

COUNTRY IMAGE IN MOVIES: A STUDY ON “HOLOGRAM FOR THE KING” MOVIE

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ABSTRACT

Movies are generally used as a tool for disseminating country's image. In the relevant literature, there is a general understanding that the Arabs are dehumanized and depicted in negative ways in the Hollywood movies. However, “Hologram for the King” has a more realistic and less biased approach with its focus on both the negative and the positive aspects of Saudi Arabia and its people. The aim of this study, is to analyze the representation of Saudi Arabia and its people in the Hollywood movie “Hologram for the King”. Content analysis method is used for the analysis. The findings of the study indicated that, the total duration of the country image in the movie is 28.9 minutes. Political and social character of the country and capacities/competencies of the country were found to have the highest percentage. This result, reflects that movies are an important tool of communication for the country image.

Keywords: Country image, Saudi Arabia, movie, representation, communication

FİLMLERDE ÜLKE İMAJİ: “HOLOGRAM FOR THE KING” FİLMİ ÜZERİNE BİR İNCELEME

ÖZET

Film ülkelere ilişkin imajları yaymak için kullanılan araçlardan birisidir. Bugüne kadar yapılan araştırmalar, Hollywood filmlerinde Arap imajının olumsuz tasvir edildiğine dair genel bir anlayışı ortaya koymaktadır. Ancak, “Kral için Hologram” filmi Suudi Arabistan'ının ve halkının hem olumsuz hem de olumlu yönlerine odaklanarak daha gerçekçi ve daha az önyargılı bir yaklaşım sergilemektedir. Bu çalışmanın amacı Suudi Arabistan ve halkının bir Hollywood filmi olan “Kral için Hologