found and translated by the counter-extremism think tank Quilliam. This ISIS document stated that the role of women was only in the household, in order to support their warrior husbands.

Nowadays, manifold mobile applications can be used to stratify public niches and publish effective propaganda to be widely disseminated. Many forms of social media are useful for the communication of extremists; it is clear that there is no safe form of social media. Due to this problem, terrorist rhetoric continues to find its way into the hands and minds of individuals and social niches. This image however does not reflect reality and the truth. Instead, it a type of propaganda implemented by such terrorist groups to attract attention and recruit young people and women. This does distort the image of Muslims whose religion rejects all types of terrorism and any form of exploitation of women and children. In fact, such practices are not acceptable in all religions including Islam.

Sullivan (2014) highlighted that when terrorists are able to take control of social media, they can use it to manipulate and amplify the effects of their actions. The conventional media often restrains terrorist's radius of expansion, but that is not possible in social media. Multiple cases link social media to radicalization, terrorist attacks, and strategy. Sullivan (*ibid*) supports that amongst the psychological factors that influence the extremist success in these environments, first, they can establish the presence and second that the content is easily viewed and shared. Also, some theories can explain the importance of getting public support on their crusades. Sullivan (*ibid*) concludes that some authors believe that the depersonalized civil society allows public opinion to be necessary, unlike in times of kings and queens whose opinions were imposed on the majority. This state versus people fight expands through the internet and invades various applications.

The rise of new mobile applications and social networks means new lands for terrorists to explore. They mostly focus on end-to-end encrypted applications that can protect their location and their messages from being read. One of the most popular applications used by terrorists is *Telegram*. The app allows groups, supergroups, channels, and direct messaging. Channels are sources of information that only the administrators can post, while supergroups and groups allow the common members to share information. As for the difference between supergroups and groups, the first can host up to 200,000 members, while the second has a more limited user count. A study recently analysed 636 extremist channels and groups in *Telegram* and found out that its primary function was the distribution of instructional material rather than communication within members (Clifford

and Powell, 2019). Therefore, although *Telegram* is classified as a messaging app, its channel function may be a mass communication tool similar to *Twitter* and *WhatsApp*. Regardless of the similarities, there are some differences between *Telegram* and *Twitter*. *Twitter* allows direct reference, reposting another user's content (retweeting) and limits the characters present in a message, therefore, leaving the user into being objective or making a thread (Simon *et al.*, 2014). In other words, Twitter allows direct, short, and effective communications that require a different dynamic than *Telegram*. This is why Twitter is always more used when there are news of attack, while Telegram is mostly a background and planning communication app, Twitter is always more used when there are terrorist acts/events However, according to Lieberman (2017), *Facebook* is the most popular platform for ISIS propaganda. As Weimann (2015)highlighted, the terrorists themselves believe, "*Facebook* is a great idea" since they can send standardized messages for groups of users and passively recruit new fighters.

3.8 Saudi Internet

As discussed in Chapter 1, the introduction of the internet in Saudi Arabia in 1994 came with strict restrictions. The internet could only be used by health and educational research institutions, in addition to other governmental bodies. It was 5 years later, in 1999, when normal Saudi Arabian citizens were finally granted access to the internet. Since that time, the quantity of internet users in Saudi Arabia has risen sharply. There were an estimated 2 million users in Saudi Arabia in 2004 (Al-Saggaf, Y. and Weckert, 2004), and this rose to in excess of 25 million users in 2020. This dramatic growth represents over 72.38 percent of the total Saudi population (Ministry of Communications, 2020)

Even today, however, internet access in Saudi Arabia is only possible according to strenuous censorship and highly developed filtering systems which have been created by the CITC. As such, the CITC is responsible for the monitoring and designing of ever more innovative measures for filtering the internet in Saudi Arabia. The CITC regularly submit databases of websites that they wish to be blocked. These databases are submitted to internet service providers (ISPs) in Saudi Arabia, and these companies put in place internet filtering measures in line with the CITC's rules and requirements. Before this system was devised, all global internet traffic was channelled through one International Access Point connected to the internet. This process was overseen by King Abdul Aziz City for Science and Technology (KACST) (Deibert, et al., 2008). Due to the increasing progression of internet usage in Saudi Arabia, in addition to the increasing quantity of users, it was

necessary to create a new form of infrastructure to oversee internet usage in the kingdom. The CITC states that the new structure enables greater flexibility by means of multiple International Access Points to the internet in the country (Deibert, et al., 2008). Furthermore, there is now a more improved competitive environment which has enabled the service and quality level to rise due to the entry of several new Internet Service Providers. An illustration of the new system is visible below (figure 3.2).
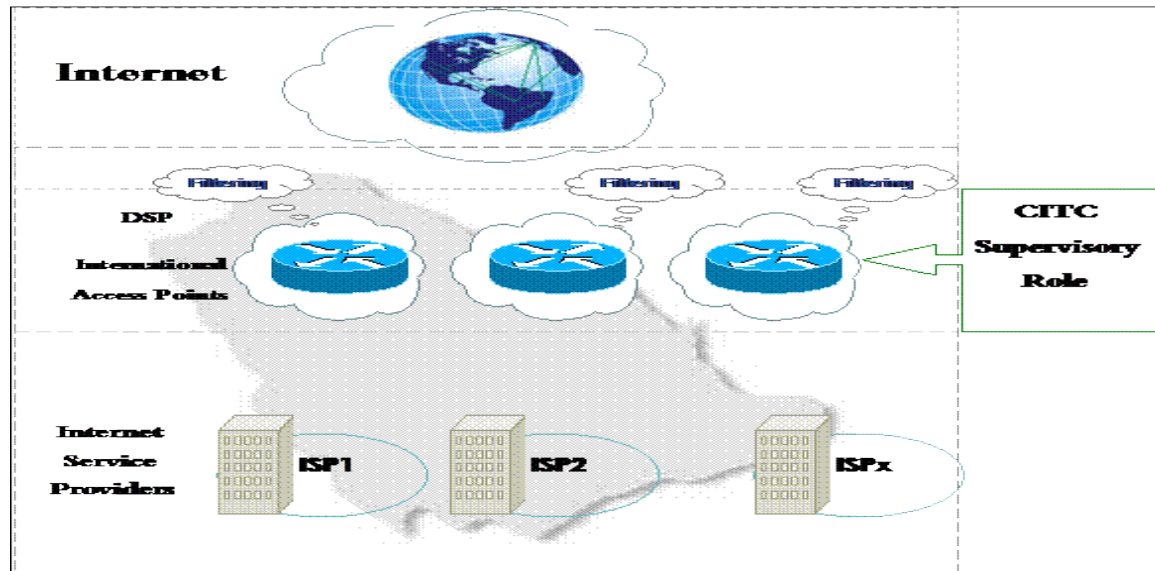
figure 3. 2 The Internet and Filtering Service Infrastructure in Saudi Arabia

The Internet Service Providers, Data Service Providers (DSPs), and CITC distribute and share technical roles between them. The Communication and Information Technology Commission provides these companies with filtering lists (URLs). The DSPs provide a filtering infrastructure which is in accordance with CITC requirements. On a daily basis, DSPs download filtering and access lists which are provided using filtering systems. The CITC oversees DSPs filtration systems and makes sure that their updates occur every day. They also ensure that they are committed to CITC policies, technical rules and conditions that internet users have to cooperate with in order to abide by Saudi legal rules. Gazzaz (2006) states that several of these rules focus on the fact that all Saudi internet uses in Saudi Arabia should not publish or access information that contains anything contradicting any Islamic principle or legislation. None of the material should infringe upon the sanctity of Islam or breach public decency. Furthermore, none of the material should contradict the Saudi state or its governmental system; there should be no information which criticises the Saudi Arabian armed forces without official governmental approval; official state laws should not be published, neither should any official Saudi agreements or statements be published online prior to their official public release; no material should be distributed

which is critical of the dignity of national state leaders, or any leaders of officially approved diplomatic missions in Saudi Arabia; no material should be published with harms international relations between these countries (Deibert, et al., 2008). Furthermore, internet users are not allowed to distribute online any subversive ideas in the kingdom, and they are also not allowed to disrupt public order or cause disputes among Saudi citizens (2006). As such, there is very close monitoring of the internet in Saudi Arabia, with a total denial of access to many websites. In addition to this, users that try to access a forbidden website are redirected to a webpage which displays a message stating that: "Apologies, but this webpage is unavailable" (please see figure 3.3 below) for more information). In the event, however, that users require to access a forbidden webpage in order to access essential information (for health reasons, for instance), they have the possibility to complete an online application form and submit this form to be considered and access to the webpage in question.
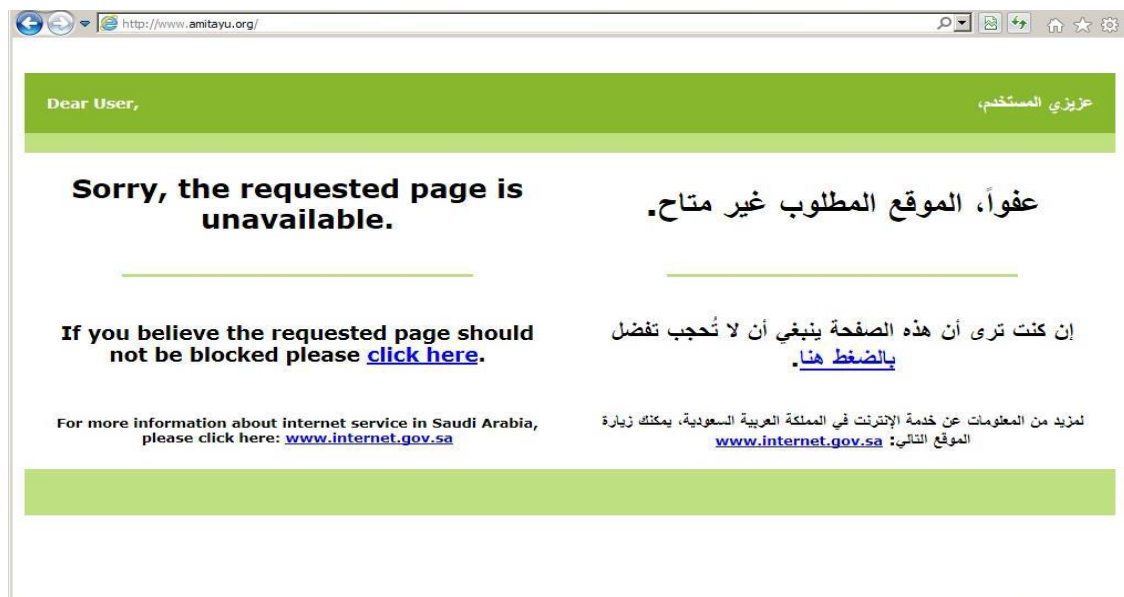
figure 3. 3 Redirected Page for Blocked Website

It is government policy in Saudi Arabia that any websites containing 'anti-Islamic', 'aggressive', 'disturbing', and 'forbidden' material (for example, terrorism, pornography, gambling, drugs and extremism) are totally restricted. In 2016, for instance, the -Araby Al-Jadeed website based in England was blocked because of the support shown by this website to the Muslim Brotherhood Group; this group is considered by the Saudi government as a terrorist organization (Freedom House, 2018).

The internet is one of the most controlled and most censored technologies in Saudi Arabia; however, the arrival of several social media platforms *(e.g., Facebook, Twitter, YouTube),* in addition to mobile smartphones, has created enormous diversification of online content in the country, providing Saudi citizens with unprecedented access to a multitude of different perspectives, many of which are contrary to the state overseen mainstream media in the country. Saudi citizens and human rights groups use alternative media channels to raise public awareness of issues in relation to political reform, corruption, poverty, gender inequality and also the recruitment tactics of terrorist organizations (Al-Khalifa,2012; Al-Saggaf; Simmons, 2015 and Noman *et al.*, 2015). As such, social media platforms in Saudi Arabia are increasingly utilised by terrorist organizations and this problem is of growing concern to Saudi authorities.

In response to these growing threats, the Saudi Arabian government is trying to monitor and restrict public discourse on certain topics, and it is also trying to curtail criticism online (Clark, et al, 2017). Taking on such an enormous job, however, is extremely difficult for Saudi authorities, and the regulation of social networking sites is an almost impossible task. This makes this issue one of the largest problems that the Saudi government has had to deal with since the creation of the media in the country. In 2013, for instance, a CITC minister said that the Saudi Arabian government oversee *Twitter* discussions online, but admitted that doing so was an absolute nightmare because of the exorbitant quantity of *Twitter* uses in the country (Al-Watan, 2013). *Twitter* account pages located in the Saudi *Twittersphere* map contain political dissident content, in addition to many other accounts which have other forms of restricted content. There are many *Twitter* accounts which are blocked in Saudi Arabia; however, censors in Saudi Arabia do not have the capacity to block all of the users posting controversial content, without blocking *Twitter* completely (AlJabre , 2013).

As such, despite the fact that the Saudi government is able to control traditional media platforms in the country, they are not able to exert the same control over social media; thus, making it a very open arena for Saudis to express themselves. In saying that, Saudi authorities have not ceased in trying to secure new measures to prevent intellectual deviation and terrorism content in the kingdom. For example, if perpetrators can be identified online who are participating in terrorist online activities or supporting their ideas, then they will be arrested and face prosecution by Saudi authorities (Horgan, & Braddock, 2010).

One example of how the Saudi government is continuing to fight terrorism online is the introduction of a new anti-terrorism law introduced in November 2017 (HRW, 2017). This law defines terrorism in vague terms; the definition states that a wide array of non-violent acts such as those which 'disturb public order', 'threaten public security', or 'weaken national unity' can be considered as terrorism (Alkarama, 2017). Furthermore, those who violate this new law will face a 15-year prison sentence if they use social media to promote terrorism (Freedom House, 2018). I agree that strenuous laws and energetic government reactions against online terrorist activities have the ability to make social media users very nervous about what they share online. It is clear that social media has made available a method of communication which is difficult for governments to monitor due to the extensive amount of uses; in addition to the face that Saudi Arabian citizens, particularly the youth, have all created online accounts in recent years.

3.9 The most popular social media platforms used in Saudi Arabia

Saudi Arabia is one of the Middle East's largest social media markets. The growing percentage of smartphone use has fuelled the popularity of social sites. The most popular social media platform is YouTube, which is followed by Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter (Global media insight, 2020). The following section presents the most popular social media platforms used in Saudi Arabia.

3.9.1 *Twitter*

Twitter is the most popularly used social media platform present in Saudi Arabia. It is estimated that there are approximately 20.3 million Internet users in Saudi Arabia (Global media insight, 2020). According to digital marketing statistics (2020) this number represents about 58% of the population of the country who have Internet access. Of this 58% of the Saudi population, approximately 11.27 million of these citizens are frequent users of *Twitter*; this means that Saudi Arabia has the fastest-growing quantity of T*witter* users in the world. Due to the fact that Saudi Arabia has a very active Internet and *Twitter* community, Saudi government officials have to exert enormous effort in order to control and monitor what is being posted and distributed online with an appropriate balance. Comunello and Anzera (2012) state that *Twitter* is very interesting to study in relation to how this social media platform influences political discourse globally. *Twitter* has special functions which are very useful when it comes to sharing information; this, in turn, has an impact on activism and mobilization in a much more distinct way than *Facebook* and other

social media websites. This is mainly due to the fact that most *Twitter* profiles are viewable to other users. It is possible for users to read the tweet*s* by users which they follow; furthermore, users may view discussions on certain topics by conducting searches using #hashtags. This brings up tweets from users that they do not follow but who have something to say about a certain topic. This means that users can participate in large discussions without having to make new friends using friend requests (as in *Facebook*). *Twitter* enables very large and complex chains and networks of communication online, allowing users to follow these discussions without having to engage in the conversation themselves (ibid). As outlined by Manuel Castells (2009),mass self-communication of this nature allows the technological platform to be created for the autonomy of the social actor. The social actor can be an individual or collective; and it is this issue which makes the internet a terrifying reality for governments worldwide.

Twitter activities have grown to become a mass phenomenon since its launch in 2006, service has spread globally providing services in 33 languages and enhancing its features for use of non-Latin character sets (Ed *et al.*, 2014). Twitter Inc. has sustained the main idea behind Twitter service as short messages (tweets) app of up to140 characters and allowing users to follow updates on their posts (ibid). As part of plans to make *Twitter* service more appealing to its users, the media platform announced a trial of an expanded character limit up to 280-character tweet which is set to be accessible to all users after a trial period. *Twitter* clarified that the decision to lift the per tweet character limit from 140 to 280 was borne out of the need to better clarify the compositional peculiarities of each language. This feature, however, may have given more social media access for terrorist organizations to reach young people who are easy targets for terrorist group recruitment. (Ed *et al.*, 2017).

Consequently, these advantages encouraged many terrorist organizations such as AL-Qaeda and ISIS to promote their propaganda and prove that they are able to govern the controlled areas in their areas (Kent, 2020). In a report by Harkous (2017), ISSI took advantage of *Twitter* service to demonstrate its administrative exploits (such as economic security, distribution of financial aids and tourism) in conflict areas. By using *Tweeter* feeds to display photos of market activities like the sale of food items and groceries or the execution of people convicted of various crimes (see figure 3.4), ISIS showcased the establishment of law and order and publicized its achievements in the territories under their

control. These activities enable ISIS to reach out to their followers through tweeting and retweeting.

figure 3. 4 ISIS images spread through social media

Twitter is one of the major social media platforms that the international terror group, Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS), use to promote their propaganda and their recruitment could be done through *Twitter* (Witmer, 2016). They operated on the platform in their own way while maintaining limited inter-relationship with the whole community since they may not be normal users on *Twitter*. Typically, they got two-thirds of their interactions from potential suspended accounts, which generated rhetorical questions if they spring from ordinary users. Bodine-Baron *et al.*, (2016) indicate that the Islamic State in Syria and Iraq have been using social media channels to broadcast messages, induce followers, and recruit new members. According to public *Twitter* data, ISIS opponents have also been using *Twitter* to repress ISIS's message on Arabic *Twitter*.

In the Middle East, social media has been a tool for enticing the natives of the region. Social media also serves as a battleground between ISIS and the existing regimes. ISIS often used *Twitter* to spread their propaganda/ideology with the aim of recruiting their sympathizers (Alfifi *et al.*, 2018). The platform also serves as an avenue to directly contact their target audience. ISIS has been labeled as a terrorist group that is very ardent in using the internet and social media platforms to spread its propaganda and recruit new members. Like ISIS, the Taliban group also makes use of *Twitter* to post and share information with their target audience. However, their tweets are not easily accessible to interpret and the content of their *Twitter* feed is often integrated into serious networking of terrorists, and English hashtags are often used (Bernatis, 2014). Additionally, Witmer (2016) states that

another group that also utilizes *Twitter* to propagate their ideology is Al-Qaeda group. They recruit men and women through the platform, and their supporters are active on *Twitter*, especially their female supporters who often tweet violent content. Although the platform is dominated by males, their female counterparts' tweets portray that they are ardent supporters of the insurgents. Witmer (ibid) goes on to state that while pro-jihadist *Twitter* communities appear to be dominated by male participation, female IS supporters are more active and post more violent content than any other organization's female support groups. The disparities found among female supporters in the intra-group indicate that group ideology, recruitment and propaganda tactics play a crucial role in women's engagement in radical environments.

3.9.2 *YouTube*

YouTube is considered the world's most popular online video site, with users watching four billion hours' worth of video every month (Briciu, & Briciu, 2020). At least, seventy hours' worth of video is uploaded every minute (Alias *et al.*, 2019).YouTube was founded in Feb. 2005 by Chad Hourley, Steave Chen, and Jawed Karim. Because of the existence of YouTube, people can create websites and can share videos in which users can upload, view, and share videos. In addition, YouTube has got billions of users, including people from different walks of life, such as educators and scholars, since its creation. As of 2011, YouTube watched videos exceed 1 trillion, which statistically represent 140 views per each person on the planet (Briciu, & Briciu, 2020). Moreover, YouTube service is available in 61 languages and the company has localised sites in 61 countries whereas 70% of YouTube traffic comes from outside the United States (Harkous, 2017). Although there are regulations guiding the upload of content on YouTube, the review system adopted by YouTube known as the 'post-hoc' review system implies that videos will be reviewed and potentially removed by YouTube staff subject to 'report' by viewers. This review requirement may facilitate abuse of the system by terrorist groups, especially given the free access which makes it less easy to control by state authorities (Vergani and Zuev, 2011). Vergani and Zuev (ibid) noted that due to the sound and video features, YouTube service represents a more effective medium of communication than text-based social media sites like Facebook and Twitter. According to the Department of Homeland Security (2010), videos that visually demonstrate tactical shooting practice or the field stripping of an AK47 are common examples of training that are streamed over *YouTube* since these videos do not contravene *YouTube's* policy. Apart from this, terrorist groups can exploit the 'post-

hoc' review system to upload video giving instructions on how to make explosive materials. Such media content can be viewed many times before they are reported and subsequently taken down by *YouTube*. As Harkous (2017) points out, jihadist groups and their supporters have significantly exploited the gigantic video-sharing service of *YouTube* platform, thereby creating a subculture for spreading propaganda messages to recruit new members. The terrorists' exploitation of *YouTube* service is compounded by *YouTube's* massive global audience which empowers terrorists to aim at potential recruits as well as set targets for terrorism. Furthermore, *YouTube* service is facilitated with features that allow users to exchange comments and send private messages about videos, thereby enabling jihadists to identify one another to form a vibrant virtual community. Harkous (ibid) confirms that undoubtedly, ISIS has capitalized on *YouTube* service by using a significant video production capacity to propagate its brutal tactics in a high-definition documentary style which are available in different languages (see Figure 3.5). It is believed that ISIS employs the service of skilled film crews who make use of Hollywood-caliber software to produce videos that portray execution-style killings of its captives (Alfifi *et al.*, 2018). Remarkably, the psychological impact of watching such a gruesome scene leaves its viewers with a tense mood of excitement or fear, making the videos a terror or recruitment tool (ibid).

figure 3. 5 ISIS Studio to make some "Executions"

According to Harkous (2017), ISIS jihadists launched a campaign to terrorize their prisoners among the captured Syrian Army soldiers and other ethnic minorities through mass executions on social media platforms. For example, ISIS militants executed 250 captured Syrian soldiers on the 28th of August 2014, an event which was posted on

YouTube with prisoners marched across the desert. Cheung and Hew (2009) provide some evidence that YouTube needs to be more studied since little is known about priorities for YouTube research. The actual studies employed trend analysis and content analysis to obtain data on research topics, issue category, research settings and sampling, research design, research method and data analysis on articles published regarding YouTube in selected journals. Up to the present time, YouTube has been able to develop an online video-sharing platform where contents that show the plethora of user's interests from different walks of life are posted (Alias, *et al.*, 2013). Harkous, Cheung, Hew, are not alone in describing YouTube effect on these events. Scholars, as well as researchers, have sought to have research questions and inquiry in academic literature regarding YouTube. For example, some embarked on research to know more about how ISIS contents are being uploaded on YouTube and the duration of time it stayed online (Project Counter Extremism, 2018). The study also focused on knowing the number of viewers the videos got. Using about 229 videos identified to be ISIS-related videos, Counter Extremism Project (CEP) did a limited search on them from the plethora of extremist contents that are uploaded on the platform. To discover the insurgents' videos, they used two computer programs. Specifically, a web crawler was used to examine the video titles and keyword descriptions. Another computer program that was used was *eGLYPH* which is a vigorous shredding content identification system. CEP explored many ISIS or insurgent-related videos. It was discovered that hundreds of ISIS video contents are uploaded every month. The contents then generated thousands of views. The content of these videos would consist of calls for recruitment as well as the spread of their propaganda (Counter Extremism Project, 2018). Also in a study by Conway and McInerney (2008), analysis of online supporters of jihad-promoting video content on *YouTub*e was conducted. The major focus of the study were on users under the age of 35 most of the residing in the United States, who made posts and comments on materials that promote martyrdom from Iraq (Conway & McInerney, 2008). What is clearly evident however is that jihadist content is spreading far beyond traditional jihadist websites or even dedicated forums to embrace, in particular, video-sharing and social networking—both hallmarks of Web 2.0—and thus extending their reach far beyond what may be conceived as their core support base in the Middle East and North Africa region to Diaspora communities and political sympathizers. *YouTube* prohibits any content that promotes violence like the other large social media platforms and has acted in compliance with government requests to remove propaganda videos of terrorist groups (Tsesis, 2017). Nevertheless, many propaganda videos of radical groups

are still being posted and viewed online. This flop can be attributed to the degree of effectiveness of the flagging system to detect questionable content for removal. In a 2013 experiment, 57 (45.4%) out of 125 videos flagged remained online more than four months later (Counter Extremism Project, 2018). However, *YouTube* has defined a Community Guideline that does not give room for terrorist groups to utilize the platform to recruit members. *YouTube* then took steps to forbid any content that encouraged terrorist acts or incite violence among others (Cohen-Almagor, 2017). It is an effort to hide any extremist contents even if it does not overtly violate the rules of the platform. *YouTube* claims to have discovered ISIS content via three strategies. The first is human flagging; second is learning and the third one is hashtags (ibid). Terrorism in Saudi Arabia has been attached to extremism, funding of terrorist groups in other countries with the inclusion of Syria since Taliban, ISIS Al-Nusra Front as well as Al-Qaeda have direct or indirect links with some Saudi citizens who defected or opposed the state (Cilizza, 2015).

Despite the fact YouTube has scrapped thousands of contents that belong to terrorist groups, there are some contents that are yet to be removed and are still hidden on the platform. There are several videos online which were created by Suri, Wuhayshi, Awlaki and Rubaish in recent times (see figure 3.6 below). All of these videos focus on the strategies and theological ideas of Jihadists. These videos have been disseminated by individual users, in addition to public groups and websites. These videos have amassed more than 190,000 views online. One of these jihadi terrorists even has an active Facebook page at present, with around 46 videos which are available for the public to view (Weiss, M. & Ayad, 2019).

The reincarnation of terrorist's videos on social media platforms is not limited to ISIS alone. The case is extended to the Taliban. In 2007, the Taliban came out boldly to invade *YouTube* with the intention of gaining more support from their sympathizers (Rawnsley, 2009). Rawnsley (ibid) state that the contents were unable to stay on the insurgent's website, so *YouTube* was utilized as an alternative to channel their communications.

3.9.3 *WhatsApp*

WhatsApp is one of the most commonly used social media platforms in the world, in schools, colleges, offices and among government officials (Dahdal, 2020). The app is an alternative communication channel to *SMS* and over one billion users are available on the platform in about one hundred and eighty countries globally (ibid). The platform is very useful to common people because it is simple, and it can be used to transfer documents. On *WhatsApp*, it is easy to engage with people through video or voice message. It is very fast in sending messages to a wide range of people (Argaam, 2019). The radical groups take several actions to control people. The ambassadors of the terror factions such as ISIS and other groups make use of different methods to recruit members and carry out their terror attacks. The first step is to manipulate the minds of people through social media. The next step is to recruit them and persuade them to commit terrorist attacks, propagating very plausible objectives through communication on social media platforms such as *WhatsApp* and others. The target individuals are the vulnerable ones in society. The vulnerable persons can include idle individuals, young people as well as former veterans. Argaam (ibid) believes that the widespread use of the social media accounts of these extremist groups is a great risk to the development of the host country, and the government lacks enough resources to monitor the content in which they upload on their social media platform especially *WhatsApp*. The Government of Saudi Arabia has made efforts in the past to limit the use of *WhatsApp*. For example, they had once banned the use of video or voice call on *WhatsApp*. Saudi Arabia suspended *WhatsApp's* voice and video call services

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as the app failed to meet the regulatory requirements as reported by Al-Riyadh newspaper, citing Abdulaziz Al-Ruwais, Governor of Communications and Information Technology Commission (CITC). Argaam (*ibid*) concluded that the insurgents have the ability to exploit many innovations and it is left for the government to step up to curb the trend in the social vices that are being perpetrated by the terror groups. They set goals and objectives to achieve their various missions and any kind of innovation that can assist them to gain more power can be exploited. *WhatsApp* as one of the social media platforms serves as a major tool of communicating with their target supporters. The people of Saudi Arabia can be reached easily, and they seem not to be well protected. There is the need for the government to devise a means of evolving a counter-terrorism attack in or to protect the sovereignty of the country.

The government probably needs to formulate policies that can be used as effective strategies to stop social media terrorism, as it is necessary to establish a regulatory body that can assist in the implementation of the policies against crimes on social media platforms such as *WhatsApp* and other platforms.

3.9.4 *Facebook*

According H. Tankovska (2021) as of the first quarter of 2021, there were around 2.85 billion monthly active users from around the world use Facebook daily; 85% of these users are from outside the USA. 54% of the users of Facebook login regularly, while 48% of the users' login on an intermittent basis. Tankovska (ibid) goes on to note that each month, 3.45 billion individuals used at least one of the business's key products (Facebook, WhatsApp, Instagram, or Messenger), according to the firm in the first quarter of 2021(ibid). Hennig-Thurau et el (2018) believes that social media has a more powerful impact than traditional forms of media. They also state that social media is present globally and very easy to see and find; thereby, it is able to grow at a rapid rate. In the past few years, Facebook has seen a rise in its numbers of users, particularly in the Middle East and Asia. These areas of the world have witnessed an increase in Facebook membership rates, with membership reaching 67% of the population of the Middle East 23% of Asia, respectively (Weimann, 2014). General Authority of Statistics (2019) reports that Saudi Arabia is among countries with the highest population growth rates in the world in relation to the usage of the internet and social media. There are about 34.218 million people living in Saudi Arabia. Over half of the population use the internet (Statista Research Department, 2021). In 2019, 14 million Saudi Arabians are Facebook users; 83.8% of Saudi Arabian

Facebook users are 18-35 years old and 90% of Saudi Facebook users live in the main urban areas of Saudi Arabia (Statista Research Department, 2020). In excess of 90% of Saudi Arabia's 14 million Facebook users access Facebook by means of a mobile device, in 2025, the number of mobile internet users in Saudi Arabia is expected to reach 36.17 million (*ibid*). Weimann (2014) has documented how terrorists have exploited this situation in Saudi Arabia, and they use *Facebook* to "share" and "send" information, they also use the website to motivate potential new members using an online jihadi forum on *Facebook*. Dean (2012) says that the US Department of Homeland Security have published a report on this issue, stating that some of the ways in which terrorists can use *Facebook* is by disseminating information concerning tactical and operational information, such as the care and usage of weapons, how to shoot tactically and so on. Terrorists can also link together from different extremist websites by means of *Facebook*. Terrorists also use this website to spread extremist ideology and propaganda, in addition to also sharing data on this website in order to target certain purposes (see figure 3.7 below).

figure 3. 7 The "Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah" Facebook page, stated in English

Weimann (2014) identified official and unofficial types *Facebook* pages with terrorist contents. Official pages exist in the form of sponsor group which is linked to other internet media and forums, for example, the "Al-Thabaat" page which emerged on *Facebook* on May 5, 2013, as a "Jihadi page for the group, 'Ansar al-Islam offered links to the *Twitter* account of Ansar al-Islam. Similarly, Al-Fajr Media Center appeared in December 2013 to serve as the exclusive online distributor of al-Qaeda propaganda by releasing "Amn al-Mujahid" (Security of the Mujahid), a new encryption program. In some cases, official jihadist forums create *Facebook* pages in their own name such as Ansar al-Mujahideen

which disseminates its contents under the *Facebook* page known as "Ansar al-Mujahideen Network" via an RSS feed. Weimann (2014) describes how, on the other hand, unofficial pages are operated by sympathisers for disseminating propaganda messages. An example of such page is the jihadi forum "al-Iraq wal-Sham" which was used to announce the launch of the "Asrar al-Ghurabaa" program by ISIS.

Facebook is a widely used website and social media application by Saudi Arabians. It is being used for different purposes ranging from business, social connections, and the spread of terror propaganda. *Facebook* is controlled somewhat by the Saudi Arabian authorities. This website is monitored due to the structure of Saudi Arabia as a political entity. The Saudi Arabian government insist on monitoring and checking this website due to the dissemination of terrorist ideals, and other damaging ideologies, these measures were thought to be promising in terms of strengthening resistance to extremist messages on this social media platform (Ational *et al.*, 2019). Fernholz (2019) claims that in spite of everything that different government bodies have done worldwide, social media continues to be exploited by criminals. It was uncovered that some insurgents in the Middle East who are fighting in Syria or linked with ISIS are trading invaluable antiquities that belong to the Middle East. Some of the items for sale included genuine Roman mosaics and royal ancient Egyptian sarcophagi. The items were sold on *Facebook* without any ability to track them. Fernholz (ibid) goes on to note that how terrorist groups connected to ISIS profited from this trading, even during periods of fighting in Syria. In order to try and curb this blatant criminal activity, *Facebook* has tried to implement taxes on sales. "Khums", an Arabic word employed by ISIS which means "profit", is in use by organizers.

Furthermore, social media have offered new ways for clerics: firstly, to announce fatwas, secondly, giving a uniquely religious institutionalized purpose to these platforms. The final and most important reason why Saudi Arabia experiences reduced dissent via *Facebook* and *Twitter*, is due to the heavy monitoring and censoring that the Saudi Arabian governmental system keeps in place on the internet (Al-Saggaf, Himma and Kharabsheh, 2008). Lieberman (2017) indicates that Saudi Arabia has made extensive attempts to limit the growth of terrorism via social media platforms. However, Walsh (2010) believes that they remain steadfast in their efforts, and the social platforms are utilized in line with the rules of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and not allow any prolific attempt to use social media for political criticism or terrorism, there is consistent combatting of terrorism locally.

We can conclude that The political structure of Saudi Arabia does not give room for large scale usage of social media since the political structures in the kingdom allow power to be exercised by the government and religious denominators only. The structure does not allow the use of social media to challenge authority without having any affliction on religion. Social media such as *Facebook* is, instead, used for career and business purposes, where it is widely used for professional connections to engage with people and businesses outside the country.

3.9.5 *Instagram*

Instagram is one of the popular social media platforms that people use in Saudi Arabia as it is one of the social media platforms that transformed the country and helped to enhance its development (Alotaibi, Alkhathlan, & Alzeer, 2019). It is another useful social media that have added values to the people of the land and is used to improve the country's image (Nereim, 2019). On the platform, users can easily follow one another, making it accessible for the terrorist groups to communicate with the people and spread their propaganda. *Instagram* is being used by extremists to promote jihad and support terror attacks on western countries (Flood, 2019). Social media platforms are instruments used in the digital world. They enhance the power of extremist groups. In addition to this, ISIS and Al-Qaeda function effectively on social media platforms, including *Instagram*, to increase the number of followers. The fact that most cases of terrorism within Saudi Arabia can be traced to social media platforms is an example of the adoption of social media use by ISIS (Taylor, 2016). Weimann (2014) who gave some examples such as strategies employed by terrorists to disseminate information is photo-sharing services in which case Instagram offers good features to share photos with friends and strangers. Indeed, jihadists have occupied Instagram for spreading radical propaganda and portraying terrorists as martyrs (ibid). Conway and McInerney 2008; Weimann (2014) also noted that gruesome execution (through beheading and shooting) of hostages can be easily accessed on these platforms as witnessed on the "*Almurbati1*" *Instagram* account. The ultimate goal of this strategy is to attract alienated Muslims to join in the battle. According to Lieberman (2017) social media is a prolific platform for terrorist groups to thrive. In addition, there is still a rise in the spread of aggressive messages by these terrorist factions on social media. The amount of the prevalent violent messages going viral is pervasive even though the government of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia makes efforts to limit the spread of violent messages. Lieberman (ibid) concludes that the Islamic State heavily relies on social media for recruitment.

Recently there has been work that focuses on analyzing the data made by this group. Farwell (2014) studied the strategies used by ISIS on the media, describing two conflicting strategies employed by the terrorist group. First, they try to protect the identity and location of their leaders by minimizing internet communication, and second, they use social media for recruitment. On the other hand Gates and Podder (2015) analyzed who was responsible for creating the content of the recruitment materials, which ended up with the discovery that global volunteers are responsible for it. The content is designed to fit the region's aesthetic. Both studies focus on the recruitment and creation of ISIS messaging (Alfifi *et al.*, 2018). *Instagram* is one of the social media platforms that is popularly used in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. The platform is used by terrorist groups to recruit followers (Hymas, 2019).The followers are mostly the vulnerable ones in society—the young people, male and female especially the unemployed. The government of Saudi Arabia and the great economies of the world are making relentless efforts to curb the spread of the terror group on social media. Some of the terrorist groups survive on social media by using private and anonymous accounts to limit Saudi government access to them.

3.9.6 *Telegram*

Clifford and Powell (2019) define *Telegram* as a messaging service online which can be used by laptops, smartphone apps and computers. *Telegram* promises users that it will never disclose any information of any piece of data which has been communicated between users, they will not give this information even to governments. Clifford and Powell (ibid) state that Pavel and Nikolai Durov launched *Telegram* in 2013. Since this time, *Telegram* has become available on a wide range of platforms where users can share unlimited information and data with one another (including voice calls, instant messages, audio messages, videos, documents and photos). Normally, *Telegram* is able to provide users with four forms of communication, which are as follows: instant messages, video messages, direct calls and voice messages. *Telegram* is capable of providing calls between groups and supergroups up to a maximum of 200,000 participants. Hakim (2014) indicate that the idea behind *Telegram's* creation came about due to Pavel Durov's communication with the Russian government, which was often very tense and difficult. Durov previously ran the Russian social media website known as VKontakte (VK); which is also the biggest social networking site in Europe. Globally, VK is ranked as the second biggest social network online, having more than 100 million active users. VKontakte is available in several languages; it is most popular, however, among Russian language users. Russian

users are able to use VKontakte to have secured and private communication with one another (Kozitsin, et al.). Due to its high security and promise to users never to disclose the information communicated on it, *Telegram* has been targeted for investigation by police organizations worldwide (ibid). Furthermore, *Telegram* is cloud-based and uses a voice over IP service. As such, it is possible to use *Telegram* on computers, laptops and mobile phones. The app is secure and has the possibility to enable communication between many users. Saudi Arabia have made an attempt to ban all instant messaging in Saudi Arabia. When the Saudi government were unable to ban instant messaging calls and voice messages, they attempted instead to the monitor all communication exchanged during video calls. After this decision, the attempted ban on all instant messaging services, including *Telegram,* was removed. The decision was made also to ensure the much-needed flexibility required in order for the tourism industry to operate (Sanchez, 2017). However, *Telegram* channels are utilised also by ISIS who use the app to spread information relating to their engagements, general communication and propaganda. ISIS uses social media in order to influence the populace and grow their membership base. ISIS, Al-Qaeda, and the Taliban have many *Telegram* channels in a variety of Middle Eastern languages, such as Turkish, Persian, Pashto, English and Arabic. The Pashto and Persian *Telegram* channels had around 4,236 followers as of 2016 (Ward, 2018). Torok (2015) claims that the *Telegram* motivates existing fighters and also enables ISIS to recruit new members who are willing to fight. As such, the propaganda communicated via *Telegram* is very powerful and dangerous. *Telegram,* therefore, unknowingly and unintentionally advances the goals and aims of ISIS and other terrorist groups across the globe. *Telegram* is a particularly powerful platform in comparison with other similar apps. This is due to the fact that it is equipped with an Application Programmable Interface (API), unlike its rival *WhatsApp,* for instance. This technology aids in integrating terrorists globally by means of different websites and broadcasting applications. Torok (ibid) argues that those ISIS members who carried out terrorism attacks in 2015 in both Paris and the Berlin Christmas market, utilised *Telegram.* The evidence suggests that ISIS launches propaganda which led to these attacks taking place; in spite of this revelation, no attempt has ever been made to stop terrorists from communicating on this platform. Users on *Telegram* agree to a privacy agreement which protects all users, including terrorists and other criminals who wish to use the app for nefarious purposes that they seek to keep confidential. The section which follows presents some related studies associated with this research from the literature review and is presented in summary form.

3.10 Summary of some related studies associated with this research from the literature review.

No	Author/ Date	Tittle of the study	Study context	Result	Method
Recent Research on Social Media and Terrorism					
1	Mansour Salim H Alshammari (2013)	Takfīr and Terrorism: Historical Roots, Contemporary Challenges and Dynamic Solutions. With special reference to al-Qaeda and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.	KSA	This study shows that mass media helps spread the takfīr ideology, and that family control and unemployment in Saudi society contributes a lot to the spread of extremism	The Analytical Inductive Approach Method
2	M. A. Ashraf (2016)	AL-Qaeda's ideology through political myth and rhetoric	KSA	define the origins, causes, values and trajectories of a specific seam of political thinking by offering a novel context and test the theory of extremism resulting from social and political problems	Discourse analysis and ideology
3	Hend Sam'an Al- Smadi (2016)	The effect of social networking sites in causing intellectual deviation from Qassim university students perspective	KSA	The findings of this study support that discourse on causes of terrorism	Quantitative study
4	Mohammad AlMaawi (2016)	Counter-Terrorism in Saudi Arabia: Narratives, Practices and Challenges	KSA	This study agrees with enhancing co-operation between religious, educational, cultural and media to counter-terrorism	Qualitative study
5	Hadi Alhussin A. Alsamdani (2017)	The Jihadist discourse of Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula	KSA	Al-Qaeda rhetorical practices aim to misinterpret texts historical religious traditions, discursively ideologized to serve the jihadist worldview.	Discourse Analysis

Table 3. 1 Some relevant studies for the current research

In 2013, Mansour Salim H Alshammari conducted a study on Takfir and terrorism: Recent Challenges, Historical Roots and Dynamic Solutions, with specific reference to Al-Qaeda and Saudi Arabia. The research has used the historical method in many areas of this study where it derived a lot from the historical resources that dealt with the subject of the research from different perspectives. Historical sources include jurisprudence books, history books,

books of hadith (sayings and incidents of the prophet Mohammed), books of Quran interpretation, books of Shariah (Islamic law), the topic-related Islamic legacy books and previous literature review that discussed the subject of the study. This study aims to find some solutions to this critical case and to present, for the benefit of the larger academic community, some of the government's achievements in combating terrorism in general and Al-Qaeda in particular. The findings of this study indicate that there is a clear link between intolerance and takfir, so one of the key explanations for takfir is intolerance. People should be inclusive and arrange peaceful, democratic and tolerant dialogues with each other at all times. Also In the assessment of alternative interpretations, Takfir is dogmatic conduct focused on extremism and is developed and encouraged by many groups and organizations in many religions. The takfirist ideology aims at clear social, political and military objectives; nevertheless, these objectives are focused on values that contradict the Saudi scholars' beliefs. In addition to this, young people, especially those who receive education from such intolerant teachers that support these kinds of thoughts. Certainly, the educational administration is not aware and do not agree with these thoughts.

In a study by M. A. Ashraf (2016) on the role that function, culture, and grand strategy play in Al-Qaeda's warfare, focuses on ideological aspects and applies a theoretical framework to understand Al-Qaeda's ideology. Thus, violence is gradually motivated instead of being centrally orchestrated and executed by rhetorical incitement. The challenge by Al-Qaeda to the world order has been unparalleled. The thesis tests the hypothesis that radical ideologies arise from social and political crises and postulates that a number of political myths generated in the sense of historical, theological and political influences are the primary components of ideology. Via rhetoric and the rhetorical styles and strategies used, these myths and other components of ideology are given structure, influencing ideology in turn. Rhetorical analysis is carried out in order to identify aspects of the philosophy of Al-Qaeda, particularly in the construction of political myths. Analysis of the relationship among textuality and political styles shows that however Al-Qaeda follows Republican attitudes to political discussion, its textual style most closely matches the texts of modern revolutionary terrorists and reveals a great deal about its dual dependency on horrific violence and rational discourse. The rhetorical influences on the main ideologue of Al-Qaeda are analyzed to show how its ideology is shaped.

The researcher senses the problem and has come up with this research, so that three questions will crystallize the problem; firstly, what is meant by ideology? Secondly, what

is the nature of Al-Qaeda's ideology? Finally, how true is that premise? This thesis has tried to address these issues. Al-Qaeda clearly utilises an extreme ideology which is dangerous. Sadly, there has been very little research done in this area and more theoretical frameworks are required. Finally, the right context and structure are also required for a successful research project. The result of this research is to define the origins, causes, values and trajectories of a specific seam of political thinking by offering a novel context. In particular, it describes Al-Qaeda as an extreme and unavoidable manifestation of the political ideology of Islam. Intellectual history is used to identify basic elements of an ideology along a given continuum of views, which involves a multidisciplinary approach, resulting in an eclectic combination of empirical approaches, since ideology affects human actions on a psychological, sociological, political and theological basis. For these reasons, might be considered to test the theory of extremism resulting from social and political problems.

A study by Hend Sam'an Al- Smadi (2016) investigated the effect of social networking sites on the intellectual deviation from the perspective of university students in Qassim. The participants in this study at Qassim University were 730 male and female students. The researcher used a descriptive-analytical method, which is focused on questionnaire data collection from the sample. The aims of the study were to shed the light on the effects of social networking sites on intellectual deviation. The writer of this dissertation is aware of the problem and thus came up with this study, so two questions will crystallize the problem; the first one is what is the influence of social networks in causing intellectual deviation from the viewpoint of Qassim University students? The second one, are there any significant differences at (a=0.05) between the response of Qassim university students due to the gender variables (F & M) and time of use (Less than an hour, One hour- three hours, More than three hours)? The significance of this study can be summarized in three points. Firstly, in these times, young people desperately need to think about extremism in a moderate way. However, this is based on Islamic tolerance teachings to make young people able to differentiate between right and wrong. Furthermore, in order to confront the surrounding shifts, our societies are also in desperate need to preserve unity and cohesion. This is done by improving the intellectual security resulting from Islamic sharia law. Secondly, the research focuses on the role played by social media networks in transforming beliefs and ethics. They consider key instruments to safeguard the national and intellectual security of societies and to preserve stability. Moreover, in directing and maintaining social

and political mobility, they do play an important role. Finally, the results of this study can benefit a large number of parties of official bodies and individuals, such as: the Ministry of Youth and Culture, Media and formal educational institutions, Ministries of Education, Higher Education, and civil societies active in youth affairs. The results of this study is presented by using the quantitative data gathered through the statistical analysis of the questionnaires using SPSS. In a later chapter, it is shown how the findings indicate that social networks have a significant influence on the cause of intellectual deviation. The researcher concludes that social networks work as a medium for sharing social, political and religious ideas is to encourage these ideas and find tremendous support for them, and there is a strong link between social media and intellectual deviation.

Mohammad AlMaawi (2016), tried to explore Saudi Arabia's Counterterrorism: practices, narratives and challenges. The main purpose of this study was to encourage behavioural change that could lead to disengagement and potentially de-radicalization, which happens through a change in thought or values and how soft power strategies have been designed by the state to confront it. The study was performed at the Prince Mohammed bin Naif Counselling and Care Centre in Riyadh City, where 11 practitioners, all of whom are considered to be male specialists and experts in the field of counterterrorism and de-radicalisation, participated in the study. Four aims were considered in this study; the first one is to historically contextualise and clarify how the developments in Saudi counterterrorism came about. The second one to provide a sociological account of recent developments in the response of Saudi Arabia to terrorism. The third is to identify the ideological assumptions behind the current policies and practices and to reveal them. Finally,this thesis also aims to understand how the implementation of policies and practices is feasible from the perspective of those responsible to fight terrorism in Saudi Arabia. The researcher used semi-structured interviews in his study as a methodology. The result of this study is presented by using the qualitative data gathered through interviews with practitioners. The results indicate that there have been various interpretations of Islam, which have included the very strict principles of non-moderate and intolerant purist Islamic takfiri-based principles and there is a strong connection between social media and terrorism. Cooperation between educational, religious, cultural and media to counter terrorism.

Alsamdani (2017) argues that in order to do this, this research project has conducted a critical analysis of the jihadist discourse of Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Gulf. It has also

researched the theory of symbolic power, Islamic religious epistemology, previous research done on intertextuality and theories connected to the Aristotelian philosophical topoi. This research project uses three types of analyses. Firstly, it is a representational study of the discourse topics favored in the discourse of AQAP and how to create the related social actors/actions, concentrating on the representation of the Self and the Other. Secondly, the study discusses the intertextual relations by which the AQAP discourse appeals to and overlaps with the 'old experience' repertoires of prior (sacred) texts and listeners. The third analysis focuses specifically on the persuasive dimension and attempts to identify critically the topoi used by AQAP to legitimize the Self and delegitimize the Other. Hence, the ultimate objective of this project is not only to contribute from a CDA perspective to the body of knowledge about radical jihadism, but also to explain understand a number of points related to terrorism. In this study, there is one primary research question and three sub-questions: the main question is why, historically, radical jihadist propaganda has succeeded in gaining sympathy and spreading jihadist ideology to the point of attracting important numbers of sympathizers and the sub-questions are as follows: the first one is what are the intertextual features of the discussion about AQAP? And what are the meanings that these intertextual AQAP features bring about? The second one is what is the worldview of AQAP? That is, how does the AQAP discourse reflect jihad, the Self and the Other?. Finally, How in its debate does AQAP discursively (de)legitimize the Self and the Other? What is used in the AQAP debate of (de)legitimate topoi? The study conducts a critical analysis of jihadist discourse. This is achieved through qualitatively analysing the contents of the propaganda e-magazine Sawt al-jihad issued by Al-Qaeda on the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP) from 2003-2005. The aim of the study is to determine how discursively constructed and legitimized the jihadist worldview is. This study has found that Al-Qaeda rhetorical practices employ each of the following goals, theocratic agenda and establishing an Islamic Caliphate not as a macro-legitimator argument but rather as a long-run consequence. The focus on the rule of Sharia that is constructed to forbid alliances with disbelievers is a strategy calculated to delegitimize the Saudi regime. The penance system is based on two principles. Firstly, it is simple to put together convergent texts to help produce a violent story. Secondly, the ahistorical perspective ignores the significant disparities between pre-modern and modern world orders. Accordingly, there is more need to revise a wide range of grand narratives such as the concepts of the 'Islamic Caliphate' and 'Sharia'. There has always been a gap between the *de facto* exercise of power and the theoretical formulations of jurists in Islamic history.

3.11 Chapter Summary

This chapter presented the context of the current research. In addition, it presents social learning theory of recruiting especially close groups such as relatives and friends, focusing on social media and online terrorism in the K.S.A. including their definitions, different types, how young people are brainwashed and persuaded to participate in terrorism on the Dark Web and deceiving security entities via encrypted languages and mobile applications. In addition, this chapter discussed the Saudi internet and the most popular social media platforms in Saudi Arabia. Finally, it presented a summary of some related studies associated with this research.

There is no doubt that social media platforms have significantly penetrated the world, influencing several aspects of our daily life. With the introduction of social media and Web 2.0 technology, various ways of social networking forms have arisen and become popular. Society members, especially youth are increasingly using these social media to communicate, cultivate their social relationships and daily life, via such methods as *Twitter*, *YouTube*, *WhatsApp* and *blogs*. These websites offer good platforms for youth to communicate, express themselves which makes them a target for terrorist groups. The second part of the literature review summarizes some related studies associated with this research.

The next chapter will focus on the methodology, and it will detail the process of data collection in order to answer the research questions. The information to be sought is geared toward describing a number of issues and topics. There are certain linguistic characteristics and features of social media that disseminate intellectual influences and promote terrorism in Saudi Arabia. This is encountered by governmental and private organizations in addition to individual efforts. The information sought will help to know the possible treatment of such social media and the deviant thoughts that contribute to terrorism. Statistical analysis and reporting will attempt to reveal the status of social media and intellectual deviation and their impact on terroristic behaviours.

CHAPTER 4 Research Methodology

4.1 Introduction

The literature review in this study presented the central area of research to be tackled in this project, which is the issue of the linguistic characteristics of terrorism and intellectual deviation via Social Media in Saudi Arabia. In this chapter, the design of this research is presented and discussed, in addition to the means by which data collection has been conducted and the researcher's methodology concerning working with the study participants. The methodology of a study is "the general approach the researcher takes in carrying out the research project; to some extent, this approach dictates the particular tools the researcher selects" (Leedy and Ormrod 2005, p. 12). In this chapter, the research design process and methodology applied in this project are described and discussed in detail. Due to the sensitive and powerful nature of the central issue under scrutiny in this research (social media's effect on intellectual deviation, in particular, terrorism), it is essential that the correct research philosophy is employed so that the work can be planned and carried out in an effective way, and the research objectives are adequately addressed.

Before conducting the empirical aspect of this work, a thorough evaluation of the quantitative, qualitative and mixed method of design was carried out to illuminate some research questions concerning the experience and skills of experts emanating from the Saudi Prosecution Unit and the Naif Arab University for Security Sciences. This is an essential process in the study to ensure that a thorough understanding of the reasons, results and solutions in combating terrorism and deviant behaviour in Saudi Arabia is achieved. This can be presented to the Saudi Arabian governing forces, to a family of (potential) terrorists and the general public. In addition to the population and sample size of the study, illustrative sampling, procedures, and the limitations of techniques utilized are also presented. The chapter concludes with a summation of the techniques employed.

4.2 Research Methodology

This chapter presents an introduction to the research methodology and explains how the methodology utilised to gather data in this study centers on two research methods, which are as follows: the quantitative and the qualitative (mixed methods approaches). It is necessary to understand the relationship between these models, and thereby identify which

models are best utilised in a study of this nature; these questions will be answered in the sections which follow (Schwandt 2007).

4.3 Quantitative Research Design

Generally, the design of research methodologies can be divided into two main areas, which are quantitative and qualitative designs. As discussed by Gay,Mills and Airasian (2009), "educational research is the formal, systematic application of the scientific method to the study of educational problems, [with] the goal […] to describe, explain, predict, or control phenomena - in this case, educational phenomena" (p. 6). According to Bless, Higson-Smith and Kagee (2006), quantitative research is conducted by means of a variety of methods which use measurements to record and investigate aspects of social reality. Leedy and Ormrod (2005) state that the quantitative approach can be applied to help answer questions concerning relationships among measured variables. This work is carried out to help explain, predict and control phenomena. This approach is often referred to as the "traditional, experimental, or positivist approach" (Leedy and Ormrod 2005,p. 94). Survey research is used to attain statistics, represented by quantitative and numerical descriptions, concerning various components of a study population. Generally, this is conducted by questioning people on particular issues and gaining their answers, which are then analysed and investigated. Normally, this information is procured from a certain segment of a population or demographic, and this is called a study sample (Fowler Jr, 2013). This study employs a paper-based questionnaire survey to gain information from a random sample of participants who are members of the Saudi Prosecution Unit and the Naif Arab University for Security Sciences, in addition to some members of the general Saudi public. The questionnaire was provided in a hard copy format to the Saudi Prosecution Unit and the Naif Arab University for Security Sciences due to the fact that their e-mails are confidential. It was possible, however, to provide the participants from the general public with an electronic questionnaire. This was extremely helpful in measuring the reactions of the local communities in Saudi Arabia concerning the terrorism phenomenon. The study sample taken from the general public was done by random selection. The entire collection of responses to the survey was gathered on the basis of a completed consent form signed by each participant, once ethical approval had been obtained from the University of Limerick and the relevant governing bodies in Saudi Arabia. The data analysis was conducted using the SPSS program version 25 (for more details see section (5.1).

4.4 The Qualitative Research Design

A qualitative methodology can be defined as "the collection, analysis and interpretation of comprehensive narrative and visual (i.e. non-numerical) data to gain insights into a particular phenomenon of interest" (Gay *et al*. 2009, p. 7). Leedy and Ormrod (2005), state that a qualitative methodology is generally utilised to provide answers concerning the complex nature of phenomena, normally with the aim of describing and understanding the phenomena from the participants' point of view. The qualitative approach is often known as the "interpretative, constructivist, or anti-positivist approach" (Leedy and Ormrod 2005, p. 94). The use of this type of research design is significant, as it enables researchers to gain an understanding of participants' inner experiences. Furthermore, it equips researchers to gain comprehension of how "interpretation and meaning creation of different forms" in, through or by culture can be understood, in addition to allowing researchers to describe and discover variables instead of testing them (Corbin and Strauss 2008, p. 12). It is therefore quite clear to see that qualitative research is constantly changing and growing, thus providing continuous new opportunities for discovery.

Creswell (2013) has separated the procedures for collecting data into four main areas, which are as follows: observations, documents, interviews and audiovisual materials. Qualitative research design includes the use of interviews and these were utilised to great effect in this study. Semi-structured interviews were carried out as part of this project with a small component of the study sample. These included a small quantity of investigators from the Saudi Public Prosecution force, in addition to the members of one of the families affected by the terrorist groups. These semi-structured interviews provided very rich answers and intriguing results. The goal of the interview process was to allow for the clarification of different variables and illuminate factors which had not been addressed in the survey of the collected data, and thus to guarantee credibility (Cohen et al. 2011).

The semi-structured interviews conducted with investigators at Saudi Public Prosecution and one of the families affected by the terrorist groups were composed of various questions which were posed to participants. All of the replies were recorded digitally. The family affected by the terrorist refused to be interviewed in person due to the sensitivity of their nature and content, and so did the investigators due to the fact that it was not permissible for the researcher to meet these individuals or know their names, given the sensitivity of their work in counter terrorism. Thus, these interviews were conducted instead by an intermediary also described in our Ethics Approval application, as the interview

gatekeeper. The interview was conducted using a variety of questions which tried to understand how exactly do ISIS trick people into following them; in addition to understanding the online recruitment strategies of other extremist groups, and how families can help to prevent this from happening to their loved ones (see Appendix B).

4.5 Mixed Methods Research (MMR)

This project incorporated a mixed methods paradigm which involved both the quantitative and qualitative paradigm.

Mixed methods research is a form of research which combines certain facets of qualitative and quantitative research techniques (for instance the use of qualitative and quantitative points of view, data collection, analysis, inference techniques) in order to broaden and deepen understanding and corroboration in a research project (Johnson, Onwuegbuzie and Turner, 2007).Mixed methods involve a logical inquiry that includes the utilisation of induction, deduction, and the investigation (Greene, 2008).

This approach to research has been advocated by many professional researchers so that the quality of research can be improved. This mixing and combining of these two fields of methodology is associated with the 'realist' philosophical stance. Realism believes that a subject can be examined in greater depth both scientifically and quantitatively using a qualitative enquiry into crucial educational and social aspects of a research project; thus, achieving better results. Newman, Ridenour, Newman *et al.* (2003) state that mixed methods research is becoming more and more widely used as a method for "third party major research or paradigm" (Johnson et al. 2007, p. 194). This is one of the most useful means by which to conduct social research in a project of this nature, due to the fact that it allows for an in-depth comprehension of phenomena which can be assessed using single methods approaches, "combining particularity with generality, patterned regularity with contextual complexity, inside and outside perspectives, and the whole and its constituent parts" (Cohen et al. 2011, pp. 22, 48). Mixed methods research can be defined as the collection and/or assessment of both quantitative and qualitative data in one research project, in which information is gathered concurrently or sequentially, and this data is given priority in the work; particularly, the "integration of data" in one or more stages of research (Creswell *et al.* 2003, p. 212). Research of this nature is best implemented when the project is founded upon solid research questions (Cohen et al. 2011; Reams and Twale 2008; Tashakkori and Creswell, 2007). Another important factor is the integration and review of

the work's results and findings in a means by which the "quantitative and qualitative components are mutually illuminating" (Cohen *et al*. 2011, p. 24). Hanson *et al.*(2005) believe that the adoption of a mixed methods approach aids researchers through the creation of generalised samples from populations, thereby creating a broader comprehension of the subject under investigation. Greene (2007) has demonstrated the power and value of utilising mixed methods in various research projects. Greene (2007, p. 101) states that the mixed method approach allows for "broader, deeper, and more comprehensive social understandings", due to the fact that the researcher is given access to various components or dimensions of the same complex phenomenon. In a project using complimentary mixed methods, the results gained can "elaborate, enhance, deepen and broaden the overall interpretations and inferences from the study" (Greene 2007, p. 101). This is due to the fact that the vast majority of social phenomenon are complex and multifaceted, thus using mixed methods in a complimentary fashion operates well with many research contexts (Greene 2007). Few studies, however, employ mixed method designs which are more "appropriate to provide rich insight than any single method" (Margaryan, Littlejohn and Vojt, 2011 p. 431). Mixed methods can be utilised in a variety of different ways (Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2009), and for many purposes (Greene 2007). For this project, the sequential mixed design is the most effective means of study, due to the fact that the qualitative approach follows the quantitative. The usage of mixed methods in this research is an effective means by which to include data collected by investigators, criminology experts and the general public. This has been conducted by means of the survey instrument, semi-structured interviews (interviews undertaken with both criminal investigators in SPP and one of the families affected by the terrorist groups). This approach has been adopted using the guidance of Bergman (2010), who has stated that a systematic enquiry into the "variations of social constructions of meaning" with interviewees and survey participants can aid in the validation of the instruments and scales of a research project, in addition to helping to produce "complementary subsets of results"; thus enriching the findings overall (p. 172). Despite the advantages of using the mixed methods approach, there are disadvantages also which should be noted. Creswell and Clark (2017) note that one of the drawbacks of using the mixed methods approach is that it can often be extremely time-consuming. Furthermore, Creswell also states that this approach has the ability to complicate the "procedures of research and requires clear presentation if the reader is going to be able to sort out the different procedures" (2017, p. 10). Another disadvantage highlighted by Creswell is the fact that researchers have normally only

received training in one of these approaches, thus utilising both methods requires they must do further studies on the other method they are unfamiliar with. In spite of the manifold negativities concerning the usage of the mixed methods approach, researchers agree that the weaknesses of both quantitative and qualitative designs mean that it is still the best approach to be adopted in research of this nature, as it combines both qualitative and quantitative methodologies which ensure that the research is as conclusive and comprehensive as possible (Cohen et al. 2011; Creswell 2017; Small 2011).

4.6 Qualitative Versus Quantitative Research

The biggest difference when comparing the qualitative and quantitative methodologies is dependent upon the type of information which has been collected to be used in a research project. Overall, the goal of quantitative research is to generate statistics and numerical descriptions concerning the goals of a study (Fowler 2013), while qualitative research seeks to gather, assess and interpret data (i.e. non-numerically) to gain insights into specific phenomena (Gay et al. 2009, p. 7). The differences between both approaches are normally thought to be "too simplistic" (Rolfe 2006 p. 305), and more variations are also present between the two traditions of enquiry, and the most important of these are discussed in the section which follows in Table 4.1.

	Quantitative methods	Qualitative methods
Epistemological positions	Objectivist	Constructivist
Relationship between researcher and subject	Distant/ outsider	Close/ insider
Research focus	Facts	Meanings
Relationship between theory/concepts and research	Deduction/confirmation	Induction/ emergent
Scope of findings	Nomothetic	Ideographic
The nature of data	Data based upon numbers	Data based upon text

Table 4. 1 table differences between the qualitative and quantitative methods: Source: Bryman (1999).

Using the epistemological argument as the most important foundation of this research, both the quantitative and qualitative approaches are philosophically incompatible. It is quite apparent, in fact, that many view the methodologies as two unique, distinctive, ideal models. Many have argued that quantitative research utilises an objectivist position which views truth and reality as existing separately from the researcher (Jones, 1997).

Alternatively, qualitative research is linked closely with the constructivist model; a model which believes that facts and understanding are created and evolved by people. One other variation between the quantitative and qualitative methods is that these approaches employ two very different models of relationship between the researcher and the subject (*ibid*). For instance, the quantitative method encourages researchers to remain distant from the subject under research. In contrast, the qualitative method motivates researchers to have direct contact with the subject, often over a long period of time.

The quantitative approach sees society as reality and explores facets in society in certain limited periods of time. Qualitative researchers, however, devote a considerable amount of time to research participants, with the result of reducing levels of "distance" or "objectives separateness" between the researchers and the subjects participating in the project (Guba and Lincoln, 1988). According to Gray (2013) the objectivist philosophical position views that quantitative research collects 'facts' in order to establish certainties. Qualitative researchers believe that it is not possible to find truth or meaning in the external world, and that truth and meaning can only be found through interaction with individuals in society (Cho & Trent, 2006).

The different approaches by the quantitative and qualitative methods to theory and research are another notable difference between these two methods. Quantitative research normally commences deductively by utilising a theory that is subsequently tested by means of the study process; alternatively, the qualitative approach inductively constructs theory. Thus, qualitative research seeks to create a theory, whereas quantitative research seeks to prove a theory. These different approaches involve either deduction or induction (Brannen, 2017).Quantitative projects start with a theoretical framework, while qualitative studies are quite descriptive in nature, and investigate theories after the data has been collected.

Sometimes, the differences between the quantitative and qualitative methods are often not very clear ((Bryman; Gray 2013). One of the biggest differences between the two approaches is the size of a sample used in a study. Quantitative nomothetic research seeks to gain results regardless of time and place, in order to create generalisations based on a large population. Alternatively, ideographic research seeks to collect information during a specific time period and hones in on the depth of data instead of its breadth (Gray 2013). Bryman (2013), however, states that qualitative researchers exhibit disagreement concerning this factor and seek to demonstrate how their research results can be applied beyond the limitations of particular cases. Furthermore, quantitative studies find it difficult

to create nomothetic cases when they are not based upon random samples or small research samples. Less consideration is given to the consistency of findings over time.

The quantitative and qualitative approaches vary in the type of information that they gather for a study. Quantitative researchers generally collect data numerically, and this is considered to be reliable and accurate (Cho & Trent, 2006). The qualitative method, in contrast, gathers data which they consider to be 'rich' or 'deep', due to the fact that it can demonstrate multiple realities. Due to the fact that quantitative research is deductive, data can be converted into numerical results. In contrast, qualitative research is inductive and develops theories expressed as narratives and models (Bryman,2016).Quantitative research prioritises the following of procedures and the examination of theories and hypotheses, whereas qualitative research exhibits more flexibility in its approach. The qualitative approach aims to answer questions, investigate results and discover new theories to provide validation for older theories. Furthermore, results can be generalised statistically in quantitative research, while qualitative research often results in the "generalisation of theories" once data has been analysed (Becker 1996, p. 66). This study follows an explanatory sequential design (see Figure 4.1).
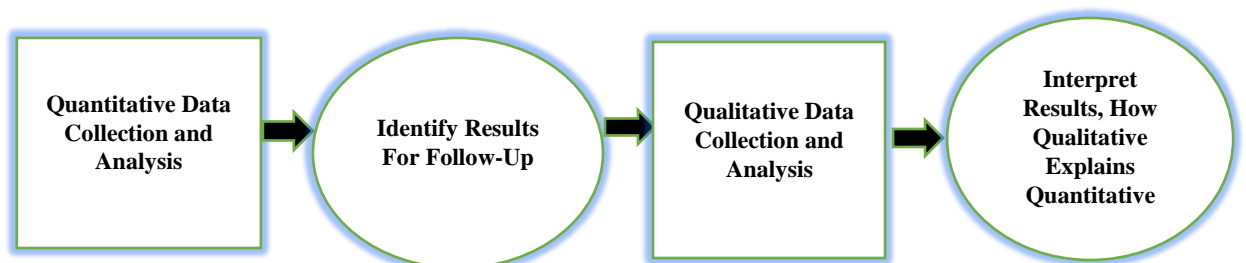
figure 4. 1 The explanatory sequential design (Creswell 2018, p. 218)

4.7 Research methods and instruments

In this component of this research study, attention is given to the methods and instruments utilized to carry out the research, which were questionnaires and semi-structured interviews. It is necessary to mention that the research methods used in this study are determined by research questions (See Chapter 1).

4.7.1   Data Collection Methods

This section discusses how the research design was created for this study. Denzin and Lincoln, (2000, p. 22) define a research design as "a flexible set of guidelines that connect

theoretical paradigms first to strategies of enquiry and second to methods of collecting empirical material." This process also illustrates how the researcher investigates the topic. Bell (2005) recommends that "decisions have to be made about which methods are best for particular purposes and then data collecting instruments must be designed to do the job" (p. 115). According to Bell, the study design is thus a sequential process for both qualitative and quantitative studies, in order to ensure the validity and reliability of a research project (Creswell 2017; Collis and Hussey 2014).

A combination of quantitative (questionnaires) and qualitative (interviews) were used to investigate the connections between the linguistic characteristics of social media and intellectual deviation: Terrorism in Saudi Arabia. As discussed in section 4.6, both MMR data collection methods were used to measure various aspects relative to the current study. The data collection of this study was comprised of two stages. The first stage involved the questionnaire that was designed to investigate different areas related to the use of social media by terrorist groups in the propaganda, recruitment of young people, financial support and intellectual deviation in Saudi Arabia. The design of the questionnaire was structured around these research questions:

- What are the linguistic characteristics of terrorism which disseminate intellectual deviation via social media in Saudi Arabia?

- What is the role of social media in disseminating intellectual deviation?

- What is the role of the current reality of official and community organizations countering extremist thoughts disseminated on the social networking sites?

- What is the role of the current reality of official and community organizations countering extremist thoughts disseminated on the social networking sites?

- Are there particular factors that are perceived to impact on social media usage in Saudi Arabia according to the variables of gender and age?

The second stage involved semi-structured interviews, which were firstly conducted with two investigators and one of the families affected by the terrorist groups to help gain deeper and richer information to clarify different issues related to the first sections (questionnaires). Participants interviews were planned to take about 30-40 minutes, during which 5 questions were asked to three participants, covering various aspects about the impact of social media on intellectual deviation: terrorism in Saudi Arabia.

During this stage the study used three primary procedures. The first step is to contact the National Security Services' director in the SPP in Saudi Arabia to interview two investigators concerned with terrorism cases, in addition to an interview with a gatekeeper to interview one family whose relatives had been lured into terrorism. Afterwards, the interviews were transcribed.

The study used several procedures for data collection. The Supervisor of Research from UL sent an official letter to the Saudi Cultural Bureau in Dublin. Once this was done, the Saudi Cultural Bureau in Dublin sent an official letter on behalf of UL to NAUSS and SPP to obtain permission for the researcher to begin collecting data from members at Naif University (from participants in the Faculty of Social Science and Criminal Justice) and Saudi Public Prosecution (the National Security Services Department). When these steps were completed, the researcher was allowed to begin. The researcher prepared and distributed questionnaires manually to the Director of the National Security Services Department to be given to investigators. This was due to the fact that it was not permissible for the researcher to meet these individuals or know their names given the sensitivity of their work in counter terrorism.

The researcher received a suggestion from the supervisor of this project to use an electronic survey service such as *SurveyMonkey* or *Google Docs*, to know the opinions and actions of the community on the phenomenon of terrorism. The researcher prepared and distributed a questionnaire using *Google Docs*. The link to this online survey was sent to participants from the general public by means of email and *WhatsApp*.

Consequently, in the first phase of research, the quantitative data was gathered and assessed; subsequent to this, the qualitative data interviews were subject to the same procedure. Creswell and Clark (2017) states that the philosophy behind this structure is due to the fact that analysis of the quantitative data enables researchers to have a foundational understanding of the research problem. Analysing then the qualitative data refines the statistical results by examining the participants' views in greater detail. These strategies were devised in order to procure information concerning a variety of subjects connected to the precise linguistic attributes of social media which drive deviation influences and advance terrorism in Saudi Arabia. The questions posed were utilized to gain information so that complex and detailed answers to the research questions can be assembled. The goal in choosing the more useful means of carrying out this research study was to allow the researcher to thoroughly explain the multifaceted reality of human behaviour by analysing it

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from many different points of view (Cohen et al., 2011, p. 195). The following sections present more precise information about the process of data collection.

4.7.2 Questionnaire

According to Gray (2013), questionnaires are research tools in which participants are asked to answer the same set of questions in a specific order. Gass and Mackey (2007) illuminate this understanding further by explaining how questionnaires are written instruments presented to participants, thus ensuring that all participants encounter the exact same questions or statements. Normally, participants respond in a written format to these questions/statements, by means of Likert-style judgments or by "selecting options from a series of statements" (Gass and Mackey 2007, p. 148). Questionnaires are the most popularly used tool to collect data which aids in helping researchers understand people's ideas, attitudes, values, perceptions and behaviours. The way in which a questionnaire is organized with its content depends upon the aims and objectives of the research project (Johnson and Christensen, 2008). It was deemed that questionnaires were the most useful method to gather data in this study due to several reasons, which are as follows: their flexibility, efficiency in many aspects (time, money and effort), versatility and anonymity (Muijs, 2010). Furthermore, information gathered using questionnaires flows easily from a variety of participants. What is more, participants are permitted flexibility in completing a questionnaire at any time and place which they deem fit. Questionnaires also allow researchers to easily analyse data and code each question. Finally, the anonymity of the respondents could increase the amount of responses received ((Gillham 2008; Gray 2013). Despite their manifold advantages, the use of questionnaires also has some disadvantages (Gray 2013;Cohen et al. 2007). For instance, participants may often fail to complete the questionnaire, resulting in a poor rate of response. Participants may also tick the answers to the questions in a rapid fashion, without correctly reading the questions or truly expressing their ideas and opinions about a certain issue, thus, leading to inaccurate responses; which are, of course, undetectable by the researcher (Gillham, 2008). In order to avoid these pitfalls, a semi-structured interview was created in order to gain data that could not be collected by the questionnaire. This thereby permits a researcher to integrate the data collected and overcome the aforementioned problems. However, the issues of reliability (Cooper, Schindler and Sun, 2006), validity , (Kumar 2010; Morse *et al.* 2002; Bryman 2016) and bias were considered during the design process for the questionnaire.

4.7.3 Translating the questionnaire

The questionnaire is divided into three phases. First, from Arabic to English and from English to Arabic, then a 'back translation' technique was used. Initially, the questionnaire was designed and created in the Arabic language where the target sample are Arabic speakers with the following Arabic questionnaire,(M Alzabran, 2011), being presented to the academic supervisor, and after its approval it was presented to the participants. For further reliability, four competent translators were chosen: two were studying for a PhD at UL (linguistic major), and the other two are specialists in academic translation in Saudi Arabia. It is worth noting that all of the competent people who are checking the translation are bilingual (Arabic and English). Back translation is a process whereby translated texts are converted back into their original language (for instance, from English to Arabic and back into English again). It is always recommended that this is done by an objective third party. Usually, back translation is commonly used in cross-cultural measurements (Brislin, 1970; Chapman and Carter, 1979). As such, this procedure tries to maintain consensus between the original texts and the target texts which are being evaluated (see Figure 4.2).
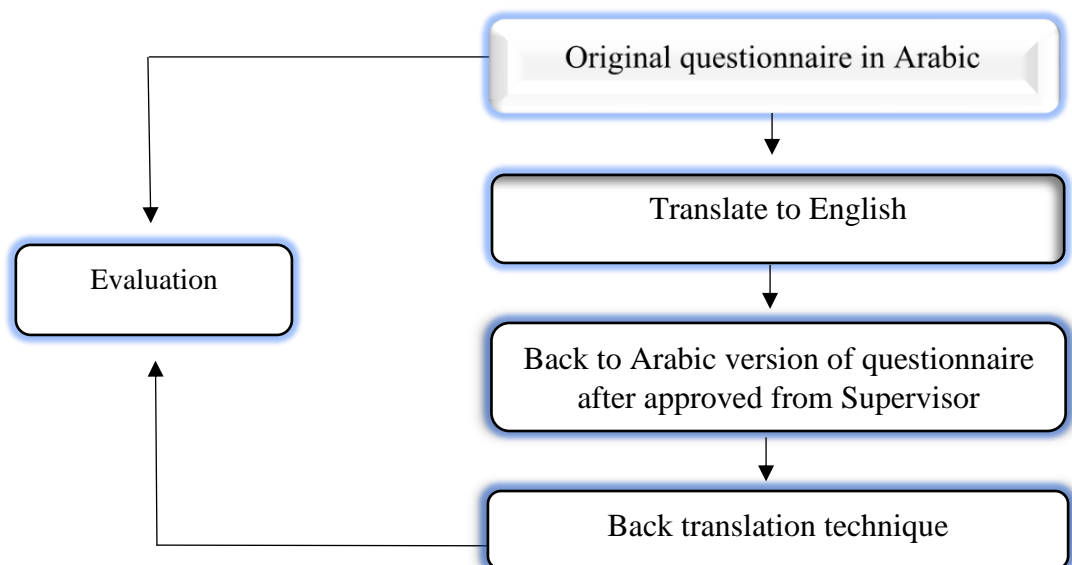
figure 4. 2 Questionnaire translation process

4.7.4 Construction of the Questionnaire

The organization and selection of items to be included in a questionnaire are of vital importance when a questionnaire is under construction. Bryman (2008, p. 239) recommends "designing questionnaire items" to make sure that rich and detailed responses are achieved. Several approaches are employed when constructing questions to achieve

this goal, and these approaches encourage the use a range of closed-ended to open-ended questions (Airasian, Gay and Mills, 2003;Birmingham and Wilkinson, 2003; Cohen et al. 2007; Bryman 2008).

The paper questionnaires were given to participants at the NAUSS, SPP. The electronic questionnaires were distributed to the general public in March and April 2019. The questionnaires were given to criminology experts from Naif University and investigators in National Security Services Department, and the electronic questionnaires were given to the general public.

To ensure that the overall goal of the study was achieved, the questionnaire was split into different sections. The first section was designed to gather demographic information about the participants and included questions relating to the age, gender, certifications, nature of work, years of experience and names of the social networking sites that they most frequently used. This information helped to determine similarities and differences for those who were involved in the survey.

The questionnaire's core was composed of 37 questions related to the following: background information concerning the characteristics and features of social media which disseminates the intellectual deviation: terrorism (10 items). The social media's role in spreading the intellectual deviation: terrorism (11 items). The role certain organizations (for instance, social and security) in tackling extremist thoughts distributed on social networking sites (9 items). Future suitable and effective methods which would aid in opposing extremist thoughts in social media (7 items). Participants were provided with the opportunity to express their own ideas concerning these topics by means of a commentary at the end of the survey. Respondents were also presented with one open-ended question concerning their ideas on possible solutions, thoughts and suggestions which could be useful to the researcher when it comes to identifying extremist thoughts, those who promote them and social networking sites which spread the deviant thinking. Further information concerning the questionnaire is contained in the appendices, (see Appendix A). The survey instrument was formally tested in pilot format in December 2018, and this is discussed in further detail in the following section.

4.7.5 Piloting the questionnaire

Van Teijlingen and Hundley (2002) state that to carry out a pilot study could enable researchers to have an indication as to whether there is a risk that a project could fail, have

problems relating to research protocols, or if the research instrument is improper or too challenging. In addition to this, a pilot study is a very important resource whereby feedback from participants concerning the research study can be attained (Otaghsara and Mohseni, 2012). The case can be made, however, that a pilot study could have weaknesses; for example, false conclusions may be reached due to erroneous information derived from pilot data (Van Teijlingen & Hundley, 2002). The survey instrument pilot tested in December 2018 was carried out with a small sample of 30 respondents from members at SPP, in the Saudi National Security Services Department, criminology experts at NAUSS and several Ph.D. students (colleagues of the researcher at UL), in order to make sure that the questions were viable; an issue which was extremely important at this stage. It was also necessary to check that the issues under study issues were addressed properly by the survey answers, in addition to ensuring that rich and detailed responses would be obtained and that these could be accurately measured. Throughout this component of the study, several weaknesses were highlighted and corrected. The questionnaire was shared with the principal supervisor of this project, after which advice was given that an electronic survey service which could give access to the general public, such as *SurveyMonkey* or *Google Docs*, could be used. The principal supervisor also approved the questionnaire.

The electronic survey was distributed online; an issue which presented several advantages and disadvantages. Online surveys are extremely easy to create and distribute, due in part to the fact that so many websites online offer this service. What is more, Porter (2004) states that web surveys require less time and are very cheap in comparison to the traditional creation of printed and distributed surveys. These often require a considerable amount of effort as they must be posted to recipients or handed to them in person. In relation to this particular project, however, fears were expressed that many of the participants may not have internet access, or even know how to use the internet correctly; so the decision was made to adopt both the electronic survey and the traditional paper survey, the latter of which would be delivered to certain particular recipients. This paper survey was distributed to investigators, experts at Naif University, while it was deemed appropriate to utilise an electronic survey to gain responses from the general public, In this research project, the data was generated through the utilisation of the Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS), using Cronbach's coefficient alpha to gauge its reliability.

4.7.6 Reliability of Questionnaire

The reliability of research requires the evaluation of both internal and external coherency and consistency. Thereby, research questions should elicit information which should be replicated if the same questionnaire was used again within an analogous context and community (Cooper, Schindler and Sun, 2006). Due to the fact that ambiguous questions are inherently antithetical to the reliability of a questionnaire, individual items must be created utilizing direct and unambiguous language so that instructions can be simplified and participant misunderstandings or misinterpretations can be minimized (Oppenheim,1992). It is also important to plan an accurate and logical question structure to help avoid unnecessary confusion (Bryman 2016).

Silverman (2009) states that there are five approaches to ensure the reliability of the process and results: refutational analysis; constant data comparison; comprehensive data use and the use of tables. These are all relevant to the present study for the purpose of ensuring consistency. Internal consistency helps to maintain the reliability of the research method. This is carried out by grouping questions in a questionnaire which measure the same respondents' views. In doing so, questions concerning the same concepts are gathered together in sets, making it easier to compute correlations between instruments, which thereby lead to coefficient correlations. The main difference between test-retest and internal consistencies in terms of estimating reliability is that the test-retest format is composed of two administrations of the measurement instrument, while the internal consistency method requires just one administration of that instrument.

Cronbach's alpha was used to test internal consistency so that estimations concerning the reliability of the test scores could be generated (see appendix C). Cronbach's alpha is a measure that is commonly used for measuring the reliability of questionnaires (Cronbach, 1951).Cronbach's alpha is widely adopted to indicate the extent to which a set of items measures a single, unidimensional, latent construct when all items measure the same construct. This shows any covariance among items as true-score variance (see Table 4.2, below).

Cronbach's Alpha	Internal Consistency
α ≥ 0.9	Excellent
0.9 > α ≥ 0.8	Good
0.8 > α ≥ 0.7	Acceptable
0.7 > α ≥ 0.6	Questionable
0.6 > α ≥ 0.5	Poor
0.5 > α	Unacceptable

Table 4. 2 Reliability

In this research, the reliability analysis on the questionnaire produced a Cronbach alpha of 0.923 after taking out all of the items that are on the nominal level of measurement. This value is considered very high indeed and, therefore, it can be concluded that the questionnaire is reliable, see Table 4.3, below.

	Scales	No. of items	Cronbach Alpha (coefficient)
1	What are the linguistic characteristics of terrorism which disseminate intellectual deviation via social media in Saudi Arabia	10	.884
2	What is the role of social media in disseminating intellectual deviation	11	.915
3	What is the role of the current reality of official and community organizations countering extremist thoughts disseminated on the social networking sites	9	.806
4	What are the possible effective methods and ways of countering those social media and the deviation thoughts	7	.809
5	**All Scales**	37	923

Table 4. 3 Exhibiting the reliability coefficient analysis scale 'alpha' of each Scales

Table 4.3, above, shows the first scale was the first ten questions of the questionnaire which asked questions about the characteristics and features of social media which lead to the intellectual deviation and eventually to terrorism. This scale has a high stability coefficient of .884 which is above the minimum accepted threshold of 0.70 indicating that this section

of the questionnaire will provide highly reliable results when applied to the 300 participants.

The second scale was the next eleven questions of the questionnaire and focused on the theme of the role that social media plays in disseminating intellectual deviation. This was the next eleven questions of the questionnaire and had the highest coefficient 0.915, which is a very high score and shows that the participants provided highly reliable results, and this will be a critical section of the thesis and these eleven questions will be central to the challenges faced in combating intellectual deviation.

The third scale was the role of current society, including social and government organizations in tackling the problem of extremist thoughts on social media. This was the next nine questions of the questionnaire and had a high stability coefficient of 0.806, showing higher stability coefficient and even reliability in terms of answers by the pilot participants.

The fourth scale consisted of seven questions regarding the future methods that can be used in tackling extremist content on various social media platforms. This scale has a high stability coefficient of 0.809. which also very high score and above the minimum accepted threshold of 0.70. The overall reliability of the Pilot study is considered Alpha as most of the scales were above the 0.70 coefficient threshold and it can be viewed as highly reliable (Maiyaki & Mokhtar, 2011). This shows that the questionnaires can be applied to the full number of participants and that the results are expected to be highly reliable and provide significant data to support this thesis.

4.7.7 Validity of the study

The concept of validity relates to the clarity and precision of all questions or statements contained in a questionnaire (Cohen *el al* 2013). Validity can be established by a systematic review of all items to safeguard against any content, sentence construction, or mode of expression which could unintentionally affect the questionnaire variables and skew the results to render any findings invalid or unreliable. This means that in order for a questionnaire to achieve its goal, a researcher should be careful to create all of the questions contained therein in the most objective and unbiased manner possible (Kumar 2010). Morse *et al*. (2002) state that the term 'validity' is the best term for these processes, even though various strategies are employed for each paradigm. Validity is the strength of research inferences, conclusions or propositions, and requires the best available

approximation to the truth or falsity of a given inference, proposition or conclusion (Morseet al. 2002). Validity in quantitative research often concerns objectivity, generalisability, replicability, predictability, controllability and nomothetic statements (Morse et al. 2002). The questionnaire examines The Linguistic Characteristics of terrorism and intellectual deviation vis Social Media in Saudi Arabia; an issue which has been focused upon by several previous studies (M AlZabran, 2011; Mansour Salim H Alshammari, 2013; M. A. Ashraf, 2016;Hend Sam'an Al- Smadi, 2016; Hend Sam'an Al-Smadi, 2016; Hadi Alhussin A. Alsamdani, 2017).There is validity for all scales present in this study. Also, it has validity because the researcher used the same questionnaire for each participant. Each type of validity highlights a different aspect of the relationship between the study's examination and outcome. Bryman (2016) mentioned that There are four types of validity commonly examined in social research and these are as follows:(1) Conclusion validity asks whether there is a relationship between social media and the observed outcome related to intellectual deviation. (2) Internal validity considers whether there is a relationship between the research aims and the outcome (which, in this research, concerns if terrorist groups have benefitted from social media in the recruitment of young people and gaining of financial support. This information is based upon the responses from the members of the Saudi Prosecution position who have investigated those accused of terrorism. Interviews have also been conducted with one of the families affected by the terrorist groups). (3) Construct validity asks whether there is a relationship between the research purpose and the actual causal relationship. This can be used to determine whether social media has an impact on intellectual deviation which leads to terrorism in Saudi Arabia. (4) External validity, lastly, refers to the researcher's ability to generalise the results of the study to other settings. In this case, it is concerned with whether the research findings regarding intellectual delinquency and terrorism in Saudi Arabia can be applied generally to all other relationships existing in Gulf countries and in Saudi Arabia alone.

	Scales	No. of items	correlation	P-Value
1	What are the linguistic characteristics of terrorism which disseminate intellectual deviation via social media in Saudi Arabia	10	0.811**	0.000
2	What is the role of social media in disseminating intellectual deviation	11	0.855**	0.000
3	What is the role of the current reality of official and community organizations countering extremist thoughts disseminated on the social networking sites	9	0.748**	0.000
4	What are the possible effective methods and ways of countering those social media and the deviation thoughts	7	0.734**	0.000

Table 4. 4 The Internal validity of Scales (** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level)

Table 4.4, above, showed that all the Pearson's correlation coefficient between responses on axes and the overall score of the scale for all instrument axes are all statistical significant at (0,01= α) (as p-value is from 0,01), which reflects the sincerity of the scale.

4.7.8 Interviews

Semi-structured interviews were also used as a research instrument in this project (Appendix B). These were employed, further to the questionnaire, in order to derive information from the Saudi prosecution service. These measures were utilised also to interview one of the families affected by the terrorist groups so that data relating to the role played by social media in the intellectual deviation (terrorism) in the Saudi Arabia could be established. In person interviews were not possible; however, these were conducted by means of a third-party gatekeeper. These measures were taken due to the fact that it was forbidden for the researcher to interact with these people, or even to know their names; due to the sensitivity of the role that they play in counter terrorism, as mentioned in section 4.7.1. Rowley (2012) states that the data-collection method operates by the interviewer attempting to pose questions and gaining information so that they can understand the interviewee. Interviewers most commonly ask participants about their experiences, attitudes, beliefs and behaviours. Bryman (2008) describes an interview as a conversation which has a distinct purpose. Byrne (2004) emphasises the effectiveness of interviewing as a research method, as it enables researchers to understand the attitudes and values of participants; these are issues which cannot be easily understood merely by a research questionnaire. Researchers recommend the use of open-ended and flexible questions in order to obtain better responses. These types of questions are better than closed questions

when it comes to gaining access to participants' opinions, interpretations of events, understanding and experiences (p. 182). There are many different types of interviews. Gray (2013) states that there are many different interview categories, such as the following: structured interviews, semi-structured interviews, non-directive interviews, focused interviews, informal conversational interviews and problem-centred interviews.

In this research project, a semi-structured interview protocol was employed. This involved a selection of open-ended questions and this format was used in order to gain detailed data. Open-ended questions enable ease of access to certain issues and allow a flexible approach when it comes to communication; furthermore, this style of approach enables interviewees to answer the questions they wish to answer, in the manner that they want to answer them, while simultaneously allowing these individuals to express themselves in their own distinct style (Gass & Mackey, 2007, p. 151). Axinn and Pearce (2006) report that an unstructured or semi-structured interview is a much better approach to use in research of this nature as it enables participants to alter the flow of conversation and include new topics that may not have been foreseen by the researcher (p. 6). As such, using a semi-structured interview allows the researcher to ask more questions and participate in detailed conversations with the participants. Crouch and McKenzie (2006) believe that there are benefits to be found when spontaneous new conversation topics occur in an interview. This is an open-ended style of communication which can greatly enhance the research when the interviewer is sensitive to discussion and exploitation of the new topics as they occur in the interview (pp. 486-487). Utilising open-ended questions in a semi-structured interview must be done with care by the interviewer, as there should also be enough time for participants to be able to speak freely and without limits. Flick (2009) states that participants must be given a great deal of time to be able to fully express themselves; however, simultaneously they must also be presented with a structure for the given topics up for discussion. One other benefit of using semi-structured interviews is that it is possible for the researcher to manage the interview. In addition to this, the participant has the possibility of enriching the interview themselves, so that they can examine issues in much greater depth than what was foreseen during the preparation of the standard questions upon which the research is based (Birmingham &Wilkinson, 2003; Bryman, 2008; Lune *et el*, 2017).

The logic behind selecting the semi-structured interview method is that it is the most appropriate means to use to enhance the quality of the qualitative research used in this project. It is the best possible means of creating a detailed explanation of the information

gained during the first phase of this project. In comparison to an unstructured interview, the range of data necessary in a semi-structured interview is very clear, as several questions connect directly to the questionnaire results. As such, the semi-structured interview is the best method to use in this phase of the research. In this project, the interview procedure is utilised in order to gain qualitative information as part of the follow-up stage.

It must be mentioned, however, that the interview procedure has its disadvantages; such as, time delays, the time-consuming nature of carrying out and then analysing interviews, translation activities from Arabic to English, and the participants may not give accurate or true answers to the questions posed. Interviewees often exhibit signs of anxiety when participating in an interview and provide additional information which is just not clear or honest. This makes analysis of the results extremely difficult and arduous. Often, it is possible for interviews to create many different answers quickly, forcing researchers to create an analysis plan. Of course, due to all of these facts, it is absolutely essential that the interviewer prepares prior to carrying out the interview (Cohen, 2007). The interviewer must list out all of the questions they will ask and put them in sequential order prior to carrying out the interview. This will ensure that the interviewer is able to elicit everything they need from the interviewee during the interview so that a detailed and copious amount of information can be collected for the research project. The interview process was overseen by the Supervisor of this research project at the University of Limerick, Ireland. During this process, the Supervisor instructed that some questions should be altered and the phrasing of the questions were changed slightly, to ensure that the participants would understand what they were being asked. Prior to the interviews taking place, the participants had to sign a consent form (see Appendix B). In addition to this, participants were also told that the interviews would be audio-recorded by means of a Voice Recorder application so that data analysis could be carried out afterwards. Once the participants' answers were recorded, the recordings were transcribed, coded (and *Nvivo* assisted), assessed in order to add depth of meaning to the quantitative data gathered by means of this survey (for more details see section (5.8.1).

4.8 Limitations

The limitations of the present study are set into four main categories and these are: sample limitations; study design and implementation limitations; intervention limitations; and assessment limitations. These limitations will be discussed in detail in section (7-4) of the final chapter of the thesis.

4.9 Study variables

According to McLeod (2019) the independent variable is the variable which the experimenter can manipulate or change; however, it is believed that it has a direct influence on the dependent variable. For example, in the current study, the role of social media (independent variable) is examined in order to measure any effects on intellectual deviation as a dependent variable. McLeod (ibid) states that this influence is due to the fact that even though the dependent variable is the variable, which is tested and measured in an experiment, it is, however, dependent on the independent variable. An example of a dependent variable in our particular study is intellectual deviation (terrorism), which depends on the independent variable (type of use social media). There might be some intervening and secondary variables whose impact was not the focus of this study; they are ignored, however, but can be appropriate for further future studies.

4.10 Selecting the Population and the Sample of the Study

4.10.1 Study Population

A population is a complete set of people, objects or events of concern to a research study, from which a sample is designed (Cohen 2007; Carroll 2015). The concept of a population to be surveyed is extremely significant in relation to a research study, as it delineates the entire range of people from which a researcher can ascertain vital information (Lynn, 2002). There are two forms of population, referred to as the wider population and the target population, which are important for all research studies. The wider population relates to the large group of people who share the phenomenon under investigation, while the target population (a portion of the wider population) relates to the group of people that the researcher employs to create generalisations of their results ((Airasian, Gay and Mills, 2003; Bell 2005).

In this study, the wider population refers to the general public were 250 questioners. The target population, or sub-set population of this study, refers to the National Security Services Department in Saudi Prosecution were 20 questioners, crime experts at Naif University for Security Sciences were 30 questioners, and one of the families affected by the terrorist groups interviewed for this project. One reason for choosing Naif University was that it is a university specialized in security sciences and intellectual security at the level of the Arab world. His Royal Highness, the Minister of Interior, the former Crown Prince and President of the Supreme Council of Naif University confirmed that it had

contributed to enriching the Arab Security Library with scientific research through 455 publications in the field of security and social sciences (Al-Riyadh Newspaper, 2009, Issue 14996).

The researcher received a suggestion from the supervisor of this study to use an electronic survey service for use by the general public, such as *SurveyMonkey* or *Google Docs*. This sample of people was selected randomly by sending a link to online Google Survey to the target population through whatever media best suited to the participants, such as WhatsApp, SMS, or Email. The process of sampling in a research project refers to the selection of a sample of a small group of people, or a population subset, in order to represent a particular population. There are two main approaches to sampling: probability (a random sample) and non-probability (a non-random or purposive sample) sampling.

In probability sampling, each person within a population has an equal chance of being selected from a given population to be the subject of a research study (Schreuder, Gregoire & Weyer, 2001). In contrast, non-probability sampling research projects do not select people to participate randomly. When this sampling system occurs, researchers deliberately choose a person to be included or excluded from the study depending on whether or not they emanate from a particular subset of a population ((Airasian, Gay and Mills, 2003; Cohen *et al*, 2007; Bryman 2008; Gray 2014). The selection of the sample in this research study was intentionally selected and arranged in advance, before the beginning of the fieldwork. Cohen et al. (2011, p. 163) provide very clear advice concerning the selection of a sample and state that the creation of "a sampling strategy must be governed by the criterion of suitability." It is very important that the strategy incorporated into the research should be mindful of the project's goals and purposes. It is also essential to adopt the correct strategy to use for purposes of the research, "the timescales and constraints on the research, the research design, the methods of data collection and the methodology of the research" (Cohen et al. 2011, p.163). Five different factors were considered when choosing the sample strategy: the research paradigm (mixed methods research), the research methods (qualitative and quantitative design), sample availability, the relevance to the population and the sample size (Cohen et al. 2011). Using different sampling strategies, the target participants were selected from experts at Naif University for Security Sciences and members of the Saudi Prosecution. Participants in the study had the same ethnic and cultural backgrounds, which is one of the best methods of creating a good sample. Carroll (2015) states that participants with the same education,

age, ethnic beliefs, social backgrounds and socio-economic backgrounds can help to generate a very effective sample.

4.10.2 Study sample

As this research study aimed to study a specific group of experts at Naif University, members of the National Security Services Department in Saudi Prosecution and one of the families affected by the terrorist groups, it adopted a "non-probability sampling" approach (Cohen et al. 2011, p. 153). Carroll (2015) indicates that the sample size as the number of participants in a study. Large samples are generally recommended as being better representations of a population as they can provide more reliability when it comes to research results. Thus, it is possible for research results to be generalised and this may not be achieved through smaller samples (Airasian and Gay 2003; Cohen et al. 2007; Aldridge 2001; Bryman 2008).

It is important, however, that large samples are not understood as being always better than smaller ones, as the effectiveness of a sample is inherently connected to the sampling strategy employed in the research (Carroll 2015). For one, smaller samples provide better response rates than larger ones (Carroll 2015; Bryman 2008). Other factors can also influence the effectiveness of a sample, for instance the type and the purpose of the research, the size and nature of the population, in addition to the methods of data analysis chosen (Airasian and Gay, 2003; Cohen et al. 2007). The sample sizes recommended by Cohen et al. (2007) and Gay and Airasian (2003) were adopted in this research project. They say that qualitative non-probability sampling should contain a minimum of 30 participants for a research study, particularly when a researcher is applying "some form of statistical analysis on their data" (Cohen et al. 2011, p. 144).

In this research study, vital factors (time, accessibility and cost) affecting the decision regarding the sample size were considered. Furthermore, it was also taken into consideration that there was a strong potential that many participants may refuse to participate in the study or, perhaps, make the decision to withdraw at some point. It was also foreseen that some respondents may fail to fill out the study survey, thus leading to "spoiled questionnaires" (for example missing out items, putting two ticks in a row of choices instead of only one and so on) (Cohen et al. 2011, p. 148). Due to these aforementioned reasons, and as recommended by supervisor of study, the decision was made to sample a large number of respondents using *Google Docs*. This came to a number

of approximately 300 participants who would receive a questionnaire, which exceeds the number suggested by Cohen et al. (2007). Two investigators from the Saudi prosecution service and one of the families affected by the terrorist groups also took part in the interviews. As far as the researcher knows, this study was the first in Saudi Arabia to interview with official investigators in Saudi Counter Terrorism Unit (CTU) and a family whose relatives had been lured into ISIS groups in Iraq, Syria.

4.11 Ethics Approval

Ethics approval for this PhD research study was sought from all of the relevant institutions. As per the approval from UL (*Reference: 2018-000 A*), approval was also received from the NAUSS, SPP and the Saudi Culture Bureau in Ireland (please see Appendix A). In this respect, Creswell (2013) underscores a number of ethical issues that must be taken into consideration by a researcher when conducting phenomenological research. These include gaining informed consent on voluntary participation in research with a gatekeeper, protecting the privacy and confidentiality of participant data, storing this data appropriately, and illustrating the benefits of research as opposed to its risks.

4.11.1 Protecting the privacy and safety of the participants

The following ethical safeguards were rigorously adhered to during data collection and analysis:

- I provided secure technical and physical data storage in order to maintain safety and to prevent any potential leakage of audio recordings and interview transcripts. The primary language used when the focus group and semi-structured interviews were taking place was Arabic. According to UL ethics, data will be stored for 7 years before I eventually dispose of this material in a safe manner.
- I substituted aliases instead of the actual names of the participants in order to protect identity and privacy.
- I concealed any information or data that could inadvertently expose the identity of the participants.

4.12 Chapter Summary

This section of the research project has described what means were utilised to gather information, and the reasons that the researcher used to select each of these methods (see Figure 4.1). This chapter also provided information concerning the various research

methodologies available for use in this project (quantitative, qualitative and mixed methodologies). Once the advantages and disadvantages of each research method had been assessed, the MMR method was the obvious best choice to apply to this project. Information was collected, during which the researcher was aware of the limitations, variables, population and sample. The rationale behind the interviews was also presented in this chapter. In any research project, high-quality data collection is essential for the progression of knowledge in the social sciences (Axinn and Pearce, 2006b), and so it was necessary to decide what data and analysis was needed to attend to the aims of the research and adequately answer the research questions (Bazeley, 2009). The chapter which follows discusses the analysis of the information gained during the field study in relation to social media and its influence on intellectual deviation, with particular attention to terrorism in Saudi Arabia.

CHAPTER 5- DATA ANALYSIS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses the primary findings of the data collected for this study. Additionally, the chapter analyses the data collected from the various participants of the questionnaires. These models of data collection were designed to help gather appropriate information for responding to the research questions. A study by Cohen et al (2007, p. 448) defines data analysis as a "reduction of copious amounts of written data to manageable and comprehensible proportions." For his part, Flick (2014) defines data analysis as a process through which analytical and also statistical tools are used to evaluate data with the aim of discovering useful information and that can be applied to make decisions either in business, research as well as any other field of interest. With an understanding of what data analysis is, this chapter will seek to analyse the main aspects with the aim of responding to the following research questions;

1- What are the linguistic characteristics of terrorism which disseminate intellectual deviation via social media in Saudi Arabia?

2- What is the role of social media in disseminating intellectual deviation?

3- What is the role of the current reality of official and community organizations countering extremist thoughts disseminated on the social networking sites?

4- What are the possible effective methods and ways of countering those social media and the deviation thoughts?

5- Are there particular factors that are perceived to impact on social media usage in Saudi Arabia according to the variables of gender and age?

To respond to these questions, two categories of people in this area were identified. The first group is the expert questionnaire, which is comprised of people who had clear knowledge in the field of interest. The other was the general public, in order to know the reaction of many members of society about the phenomenon of terrorism. The experts' team consisted of 50 individuals while the general public represented responses from 250 participants. Notably, most of the respondents to the expert questionnaire had at least 20 years of working experience and therefore were in an excellent position to give technical responses. The experts' team ranged from lecturers and professors in the sociology field, community experts, crime and delinquency as well as criminology experts. The other set

of questionnaires was administered to the general public. The scope of the participants was in Riyadh, the capital of Saudi Arabia, where people were willing to complete the questionnaires. This questionnaire had a total number of 37 research questions, while, the personal information was 15 questions as per the chart below. The questions which were related were grouped and ranked on a scale.

In essence, the quantitative analysis will be focused on ensuring that the determinable research questions from the gathered *SPSS* questionnaires are answered adequately through statistical significance measures. Descriptive statistics will ensure that the characteristics such as demographics, age, gender, among other features, are represented in the study. Reliability statistics tests will examine whether the results are feasible to the research study or not, thus can be used in the analysis. The specific studies on the attributes of the study will be examined through correlation analysis. To note, the participants in the interviews and questionnaires results will be grouped as a team of experts or the general public, depending on the part they played in the actual interviews. Qualitative analysis, on the other hand, will be aimed at explaining in-depth the themes raised in the research study as identified above. Both the analyses are aimed at answering the research questions of this research study.

5.2 The application of statistical analysis procedures

This portion of quantitative data analysis was gained from the questionnaires. Prior to presenting the data analysis methods and statistical tests, it is vital that the statistical research literature is explored in order to select the best analysis procedure and statistical test; once this has been done, then analysis skills can be formulated by means of *SPSS* and *Microsoft Excel*. Essentially, it is crucial to underscore the fact that statistical data analysis is dependent upon the quantity and variety of variables (dependent or independent), measurement levels (nominal, ordinal and ratio scale), and the goal of the research study (research questions, aims). Furthermore, the various tests which are used in the project depend significantly on whether or not the test can be operated with parametric or non-parametric data (Allen and Seaman, 2007; Bryman 2016; Fisher and Marshall, 2009; Greasley, 2007; Marshall and Jonker, 2010; McCrum-Gardner, 2008; Porter, 2004; Van Teijlingen & Hundley, 2012). In this part of the research study, information has been generated mostly from questionnaires, in which Likert scales are utilized to attend to research phenomena in addition to categorical data (nominal), so that demographic data can be created. Allen and Seaman (2007), Jamieson (2004), and McCrum-Gardner (2008),

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are all in agreement that Likert scales have more probability of being placed in ordinal level of measurement; thus, parametric methods are best suited for this selection, for example the Pearson Correlation coefficient for correlation when it comes to differences (Bryman,2016; Cohen *et al.*, 2013). In relation to descriptive analysis and Likert scales, several previously conducted research studies employ a questionnaire which has been created for items, and these studies utilized frequency distribution, means and standard deviation, and analysis to produce their results (Smadi, 2016;M Alzabran, 2011). As such, the method of descriptive analysis employed in this study utilised frequency, mean, standard deviation, percentages, and the total quantity of agreement and disagreement to allow the questionnaire data to be correctly analysed. Quantitative data analysis methods are detailed in the section following.

figure 5.1 Statistical analysis procedure and tests
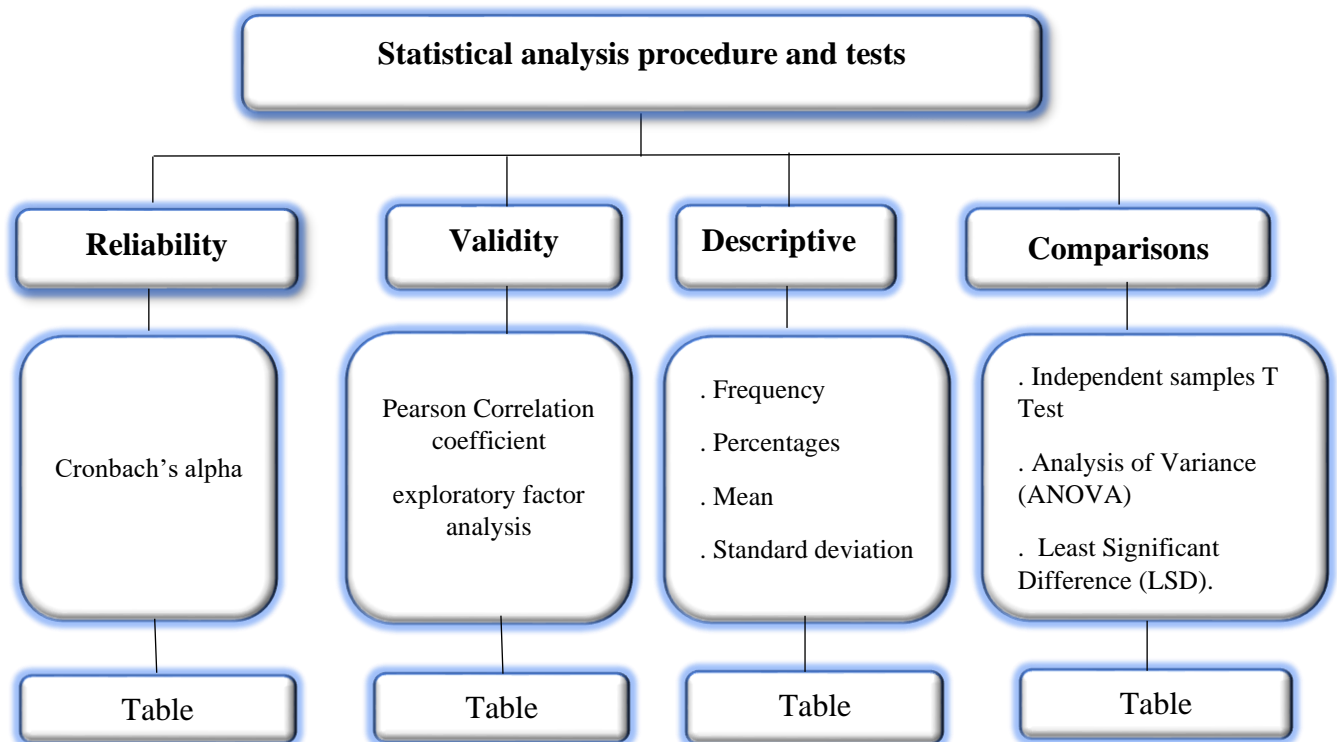
5.3 Questionnaire Context

The research project was carried out in Saudi Prosecution, Naïf Arab University for Security Science with General Public in Saudi Arabia in March and May 2019 (see section 4.6.1 for more details). In order to analyze the quantitative data, *SPSS* version 25 and *EXCEL Microsoft* were used. Participation in the survey was very satisfactory. Of the

respondents, 50 experts from the Saudi Prosecution and Naif Arab University for Security Science finished the questionnaire and 250 from the general public.

The data analysis of the questionnaires starts with a profile of the participants (see Figure 5.4), including demographic data such as their age, gender, qualification, specializations, workplace, occupation, years of experience, social network sites and numbers of the use of social media usage hours. The second section explores in depth participants' views on the Internet and social media, as well as perceptions in relation to the value and purpose of using the Internet and social media in influencing the ideas of youth regarding terrorism.

5.3.1 Quantitative Data Analysis

The questionnaire used for experts and the general public is the only completely quantifiable aspect of this research and it is critical that the data is highly reliable as a lot of consequent inferences will be made as a result (Bonett and Wright, 2015). To measure the consistency of the questionnaires the researcher used Cronbach's Alpha Reliability method to analyse the internal reliability of the four main themes in the questionnaire. The generally acceptable threshold for reliability is 0.70 for each scale and the overall average is also expected to be above 0.70 to be considered Alpha (Bonett and Wright, 2015). Taber (2017) discusses acceptable coefficients for Cronbach's Alpha Reliability and noted that even though several academics viewed above 0.70 as an acceptable threshold, academics such as Athanasiou and Mavrikaki (2013,p: 1269) and himself believe that values above 0.65 are acceptable coefficients. This is indicated in the figure below which shows that six out of eleven acceptable academic coefficients show that values above 0.65 are acceptable. These coefficients were determined by evaluating 64 articles published about Cronbach's Alpha Reliability in 2015 in four journals, SE, RISE, IJSE and JRST (Taber, 2017). A correlation of high values does indicate the participant understanding the questions and providing reliable answers although this is relative to their understanding of the questions and what is expected as answers (Taber,2017). For more information about reliability and validity see our methodology chapter (4.7.6).

5.4 Demographic analysis of participants' background characteristics

This section focuses on presenting the demographic data in order to provide information related to participants' background. The demographic data is the initial part of the questionnaire including age, gender, qualifications, specializations, workplaces, occupation, experience, and number of hours of social media use. This information

provides overview details related to the research sample, which can also be used to control other factors within the study. The data are presented in tables and figures that includes frequencies, percentages, means, weighted average, and standard deviation. The data in this section are derived merely from the questionnaire.

5.4.1 Participant Profile

The data shows that the participants' ages ranged from less than 29 to over 50, with a median age of 45. According to the data collected, the vast majority were from 40 - 49: 37% were from 30-39 years of age; 36.33% were over 50; 15%, as can be seen in the chart 5.2, below.
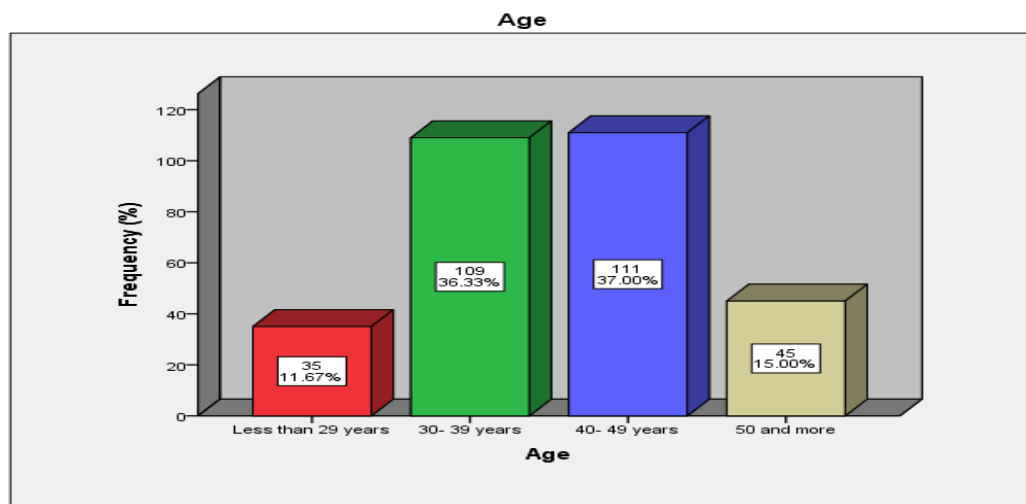
figure 5. 2 Participation in the study, according to Age

Figure 5.3 shows the number of the participants in the study with regard to gender. Observably, most participants were males 80%, compared to only 20% of females, and this is possibly because men are more likely to participate in surveys than women because of the sensitivity of the topic as well as due to the fact that the number of males organizers of terrorist groups higher than that of females (Von Knop, 2007). The participants were all Saudis (100%). The following chart shows the percentages of qualifications that participated in the study.

Sex
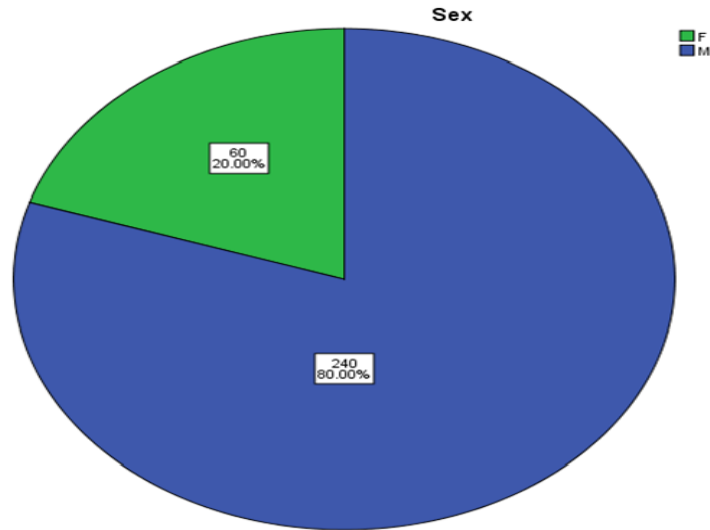
figure 5. 3 Participation in the study, according to gender
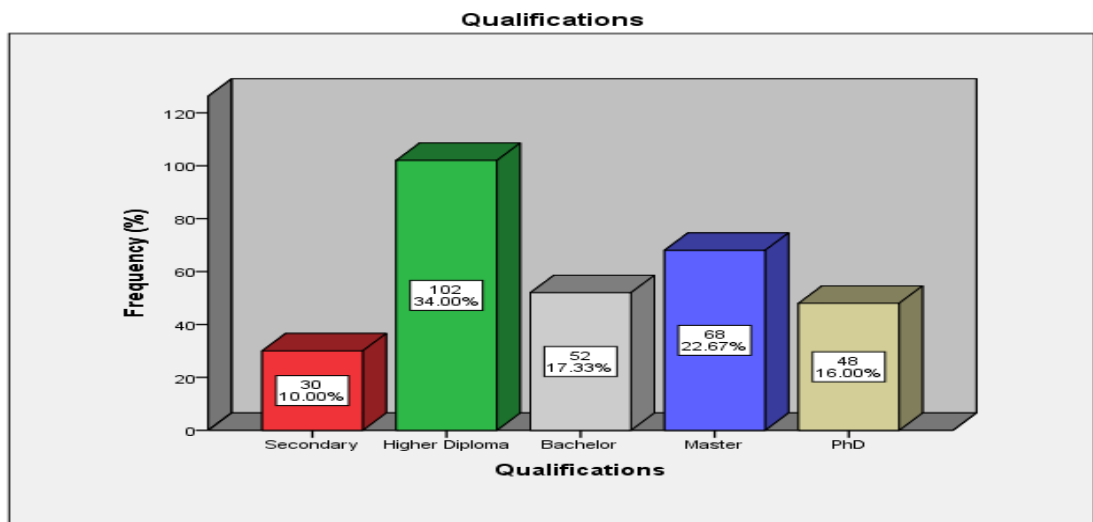
figure 5. 4 Participation in the study, according to qualification

Figure 5.4, Shows the percentages of qualifications of those who participated in the study were secondary school 30%; were Higher Diploma 34%; were Bachelor 17.33%; were Master 22.67%; while a PhD 16%. The following chart shows the percentages of specializations that participated in the study.

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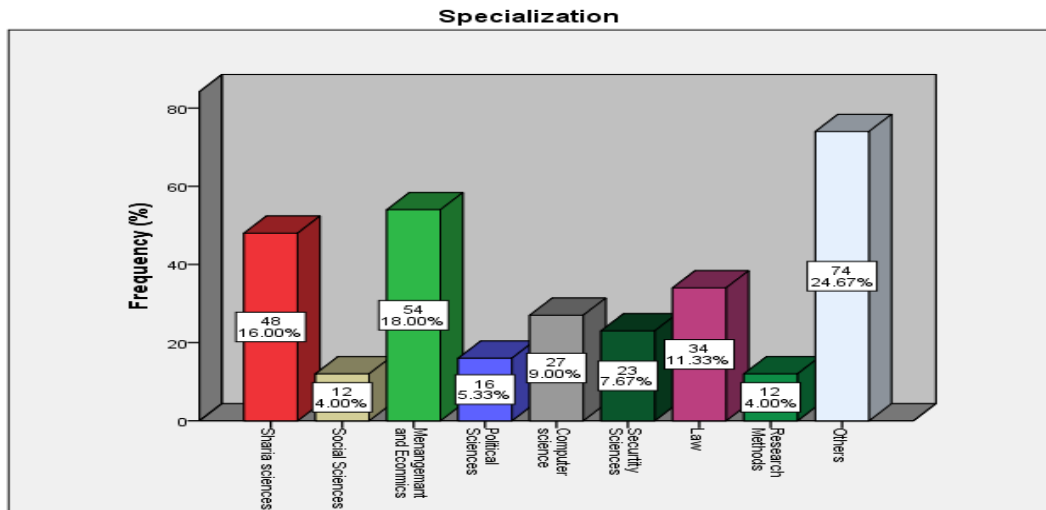
figure 5. *5* Participation in the study, according to Specialization

Figure 5.5 classified participants according to their specializations. As seen, management, sharia sciences, computer science, law, security sciences, research methods, political sciences and social sciences were the fields of specializations ranked from largest to smallest percentages. Their respective percentages were 18%, 16%, 11.33%, 9%, 5.33%, and 4%. Others also formed a large percentage with 24.67%. Chart 5.6 shows that percentages of participants of workplace in the study.
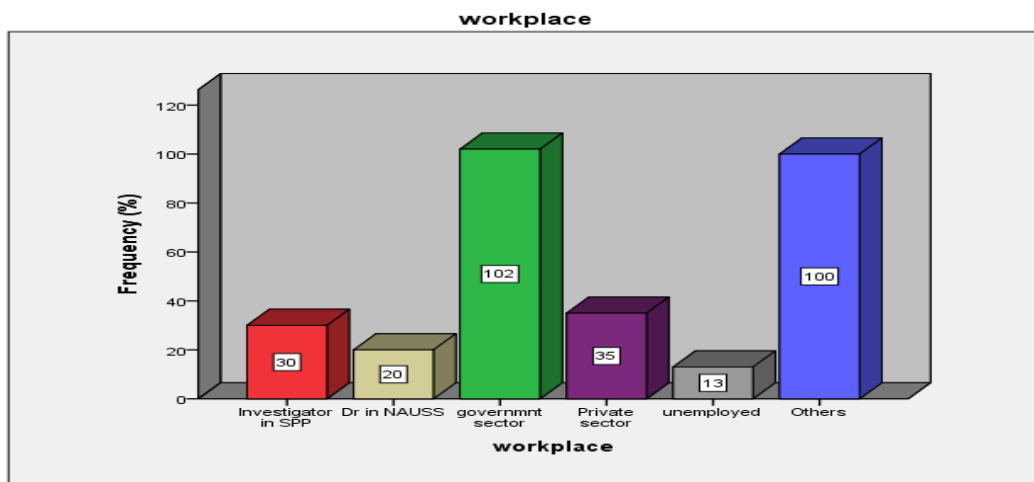
figure 5. 6 Participation in the study, according to workplace

In Figure 5.6 above, the participants were ranked according to the workplaces as shown above. Those working in the government sector were 152 staff with 50.66% (a total of the 3 columns investigator, NAUSS and other government sector), while in the private sector were 35 with 11.66%. The unemployed were 4.33% while those who worked in unspecified places were 100 with 33.33%. Chart 5.7 explains participant percentages according to their occupation.
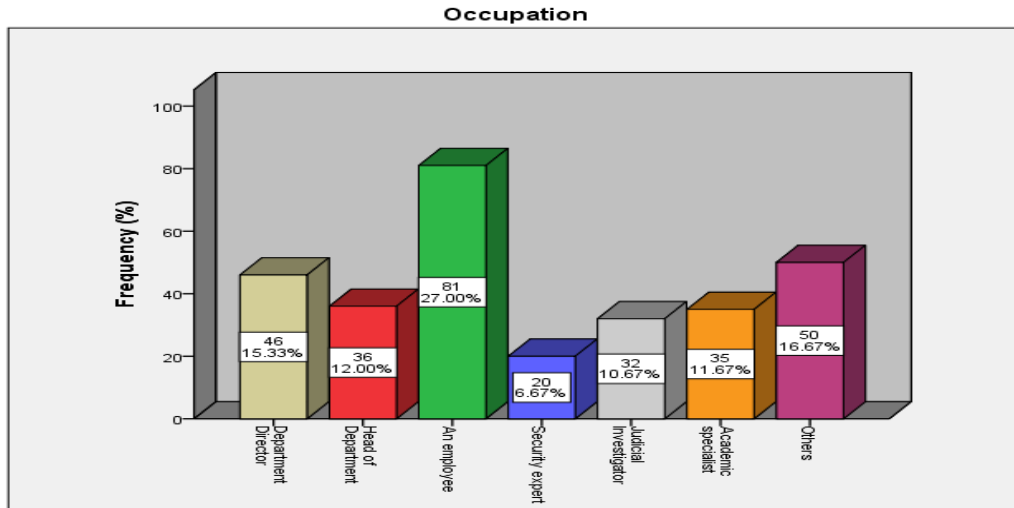
Chart 5.7 represents the participants according to their occupation. In order of their percentages, they were employees, department directors, head of departments, academic specialists, security experts and judicial investigators with 27%, 15.33%, 12%, 11.67%, 10.67% and 6.67% respectively. Others who were not mentioned accounted for 16.67%. The following chart illustrates the participants percentages of experience.
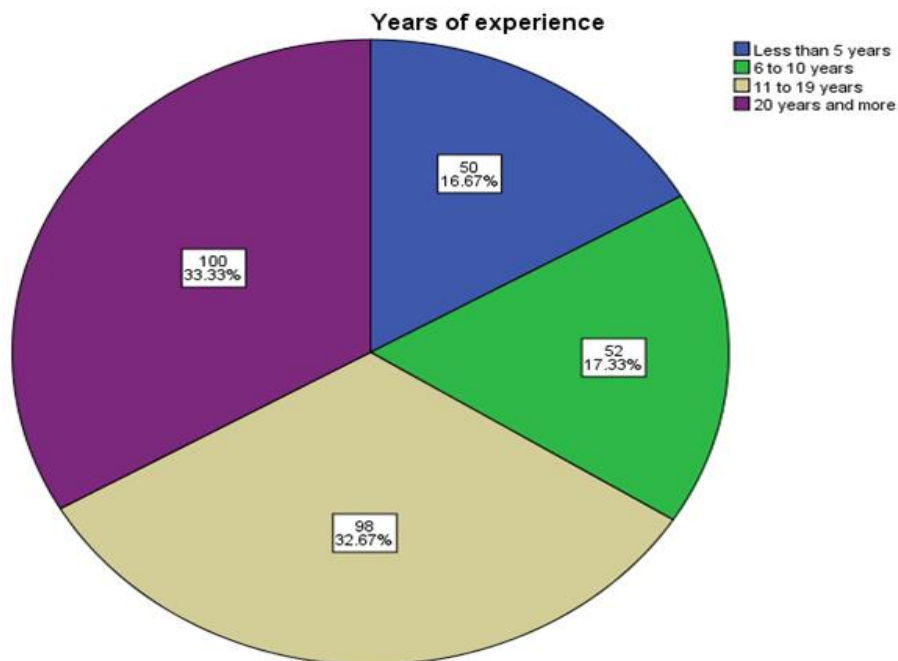
Figure 5.8 above provides information on their experience; the participants with experience less than 5 years represented 16.67% and those with 6-10 year experience represented

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17.33%. On the other hand, 32.67% had experience of 11-19 years and 33.33% had more 20-year experience. Chart 22 shows Social network sites that the participants use.
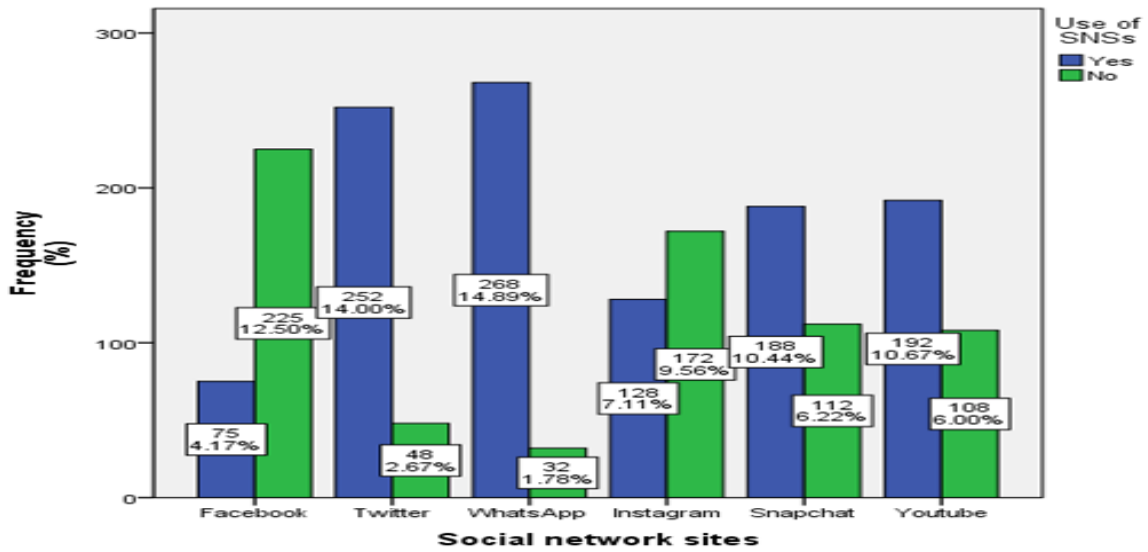
figure 5. 9 Participation in the study, according to SNSs

Notably, Figure 5.9, above illustrates participant internet and social media access which were self-assessed in the questionnaire. The majority of participants declared that they were familiar with and had been using Social Media. The results clarify that a large number of the participants were Internet users. Participants reported that *WhatsApp* took first place more clearly with 80.4%, followed by *Twitter* with 75.6%, *YouTube* 57.6% and *Snapchat* 56.4% which made them the most popular platforms among Saudi society, while *Instagram* users were *Facebook* 22.5%, followed by others (e.g. *Skype*, *IMo* and *Telegram*).
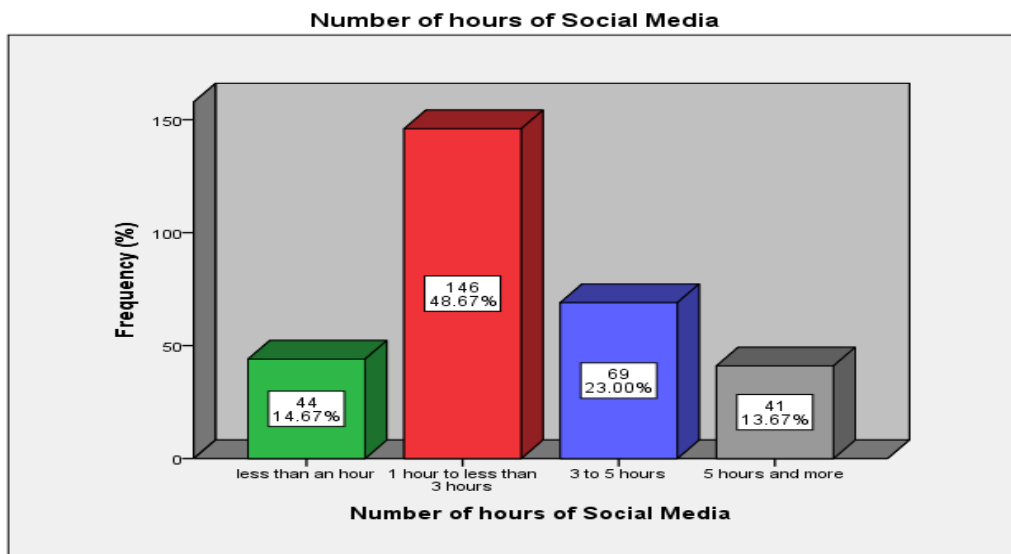
figure 5. *10* Number of hours of social media usageFigure

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The above figure 5.10, shows the participants' percentages relating to the number of hours used by Saudis on social media according to age groups (less than 29, 30-39, 40-49, and more than 50, respectively). The majority of participants were less than 39 years of age 63.34%, and this group spent approximately three hours daily on social media. On the other hand, the group which were 40 years old and over 36.67% used social media up to two hours a day, or less. This means that those in the age group less than 39 years old, seemed to spend more hours using social media. This was due to the fact that social media has become so integral to youth life, and that most of the participants from this age group were students or unemployed (for more details see section (5.5).

5.5 Descriptive analysis

This section presents the descriptive results of the questionnaires. This data is organised around four factors/research questions which employ a five-point *Likert* scale; these results are presented in a table format including their mean, rank and attitude. The results are also analysed underneath each table.

5.5.1 First factor: The linguistic characteristics of terrorism via social media

The table below, 5.1, presents the results of the first factor, aiming to address the research question, *what are the linguistic characteristics of terrorism which disseminate intellectual deviation via social media in Saudi Arabia?*. This factor includes 10 items to assess disseminated intellectual deviation through social media and their impact on terroristic behaviours, from which we find that the highest average was awarded to item 4: *(They provide free programs and facilitate signing up in them and their widespread use?)* with a mean of 4.21 and Std Deviation 1.04. Item 2 *(They provide audio and video materials with high emotional effect?)* comes second with a mean of 4.17 and Std Deviation 0.88. Item 9: *(Chat among extremists is possible?)* comes third with a mean of 3.83 and Std Deviation 1.15, with *Always* by percentages of 51.7%, 42.0% and 31.0% respectively, and *Often* by percentages of 30.0%, 38.7% and 40% respectively.

Questions		None	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always	Mean	Std. Deviation	Rank
1. They highlight the thrilling contents in an innovative technical manner in the design	F	8	12	105	112	63	3.70	0.93	3
	%	2.7	4.0	35.0	37.3	21.0			
2. They provide audio and video materials with high emotional effect	F	2	13	43	116	126	4.17	0.88	2
	%	.7	4.3	14.3	38.7	42.0			
3. They provide access to blocked websites regularly (VPN programs)	F	21	20	97	82	80	3.60	1.15	8
	%	7.0	6.7	32.3	27.3	26.7			
4. They provide free programs and facilitate signing up in them and their wide spreading	F	11	14	30	90	155	4.21	1.04	1
	%	3.7	4.7	10.0	30.0	51.7			
5. They are multilingual and can be translated easily	F	15	19	105	102	59	3.57	1.03	9
	%	5.0	6.3	35.0	34.0	19.7			
6. They use a common language and private symbols among them (encrypted language)	F	31	26	84	92	67	3.46	1.22	10
	%	10.3	8.7	28.0	30.7	22.3			
7. The websites are managed by a professional team	F	35	16	36	131	82	3.69	1.25	4
	%	11.7	5.3	12.0	43.7	27.3			
8. They coordinate with other websites to disseminate the speeches and data of the leaders of organization and promote them	F	27	18	63	110	82	3.68	1.20	6
	%	9.0	6.0	21.0	36.7	27.3			
9. Chat among extremists is possible	F	25	8	54	120	93	3.83	1.15	3
	%	8.3	2.7	18.0	40.0	31.0			
10. Everything new on websites is used on the cellular phones of website members	F	27	27	59	107	79	3.62	1.22	7
	%	9.0	9.0	19.7	35.8	26.4			
	F	300	Weighted mean				3.75		
	%	100	Std. Deviation				0.65		

Table 5. 1 The characteristics of social media which disseminate terrorism

While the lowest average was awarded to the item 6 (They use a common language and private symbols among them, encrypted language?) with mean 3.46 and Std. Deviation 1.22, followed by item 5: *(They are multilingual and can be translated easily?)* with a mean of 3.57 and St. Deviation 1.03. Item 3: *(They provide access to blocked websites regularly (VPN programs?)* comes next with a mean of 3.60 and Std. Deviation 1.15, with *Always* by percentages of 22.3%, 19.7% and 26.7% respectively and *Often* by percentages of 30.7%, 34.0% and 27.3% respectively.

The weighted average of the first scale, was 3.75 with Std. Deviation 0.65, which indicates that the trend of *(the linguistic characteristics of terrorism which disseminate intellectual deviation via social media in Saudi Arabia),* is often, as general trend according to 5-point Likert scale, lie in the interval [3.40-4.19] and corresponds to the pentagonal 4, reflecting their significance; since the intervals of level are as follow (see Table 5.2).

None	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always
[1-1.79]	[1.80-2.59]	[2.60-3.39]	[3.40-4.19]	[4.20-5.00]

Table 5. 2 The characteristics of social media which disseminates terrorism

The results in the first factor show that a large majority of participants 81.7%, considered the free programs and ease in signing up in them and their propagation, to be effective tools in helping terrorist organization with recruitment and propaganda. 80.7% of interviewees stated that audio and video content which was highly emotional in nature and used jihadist rhetoric had quite a power impact in connection to Al-Qaeda. It is obvious that rhetoric is given a great deal of attention in the plans of Al-Qaeda when they create political and strategic aims (for more details see section 5.8.2, 5.8.5 and 6.2.1). Further to this, engaging their audience, in addition to motivating them, instructing them, persuading them and creating contingent issues are all techniques used to gain new members. Interviewees stated that social media networking websites were used for communication by extremist groups (70%) and managed by a professional team (70%). Participants stated that these were vital issues that aided them when it came to how to view law enforcement. Further to this, participants (64%) also stated that most terrorist groups have websites which they also used to communicate, distribute material and plan meetings. Participants (62.2%) also stated that mobile phones were often used as they are cheap and easily accessible. Some interviewees (58.3%) stated that the material used by the groups were technologically innovative and interesting. The use of multilingual, blocked websites and encrypted

language for (Q3, Q4, Q6, respectively) were around 54%. This was quite a low score, and this could be due to the fact that most users do not have any knowledge of encrypted languages and the restrictions faced by extremist groups, as will be illustrated in this study. Due to these restrictions, security must be updated continuously; particularly due to the fact that authorities are well aware that encrypted platforms are the main method used to radicalize and recruit new members and plan events. The results are shown in Table 4.1 above.

5.5.2 Second factor: The role of social media in disseminating terrorism

Table 5.3 below shows the second factor: *What is the role of social media in disseminating intellectual deviation?* This scale includes 11 items from which we find that the highest average was awarded to the item 8: *(They target young people to seduce the values of gallantry in them?)* with mean 4.35 and Std Deviation 0.99. Item 1: (*They contribute to spreading hatred against religious and political symbols (stimulating seditions)?* Comes next with mean 4.19 and Std Deviation 1.01. Then comes item 3: (*They exploit the current events to express them from their own points of views in order to reinforce their views regularly (VPN programs?*), with mean 4.18 and Std Deviation 1.08, with *Always* by percentages of 58.7%, 50.7,% and 50% respectively and *Often* by percentages of 27%, 26.7% and 30.3% respectively.

Questions		None	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always	Mean	Std. Deviation	Rank
1. They contribute to spreading hatred against religious and political symbols (stimulating seditions)	F	9	8	51	80	152	4.19	1.01	2
	%	3.0	2.7	17.0	26.7	50.7			
2. They call for standing against rulers by restoring the Islamic ruling and caliphate	F	16	25	61	87	111	3.84	1.17	9
	%	5.3	8.3	20.3	29.0	37.0			
3. They exploit the current events to express them from their own points of views in order to reinforce their views regularly (VPN programs)	F	16	6	37	91	150	4.18	1.08	3
	%	5.3	2.0	12.3	30.3	50.0			

Questions		None	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always	Mean	Std. Deviation	Rank
4. The websites concentrate on calling to exiling foreign forces out of Islamic lands	F	21	38	74	78	89	3.59	1.23	11
	%	7.0	12.7	24.7	26.0	29.7			
5. They publish educational materials which educate youth the strength such as fighting and bomb-making	F	24	23	63	95	95	3.71	1.21	10
	%	8.0	7.7	21.0	31.7	31.7			
6. They exploit the lack of sharia knowledge in visitors	F	2	17	60	133	87	3.96	0.88	7
	%	.7	5.7	20.0	44.3	29.0			
7. They try to justify their thoughts and attitudes using evidence from Holy Qur'an, prophet traditions and the advisory opinion of extremist symbols	F	11	11	43	88	147	4.16	1.04	4
	%	3.7	3.7	14.3	29.3	49.0			
8. They target young people to seduce the values of gallantry in them	F	12	4	27	81	176	4.35	0.99	1
	%	4.0	1.3	9.0	27.0	58.7			
9. They accuse their opponents of disbelief without any constraints or limitations	F	7	6	59	136	92	4.00	0.89	6
	%	2.3	2.0	19.7	45.3	30.7			
10. They pull of youth into trap the cycle of extremist and suspicious groups	F	16	7	43	100	134	4.10	1.08	5
	%	5.3	2.3	14.3	33.3	44.7			
11. Through them, money can be raised for extremists	F	22	10	53	107	108	3.90	1.15	8
	%	7.3	3.3	17.7	35.7	36.0			
	F	300	Weighted mean				4.00		
	%	100	Std. Deviation				0.75		

Table 5. 3 The role of social media in disseminating terrorism.

While the lowest average was awarded to item 4 (*The websites concentrate on calling to exiling foreign forces out of Islamic lands*?) with mean 3.59 and Std. Deviation 1.23. Item

5: (*They publish educational materials which educate youth the strength such as fighting and bomb-making*?) comes next with mean 3.71 and St. Deviation 1.21. Then comes item 2:(*They call for standing against rulers by restoring the Islamic ruling and caliphate*?) with mean 3.84 and Std. Deviation 1.17, with *Always* by percentages of 29.7%, 13.7% and 37% respectively and *Often* by percentages of 26%, 13.7% and 29% respectively.

The weighted average of the second aspect was 4.00 with Std. Deviation 0.75, which indicates that *(The role of social media in disseminating the intellectual deviation (terrorism)* is the trend as this is a general trend according to the 5- point Likert, since 4.00 lies in the interval [3.40-4.19], which means they often consider a high level as mentioned earlier.

In the results of the second factor, participants were asked if social media could help in disseminating terrorism. 80.3% reported that terrorist organisations exploit what they can to communicate their opinions, so that they can disseminate their opinions frequently using jihadist rhetoric on current issues. It is clear that in questions (Q7, 78.3% - Q10, 78% - Q1, 77.4% - Q9, 76 respectively), participants agree that terrorist groups try to justify their thoughts and attitudes using evidence from the *Holy Qur'an*, prophet traditions and the advisory opinion of extremist symbols; thereby, pulling youth into a trap which is the cycle of extremism. Thus, they contribute to spreading hatred against religious and political symbols and accuse their opponents of disbelief without any constraints or limitations; this is due to the fact that a Muslim's life is governed by Sharia law. Sharia law has been created by teachings from the *Qur'an* (the Muslim holy book), the *Hadith* (sayings and life of the prophet Muhammad) and fatwas (the rulings of Islamic teachers). Furthermore, 73.3% stated that the dearth of Sharia information is probably the most powerful reason why people can be manipulated, as they do not really know what the divine and authentic religious truth is. Besides this, 71.7% reported social media to be an effective fundraising tool for extremist groups, such as ISIS has considerable access to funds whenever it needs money. 66% of participants stated that social media enhances social anarchy through the restoration of Islamic laws and caliphate, such as that promoted, for instance, in the enormous ISIS controlled region of land from northern Syria to Iraq. 58.7% indicate that they target young people to seduce them and impart the values of gallantry to them; indicating that they must take control of their countries due to the suffering that Muslims experienced because of harsh UN sanctions. 63.4% reported that extremist groups publish materials which train youths on platforms, such as *YouTube*. On *YouTube*, users are able

to use certain features so that they can communicate with one another and send private videos; users are able to find one another and connect by means of these videos. The websites concentrate on calling to exile foreign forces out of Islamic lands. 55.7% of participants stated that they Believed that terrorist groups exploited these types of websites to recruit young members, collect money and spread rhetoric concerning the exiling of foreign forces from Islamic lands. Information concerning this is shown in Table 4.3 above.

5.5.3 Third factor: The role of official and community organizations countering terrorism.

In this survey, as seen in Table 5.4, below, participants were asked about *What is the role and the current reality of official and community organizations countering terrorism thoughts disseminated on the social networking sites,* through 9 items. The highest average was awarded to item 9: (*The concerned entities in the Ministry of Interior can help those who returned back and left the extremist thought to be included in society*?) with mean 4.40 and Std Deviation 0.90. Item 1:*(Sharia organizations can work on the moderation of Islam and the sobriety of its principles in society*?) *comes next* with a mean of 4.18 and Std Deviation 1.02. Then comes item 7: (*The entities concerned with monitor the websites can block the extremist websites and intensify the control over them and capture what's going on them periodically*?) with mean 3.99 and Std Deviation 1.03, with *Always* by percentages of 60.3%, 50.3% and 38.7% respectively and *Often* by percentages of 26.3%, 26.3% and 32.7% respectively.

Questions		None	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always	Mean	Std. Deviation	Rank
1. Sharia organizations can work on the moderation of Islam and the sobriety of its principles in society	F	8	11	51	79	151	4.18	1.02	2
	%	2.7	3.7	17.0	26.3	50.3			
2. Sharia organizations spread the awareness in speeches in mosques regarding the dangers of extremist websites	F	6	19	52	108	115	3.97	1.02	4
	%	2.0	6.4	17.3	36.0	38.3			

Questions		None	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always	Mean	Std. Deviation	Rank
3. Sharia organizations can show the rights of non-Muslims in society	F	8	41	32	113	106	3.62	1.09	7
	%	2.7	13.7	10.6	37.7	35.3			
4. Social organizations can spread the culture of tolerance, dialogue and accepting the opinions of others	F	6	34	41	107	112	3.77	1.07	5
	%	2.0	11.3	13.7	35.7	37.3			
5. Social organizations can prepare sports clubs to contribute to protecting youth from the intellectual deviation through planned programs	F	25	80	81	54	60	3.15	1.25	9
	%	8.3	26.7	27.0	18.0	20.0			
6. Social organizations can work on raising the awareness of family regarding their role in family control	F	25	80	81	54	60	3.33	1.17	8
	%	8.3	26.7	27.0	18.0	20.0			
7. The entities concerned with monitor the websites can block the extremist websites and intensify the control over them and capture what's going on them periodically	F	8	17	61	98	116	3.99	1.03	3
	%	2.6	5.7	20.3	32.7	38.7			
8. The concerned entities in the Ministry of Interior can arrest those who contribute to spreading the extremist thoughts on websites and refer the convicts to the judiciary	F	2	35	73	123	67	3.73	0.96	6
	%	1	11.7	24.3	41.0	22.3			
9. The concerned entities in the Ministry of Interior can help those who returned back and left the extremist thought to be included in society	F	4	12	24	79	181	4.4	0.90	1
	%	1.7	4.0	8.0	26.3	60.3			
	F	300	Weighted mean					3.79	
	%	100	Std. Deviation					0.75	

Table 5. 4 The role of official and community organizations countering terrorism.

While the lowest average was awarded to the item 5 (*Social organizations can prepare sports clubs to contribute to protecting youth from the intellectual deviation through planned programs*?), with mean 3.15 and Std. Deviation 1.25. Item 6: (*Social organizations can work on raising the awareness of family regarding their role in family control*?) comes next with mean 3.33 and St. Deviation 1.17. Then comes item 3: (*Sharia organizations can show the rights of non-Muslims in society*?) with mean 3.62 and Std. Deviation 1.09. with *Always* by percentages 20%, 20% and 38.3% respectively and *Often* by percentages of 18%, 18% and 31% respectively.

The weighted average of the third aspect was 3.79 with Std. Deviation 0.75, which indicates that the trend of the role and current reality of (Sharia, social and security) organizations in countering the extremist thoughts seem to have often disseminated on the social networking sites, as general, as shown by 9 items, 3.79 which lies in the interval [3.40-4.19]. So, the average of the role and current reality of (Sharia, social and security) organizations in countering the extremist thoughts disseminated on the social networking sites 3.79, and corresponds to the pentagonal 4, which means they 'often' consider it a high level.

Data from the survey shows that a large majority of participants 88.6% reported that the Ministry of Interior can help those who have returned back and left the extremist group, through the establishment of many awareness centres; such as the Mohammed bin Naif counselling and care centre, intellectual security, etc. All of these establishments attend to those suffering with extremist ideas using state-of-the-art scientific methods. This is due to the fact that Saudi Arabia is obligated to stop and defend their people against terrorism; further to this, the country must also protect its people and services, and protect human rights and freedoms. It is clear that in some questions (Q1, 76.6% - Q2, 76.3% - Q3, 73% - Q4, 73% respectively), participants agreed on the important role of religious organizations (Sharia) to advise society against the dangers of terrorism and intellectual deviation. This is done through the moderation of Islam and the sobriety of its principles in society, spreading of awareness in speeches in mosques, showing the rights of non-Muslims in society and the culture of tolerance, dialogue and accepting the opinions of others. 71.4% stated that the Saudi government has the responsibility to alert people about threats using social media and that they should take control over social media and make reports about what is being communicated in these channels. 63.3% reported that arrests should be made on those who contribute to spreading extremist thoughts on websites.

They also stated that convicts should be referred to the judiciary and that the government should monitor potential terrorists. 38% stated that more should be done to protect families and communicate to them concerning potential threats. The results are shown in Table 4.4 above.

5.5.4 Fourth factor: The proposed future methods and means to counter terrorism

Participants reported an overall high level of agreement to implement appropriate ways to address such ideas, and find future methods and means which are suitable to counter such websites and their published extremist thoughts on social media. Table 4.5 below, explains the participants' responses. In the survey, the vast majority of responses were between 69.3% and 96.7%. The weighted average was 4.56 with Std. Deviation 0.54. This shows that those proposed future methods show that social media terrorism should be strongly tackled (*Strongly agree*). Thus, the average concerning the methods and means that can be used in the future to counter this material online is 4.56, which can be confirmed as a very high level. Results are shown in Table 5.5:

Questions		Strongly disagree	Disagree	Not sure	Agree	Strongly agree	Mean	Std. Deviation	Rank
1. Developing an agreed-upon Arab strategy to combat the electronic terrorism	F	2	5	14	65	214	4.61	0.72	5
	%	.7	1.7	4.7	21.7	71.2			
2. Establishing Arab and international databases including the terroristic websites to exchange the security and research experiences	F	0	4	19	49	228	4.67	0.66	3
	%	0	1.3	6.3	16.3	76.0			
3. Developing strategic plans to exploit the energies of youth to keep them away from extremism	F	3	0	7	47	243	4.76	0.59	1
	%	1.0	0	2.3	15.7	81.0			
4. Spreading the word about the websites which contribute to the prevalence of extremist thoughts in order to be aware of	F	21	31	40	55	153	3.96	1.30	7
	%	7.0	10.3	13.3	18.3	51.0			
5. Distributing awards and encouraging the more active Islamic websites in encountering the extremist websites	F	3	2	12	49	234	4.70	0.67	2
	%	1.0	.7	4.0	16.3	78.0			

6. Establishing a specializing oversight board to monitor the websites and block those which promote the wrong and extremist thoughts	F	0	6	20	45	229	4.67	0.69	4
	%	0	2.0	5.7	16.0	76.3			
7. Developing programs for the electronic advise by scholars of sharia, psychologists, and sociologists	F	2	5	14	71	208	4.59	0.72	6
	%	.7	1.7	4.7	23.7	69.3			
	F	300	Weighted mean					4.56	
	%	100	Std. Deviation					0.54	

Table 5. 5 The proposed future methods and means to counter terrorism

To sum up, most Saudi participants stated that they strongly agree that an Arab strategy should be devised to combat terrorism online, establish Arab and international databases and create an expert panel of members to devise strategies on how to combat terrorism online.

5.6 Comparison analysis

This section of the analysis is important in examining descriptive findings in a detailed method. Three variables have been tested against factors to reveal any differences which exist between the various groups. The variables are Internet usage according to age, gender and frequency of use.

To verify the differences between the two groups, Independent samples T Test, Analysis of variance (*ANOVA*) and Multiple Comparisons (LSD), were run using *SPSS* to determine the difference between them. This test was utilised due to the fact that the information is based on ranks (Likert scale); furthermore, the data employed in this study is normally distributed (parametric). Based on this, the researcher aims to run comparisons analysis to further explore the present findings in terms of categorical data, such as gender and age regarding usage of social media. Therefore, two questions were constructed to explore this further, these are listed below.

Are there any statistically significant differences between participants in Saudi Arabia at the level of significance (0.05) regarding their level of use of internet and social media applications in terms of the gender variable?

H0: There are no differences in their use of internet and social media due to the gender variable.

Are there any statistically significant differences between participants in Saudi Arabia at the level of significance (0.05) regarding their level of use of internet and social media applications in terms of the age variable?

H0: There are differences in their level of use of internet and social media due to the age variable.

Tables (4.6) and (4.7) below summarise the 'age' and 'gender' items into two groups, according to internet use and social media applications among participants in Saudi Arabia.

5.6.1 Internet and social media usage according to gender

Table 5.6 below provides a paired t-test which was conducted to compare the differences between male and female participants in Saudi Arabia regarding their level of internet use and social media applications. The survey results summarised in Table 5.6, below, revealed that there is no difference between both genders in use of the internet and social media, whereas the P-value associated with the t-test is higher than $(0.05 = \alpha)$, reflecting that both male and female participants consider the aspects to be at the same degree.

Scales	t-test for Equality of Means Group Statistics						
	gender	Mean	Std. Deviation	t	df	P-Value	Result
Scale 1	M	3.7375	.66698	-.814	298	.417	No difference
	F	3.8133	.55157				
Scale 2	M	4.0265	.72010	1.327	298	.185	No difference
	F	3.8821	.87709				
Scale 3	. M	3.8148	.73546	987	298	.325	No difference
	F	3.7074	.82516				
Scale 4	M	4.5440	.54081	-1.259	298	.209	No difference
	F	4.6429	.55640				

Table 5. 6 Independent Samples T Test

5.6.2 Internet and social media usage according to age

To make a comparison between participants in this survey according to the age variable in internet and social media use, an *ANOVA* test was used to assess the equality of variances,

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the P-value was calculated using the Anova test to find that this is less than $0.05 = \alpha$, this means that the mean of the availability varies according to the age variable; for more details see Table 5.7, below.

Age	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	F	P-Value	Result
Less than 29 years	35	2.69	.900			
30- 39 years	109	2.50	.929			
40- 49 years	111	2.24	.811	5.084	.002	There is difference
50 and more	45	2.04	.878			
Total	300	2.36	.894			

Table 5. 7 Analysis of variance (ANOVA)

In order to identify the age groups that have differences of statistical significance, we will perform multiple comparisons showing the least significant difference (LSD) levels. The results are in the following table 4.8.

5.6.3 Least Significant Difference (LSD)

It is noted from Table 5.8 below that there are statistical significance differences in the mean of internet and social media applications use in Saudi Arabia according to the age *group Less than 29 years* and *50 and more* at $0.10 = \alpha$, as the P-value was less than $\alpha = 0.10$. The difference was in favour of the age group *Less than 39 years*, for more details, see section 5.4.1, Figure 1.10 earlier in this chapter.

Dependent Variable	Age		P-Value
	Less than 29 years	30- 39 years	0.264
		40- 49 years	.010*
Number of hours of using Social Media		50 and more	.001*
	30- 39 years	40- 49 years	.034*
		50 and more	.004*
	40- 49 years	50 and more	.200

Table 5. 8 Multiple Comparisons (LSD) Note: * The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level

5.7 Summary of Quantitative Results

The results obtained from the quantitative survey conducted in this research study substantiate the belief that the internet, and specifically social networking sites, are used in the spread of terrorism, where 97% of participants confirmed this to be true in Saudi Arabia. Most of the participants in this study were male 80%, while the remainder were female (20%). This gender imbalance could be attributed to the probably of males being more liable to take part in surveys than women, which could also be grounded to the sensitive nature of the material being discussed. All of the participants who took part in the study were of Saudi Arabian nationality (100%). The majority of the participants confirmed that they visit two or more social media websites. The participants were aged between 18 and over 60 years of age. Approximately 37% of the participants were in excess of 50 years of age; however, all of the participants from this age demographic stated that they used social media up to two hours a day, or less. 63% of the participants ranged between the ages of 18-39 years, and this age demographic stated that they use social media daily for two hours or more. The most popular social media application used by the participants was *WhatsApp* 89.33%, while the second most popular was by *Twitter* 84%, thirdly was *YouTube* 64%, and *Snapchat* was ranked in fourth place (62.66%). These are, therefore, the four most popularly used social media applications in Saudi Arabia. Other social media websites which are popularly used by Saudi nationals are *Instagram* 41.66% and *Facebook* 25%, in addition to *Skype*, *IMo* and *Telegram.*

The expert team who conducted the survey was composed of 50 individuals and consisted of lecturers and professors who specialise in sociology; in addition to community experts who are experts in crime and delinquency from the Naif Arab University for Security Sciences. The team also consisted of counter terrorism investigators from the Saudi prosecution unit. All of the participants had at least 20 years of work experience; as such, they were all in a very good position to offer technical advice and feedback. 250 participants emanated from the general public.

It is evident from the survey that there were no differences statistically between males and females in relation to their utilisation of social media. Differences were evident, however, in relation to age variable; this was necessary so that a more detailed analysis could be conducted. Furthermore, both males and females have ease of access to the internet in Saudi Arabia. The following section presents data relating to the interviews.

5.8 Interview Data

This part presents an analysis of the qualitative data that was collected from investigators and one of the families whose members were involved in terrorism about identifying some reasons why some young people have joined terrorist groups in Saudi Arabia. This material offers significant findings into the usage patterns of these individuals, and their competent ability in using the Internet and social media, and how this led to their involvement with terrorist groups and changing their ideas. In addition, data was tabulated by *NVivo*, one of the most common programs for analysis of text-based data. According to Auld et al., 2007, *NVivo* (see Figure 5.11) is able to enhance the qualitative research process. The assessment of the recorded interviews offers a deeper comprehension of our research project. This qualitative data allows for an exploration of the opinions held by one of the families affected by the terrorist groups and experiences of official investigators in the Saudi Counter Terrorism Unit (CTU). In the section which follows, a variety of topics are presented in order to explore the opinions of those interviewed and their attitudes toward the positive and negative sides of social media. The questions were formulated with great sensitivity, so as not to hurt or offend any of the family members. These questions are included in Appendices B. The interviews were transcribed into a textual format and were also coded to enable ease of analysis. Mainly, the data was composed of material which was thematic in nature and could be easily coded. (Andersen, 2007;Creswell, 2009). Thematic content analysis states that detailed qualitative data should be reported (Anderson, 2007); and this approach was adopted in our current study. Data descriptions contained codes or short phrases which reflected the main themes of the selected texts (Saldana, 2009). In this study, the material was coded by the researcher and this process made a positive impact on the data which was collected, and aided in fulfilling the goals and objectives of our own research.

5.9 Factors affecting intellectual delinquency (recruitment and radicalization) by social media in Saudi Arabia

Through an interview with the participants and asking them about the main problems that young people currently face with social media in influencing their ideas regarding intellectual deviation (terrorism), they agreed that the most important of these problems is the practice of persuasion through social media over a long period of time. First of all, the media justifies their thoughts and attitudes using evidence from the *Holy Qur'an*, prophet traditions through their advisory opinion of extremist symbols, trying to lure youth into the circles of extremist, suspicious groups by accusing their opponents of disbelief without any constraints or limitations. However, these were personal interpretations made by any group who misinterprets certain verses to justify a wrongdoing, while the Holy Qur'an and the Prophet promote peace and understanding among all people of all types and colours, and never encourage hatred and enmity. They then aim to seduce the values of gallantry in them and this does not come overnight, as some believe, but needs a long time to brainwash their minds. They also call for standing against rulers by restoring the Islamic ruling and Caliphate, which lead to destabilizing security in any country and in the world. There is also no doubt that the lack of cultural knowledge, especially in sharia for visitors increases the chances of persuading, exploiting them and thus recruiting them. The participants' responses to this topic were as follows:

5.9.1 Social Media Persuasion

The investigators and one of the families affected by the terrorist groups were asked about the characteristics of social media that deploy intellectual deviation and terrorism:

> *Investigator 1: Reported that the problems faced by young people are diverse. The most important of which is the involvement of terrorist groups such as ISIS and others to recruit young people (through the practice of persuasion). This is carried out by a specialized team to convince Muslim youth everywhere by understanding their needs and demonstrate a two-way communication process. Then, visitors are allowed to comment on the published materials and to allocate specific areas for their participation in order to know the attitudes of young people and their needs and then influence them to get recruited, benefiting from their lack of religious knowledge. Later, their relatives are recruited (Investigator 1/ 10- 03- - 2019).*

> *Investigator 2: He reported that leaving young people free to use the Internet for long periods of time, especially young people without family control, which makes them an easy target for terrorist groups. They brainwash young people by convincing them of their beliefs and ideas (Investigator 2/ 10- 03- - 2019).*

From what has been discussed above, we can see that the most important significant problem faced by young people in relation to changing their ideas is social media. This issue is particularly relevant in relation to the information technology revolution and the outbreak of the Arab revolutions and their subsequent developments. These movements have been negatively exploited by terrorist groups to influence the ideas of young people and recruit them into terrorism. This phenomenon is also visible in other countries around the world, where social media has become one of the most important tools used by terrorists to disseminate their ideas , beliefs and plans. Often times, the people targeted by these groups do not have the theological knowledge to be able to refute and argue with their false dogma. Terrorist groups usually begin by asking targets general questions about the situation, in addition to enquiring about their personal problems and social conditions until they attract the young recruit and secure their support.

> *Investigator comment 1 highlights another problem of the use of social media in the practice of forced persuasion through the process of re-nurturing in an environment of influence based on psychological principles governing human behaviour starting with luring and ending with suicide. Persuading young*

people is one of the most important reasons to leave them for long periods in

the use of the Internet without family censorship (Investigator 1/ 10- 03- 2019).

This highlights another problem for us. Unity begins their discussion in several matters, whether personal, pertaining to material income, religious or social, related to unemployment or religious persecution and others, taking advantage of the weakness of their religious background in addition to their social isolation, which helps prepare them to accept the ideas of the group without hesitation.

The previous question about social media that deploy intellectual deviation and terrorism was also asked to one of the families affected by the terrorist groups (FOT) in particular with a brother of four terrorists who were involved and joined the terrorist groups in both Iraq and Syria. The answer to this question is as follows:

> *FOT: There is no doubt that during the recent period and the information revolution has become a major impact in all fields, whether positive or negative, especially for young people. If there is no family and government censorship on the Internet, the methods of persuasion and seduction are various. Unfortunately, the inclusion of young people starts with asking new recruits to distribute some publications, attend some religious lectures and go out with them at the end of the week for the nomination of new members. Brothers and relatives are victims due to the confidence they have in responsible for recruitment. The tasks become bigger and bigger until things become irreversible and more complicated. Sheltering members of the organization provides a cover up for them and helps them to receive remittances and delivery, facilitating the involvement in criminal schemes (FOT / 15- 03-2019).*

Conclusion: From the previous comments, it is clear that all interviewees agree on the importance of family control in monitoring children to prevent the risks of social media. Therefore, the state should intensify family awareness concerning the negative dangers of the Internet both on the individual and on society as a whole. As such, it is necessary for actions to be taken to immunize young people and protect them from the influence of terrorist groups.

5.9.2 Jihadist rhetoric

The investigators and one of the families affected by the terrorist groups (FOT) were asked about jihadist rhetoric by social media and its impact on recruitment and financial support.

> Investigator 1: *Results reported that jihadist rhetoric certainly has a great influence, whether they are sympathetic or not, its effect on sympathizer is effective by recruiting or providing material support; or even through publicity to them by the internet. Social media is used by terrorists to try to convince their friends and relatives of their cause that are wronged and must be supported because they defend religion. As for ordinary individuals, the subject of jihadist speech is people's talk for a period of time. We believe that terrorist groups are trying to exploit events, whether political, social and economic to spread their ideas through the speeches. Terrorists today utilise social media to disseminate jihadist rhetoric and imagery, and they also use it to engage in encrypted communication. This continues to increase rapidly (Investigator 1/ 10- 03- - 2019).*

> **Investigator 2** *states that there is also expressed concern about jihadist rhetoric and there is a strong correlation among rhetoric and the spread of terrorism. The downside of globalization and social media is that they are aiding in the spread of global terrorism. Of course, there are other issues which also contribute, such as poverty, political, economic and social issues which aid in the spread of terrorism. These issues are exploited by terrorists online to justify their actions either before or after an attack (Investigator 2/ 10- 03- 2019).*

> FOT: One family effected by terrorism that consulted in this research study stated that in their experience*, social media and the internet were the main tools used to spread terrorism. Jihadist rhetoric occurs in many different ways, such as speeches images and videos; YouTube is often used for these. These materials are exploited to persuade young people to join them or donate to their cause (FOT/15- 03- 2019).*

5.9.3 Influencing relatives and friends

Through the previous question, it becomes clear to me through Investigator 1 and one of the families affected by the terrorist groups (FOT). The answer is that relatives and friends

are often targets of terrorist groups to the nomination of new members. The question directed to the investigator was: "what is your comment on that?

> ***Investigator 2:*** *Yes, I agree with that a hundred percent for several important reasons, the first of which is the trust factor, as it has been proven and definitive evidence through investigations. Most of those joined to terrorist groups were able to influence their relatives and friends, especially those who agree with them and have the same thoughts. Some of them joined or support them for financial reasons. (Investigator 1,2. Fot - 10- 03- 2019).*

5.9.4 Electronic Games and Open Sites

When asked about the most important characteristics of social networking that help in spreading deviant ideas and terrorism, the respondents agreed that open sites away from censorship have substantial role in spreading anti-social deviant ideas both locally and internationally, and this is consistent with what was mentioned in the previous literature chapter.

> ***Investigator 1:*** *"One of the characteristics of social networking is that it can disseminate deviant ideas easily at any time and from any location through free sites and the production of electronic games. Such games include combats and make the heroes in the form of leaders of ISIS so that young people get used to their forms in the virtual world without revealing the personality of the user. They also use new programs with distinctive colors that attract attention and usually target young people or people resentful to the state and have problems with them or unemployed and sometimes mental patients. The material cost is low, which reduces the cost of recruiting members. Moreover, the characteristics of creating communities to communicate electronically and speak and express opinion away from any censorship" (Investigator 1/ 10- 03 - 2019).*

> ***Investigator 2:*** *"Undoubtedly, open websites are one of the most important features and characteristics of social media that are used by deviant groups to promote intellectual deviation and terrorism because they do not cost them large sums. At the same time, they spread all over the world which enables them to establish wide relationships, use language of games to win the support of individuals and recruit new members by professional team, particularly young*

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people whether through discussions or face-to-face conversation. In this way, they overcome the geographical areas and claim the application of Islam and ideals and preserve the customs and traditions and make it a slogan to gain sympathy and support of the general public. They claim that it is right, and that who violates its approach is stray based on the verses of the Koran and the Sunnah, which they interpreted according to their scholars and leaders. Based on their intellectual orientations, they confirm the validity of their approach and consider anyone who violates them as not Muslim and do not mind killing him, even if one they were family members", and this is what was mentioned in chapter III. (Investigator 2/ 10- 03- 2019).

FOT: " One of its most important characteristics is that it tries to reach the general public, especially young people through simple and easy to access programs, often through electronic games programs or through YouTube videos of members of the professional Internet to try to win the sympathy of young people and support their ideas and claim that they are right. Muslims and their support, especially the vulnerable and robbed of their rights and the use of experts in all fields and there is a serious issue is that they publish the way of making explosives through YouTube and others to destabilize security and play the minds of young people who cannot travel to them. The material is always very emotional and allows viewers to comment on the published materials disseminated by the group. This is a forum, thereby, for young people to discuss their ideas with one another" (FOT / 15-03-2019).

Conclusion: From the previous comments, we can see that the most important characteristics of social networking that spread the intellectual deviation by terrorist groups, specifically AlQeada. ISIS are open sites without censorship that allows direct face-to-face communication or indirectly through talks. We see that these extremist groups have increased their crime in targeting young people through the production of electronic games to attract their attention and participate in playing and interacting with them to know their needs and reactions and then recruiting them. The implementation of their stations, either directly or indirectly through the collection of material donations and receiving bank remittances and recruiting new people and often targeting young people who suffer frustration, isolation and marginalization, whether real or imaginary, where they find in the organization a means to help them retaliation and destabilization of security in their

countries, and they are spreading educational videos for the manufacture of explosives and benefit a large number of followers and copies before they are reported and reviewed by those on the site to remove them.

5.9.5 Using Languages in Recruitment by Social Media

The fourth question in the interview with the participants was about the encrypted language used between extremist groups on social media. Their responses to this topic were as follows:

> ***Investigator No. 1:*** *Yes, there are special and encrypted languages among extremist groups, but they are not known,* while Investigator No. 2 confirmed this, *but said at the same time, even if these encrypted languages and symbols are known, no one can provide them for security reasons related to the security of the state and society.* In addition, investigator No. 1 added that *languages of all kinds have an active role in recruiting young people especially by relatives and friends through extremist groups, whether it is the language of direct speech or through direct speech such as rhetoric (Investigator 1/ 23- 03- 2019).*

> ***Investigator No.2****: Certainly, the more foreign languages vary among terrorist groups, the greater the chances of persuading and recruiting them from different regions of the world. It is one of the effective tools on which the organization relies so heavily. In persuasion either write or talk, whether direct or indirect multimedia and moving emotions and provoked through the production of films in YouTube, Twitter, Instagram, Snapchat and other social media. Such sources show the killing of children and women, and rape and displacement of rather foreign forces in Iraq, Syria, and Afghanistan, and provoke their passion for their victory. They remind them of what awaits the martyr in paradise does not occur to the mind of human beings as mentioned in the Koran and this is consistent with what was mentioned earlier in Chapter II, (Investigator 2/ 23- 03-2019).*

> ***FOT*** *: According to what I read about them that there is a language of their own, and of course I do not know because it is not known outside their surroundings, and narrowly in terms of foreign languages they certainly have several languages and this is known to all because they have fighters from several countries and certainly they benefit from them for the purpose of*

translation and publishing sermons and trying to recruit In many languages, we all saw this on many TV channels. I personally think that they use magic or hypnosis, or how they affect educated people and have families and children supposed to be afraid of them, especially since our religion forbade jihad for those who have two older parents. I really don't know how these terrorist groups how to convince these young people I believe that they are using personal magic because it is impossible to leave a person and his children for jihad and religion forbade it (FOT/ 15- 03-2019).

Conclusion: Here we can see that all participants agree that terrorist groups have special and common languages through social media. At the same time these languages are unknown and limited to certain members of the organization such as leaders, which makes it a coded means of communication. Moreover, investigators may not want to disclose what they fully know. This policy of secrecy is enacted in order to protect the security of the state. Participants also reported that at the same time there are other languages may be more important because they are addressed to the public. For example, advertising on the Internet or the use of the language of speech, whether directly or indirectly through multi-modal videos in *YouTube*, *Twitter*, *WhatsApp*, *Facebook*, *Instagram*, *Snapchat*,, emails or mobiles or other all of these types of effective languages used. This is an interactive network that allows its users to communicate at anytime and anywhere in the world. This communication can occur in record time and across any borders; as such, any event in any region of the world can have a direct impact in other regions. Participants commented on this as following:

Investigator No. 1 Extremist groups have coding languages, and they use foreign fighters to spread their propaganda on Facebook and Twitter in foreign languages. Avoid new individuals from their countries through internal networks and then send them to organize and intensify advertising campaigns everywhere in various countries where terrorist organizations have relied on media discourse since its inception through the rise of jihadi media platforms. The first appearance of jihadist rhetoric on several occasions by Osama bin Ladin especially after 9/11, to incite and recruitment also after the killing of Abu Musab al-Zarqawi in 2006 and the emergence of Awad al-Badri, known as al-Baghdadi in 2010, where ISIS adopted a new policy that differs from al-Qaeda and other militias. And the speed of delivery of messages and the quality

of media rhetoric using modern technology to reach potential recruits in their homes and mobile devices and the practice of persuasion, unlike previous terrorist organizations that did not have this technique (Investigator 1/ 23- 03-2019).

Investigator No. 2 also agreed with Investigator No. 1 *Foreign languages help extremist groups in recruiting new foreign fighters from different countries, and this expands their spread that they are not confined to Arab countries only, which increases their power to others, especially in the media to attract more fighters. This is known as a psychological war in which media. There is an exploitation of all means of modern technology to intensify the presence through social media through the so-called Saraya incitement to pump promotional propaganda. This also relied on the review and promotion of their delusional victory so that the spirit of enthusiasm is pumped among the fighters to continue with the influenced by the rhetoric used (Investigator 2/ 23-03-2019).*

The previous question was also asked to one of the families affected by the terrorist groups in particular with a brother of four terrorists who were involved and joined the terrorist groups in both Iraq and Syria.

FOT: *Emphasize that extremist groups use many languages to increase their proliferation and the presence of foreign fighters and must take advantage of their abilities. These groups are criminal groups and have organized strategic planning to increase their prevalence. Jihadist language can arise in many different forms. For example, speeches, pictures and videos via YouTube. These forms of media are utilised in order to encourage young people to become members of a terrorist organization or else give them money (FOT/ 15- 03-2019).*

Conclusion: Through the previous comments, all those interviewed agree that terrorist groups have coded languages, but they are not known to all, but they use more dangerous languages such as rhetoric through multimedia platforms. They use social media and use it in advertising and marketing to promote their ideas and beliefs.

5.9.6 Popular Social Media in KSA

As discussed in detail in section 5.4.1, Figure 4.9, the results showed that 97% of the sample study said the most popular Social Media in KSA which contribute to the prevalence of extremist thoughts that are open and easy to access sites are *Twitter, YouTube* and *WhatsApp*. This means that the majority of participants agree on the importance of the same tools in the interview question. Their responses were as follows:

> *Investigators 1 and 2* interviewed think that the most popular Social Media in KSA that they are easily accessible without registration and most of them were YouTube, WhatsApp and Twitter, It is clear that terrorist groups use Twitter to gain new members and they do this all over the world, because they are not subject to government censorship, but recently, Facebook, Microsoft, Twitter and YouTube are announcing the formation of the Global Internet Forum to Counter Terrorism and cooperating with governments which will help us continue to make our hosted consumer services hostile to terrorists and violent extremists and blocked their sites continuously, while WhatsApp uses a technology called end-to-end encryption to encode text messages. WhatsApp uses a technology called end-to-end encryption for text messages, often used to communication through family and friends' networks to recruit new members, it is a very serious service that this encryption is intended to protect messages from being intercepted by hackers and cybercriminals. If a text is intercepted, it cannot be read without the decryption key – and only the authorised sender has that key (Investigator 1& 2 / 28- 03- 2019).*

> *Investigator 1 " YouTube is one of the most dangerous websites when it comes to terrorism. Anyone can view the videos and no registration is necessary, terrorist groups exploit video and audio sharing in order to disseminate propaganda and gain new recruits".* Moreover, *investigator 2* states that*" terrorists will use every method available to them and social media is one of the most useful tools they have right now, particularly YouTube because of the ease in spreading videos and images (Investigator 1& 2 / 05- 04- 2019).*

> *FOT interviewed, believes that the Internet has become a central part of life among people all over the world and this has implications for the radicalization and has helped terrorist groups to market themselves significantly, influence*

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and exploit young people's minds. Twitter is one of the most important tools because it spreads quickly anywhere of course there are dimensionality of the data, social, temporal and content factors of the tweet were used as it affects feelings, while we see YouTube is considered one of the open sites and has been used to spread propaganda for terrorist groups and teach young people to manufacture explosive and others. However, we can't forget WhatsApp and its danger, especially for relatives and friends because they can directly reach to targeted persons easily (FOT/ 15- 03- 2019).

Conclusion: from the above we can see the most popular Social Media in KSA which contribute to the prevalence of extremist thoughts are *Twitter, YouTube* and *WhatsApp.*The interviewees recommended that the government should tighten censorship on these sites. Through increased counter messaging activities and radicalization awareness on networks, this may protect the youth from falling into the traps of terrorist groups and their network of extremists.

5.9.7 The role of organizations

The participants were asked about the role of social and security organizations in combating extremist ideas through social media.

***Investigator 1:** There is no doubt that the role of social and security organizations is significant and very important in any society to raise awareness and maintain its security and stability from the outlaws, society and local and international norms and also from dangerous ideologies that could corrupt the youth. So, the solution is to monitor the Internet and the content displayed, block websites that promote terrorism and extremist ideas, prosecute and hold accountable those who promote them and educate the society about their dangers (Investigator 1/ 28- 03- 2019).*

***Investigator 2:** The role of social organizations is to enlighten and alert about the danger of these deviant ideas, although an important role, but still below the required level and needs to intensify and diversify the approach to address these deviant ideas through social media Specialized in intellectual security. The security and religious organizations play an effective role in monitor those deviant ideas that are promoted by legitimate and mental evidence in a manner*

that keeps pace with the times, whether through Sushil media or through sermons in mosques or the press and television (Investigator 2/ 28- 03- 2019).

Investigator 2 *also stated that the Ministry of Interior and General Intelligence, the Ministry of Islamic Affairs and the General Presidency for Youth Welfare are collaborating so that plans can be put in place to protect young people from being drawn into terrorism by creating sports clubs and they are also trying to end the unemployment problem in the country (Investigator 2/ 28- 03- 2019).*

FOT: Previously, its role was very weak and almost non-existent, perhaps because terrorism and deviant ideas were not widespread before the emergence of social media such a large form. As such, young people should be drawn away from this by recreational facilities in both the urban and rural areas It is also necessary to revise the old school curricula in line with the new age (FOT/ 15- 03- 2019).

Conclusion: From the comments of the two investigators, it is clear that the general subject of harnessing security is pegged onto the collaborations of the institutions and individuals and security sector. Social media is noted to be the most critical source of security breaches and terrorism facilitation.

5.9.8 Methods of prevention

When asked about the proposed methods to counter extremist ideas through social media, their responses were as follows:

Investigator 1: Spreading continuous awareness on social media by the security and judicial authorities and the Public Prosecution and educating people about its dangers, spreading penalties and using the account of influencers to spread awareness in the community about the dangers of terrorist sites and their dangers to society. On how to review the accounts that were followed by their children after leaving these sites as a security precaution and put these courses on the Internet so as to benefit the people who were unable to attend, assist scientific research in this area and benefit from the results Also we need to talk about the problem frankly, without fumbling it is a shame or social stigma in order to put our hand on the problem and its causes and reach an appropriate solution (Investigator 1/ 28- 03- 2019).

Investigator 2: The first step is that the family should monitor the children in the use of the Internet, especially electronic games that have fighting and violence (Investigator 2/ 28- 03- 2019).

2 - Activating the role of senior scientists in the social media and influential people to address such extremist ideas

3. Forming a joint committee of the Ministry of Interior and General Intelligence, the Ministry of Islamic Affairs and the General Presidency for Youth Welfare and drawing up strategic plans to protect young people from extremism through the establishment of sports clubs to fill leisure time and solve the problem of unemployment.

4. Spread sanctions for anyone who sympathizes with or aids extremist groups

5 - Fighting extremist thought in the same way used, which is the emotional and religious discourse that affects young people so that there are positive speeches influential in the youth and the general public by displaying images of bombings and the killing of innocents by terrorist groups

6 - The establishment of educational sessions for families how to deal with children and the way to monitor the websites frequented by their children

7. Conducting television interviews with youth who joined extremist groups and explaining the reasons for their joining and the reasons for their return.

8 - Track sites that publish perverted ideas and block them immediately

FOT: I am not a specialist in this field, but I will speak from the experience and sorrow of my brothers who joined these terrorist groups, there is no doubt that the role of the family is very important and I will not tell you unemployment is the only reason, why my brothers who joined these terrorist groups are all educated and have high degrees and work in teaching and have families and children and my personal belief behind this lies in several educational curricula It is time to review it as well as preachers who encourage our sons to jihad and martyrdom They incite murder and atonement. They should be eliminated immediately before our children. Islamic scholars also have a role to play in the battle against terrorism (FOT/ 15- 03- 2019). This participant stated that these scholars should also go online and disseminate correct Islamic

discourse which promotes moderation and toleration; thereby, combating terrorism

Conclusion: In facing the extremist ideas, it is evident that the general concept revolving about the responses is the educative drive and campaigns to the youths and general population. Family is the smallest unit which the campaigns should start with. After which, teachers and all the senior people to the youths in the society can take charge of the activities revolving around them. There is need for the society to speak up frankly against the extremist groups since that is the only way they can be tackled.

5.10 Summary of Qualitative Results

The interview comments from both experts and one of the families whose members were involved in terrorism as they have been described reflected a high level of access to, and availability of, digital technologies and social media in Saudi society. All interviewed experts and FOT showed that the significance of digital technology and different social media platforms in daily life and for business purposes.

There has been extensive analysis of results from the interviews and administered questionnaires. The information analysed are thematic concerns only without any numerical analysis. The questionnaires were administered to the above participants as they have been described. The analysis done has revealed that the extremism is encouraged through social media facilitation. The results from the qualitative analysis have helped in explaining the main problems faced by the youth through social media, characteristics of social media recruiting people, educative campaigns to counter terrorism, identification of coded languages for extremists and the ways in which all these can be fought to end terrorism.

All interviewed participants reported a strong belief in the importance of the Internet in young people's lives over the last few years and considered that open sites with no censorship, which has a big role in spreading anti-social deviant ideas, followed by recruitment of the youths to join the terror and militant groups via overcoming the geographical dimension. The interviewees reported accessing different social media platforms, and they considered social media an important part of life. All participants the most famous social media such as *WhatsApp* and *Twitter* accounts, and they follow *YouTube* videos. The least liked social platform among them was *Facebook*. Experts' and

FOT responses ranked *WhatsApp*, *Twitter* and *YouTube* in first place, as the most dominant social media among Saudi society. In fact, these responses support the survey results.

5.11 Chapter Summary

This chapter described participants' perspectives on social media and their role in intellectual terrorism. A mix of both quantitative and qualitative analyses has been done and were used to explore in depth the extent to which Saudi youth access and use digital technology, social media and how terrorist groups influence their ideas. The study results indicate that weakness of family and government monitoring, open sites and electronic games had a big role in the exploitation of young people, relatives and friends especially those unemployed and who suffer frustration, isolation and marginalization by extremist groups. The quantitative sections mainly give information regarding the respondents which the interviews and questionnaires were administered to. As evident, the experts and general public demographic information have been presented in the form of pie charts, bar charts and as tables. Also, reliability scales have been used in summarizing the quantitative results from the research. In the qualitative sections, the results have been presented as texts. The results have been organized into sections according to how the questionnaires were administered. In essence, the ways in which terrorism activities are facilitated have been examined with recommendations from participants on how to stop them from reaching out to many other innocent individuals, especially youths have been reported. The next chapter focuses on the main themes emerging from the data and attempts to answer the research study questions with proper regard to other comparative studies carried out recently and both will also be examined in detail.

Chapter 6- Discussion and Interpretation

6.1 Introduction

This chapter focuses on the main themes reported in the previous chapter, concerning how terrorist groups use social media for nefarious purposes. This chapter utilises the results of this project by using them to explore the original goal of the thesis, which was to understand the linguistic characteristics of terrorism and intellectual deviation via social media, and explain how these can be used to effectively recruit Saudi young people through social media. Finally, the researcher concludes that social media and terrorism cannot be separated from each other at the present time. The results indicated by this study are different from previous research studies that were conducted in this area. Moreover, new themes emerged from the interview results which provide a richer breadth of understanding. The researcher's findings reveal that social media can be considered one of the important and strategic factors driving the increasing use of the Internet by terrorist organizations and their supporters for a wide range of purposes.

This chapter discusses the key themes which emerged in Chapter 5 in relation to the terrorist groups and how they affect Saudi youth through social media. It also explores the major findings in Chapter 5. The research questions and objectives are addressed, along with a discussion regarding the results derived from the questionnaires and interviews, connecting these with the current literature. This will highlight the further extension, confirmation and/or contradiction of the current outcomes in relation to earlier research.

It is worth noting that the main title of the current research is, *"What is the potential role of social media in the formation of intellectual deviation (Terrorism) in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia?"*. In order to investigate the topic, this chapter presents four scales according to the results gained from a factor analysis during the analysis procedures. These scales (factors) to answering each of the four questions specified in Chapter 5, as well as discussion and interpretation of these results are as follows: some linguistic characteristics of terrorism (10 items), some characteristics of social media (11 items), and community awareness (9 items). Finally, some prevention methods are also offered and described (7 items). Each factor will be discussed individually in the sections which follow.

6.2 The linguistic characteristics of terrorism factor

The data utilised in this research indicates that the large majority of participants (81.7%) considered several features to be effective in aiding terrorists in the development of terrorist organizations. These features included certain linguistic characteristics of terrorism, in addition to the quantity of freely available programmes which exist to support terrorist organizations. In addition, the ease in which individuals could register for these groups and the efficacy in which they can disseminate their material was noted as being integral to the growth and recruitment strategies of terrorist groups worldwide. The aim of this section is to examine and discover certain linguistic characteristics of terrorism. The proposed research question was: *what are the linguistic characteristics of terrorism which disseminate intellectual deviation via social media in Saudi Arabia?* This question is assessed and addressed based on our identified linguistic characteristics of terrorism, which consists of 10 items. The linguistic characteristics are multiple and varied, they include: salient and important contents, with multimodal materials (audio and video as well as textual), and access via blocked websites, free programs, cellular phones of website members, coordination with other websites; chat among extremists (as will be described here) and the use of highly encrypted language. Thus, this section focuses solely on one scale (identified linguistic characteristics of terrorism).

In the current scale, all of the data is mainly derived from a five-point Likert scale (None, Rarely, Sometimes, Often and Always), along with semi-structured interview results. However, there were some unexpected emerging themes from the qualitative data which will also be discussed.

Interviewees' responses strongly acknowledged the high spread of the linguistic characteristics of terrorism across social media: *"information technology has made the possibility of encrypted languages among extremist groups, but they are not known"* (Investigator 1/23-03-2019). Also, Investigator 2 confirms that: *"yes, these terrorists have their own language; naturally, I do not know what this language is, but the more foreign languages vary among terrorist groups, the greater the chances of persuading and recruiting them from different regions of the world"* (Investigator2/23-03-2019). Whilst another participant stated that: *"to the best of my understanding, there is a language of their own, and of course I do not know because it is not known outside their surroundings, and narrowly in terms of foreign languages they certainly have several languages and this is known to all because they have fighters from several countries and certainly they benefit*

from them for the purpose of translation and publishing sermons and trying to recruit in many languages" (FOT/15-03-2019).These findings are important and seem to confirm the claim that extremist groups have the linguistic characteristics and wide variety of languages needed to make an impact on social media. This is an extremely difficult issue which governments must contend with, as they must track and trace messages communicated between terrorist groups; however, the meaning of the words changes consistently, in addition to the existence of group slang expressions that are impossible for outsiders to decipher. There are also words and phrases which are known only to certain members and groups within an organization due to secrecy rules; this is done in order to subvert government surveillance on their communication. Dave (2019) found that there are a wide variety of methods which can be used to encrypt a message. Most of these methods are only known by those who hold the decryption key and this is known as end-to-end encryption; using measures such as these magnifies counterterrorism work done to track illicit activities. AlMaawi (2016) demonstrated in their research that the phenomenon of terrorism takes place on a social platform which features the utilisation of language and communication. This type of communication and any attempts made to diminish it depend on the pattern of communication which defines it. Another study, conducted by Kaati, Shrestha, and Cohen (2016), found that a considerable amount of words was used less when they were connected to emotion and friends; in contrast, words expressing negative emotions, for example: anger, power, certainty, were more widely used; furthermore, third person plural pronouns (particularly the pronoun 'they') and words containing in excess of six letters were also used more frequently. Ghajar-Khosravi et al. (2016) documented that the most widely disseminated material by terrorists was fixed on the following themes (the themes are displayed in descending popularity): God, Islam, ISIS, violence, punishment, the West, non-believers, jihad, the names of ISIS's Middle Eastern enemies, marriage, friends, high school, sport and dating vocabulary. This study underscored how vocabulary related to religion and anger were often used by ISIS followers. In the Saudi context, it is clear that these social media platforms are used by people all over the world; as such, it is a mammoth task for government agencies to evaluate all of the conversations which take place within the boundaries of Saudi Arabia.

As stated in chapter one, the General Authority of Statistics (2020) has shown that the number of expatriates amounts to 30% of the Saudi Arabian population, which currently stands at 34.813 million. The conclusions of this study document that if a large proportion

of the expatriates are not assimilated within the native community, then people will associate with one another based on their native languages; this expresses an aspect of friendship which facilitates recruitment within these expatriate groups. More research should be conducted in this area, particularly concerning how foreign, dialectic and colloquial languages are used in the recruiting process through social media. As outlined in the literature review in chapter three, it is possible for victims to identify with their predators when communicating in their own native language. As such, it is clear that language is a cultural aspect and, therefore, using a native language reinforces the essence of connectivity both in relation to the ideological and identity perspectives. By using native languages, terrorist groups have a greater chance of successfully recruiting new members, as has also been noted by Dean and Bell (2012).

Using information gleaned from social learning theory and this project's survey results, the issue of identity highlights the vulnerability of young people. When people can communicate together in the same native language, or sub-language, they immediately connect with one another, thus intensifying convergence and closeness; this leads to the establishment of a relationship. This sort of interaction can have a considerable impact when these individuals share a dialect while both are resident in a foreign setting. Interaction such as this can easily lead to a friendship and the introduction of this new friend to other friends and relatives. Therefore, people who share a language may share at least some of the same values and cultural issues. People can be recruited through methods such as these, and the cultural and linguistic closeness can be exploited by terrorist groups. As such, users of social media feel a sense of special privilege when making friends with others from their nation online; they may become a super community of practice (Lave & Wenger, 1991). This can be enacted due to the fact that these people do not speak in their native language for the majority of their daily lives; as such, both the language used and social media facilitate the recruiting of new members into terrorist organizations. Having personal connections to one another and the same culture allows individuals to relax their stance with other another and also relax their values and beliefs; this provides a great opportunity for terrorists to recruit individuals into their organizations. Participants in this study documented how challenges have to be managed according to the strength of family relations. Further to this, community relations must replicate those of the society in order to resist intrusion from intellectual deviance. Thus, the establishment of very strong moral views may assist in the fight against brainwashing techniques utilised by terrorists.

Previous research conducted in the area of the linguistic characteristics of terrorism and on the encrypted languages utilised by extremist groups through social media platforms have reached similar conclusions. This includes the research conducted by Dave (2019), AlMaawi (2016), Kaati, Shrestha, and Cohen (2016), Ghajar-Khosravi et al. (2016), and Dean and Bell (2012).

Qualitative data studies have demonstrated how there has emerged data results from research projects which is known as Jihadist rhetoric and the persuasion process: 'Electronic Games and open sites'. This important result is combined with our research study and is analysed in the section which follows.

6.2.1 Jihadist rhetoric and persuasion process

Posting Jihadist rhetoric on social media is a key element evident in the linguistic characteristics of terrorism. Participants in Saudi Arabia raised their concerns about jihadist rhetoric which signifies a risk associated with Jihadi radicalization. Jihadi groups utilise a specific vocabulary that is employed as a significant and influential way of motivating members using linguistic factors which highlight whether a group is radical as opposed to a non-radical group. This is done in order to control and manipulate adherents and their followers to recruit more members into their group; in doing so, terrorists may outsmart government counterterrorism organizations and enact successful terrorist attacks. Therefore, the current study attempted to address three items: item 2 in chapter 4, Table 4.1,: '*They provide audio and video materials with high emotional effect';* item 8 '*They coordinate with other websites to disseminate the speeches and data of the leaders of organization and promote them';* and item 10: '*everything new on websites is used on the cellular phones of website members.* Regarding item 2, according to participants' responses, this practice was to provide high emotional effect (M = 4.17, Approximately Always). Regarding item 8, participants confirm that they coordinate with other websites to disseminate the speeches and data of the leaders of organization and promote them (M = 3.68, Often). Related to item 10, participants state that mobile applications were a powerful tool for transmitting news and everything new among extremist groups (M = 3.62, Often). The results of three items showed that terrorist groups use thrilling and visual action contents via social media to enact youth recruitment. This outcome will be explained in more detail via data from the interviews.

In terms of qualitative data, participants acknowledged that extremist groups work together with other people and websites online, in order to spread and disseminate speeches and sermons to as wide a group as possible. For instance, one interviewee disclosed: '*terrorist organizations have relied on media discourse since its inception through the rise of jihadi media platforms, where ISIS adopted a new policy to reach potential recruits in their homes and mobile devices and the practice of persuasion, unlike previous terrorist organizations that did not have this technique* (Investigator 1/23-03-2019). Moreover, another said: *"Modern technology intensifies the presence through social media through the so-called Saraya incitement to pump promotional propaganda, which relied on the review and promotion of their delusional victory so that the spirit of enthusiasm among the fighters persists and this taper styles of rhetoric affecting"* (Investigator 2/23-03-2019). Also, another said, "*Jihadist rhetoric can arise in many different forms; for example, speeches, pictures and videos; these forms of media are utilised in order to encourage young people to become members of a terrorist organization or else give them money*" (FOT/15-03-2019).

The results from this study showed that there is some concordance with Ashraf's (2016) findings. The emotional language utilised in Al-Qaeda's material demonstrates how it takes an alternative approach in comparison to other terrorist organizations. Rhetoric is a powerful means of persuading others through the construction of seemingly clever arguments which appeal to other people's minds or emotions; thus, encouraging them to think or act in a certain way. Often, people are encouraged to take action by force. Methods of rhetoric, such as these, are used in everything which Al-Qaeda disseminates in its aim to grow and recruit and in its effort to persuade and recruit. Ashraf's (2016) research also developed and applied a theoretical framework to comprehend Al-Qaeda's ideology, an ideology which comprises political myths, created by means of rhetoric. This study tested the theory that extremist ideologies emerge from various crises in a society, whether that be politically and/or socially. In a similar vein, our own current study attempted to expand upon Ashraf's (2016) findings from an analysis of the responses from the survey respondents. Alsamdani (2017) propounds that the linguistic characteristics of Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP) discourse shows an intentional means of systematically presupposing religious truths to establish self-legitimisation using manipulation and the corruption of divine truth and/or religious authenticity. Similarly, he argues that the Mujahedeen have been created due to their positive (religious) views. Previous studies in

this field have conducted a critical analysis of jihadist discourse by qualitatively analysing material found in the *Sawt al-jihad magazine*. The previous study also analysed the discursive features of jihadist discourse using concepts such as 'capital theory', 'symbolic power', and 'Islamic religious epistemology', while our own current study employs a variety of sample perspectives by means of a mixed-methods approach. Additionally, the current findings further explore earlier research conducted in the field by AlMaawi (2016) who has been researching terrorism in Saudi Arabia, since in 2001. AlMaawi (*ibid*) has primarily focused on the influence of Al-Qaeda and the effect that they have had on Saudi Arabian people and the country itself. Extremist fundamentalism has continued to grow and spread since 2003, so much so that it has created state security concerns, in addition to attracting many young people into its dangerous fold. This came about primarily through the power of religious rhetoric spread in mosques. AlMaawi's research was limited to 11, male participants who were all working as experts and specialists in the Mohammed bin Naif Counselling and Care Centre; this research only used the applied qualitative approach (semi-structured interview) to gather information. Therefore, considering the results of our particular study together with earlier research conveys that social media platforms are indeed environments that extremist groups use to spread terrorism, recruitment and propaganda.

Research conducted globally has found similar results, especially that undertaken by the American University Law Review. Research on the topic of Jihadist rhetoric conducted in the USA has discovered that online hate speech has a profound influence on the advocacy of terrorism to recruit new members and to create an atmosphere of fear and violence (Tanenbaum, 2005). Research conducted in Belgium by De Smedt, de Pauw and van Ostaeyen (2018) has shown how Jihadist hate speech can be understood as hate speech spread by adherents of Salafi jihadist militant groups, including Al-Qaeda and ISIS. Material such as this, is designed to be propaganda, which will encourage violence and the threatening of civilians, and is illegal on a worldwide basis (e.g. videos depicting human executions).

As demonstrated by the findings gained in our own current research, participants reported that terrorist groups have used effective online propaganda through Jihadist rhetoric to disseminate fundamentalist views, encourage terrorism and gain new members, and these all concur with the research findings reported in other literature (Ashraf 2016; Alsamdani 2017; AlMaawi 2016 and Herrick 2013; Gunaratna 2004; Jacobs 2004; Mendelsohn 2009)

6.2.2 The language of games and open sites

While the results of the study demonstrate strong connectivity between the Internet and media in relation to most of the participants in Saudi Arabia, this does not confirm, however, that all of the participants' utilisation of video games mean that they are at risk of being lured into a terrorist organization. The main objective of a terrorist organization when creating websites is to recruit new members, especially young people. One of the most effective techniques these groups use to recruit young people is through video games. The results drawn from this research study (see chapter 4,Table 4.1) demonstrate that terrorist groups spread audio and video files, specially created to have a high emotional impact, in addition to free video games which are readily available.

The reflective participants' interviews support the survey data, which indicates that the majority of participants agreed that electronic games and open sites away from censorship have a big role in spreading anti-social deviant ideas both locally and internationally: "*yes, creation of video games, particularly violent combat games which create heroes out of ISIS leaders; these things have a big impact on young people. Youth can access these files online anonymously. The games are very visually appealing and attract young people, particularly young people who resent the Saudi state",* (Investigator 1/10-03-2019). Whilst another participant stated that: *"Of course, terrorist groups use the language of games to win the support of individuals and recruit new members, particularly young people"* (Investigator 2/ 10-03-2019). Moreover, another said: *"Terrorist groups try to reach the general public, especially young people through simple and easy to access programs, often through electronic games programs or through videos"*, (FOT/15-03-2019). The interview results confirm Schulzke's (2014) finding that video games are a non-physically violent means of gaining sympathy and support from individuals. They are able to present and discuss their grievances and display their military prowess without fear of physical or actual retribution. Similarly, Jansz (2005) has underscored that these games are targeted towards young people who have an interest in violent games of this nature; particularly, young males have an interest in playing these types of games. Olson, Kutner and Warner (2008) have shown in their research that these sorts of games allow users to experience fantasies of power and fame, to gain access to what they perceive to be exciting situations, to express anger and alleviate stress and to make friends online. Plaisier and Konijn (2013) have documented how there is parallel between feelings of anger, frustration and rejection among young people; often, cyberbullying occurs in social media. Therefore, aggressive

video games are a safe and exciting environment for young people to express themselves. Many studies conducted around the world have proven that there is a strong link between video games and the growth of terrorism. For instance, a British study showed how ISIS messages arrived in a variety of forms, and these could be sent to both supporters and enemies alike. Some examples of these video games include games copying a famous game known as "*Call of Duty*", renamed as "*Call of Jihad*"; the game replicates the style and design of the original game. "*Grand Theft Auto*" has also been replicated by terrorist groups and is known as "Grand Theft Auto: Saleel as-Sawarim", or Clash of Swords. (It should be noted that this name is widely used in the Islamic world, for instance in historical TV programmes, and also in the *nasheeds*, or chants, of the Islamic State.) The background in these games is often changed to locations such as Northern Syria and Iraq; the enemies are dressed in US military uniforms. There is a clear target audience and these are young men as this is the widest demographic which play these types of video games (Wilson, 2017). Furthermore, a British study undertaken by Mohamad (2015), analysed the most popular video games from the US, Britain and Russia. It was shown how the characters in these games are represented as the classic terrorists, bearing characteristics which are in opposition to the classic hero. These games present terrorists as honourable people who are seeking to rectify wrongs created through different personal, social and political grievances; instead of the truth that these are people who are filled with religious hatred and that the games attempt to corrupt young people.

There are many arguments that playing these games has many negative effects (Granic, Lobel, & Engels, 2014). However, there are also possible positive effects to video games and these should also be considered. These games have been altered dramatically in the last ten years, becoming more and more complex, diverse, realistic and social in nature (Granic, Lobel and Engels, 2014). Dweck and Molden (2017) state that children develop beliefs about intelligence and ability from these games, beliefs that underscore particular motivational styles and have an influence on achievement. Thus, games, when used in a positive way, can encourage young people and give them positive feedback concerning their efforts and ability. Ewoldsen et al., (2012) state that players can attain prosocial skills when partaking in games which have been created to enhance cooperation, support, and helping behaviours.

Relating the social learning theory to the survey results reveal that as the players (users) spend a majority of their time playing electronic games, they are likely to assume the

environment as their new reality. This assumption positions them to adopt the plots and views of the games in their lives. They will perceive these games as their learning environment. Subsequently, they will be inclined to the stances reported in the games. Similarly, they would be influenced by the content shared on the open sites since they spend a majority of their time interacting on these platforms. Therefore, the reflections and stances formed from these violent games and exploitative open sites become the reality for the players and users respectively.

6.3 The characteristics of the social media factor

The characteristics of social media which disseminate intellectual deviation (terrorism), is the second factor in the present investigation. This section aims to address the question '*What is the role of social media in disseminating intellectual deviation*?'. In response to this, data is obtained from chapter 4,Table 4.3 which consisted of 11 items. This issue is a very popular topic at present. Al-Qaeda seeks to encourage its members to carry out attacks on an individual basis and move towards teaching members to carry out their own jihad attacks and teach them how to create explosives at home. Weimann (2008) states that these groups use social media to promote their group, their goals, attain recruits and spread their propaganda. Kampf (2014) also documents how terrorist groups use social media to grow and spread their organizations. Aseiry (2003) has shown how these groups encourage social fragmentation and separation in society, thus causing a weakened and disparate society. This type of society is a threat to national unity, spreading hatred and division throughout all of society. In addition to this, these findings agree with those of Hend Al-Smadi (2016), who undertook a research project concerning the impact of social networking sites on the creation of intellectual deviation in students at Qassim University (Qassim city), in Saudi Arabia. The results obtained confirm that there is a considerable influence from social networking sites on the spread and growth of intellectual deviation and extremist ideas. The research also confirmed that social media plays a role in the dissemination of social, political and religious ideas. Undergraduate students participated in this research project and their responses were obtained while they were in Qassim city (using questionnaires). Limitations in the study mean that responses could not be obtained from non-students; as such, our own particular research study is expanding the participant base and obtaining information from the general public, from terrorism investigators in the Saudi prosecution service, from crime experts at Naif University for Security Sciences, and also from a family with members who had previously joined ISIS. In doing so, this

research study is expanding the geographic area and research approach of previous studies of a similar nature.

In terms of qualitative data, several participants acknowledged that the characteristics of social media which are disseminating intellectual deviation have many forms. For example, an interviewee said: "*new programmes generally have very bright and attractive colours which attract new members, particularly young people. This is a huge challenge for young people to resist, as they are being directly targeted by terrorist groups, like ISIS. Persuasive techniques are used to attract Muslim youth, influence them and brainwash them*" (Investigator 1/10-03- 2019). Moreover, another said, "*these programmes are overseen by a team of experts who try to target young people. They try to exploit young people, targeting them for money and to disseminate propaganda*" (Investigator2/10-03-2019). In addition, another participant said:"*the material is always very emotional and allows viewers to comment on the published materials disseminated by the group. This is a forum, thereby, for young people to discuss their ideas with one another*" (FOT/ 15- 03- - 2019). Thus, based on these results, extremist groups exploit social media for recruitment (M = 4, often), this confirms the conclusion that social media is an effective tool with which terrorist groups can grow and spread propaganda. Results obtained from the qualitative data showed an emerged data (result) referred to as 'The most popular social media platforms in Saudi Arabia'. Most of the interviewees in this project stated that (97%) these are *WhatsApp*, *Twitter* and *YouTube*.

Interviewees' responses strongly acknowledged the importance of *WhatsApp* as a gateway to social media , with links being easily sent etc, so much so that it has become part of the SM machine that facilitates relationship forming between users from diverse backgrounds, This happens particularly in everyday life due to the fact that this app employs end-to-end encryption to encode text messages. This security measure is exploited by terrorist organizations: "*WhatsApp uses a technology called end-to-end encryption to encode text messages, often used for communication through family and friends' networks to recruit them*" (Investigator 1&2/ 28-03-2019). In the same context another participant confirmed that: "*Of course we can't forget WhatsApp and its danger, especially for relatives and friends because they can directly reach to targeted persons easily*" (FOT/15-03-2019). *WhatsApp* is also used to spread gossip, news and rumours, in addition to many images, as another participant said: "*WhatsApp is really very dangerous as it is not subject to government censorship, as such dangerous material can be easily spread though this*

medium and become 'viral' across cities and even across all of Saudi Arabia itself", (Investigator 2/ 10-03-2019). These findings seem to confirm the claim that propaganda networks set up by terrorist organizations are very dangerous and these methods should be stopped by governments worldwide. Argaam (2019) has outlined how these groups plan actions to recruit new members. ISIS members employ a variety of methods to recruit members and plan terror attacks with *WhatsApp* being one of their most widely used tools. Another study, conducted by Al-Rawi (2018) states that social media is used by groups to gain publicity, prey on victims and gain new members; phone technologies are also widely used, and again, in particular, through using *WhatsApp*.

Additionally, multimodal *Twitter* is one of the most frequently used social media platforms in Saudi Arabia. Terrorist groups using *Twitter* do not have to make new friends to spread information, they can easily disseminate their propaganda, gain followers and recruit new adherents to propagate their violent ideology. For example, "*It is clear that terrorist groups use Twitter to gain new members and they do this all over the world*", (Investigator 1&2 / 10-03-2019); "*Twitter is one of the most important tools because it spreads quickly anywhere, and of course the size and nature data, social, temporal and content factors of the tweet were used as it affects feelings*", (FOT / 15-03-2019).

Important and interesting examples from tweets that use such emotional language, include the following: verbs such as rejoice, victory, martyrdom, fight, or inclusive first-person plural pronouns ('we' and 'us'), or exclusive third person plural pronouns (such as 'they' 'them'), or nouns such as (violence, punishment, the West, non-believers, jihad, lone wolves…etc). It's also vital to consider the dimensionality of the data, as well as the social, temporal, and content components of what's being tweeted, as they can all affect a person's feelings.

According to Middle East Internet Usage Stats (2020), there are around 13 million *Twitter* users in Saudi Arabia; this represents approximately 46% of the population of Saudi Arabia which have access to the internet. Outcomes confirmed and conducted by Manuel Castells' (2012) findings show that *Twitter* enables the creation of large communication network online, enabling participants to read the tweets without having to participate in the conversation themselves. Findings by Bruns and Hanusch (2017) show that *Twitter* is widely used by the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS), to spread propaganda and gain new recruits. Another study, conducted by Witmer (2016) has found that *Twitter* is a major

tool used to spread the power and influence of the Al-Qaeda group. They use this platform to spread propaganda and gain new members and donations.

Moreover, *YouTube* is also used by terrorist groups. Considered to be the world's most popular video site, this platform contains videos teaching people how to make explosives at home. In addition, this platform gives users the opportunity to create and share their own videos online. There are other videos on *YouTube* which have been uploaded by terrorist groups and these videos show the murder of children and women in order to gain support and sympathy from the public. They also create videos which promote their ideas concerning a type of delusional victory to motivate members and fighters to continue the struggle. For example, one interviewee said: *"Yes, YouTube is considered one of the open sites and has been used to spread propaganda for terrorist groups and teach young people to manufacture explosive"*, (FOT/ 15- 03- 2019); Another participant stated that: *"Yes, I agree that YouTube is one of the most dangerous websites when it comes to terrorism. Anyone can view the videos and no registration is necessary, terrorist groups exploit video and audio sharing in order to disseminate propaganda and gain new recruits"*, (Investigator 1/ 05-04-2019); Moreover, another participant said: "*Of course terrorists will use every method available to them and social media is one of the most useful tools they have right now, particularly YouTube because of the ease in spreading videos and images*", (Investigator 2/ 05-04-2019). Primarily, our current findings confirm widespread use of *YouTube* by terrorist groups for propaganda, recruitment and teaching potential recruits how to make bombs and weapons at home, remaining safe and unimpeded.

The interview's findings revealed that *YouTube* is exploited for evil and negative purposes by terrorists online. This result confirms and extends the research by Cheung and Hew (2009) that *YouTube* should be researched in detail due to the fact that *YouTube* is used so often by extremist groups via social media. Hence, the current findings support Vergani and Zuev's (2011) results, which document how *YouTube* is a more effective method of communication than *Facebook* or *Twitter*, because it uses sound and images. This is also associated with the Department of Homeland Security (2010), who have uploaded videos showing people how to use AK47 assault rifles and are available on *YouTube.* Conway and McInerney (2008) have conducted research on jihad-promoting video content on *YouTube*, and have confirmed that these videos are disseminated to people in all spheres of life through the sharing of videos and social media. Therefore, Weiss & Ayad (2019) state that even though *YouTube* have removed many terrorist videos, there is still a lot of terrorist

material on their platform which is hidden and difficult to find for non-members. In general, previous findings along with the current results highlight that extremist groups have infiltrated *YouTube* in order to gain more supporters. Unable to disseminate their videos, these groups have exploited *YouTube* as a means of spreading their propaganda, as Rawsley (2009) has pointed out some time ago. Also Harkous (2017) points out, jihadist groups and their followers have made extensive use of YouTube's massive video-sharing facility, resulting in the creation of a subculture for distributing propaganda and recruiting new members.

The current study (in Saudi Arabia) geographically extends the outcomes of Joe (2020) in Nigeria) who found a symbiotic relationship between the media and terrorism. This research highlighted how the Boko Haram terrorist group is influenced by the values, routines, norms, logic and affordances of social media channels. Further, Joe (ibid) states that social media unintentionally is used to carry out the objectives of terrorists, despite the fact that in essence the media is meant to expose those who are responsible for unrest in the world. Boko Haram also use social media to spread propaganda. Reynolds (2015) has shown how social media is a part of daily life in Britain and terrorists use social media to spread their lies and attract new members. Conclusions from this study showed how online participation in extremism can be facilitated through social media. Findings included information relating to overall traffic generation, the use of links in communications and the influence on member traffic, and how the group narrative is advanced in conversations to influence the minds of participants. In addition, our current study's finding that participants reported terrorist groups use of new programs and being managed by a professional team to exploit and persuade youth, spread propaganda and recruitment during social media discussions is consistent with Lieberman's (2017) report that social media terrorism is very powerful. Their information webs find a way through many different social media networks; a fact that should be taken seriously considering the growth of terrorism worldwide in the past decade. This finding also confirms those found in a study conducted by Ozeren *et al.*, (2018), which showed that ISIS and other terrorist groups grow daily via social media. This is through the gaining of new members at a large rate. The current findings further confirm the survey findings (see Figure 4.9) which indicated that the most popular social media platforms in Saudi Arabia are *WhatsApp* (80.4%), *Twitter* (75,6%), and *YouTube* (57.6).

In the interest of balance, it should be pointed out that *YouTube* can also be a positive influence. In contrast to the previous findings relating to terrorism online, Tamim (2013) revealed a positive result related to the social media usage of students learning via *YouTube*. This research found that educators globally use *YouTube* to promote education in a positive way, in addition to using this platform to teach clinical skills. According to Topps, Helmer and Ellaway (2013), *YouTube* is a wonderful means of disseminating clinical videos and teaching clinicians online. In addition, another study about *Twitter*, conducted by Elavsky, C.M., Mislan (2011) found that students can use *Twitter* during lectures in order to enhance the course discussions that they engage in during lectures. Moreover, another study about *WhatsApp*, conducted by Argaam (2019) concluded that *WhatsApp* is utilised in a positive way in schools, colleges, offices and among government employees. *WhatsApp* is a great alternative to the traditional *SMS* feature on mobile phones and a great way for people to communicate and send documents and files to one another.

6.4 Community awareness factor

The role organizations play in countering online terrorism is the fourth factor in the present investigation. It encompasses nine sub-questions seeking to measure participants' engagement in relation to the effectiveness of these organizations to counter terrorism thoughts disseminated on the various social networking sites. This section aims to address the question: *"What is the role of the current reality of official and community organizations countering extremist thoughts disseminated on social networking sites?"*. These roles vary in nature, and often operate through inter-family and community discussions and awareness, in addition to the application of moderate Islam and toleration by means of religious (Sharia) social groups. These groups attempt oftentimes to track down and arrest individuals who disseminate extremist material online. Sometimes, security organizations also participate. These groups operate under the belief that individuals in a community may become radicalised by terrorist groups, due to the influence and pressure of corrupt friends, and so forth (Shinn, 2004). Shinn (*ibid*) also states that economic reasons are not solely to blame for the rise in terrorism. It is important that moderate religious beliefs are encouraged, and that all members of a society practise guidelines which allow official and community organizations to lead the fight against terrorism. Further to this, Althari (2019) states that Crown Prince Mohammad Bin Salman has expressed officially his aim to return Saudi Arabia to moderate religious practices and beliefs, and in doing so, remodel Saudi society as one which has an interfaith dialogue and

intra-Islamic tolerance. Moves have been made towards a more moderate religious climate in Saudi Arabia, and this includes reshaping of the curricula through which the youth are educated in the Kingdom. Althari (*ibid*) states also that academics generate knowledge to enrich the minds of young people; thus, academia has an enormous impact on the developing minds of young people. Academics have the capacity to recruit students to accept evil ideas which are being disseimated at present in the Middle East. These views lead to suffering and disharmony within a society. AlMaawi (2016) conducted research which discovered that collaboration between religious, educational, cultural and media establishments leads to stronger religious and ethical values in a society. As such, religious and cultural leaders have a responsibility to create inter-cultural and inter-religious gatherings to establish a more peaceful society.

The results drawn from our research study (see chapter 4, Table 4.4) demonstrate how Saudi Arabian official and community groups pool their resources together to fight terrorism taking place within the Kingdom. These groups also do everything within their power to stop and remove terrorism in all forms in which it exists. The Saudi Arabian government actively monitors what is preached around the country and consistently develops education so that it is refined and improved. Terrorist groups operate in opposition to the civilised cultural and religious values of a stable and peaceful society. Despite their best efforts, the Saudi government continues to be challenged in this area.

The majority of participants representing 88.6%, as exhibited by item 9 in Table 4.4, reported that "*The concerned entities in the Ministry of Interior can help those who returned back and left the extremist thought to be included in society*". This item had a high agreement (M = 4.4, Always) and this item confirms that the Saudi Arabian government is doing its very best to fight terrorism and extremist ideologies, by utilising the very latest scientific methods. The country has experienced a spate of terrorist attacks in the last few years, these have varied in seriousness; however, many of the terrorists who participated in these attacks have been rehabilitated and reintegrated back into Saudi society (Boucek, 2008). Afterwards, data was obtained from items 1, 2, 3, 4, showing that between 73% and 76.6% (see Table 4.4) of the participants believe that religious organizations (Sharia) play a worthwhile role in educating people on the dangers of terrorism. It was also believed that these religious groups are working diligently to fight extremist ideologies and are combating rhetoric to support violence using religious and theological arguments. For instance, religious groups try to educate people in mosques,

exhibit tolerance to other religions, and enter into peaceful conversations in which they accept the views of other people. Religious leaders have also criticised religious intolerance in the country and have promoted educated and qualified people as Imams to lead mosques. These qualified Imams are able to enter into discussions on terrorism and have a liberal view which influences those listening. As such, participants returned a percentage of 71.4% concerning item 7, "*The entities concerned with monitoring the websites can block the extremist websites and intensify the control over them and capture what is going on in them periodically*". The monitoring and blocking of terrorist websites was pinpointed by a number of participants (M = 3.99, Often) as a practical way of combating terrorism and ceasing its dissemination. This result outlines the views and ideas of participants concerning punishment for terrorists and those who finance them. For instance, participants stated that the government should track down and arrest the people operating these websites and prevent the spread of their material online by using modern technology to block their sites.

Participants also stated that these individuals should face trial. In relation to items 5 and 6, a result of 38% was obtained, as shown in chapter4, Table 4.4, "*Social organizations can work on raising the awareness of families and prepare sports clubs to contribute to protecting youth from the intellectual deviation*", with a means of 3.15 and 3.38 (Sometimes). In this project, the social groups referred to are as follows: families, schools, mass media, recreational groups and groups associated with the private sector. Results show that the participants consider social organizations to have a weak role concerning the spread of terrorism. However, it was recommended that these groups could participate in this struggle in a much stronger way. For instance, families have the ability to exhibit a positive force in protecting family members from deviation and crime by developing social cohesion and supervising family members, especially so that they do not spend unsupervised periods on the Internet. Furthermore, schools have a responsibility to educate students with good religious, moral and educational mores. Recreation centres (sports clubs, gyms, youth centres, dance clubs, and so on) are where young people spend their free time by doing things that bring joy and happiness to young people. These centres should do their utmost to prevent the spread of terrorism in their localities. To conclude, this study has shown how participants exhibit positive attitudes concerning the efforts made by security and religious (Sharia) groups in Saudi Arabia to combat terrorism and extremist ideologies.

Exploring this in more detail, our qualitative data revealed that each one of these factors has a specific and vital role in fighting terrorism. One interviewee said that: *There is no doubt that the role of social and security organizations is significant and very important in any society to raise awareness and maintain its security and stability from the outlaws, society and local and international norms and also from dangerous ideologies that could corrupt the youth* (Investigator1/28-03-2019). Another participant stated that: *The role of organizations is to enlighten and alert* [people] *about the danger of these deviant ideas, although an important role, but still below the required level and needs to intensify and diversify the approach to address these deviant ideas through social media specialized in intellectual security. Security and religious organizations play an effective role in monitoring those deviant ideas* (Investigator2/28-03-2019). Another participant confirmed that: *Previously, its role was very weak, perhaps because terrorism and deviant ideas were not widespread before the emergence of social media in such a large form. As such, young people should be drawn away from this by recreational facilities in both the urban and rural areas It is also necessary to revise the old school curricula* (FOT/ 15-03-2019).

As previously stated, evidence confirms that most of the participants have confidence in the security and religious (Sharia) groups in raising awareness and establishing stability in the country. Participants also have faith in religious officials that they will bring to justice those who are responsible for spreading terrorism. It is also evident, however, that the efforts of these social groups still fall below what is required to fully combat these deviant ideas. Referring to this shortfall, Alsuhaibany (2009, cited in Elasrag, 2014) has shown a severe lack of social responsibility evident in the Saudi Arabian areas of private employment. Unfortunately, many Saudi companies have neglected to attend to their duties in this area. Research studies have documented how official organizations have an influence in developing trust and responsiveness in a society and this is crucial in the war to combat extremist ideas. As such, many social groups in Saudi Arabia need to take their responsibility seriously in this regard, should the war on terrorism be won (Althari, 2019; AlMaawi, 2016; Alsuhaibany, 2009; Shinn,2004). Our current study is consistent with these previous findings.

6.5 **Prevention methods factor**

This final factor in the current investigation consists of seven items to measure methods and means that can be used to combat terrorist websites and prevent the dissemination of their material online; these are crucial measures in the war on terror and Saudi Arabia has

exhibited great success in this area. Al-Mufarih (2004) stated that in August 2003, the Council of Ministers in Saudi Arabia put in place new legislation which brought about strict punishments for those involved in the laundering of money and the financing of terrorism. These punishments include prison sentences to a maximum of 25 years and up to $1.8 million in fines. In order to address the sub question 4, in chapter 4,Table 4.5, "*What are the possible effective methods and ways of countering social media and deviant thoughts*?", this will rely on five sub-questions that were provided to the participants based on *a Likert scale* ('Strongly disagree, 'Disagree', 'Not sure', 'Agree' and 'Strongly agree'). The majority of participants in this study exhibited a high agreement (M = 4.56, Strongly agree) that a strategy should be devised to combat terrorism online. The result of item 3 was the highest score in this scale (M = 4.76 Strongly agree), concerning: "*developing strategic plans to exploit the energies of youth to keep them away from extremism*". On this point, 96.7%, stated that preventive measures should be taken to protect young people. For instance, the majority of the people who enact terrorist attacks are usually young people who have been exploited and radicalised by terror groups. This result supports data obtained at an earlier stage in relation to items 5 and 6, shown in chapter 4, Table 4.4. This finding confirms that recreation centres (sports clubs, gyms, youth centres, dance clubs, and so on) do have an important role to play when it comes to protecting young people from becoming radicalised.

The mean response for item 5 in chapter 4,Table 4.5 "*distributing awards and encouraging more active Islamic websites in encountering the extremist websites*" showed agreement (M = 4.70 Strongly agree), where participants scored 94.3 % with this item, thereby showing the necessity of tackling terrorism online and providing realistic images of what really happens during terrorist attacks: such as, dead innocent civilians, often many women and children. Testimonies from the victims should also be included. This finding is concurrent with those of Ashour (2010) who demonstrated that both online and offline, it is possible to provide target audiences with a wide range of counter and alternative narratives.

The mean response for items 1, 2, 6 in chapter 4, Table 4.5: "*Establishing a specializing oversight board to monitor the websites and block those which promote the wrong and extremist thoughts and developing an agreed-upon Arab and international strategy to combat the electronic terrorism and exchange experiences*" also showed high agreement (M = 4.67 Strongly agree). Around 92% of the participants stated that a clearly defined

plan should be created to begin a unified counter-terrorism programme. They also stated that it should be clearly established what forces negatively impact the lives of individuals and society as a whole. AlMaawi (2016) discovered that the Saudi government has collaborated with other countries in the battle against terrorism, particularly with the U.S. This has been brought about so that countries may pool sources together and share intelligence to launch effective international programmes. Asseri (2009:116) documented the cooperation between the Saudi government and the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), and also unified efforts together with the United Nations (UN). As such, Asseri (*ibid*:118) stated that the Saudi government and the U.S. have plans to form a Joint Task Force so that they can elimiate the finanical backing behind terrorism.

The mean regarding items 7 in chapter 4, Table 4.5: "*Developing programs for electronic advice provided by scholars of sharia, psychologists, and sociologists*" was also in agreement (M = 4.59 Strongly agree). 93% of the participants expressed the belief that the impact of communications technology is considerable at present, due to the fact that satellite channels, the blogosphere, websites and social media facilitate new methods of communication and are promoting new norms and values. As such, new online protection programmes must be created to deal with the threat of intellectual deviancy online. Terrorist organizations exploit and corrupt religious values to win over new supporters and corrupt their minds. Al-Shahri (2011) concurs with this finding, as they have shown that E-terrorist groups disseminate rhetoric online aimed at triggering the emotions of the youth in a country.

In terms of interview outcomes, participants emphasised that promoting the concept of intellectual security to all and creating many intellectual research centres to fight terrorism and promote de-radicalization would be a positive step forward in this battle. For example, an interviewee said that: *Spreading continuous awareness on social media by the security and judicial authorities and the Public Prosecution and educating people about its dangers, spreading penalties and using the account of influencers to spread awareness in the community about the dangers of terrorist sites* (Investigator1/28-03-2019). This can be seen as a supportive result in quantitative outcomes. Further, another participant revealed an interesting outcome from the research and stated that: *The first step is that the family should monitor the children in the use of the Internet, especially electronic games that have fighting and violence, while official and community organizations spread sanctions, the establishment of educational sessions and activating the role of senior scientists in the*

Social Media and influential people to address such extremist ideas (Investigator2/28-03-2019). This is an ideal sign, indicating the importance of the role of scientists and families to counter online radicalization. Additionally, another statement from a participant in response to the role of scientists in this regard was that *Islamic scholars also have a role to play in the battle against terrorism. This participant stated that these scholars should also go online and disseminate correct Islamic discourse which promotes moderation and toleration; thereby, combating terrorism* (FOT/ 15- 03- 2019). The current finding along with quantitative results showed that the implementation of preventive methods to counter extremist thoughts on the Internet, particularly through social media, is crucial. Moreover, the battle against terrorism should be unified, using a multi-dimensional approach with collaboration between governmental and social groups. The current results confirmed Alshammari's (2013) study (using the analytical inductive approach method) who found that the mass media aids the spread of extremist ideology, with this occurring mainly by means of satellite channels; these channels have been found to be broadcasting the ideology of takfirist groups. Similar things happen through the Internet and social media. This research employed the historical method, using historical evidence from history, jurisprudence, Quranic material and prior literature theories. This evidence seems weak in comparison to the empirical evidence which can be gained from people in relation to their experiences of online radicalisation. Therefore, our current study attempted to employ a mixed-methods approach (questionnaire and interview) based on different participants' backgrounds. It is interesting to note whether these differences in place and methodology would uncover different results. Having the same results in existing literature along with data derived from completing 300 questionnaires leads to generalising the current findings.

In contrast, a study conducted by Alqahtani (2016) reported that the methods and strategies created to tackle terrorism in recent years have been shown to be relatively ineffective. This is due to the fact that terrorists globally have expanded their attack methods greatly from just, hijacking plans, bombing trucks and suicide bombers. Nowadays, terrorists can carry out cyber-terrorism, by using cyberspace to attack. By integrating the virtual and physical spheres of life, security agents are weak when combating this invisible enemy. This issue was previously discussed in chapter 3.

To summarise this section, there was an in-depth discussion related the methods which can be employed to act as preventive means against the growth of terrorism and limit its dissemination online. The majority of the information received via the questionnaires was

positive. This confirms that preventive methods may be effective in the war on terrorism online. Interviewees expressed supportive and positive reports concerning these measures, and this allows for a more thorough understanding of this problem online.

6.6 **Chapter Summary**

In summary, we can see that terrorist organizations document a high level of access to, and use of, digital technologies that are widely spread and available in Saudi Arabia. These technologies are used frequently by terrorist groups, as evidenced in this research, despite government and family censorship on many sites. However, usage seems to vacillate with varying waves of digital information; the findings report that terrorist groups, such as Al-Qaeda and ISIS, all evolve with varying degrees of complexity. These groups can deceive families and security counterterrorism entities easily with encrypted language communication and end-to-end encrypted apps and various mobile applications; foremost of which is *WhatsApp*. Furthermore, social media is considered one of the important and strategic factors driving the increasing use of the Internet by terrorist organizations and their supporters for a wide range of purposes.

A major finding in this study is the discovery that the younger generation spends a considerable amount of time online, and terrorist groups used this to their advantage. These groups have tremendous cyber capabilities, which can help them not only radicalize and recruit new blood, but also conduct cyber-attacks on their enemies, influence relatives and friends via members of the organization and use coded languages between them. These groups also practice different methods to persuade young people to justify their acts of violence through propaganda and persuasion. Terrorist organizations illicit power structures' use of social media and electronic games technology, to the extent that ISIL is still practising this technique; this is also a new finding discovered in this research. This is a very dangerous and alarming fact. Often, ISIL's radicalization and recruitment efforts via social media and cyber technology have been very successful in gaining sympathizers worldwide. It can be concluded that spreading continuous awareness on social media by the security and judicial authorities, reviewing educational systems, educating people about the dangers of suspicious sites and following them up on an ongoing basis, are some of the most important methods for facing down extremist ideas. The findings from this research revealed a considerably higher use of different social media platforms; significantly, *Twitter, WhatsApp* and *YouTube* are ranked as the most widely used social media platforms among Saudi youth. Both genders reported similar levels of skill and use

of digital technologies. They acknowledged that social media assist terrorist groups in recruitment, collecting funds and donations. Participants and practitioners think that social media play an essential role in promoting terrorism.

In the following chapter of this thesis, Chapter 7, the main findings and results of the study are presented. Furthermore, this chapter also discusses how the research questions have been examined and assessed, in addition to the contributions made by this project, its limitations and future avenues for continued research.

Chapter 7- Conclusion and Implications

7.1 Introduction

This concluding chapter discusses the major findings of this research project. Furthermore, this chapter also explains how this research can contribute to field practice in this area; in addition, to presenting the limitations of this research. This chapter also discusses suggested areas in which further research could be conducted in the area of counter terrorism; specifically, in relation to the topic of social media.

To begin the chapter, the main findings are summarised and discussed according to the results gained from a combination of the questionnaires and interviews. Following this, the limitations of the current study will be discussed as well. Implications and the recommendations for future research in the same field of study will be addressed.

7.2 Summary of the Thesis

This research study addressed the linguistic characteristics of terrorism and intellectual deviation via social media in Saudi Arabia. The core objective of this study was to answer the research questions, which we will now revisit briefly:

- "What is the potential role of social media in the formation of intellectual deviation (Terrorism) in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia?" (Primary question 1)

- What are the linguistic characteristics of terrorism which disseminate intellectual deviation via social media in Saudi Arabia? (Sub-question 1)

- What is the role of social media in disseminating intellectual deviation?

  (Sub-question 2)

- What is the role of the current reality of official and community organizations countering extremist thoughts disseminated on the social networking sites? (Sub-question 3)

- What are the possible effective methods and ways of countering those social media and the deviation thoughts? (Sub-question 4)

- Are there particular factors that are perceived to impact on social media usage in Saudi Arabia according to the variables of gender and age? (Sub-question 5).

This doctoral thesis analysed and assessed major themes connected with the linguistic characteristics of terrorism found in the most widely used languages among terrorist organizations via social media (sub-question 1). The majority of participants reported that terrorist organizations utilize digital technologies and social media in an exploitative manner in order to disseminate their material; thus, using this rhetoric to draw young people into their organizations and corrupt them, raise funds and spread jihadist opinions on a variety of topics to as large an audience as possible (sub-question 2). In spite of the possible weaknesses detailed in the previous chapter concerning community organizations countering extremists, participants stated that they felt that they enjoyed a high degree of security and trusted religious organizations (Sharia) to bring adequate awareness to Saudi society in relation to the dangers represented by terrorism. They also stated that they felt that religious organizations were active in attempts to combat radical ideologies which sought to legitimize violence using the veneer of religion (sub-question 3). Data analysis documented how most of the participants in Saudi Arabia felt that the future implementation of methods and means were the central measures to tackling the issue of terrorism and limiting its dissemination on social media. Participants stated that this was the most effective way to deal with terrorist threats before they occur (sub-question 4). The data analysis showed that there are no differences in the mean of Internet and social media applications usage in Saudi Arabia in relation to the gender variable; however, considerable differences exist in relation to the age group. The difference was in favour of an age of less than 39 years (sub-question 5). Project results here show that terrorist organizations have a strong presence on the Internet and social media. Their presence continues to grow, leading to instability, insecurity and a growth in extremist ideas. This research has demonstrated that there is a correlation between the rise in online radicalization and the spread of Jihadist rhetoric online. This is because people (of all age groups) misinterpret Islamic texts, thereby gaining support, new members, increased funds and learning new methods of persuasion. This research clearly emphasised that new members, particularly young people, are recruited using video games. Finally, this research also considered the influence of official and community organizations as a positive means of countering extremist thoughts and raising awareness throughout society concerning the dangers of terrorism. It was determined in this study that prevention methods have a powerful impact in countering these dangerous ideas.

7.3 Discussion and Conclusions

The assessment of the survey data and participant interviews in this research project confirms that extremist groups employ a multiple and varied range of linguistic characteristics to persuade people to join their cause. These techniques include positive emotions and offers of friendship; in addition to negative emotions, exhibiting anger, power, certainty, and the regular usage of the first-person plural pronouns ("we" and "us"), or third person plural pronouns (such as "they", "them") as illustrated in the literature review. The most widely repeated themes utilised by terrorists were (in order): God, Islam, ISIS, violence, punishment, the West, non-believers, jihad, and lone wolves. Furthermore, special common languages were used by extremists while operating on social media (sub-question 1).

Social media enables people to communicate virtually with anyone around the globe. As such, users from a wide array of nationalities, cultures and locations may communicate daily; this reality is sadly yet effectively exploited by terrorist recruitment groups. The type of language that people use online may contain specific cultural rules and conventions and these features are considered and exploited by terrorist groups when communicating online. These groups also utilise highly encrypted language in order to outsmart government counterterrorism entities; as such, new expressions are created and modified continuously. This research shows how understanding and documenting the linguistic characteristics used online could aid in the prevention and limitation of terrorism. Moreover, the utilisation of radical rhetoric, particularly in relation to the topic of video games, poses a serious risk factor connected with Jihadi radicalization. This rhetoric can easily be employed to manipulate followers and recruit new members through a repeated process of persuasion.

The results show that terrorist groups use social media to promote themselves, achieve their goals, gain recruits and disseminate their propaganda. The characteristics of social media mean that terrorist groups have a cheap method of providing information to others. They have quick access to users and their profiles are managed by a professional team. They use social media to disseminate hatred, raise money and entice young people into the trap of extremism and suspicious groups. These groups publish educational materials which educate youth on fighting and bomb-making, and they exploit the lack of Sharia knowledge in those who read their material by using corrupted and doubtful evidence from Holy Qur'an, prophet traditions and the advisory opinion of extremist symbols. The data

has shown that *Twitter, YouTube* and *WhatsApp*, are the most widely used social media platforms in Saudi Arabia. However, the participants in this study stated that, to the best of their knowledge, extremist groups most often recruited new members using closed groups via *WhatsApp*. They provided evidence for this from their own experiences, in addition to those from their family members and friends (sub-question 2).

This study documented that the role played by social organizations is weak. There is a strong need for community participation to be developed in relation to their role in promoting the concepts of intellectual security. They also have a role to play in increasing the awareness of the dangers represented by extremist groups; as such, they could help to protect their young members from these threats. This could be done through the establishment of recreation centres, for example sports clubs, youth centres, libraries, and so on, to fill up young people's leisure time and teach them useful things that can benefit both themselves and society. Furthermore, schools also have an important role to play when it comes to educating students on correct religious, moral and educational values. However, participants in this project were confident that security and religious (Sharia) organizations played a good role in combating terrorism, and they believed that these groups were effective in raising awareness, maintaining security and holding individuals accountable and those who have been found to be promoting extremist ideas in society. Participants also stated that these groups were effective in combating terrorist activities and curbing their impact, due to the participation of security and religious (Sharia) organizations in the mass arrest of suspected terrorists and their supervision of the implementation of penal provisions, including the monitoring and blocking of extremist websites (sub-question 3). Participant data in this study was of high importance as the material that they provided can be beneficial in the creation of future methods and means to counter terrorism. The participants expressed an overall high level of agreement concerning how to implement appropriate ways to address such ideas. The overall consensus was that an expert panel of members should be created to devise strategies on how to combat terrorism online (sub-question 4).

Participants confirmed that Internet and digital technologies are readily available in the Saudi environment. Data showed that there were no differences statistically between males and females concerning their utilization of social media. Differences were apparent, however, in relation to age variable: most participants were less than 39 years of age and

spent approximately three hours daily on social media. Alternatively, the group which were 40 years old and overused social media for less than two hours a day (sub-question 5).

The final issue addressed in this thesis was the role that the linguistic characteristics of terrorism and social media in the formation of intellectual deviation in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (primary question 1). As aforementioned, participants in Saudi Arabia strongly agreed that social media and technology carry a threat of destabilization in the country, and that social media is exploited by terrorist groups and misused for illegal purposes, including acts of terrorism. Social media contributes notably in Saudi Arabia in the promotion of an immense amount of hatred, in the recruitment of young people into these groups, in the growth of terrorist sympathizers, in fund-raising and the promotion of terrorist groups; thereby, enabling them to achieve specific aims. Certain encrypted languages and terms are widely utilised so that outsiders are unable to understand the communication; for instance, through the use of slang, pronouns or specific vocabulary to avoid government surveillance even in social networks (see Figure 7.1). The data shows that security and religious bodies exert an effective role in combating online radicalization and curbing their impact, by means of mass arrests of suspected terrorists and the raising of awareness opposed to extremist thoughts.
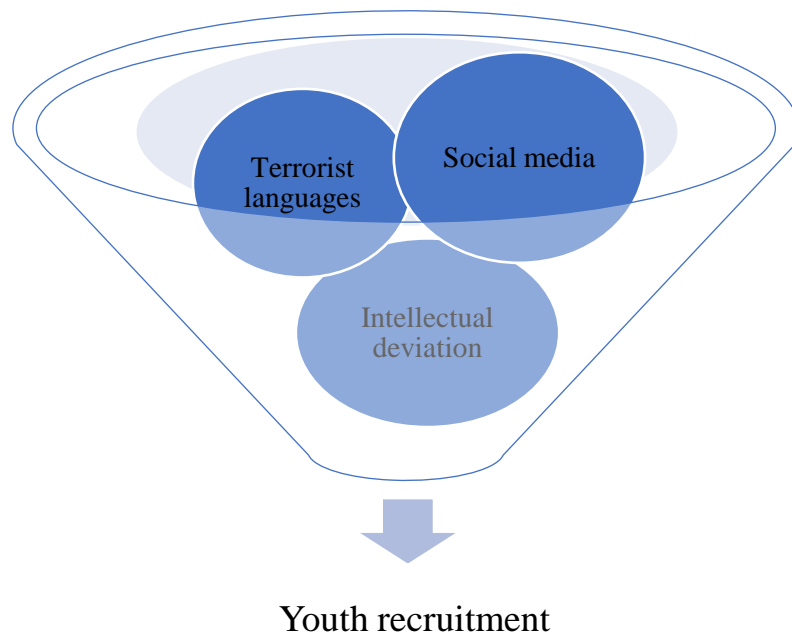
Figure 7. 1 process of the linguistic characteristics of terrorism via social media

7.4 Limitations of the Study

Some limitations exist in this project, and these relate to the context of the study and could be addressed in future work; for example, conducting research in the current context of Saudi Arabia. Other limitations in this study were due to particular time and resource restraints, in addition to the nature of the study, its design and implementation. One major limitation was the lack of opportunities for the researcher to conduct face-to-face interviews with both investigators and families whose relatives had been recruited into the extremist groups. This limitation was due to the sensitive context and concerns for correct ethical treatment. There were also restraining issues due to national security and investigators who only operated by anonymity to ensure maximum confidentiality. Another possible drawback was that some participants stated that the survey was too long, so they felt bored while filling out the survey; this could possibly affect their answers, so a shortened survey should be constructed in similar research. The survey also should consider more participants from different regions in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

7.5 Implications

The results of this research contain significant implications for those concerned with counter terrorism in Saudi Arabia and beyond. The implications of the present study target four categories of central security and social entities in Saudi Arabia, these are: security, religious, social and educational organizations.

- **For security entities and decision-makers:** the current study carries important implications for review within the current security system operating in Saudi Arabia and elsewhere. It is clear that the Internet must be monitored, especially open websites, electronic games which target young minds, particularly combat games.

- **For religious organizations:** these findings illustrate the importance of informing others concerning the topic of *takfir* and the scholarly views on this subject. People should be made aware of its devastating consequences. Mosques can be utilised to disseminate awareness of the dangers of social media within society, and the issue of intellectual terrorism. People should be directed to Islamic websites with moderate and tolerant perspectives on intellectual issues; as such, it is important to organize and design training programs for religious scholars and Imams.

- **For social organizations:** these findings illustrate the significance of activating community participation regarding the promotion of concepts of intellectual security.

Further to this, there should be an increasing awareness of how social media can be used to corrupt the mind. Leisure activities for young people should be promoted in sports clubs, youth centres, libraries, etc., both in rural and urban areas, including very remote areas. This will help to fill up the leisure time of young people and provide them with useful tools to help them live productive lives.

- **For education policy and decision-makers:** these results demonstrate the significance of the educational approach to achieve the desired learning outcomes through regular reviews. The old curricula should be regularly updated and improved and all extremist materials should be removed, if any are discovered. New materials should be added to all stages of education, in order to strengthen intellectual security for young people. It is expected that all of these efforts will contribute to the confrontation and eventual defeat of extremism.

7.6 Recommendations for Future Research

In its very essence, scientific research is cumulative, beginning from where others have stopped. As such, this section suggests some recommendations for any research project on a similar topic undertaken in Saudi Arabia, or any other topic which is comparable to the context of intellectual terrorism online. The insights and results gained from both the investigators and the families whose relatives had been recruited into extremist groups, such as ISIS and Al-Qaeda, were extremely interesting and useful in relation to the usage of social media for recruitment purposes in the Saudi context. Despite the stated limitations, the present study suggests the following recommendations for future research:

- The interview participants contained two investigators in the national security department at the Saudi public prosecution and one family whose relative had been lured into terrorism. I think if the interview involved a larger and wider sample, it could help to gain better and deeper results in any future research.

- The current study focused on using questionnaires and interviews as methods of data collection. I suggest that it would be an interesting experience to replicate this research study using Discourse Analysis, in order to explore the practices in greater depth and detail.

- Another potential limitation of this study is that encrypted languages utilised among terrorist groups are still poorly understood and this would be something to examine in depth in future studies.

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FACULTY OF ARTS, HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES

RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE

INFORMATION LETTER

Appendix- A

Dear Participant,

My name is Ibrahim AlSaab,, currently a PhD student at the Faculty of Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences, University of Limerick/ Ireland. I am working on a thesis about social media and intellectual delinquency: Terrorism in Saudi Arabia, and I would like to investigate the reasons and ways join youth to terrorist organizations through social media.

Therefore, you are invited to participate in a PhD questionnaire of a research study at the University of Limerick. This research project entitled "Investigating the Role of Social Media in the Formation of Intellectual Deviation in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia". The purpose of this research study is to examine the effects of social media on intellectual Deviation: Terrorism on Saudi youth.

This questionnaire is divided to four main parts. It constructs of 38 different questions. Participants have to tick (✓) the suitable answer for them. Any further details or comments can be added in question 38.

- The questionnaire will take approximately 20 minutes.
- The participation in this project is voluntary.
- You have the right to withdraw your contribution from the project at any time.
- Confidentiality in this questionnaire is guaranteed.

If you have any queries or would like more information about the project please contact:

* Principal investigator: Ibrahim AlSaab : Ibrahim.al,saab@ul,ie

* Supervisor: Dr.Liam Murray: liam.murray@ul.ie

This research study has received Ethics approval from the Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee (reference: 2018-09-20-AHSS). If you have any concerns about this study or your participation and wish to contact an independent authority, you may contact:

Chairperson Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee

AHSS Faculty Office

University of Limerick

Tel: +353 61 202286   Email: FAHSSEthics@ul.i

Best Wishes

Ibrahim AlSaab

FACULTY OF ARTS, HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES
RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE

Consent Section:

I, the undersigned, declare that I am willing to take part in research for the project entitled " Investigating the Role of Social Media in the Formation of Intellectual Deviation in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia".

- The nature of my participation has been explained to me, and I have full knowledge of how the information collected will be used.

- I am also aware that any information, or recordings collected will be securely stored, and destroyed after seven years in line with the Data Protection Act.

- I am aware that such information may also be used in future academic presentations and publications about this study.

- I fully understand that there is no obligation on me to participate in this study.

- I fully understand that I am free to withdraw my participation at any time without having to explain or give a reason.

- I am entitled to full anonymity.

- I am entitled to full confidentiality in terms of my participation and personal details.

I may choose to waive my anonymity by ticking the box below; in this case, confidentiality will still be maintained with regard to any statements I make which are not relevant to this particular project.

❑ I would like to be named in the reporting of this project, including within future academic presentations and publications.

If I have ticked the above box, I would like to be referred to as: _____

_____   _____

Signature of participant   Date

Questionnaire Form

Investigating the Role of Social Media in the Formation of Intellectual Deviation in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

Kindly, answer all the following questions:

First part; primary data:

Nature of work:…………………………………………………….

Organization: ……………………………………………………

1. Sex:
   □ Male   □ Female

2. Age:
   □ Less than 29 years old   □ From 30 to 39 years old   □ From 40 to 49 years old □ 50 or more years old.

3. Qualifications:
   □ Bachelor's degree   □ High Diploma   □ Master's degree   □ Ph.D. □ Other.

4. Specialization:
   □ Sharia sciences   □ Social Sciences   □ Management and Economics
   □ Political Sciences

5. Nature of work:
   □ Department Director   □ Head of Department   □ An employee   □ Security expert □ Judicial Investigator   □ Academic specialist   □ other……..

6. Years of experience:
   □ Less than 5 years   □ From 6 to 10 years old   □ From 11 to 19 years old
   □ 20 or more years old.

7. Social networking sites which are most used:
   □ Facebook   □ Twitter   □ What's up   □ Instagram   □ Other.

8. You visit these websites:
   □ Daily   □ Weekly   □ Monthly   □ Others……..

9. The characteristic by which the extremist websites are characterized is:
   □ Technical characteristic   □ Administrative Characteristic   □ General View of the website   □ Other………

Second Part: aspects of the questionnaire

⊠ **The first aspect: what are the linguistic characteristics of terrorism which disseminate intellectual deviation via social media in Saudi Arabia.**

No	Statement	Always	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	None
1	They highlight the thrilling contents in an innovative technical manner in the design					
2	They provide audio and video materials with high emotional effect					
3	They provide access to blocked websites regularly (VPN programs)					
4	They provide free programs and facilitate signing up in them and their wide spreading					
5	They are multilingual and can be translated easily					
6	They use a common language and private symbols among them (encrypted language)					
7	The websites are managed by a professional team					
8	They coordinate with other websites to disseminate the speeches and data of the leaders of organization and promote them					
9	Chat among extremists is possible					
10	Everything new on websites is used on the cellular phones of website members					

⊠ **Second aspect: the role of social media in disseminating intellectual deviation (terrorism).**

No	Statement	Always	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	None
1	They contribute to spreading hatred against religious and political symbols (stimulating seditions)					
2	They call for standing against rulers by restoring the Islamic ruling and caliphate					
3	They exploit the current events to express them from their own points of views in order to reinforce their views regularly(VPN programs)					
4	The websites concentrate on calling to exiling foreign forces out of Islamic lands					
5	They publish educational materials which educate youth the strength such as fighting and bomb-making					
6	They exploit the lack of sharia knowledge in visitors					

No	Statement	Always	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	None
7	They try to justify their thoughts and attitudes using evidence from Holy Qur'an, prophet traditions and the advisory opinion of extremist symbols					
8	They target young people to seduce the values of gallantry in them					
9	They accuse their opponents of disbelief without any constraints or limitations					
10	They pull of youth into trap the cycle of extremist and suspicious groups					
11	Through them, money can be raised for extremists					

☒ Third aspect: the role of the current reality of official and community organizations countering extremist thoughts disseminated on the social networking sites

No	Statement	Always	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	None
1	Sharia organizations can work on the moderation of Islam and the sobriety of its principles in society					
2	Sharia organization spread the awareness in speeches in mosques regarding the dangers of extremist websites					
3	Sharia and educational organizations can show the rights of non-Muslims in society					
4	Social and educational organizations can spread the culture of tolerance, dialogue and accepting the opinions of others					
5	Social and educational organizations can prepare sports clubs to contribute to protecting youth from the intellectual deviation through planned programs					
6	Social organizations can work on raising the awareness of family regarding their role in family control					
7	The entities concerned with monitor the websites can block the extremist websites and intensify the control over them and capture what's going on them periodically					
8	The concerned entities in the Ministry of Interior can arrest those who contribute to spreading the extremist thoughts on websites and refer the convicts to the judiciary					
9	The concerned entities in the Ministry of Interior can help those who returned back and left the extremist thought to be included in society					

⊠ Fourth aspect: the possible effective methods and ways of countering those social media and the deviation thoughts

No	Statement	Always	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	None
1	Developing an agreed-upon Arab strategy to combat the electronic terrorism					
2	Establishing Arab and international databases including the terroristic websites to exchange the security and research experiences					
3	Developing strategic plans to exploit the energies of youth to keep them away from extremism					
4	Spreading the word about the websites which contribute to the prevalence of extremist thoughts in order to be aware of					
5	Distributing awards and encouraging the more active Islamic websites in encountering the extremist websites					
6	Establishing a specializing oversight board to monitor the websites and block those which promote the wrong and extremist thoughts					
7	Developing programs for the electronic advise by scholars of sharia, psychologists, and socialists					

FACULTY OF ARTS, HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES

RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE

INFORMATION LETTER

Appendix- B

Dear Participant,

My name is Ibrahim AlSaab, and I am a currently studying for a PhD in in the Faculty of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences at the University of Limerick, Ireland. As part of my studies I am carrying out research project entitled "Investigating the Role of Social Media in the Formation of Intellectual Deviation in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia: A Case Study on Saudi Public Prosecution (SPP),and one of the families affected by the terrorist groups". and I would like to investigate the reasons and ways join youth to terrorist organizations through social media. You are invited to participate in a PhD Interview of a research study at the University of Limerick. The purpose of this research is to analyse the effects of social media on intellectual delinquency: Terrorism in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

This interview will be recorded using a digital audio recorder and will take approximately 40 minutes. The outcome of the study will provide information about the role of social media on the intellectual delinquency: Terrorism in Saudi Arabia: All information provided by you will be kept confidential and anonymised. You will be assigned a pseudonym and the counselling centre will also be given an invented name. Once the interview recording has been transcribed, the recorder will be wiped.

You are free to withdraw from completing the interview at any stage and you do not have to give a reason for this. You can also request that the recording be stopped at any stage. Should you wish, you may request to view a transcript of our interview.

If you have any queries or would like more information about the project please contact:

* Principal investigator: Ibrahim AlSaab : Ibrahim.al,saab@ul,ie

* Supervisor: Dr.Liam Murray: liam.murray@ul.ie

This research study has received Ethics approval from the Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee (reference: 2018-09-20-AHSS). If you have any concerns about this study or your participation and wish to contact an independent authority, you may contact:

Chairperson Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee

AHSS Faculty Office

University of Limerick

Tel: +353 61 202286   Email: FAHSSEthics@ul.i

Best Wishes

Ibrahim AlSaab

FACULTY OF ARTS, HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES
RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE

Consent Section:

I, the undersigned, declare that I am willing to take part in research for the project entitled

" Investigating the Role of Social Media in the Formation of Intellectual Deviation in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia: A Case Study on The Saudi Public Prosecution (SPP),and one of the families affected by the terrorist groups". I declare that I have been fully briefed on the nature of this study and my role in it and have been given the opportunity to ask questions before agreeing to participate

- The nature of my participation has been explained to me, and I have full knowledge of how the information collected will be used.

- I am aware that my participation in this study will be audio recorded and I agree to this. However, should I feel uncomfortable at any time I can request that the recording software be switched off. I am entitled to copies of all recordings made and am fully informed as to what will happen to these recordings once the study is completed.

- I am also aware that any information, or recordings collected will be securely stored, and destroyed after seven years in line with the Data Protection Act.

- I am aware that such information may also be used in future academic presentations and publications about this study.

- I fully understand that there is no obligation on me to participate in this study.

- I fully understand that I am free to withdraw my participation at any time without having to explain or give a reason.

- I am entitled to full anonymity.

- I am entitled to full confidentiality in terms of my participation and personal details.

I may choose to waive my anonymity by ticking the box below; in this case, confidentiality will still be maintained with regard to any statements I make which are not relevant to this particular project.

❑ I would like to be named in the reporting of this project, including within future academic presentations and publications.

If I have ticked the above box, I would like to be referred to as: _____

Signature of participant   Date

Interview Questions

1- What is the main problems faced youth currently through social media disseminating the (terrorism)?

2- What is the characteristics of social media that deploy intellectual delinquency and terrorism ?

3- What is the Role of social, security and educational organization in combating terrorism in KSA?

4- Are there encrypted language between extremist groups on social media?

5- What is the methods suggested for facing extremist ideas through social media?

Appendix- C

Reliability Analysis Cronbach's Alpha

```
RELIABILITY
  /VARIABLES=Q1 Q2 Q3 Q4 Q5 Q6 Q7 Q8 Q9 Q10 Q11 Q12 Q13 Q14 Q15 Q16 Q17
Q18
 Q19 Q20 Q21 Q22 Q23 Q24 Q25 Q26 Q27 Q28 Q29 Q30 Q31 Q32 Q33 Q34 Q35
Q36 Q37
  /SCALE('ALL VARIABLES') ALL
  /MODEL=ALPHA.
```

Case Processing Summary

		N	%
Cases	Valid	30	100.0
	Excluded[a]	0	.0
	Total	30	100.0
a. Listwise deletion based on all variables in the procedure.			

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.923	37

```
RELIABILITY
  /VARIABLES=Q1 Q2 Q3 Q4 Q5 Q6 Q7 Q8 Q9 Q10
  /SCALE('ALL VARIABLES') ALL
  /MODEL=ALPHA.
```

Case Processing Summary

		N	%
Cases	Valid	30	100.0
	Excluded[a]	0	.0
	Total	30	100.0
a. Listwise deletion based on all variables in the procedure.			

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.884	10

```
RELIABILITY
  /VARIABLES=Q11 Q12 Q13 Q14 Q15 Q16 Q17 Q18 Q19 Q20 Q21
  /SCALE('ALL VARIABLES') ALL
  /MODEL=ALPHA.
```

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.915	11

```
RELIABILITY
  /VARIABLES=Q22 Q23 Q24 Q25 Q26 Q27 Q28 Q29 Q30
  /SCALE('ALL VARIABLES') ALL
  /MODEL=ALPHA.
```

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.806	9

```
RELIABILITY
  /VARIABLES=Q31 Q32 Q33 Q34 Q35 Q36 Q37
  /SCALE('ALL VARIABLES') ALL
  /MODEL=ALPHA.
```

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.809	7

Appendix- D

Kingdom of Saudi Arabia
The Public Prosecution
(248)
General Department of Administrative Development
Planning Administration

No.: 16486

Date: 14/03/1440 H
23/11/2018 G

Sir, the Saudi Cultural Attache to Ireland,

Peace, mercy and blessings of God be upon you,

The Public Prosecution extends its warm greetings for you. As the student/ **IBRAHIM FAHED AL SAAB**, is studying for PhD degree at the University of Limerick in Ireland, according to the scholarship decision No. (260) on 23 Rabia' al-Awwal 1439 H, and he made an application in the Public Prosecution for implementing his field study through distributing questionnaires, for its relevance to the field of his scientific research. His research topic is "Social Media and its role in intellectual perversity (terrorism) in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia."

Accordingly, The Public Prosecution doesn't have a problem, in its concern to encourage researchers and facilitate their mission.

Greetings,

Manager of Administrative Development
Ali bin Mohamed Alfazli
Signed

المملكة العربية السعودية

النيابة العامة

(٢٤٨)

الإدارة العامة للتطوير الإداري

إدارة التخطيط
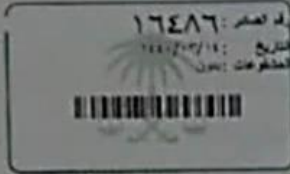
سعادة الملحق الثقافي السعودي بدولة إيرلندا   سلمه الله

السلام عليكم ورحمة الله وبركاته

تهديكم النيابة العامة أطيب تحياتها وحيث أن الطالب/ إبراهيم بن فهيد الصعب يدرس الدكتوراه في جامعة ليمرك بدولة إيرلندا بقرار الابتعاث رقم (٢٦٠) وتاريخ ٢٣ ربيع الأول ١٤٣٩هـ، وقدم تقدم بطلب تطبيق دراسته الميدانية في النيابة العامة من خلال توزيع الاستبانات لمناسبتها لمجال بحثه العلمي في موضوع "وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي ودورها في الانحراف الفكري" (الإرهاب) في المملكة العربية السعودية".

عليه فإن النيابة العامة ليس لديها مانع في إطار حرصها الدائم على دعم الباحثين وتسهيل مهمتهم.

نأمل الاطلاع.

ولكم خالص التحية ،،،

مدير عام التطوير الإداري المكلف

علي بن محمد الفضلي

دائرة قضايا الأمن الوطني

سعادة مدير الإدارة العامة للتطوير الاداري المكلف

السلام عليكم ورحمة الله وبركاته. وبعد:
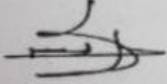
إلحاقا الى خطابنا رقم ٧١٠٩٥ وتاريخ ١٤٤٠-٣-٧هـ المشار فيه إلى كتاب الباحث / إبراهيم بن فهيد بن إبراهيم الصعب ، المتضمن طلبه توزيع (استبيان) لأطروحة المعنونة بـ ' وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي ودورها في الانحراف الفكري (الارهاب)، في المملكة العربية السعودية"، على دائرة قضايا الأمن الوطني بالنيابة العامة لتعبئتها.

نبعث لكم الاستبانات بعد تعبئتها.

للإحاطة وإكمال اللازم.

ولكم تحياتي ،،،

رئيس دائرة قضايا الأمن الوطني

ابراهيم عبدالرحمن الفنتوخ

Naif Arab University for Security Sciences

Sir, the Saudi Cultural Attache to Ireland,

Peace, mercy and blessings of God be upon you,

Naif Arab University for Security Sciences extends its warm greetings for you. As the student/ **IBRAHIM FAHED AL SAAB**, is studying for PhD degree at the University of Limerick in Ireland, according to the scholarship decision No. (260) on 23 Rabia' al-Awwal 1439 H, and he made an application in Naif Arab University for Security Sciences for implementing his field study through distributing questionnaires, for its relevance to the field of his scientific research. His research topic is "Social Media and its role in intellectual perversity (terrorism) in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia."

Accordingly, the university doesn't have a problem, in its concern to encourage researchers and facilitate their mission.

Greetings,

Vice Dean for Academic Affairs
Dr. Abdalelah bin Mohamed Alma'yoof
Signed

Official stamp of
Naif Arab University for Security Sciences

سعـادة الملحـق الثقافـي السعـودي بدولـة أيرلنـدا

السلام عليكم ورحمة اللّه وبركاته

تهديكم جامعة نايف العربية للعلوم الأمنية أطيب تحياتها، وحيث أن الطالـب/ إبراهيم بن فهيد الصعب يـدرس الـدكتـوراه في جامعة ليمرك بدولـة أيرلندا بقرار الابتعاث رقم (٢٦٠) وتاريخ ٢٣ ربيع الأول ١٤٣٩هـ، وقد تقدم بطلب تطبيق دراسته الميدانية في جامعة نايف العربية للعلوم الأمنية من خلال توزيع الاستبانات لمناسبتها لمجال بحثه العلمي في موضوع "وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي ودورها في الانحراف الفكري (الإرهاب) في المملكة العربية السعودية".

عليه فإن الجامعة ليس لديها مانع في إطار حرصها الدائم على دعم الباحثين وتسهيل مهمتهم.

نأمل الاطلاع وتقبلوا موفور التحية والتقدير،،،

وكيل
الجامعة للشـؤون الأكاديميـة

د. عبـد الإلـه بـن محمـد المعيـوف

Web site: www.nauss.edu.sa   البوابة الالكترونية   رقم الصادر: ١١٦/٤٠/٤   التاريخ: ١٤٤٠/٠٢/٠٥   E-Mail: info@nauss.edu.sa
P.O.Box: 6830 RIYADH 11452 K.S.A   ص.ب ٦٨٣٠ الرياض ١١٤٥٢ المملكة العربية السعودية
TEL.: 2463444 FAX: 2464713   الهاتف: ٢٤٦٣٤٤٤ الفاكس: ٢٤٦٤٧١٣

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Appendix- G

Al-Nasekh Al-Arabi
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مكتب الناسخ العربي
تـرجمة معتمـــدة
ترخيص رقم ٥٧٨
غرفة تجارية، (٢١٦٩٤١)

Naif Arab University for security Sciences

To Whom It May Concern,,

Peace be upon you,,

Naif Arab University for Security Sciences presents you its best regards, and we would like to inform you that the student / Ibrahim bin Fohaid Al-Saab has applied his field study at Naif Arab University for Security Sciences by distributing questionnaires in the field of his scientific research about the subject of **"Social media and its role in intellectual deviation (terrorism) in Kingdom of Saudi Arabia,** during the period from March 1, 2019 to April 30, 2019. He was given this statement without any responsibility on the part of the university

With our best regards,,

Vice Academic Affairs

Dr. Abdul Ilah bin Muhammad Al-Mayouf

إلى مَن يهمه الأمر

السلام عليكم ورحمة الله وبركاته

تهديكم جامعة نايف العربية للعلوم الأمنية أطيب تحياتها، ونفيدكم بأن الطالب/ إبراهيم بن فهيد الصعب قد قام بتطبيق دراسته الميدانية في جامعة نايف العربية للعلوم الأمنية من خلال توزيع استبانات في مجال بحثه العلمي في موضوع "وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي ودورها في الانحراف الفكري (الإرهاب) في المملكة العربية السعودية" وذلك خلال الفترة من ١ مارس ٢٠١٩م وحتى٣٠ أبريل ٢٠١٩م.

وقد أعطيَ هذه الإفادة دون أدنى مسؤولية على الجامعة، ولكم موفور التحية والتقدير.

وكيل
الجامعة للشؤون الأكاديمية

د. عبد الإله بن محمد المعيوف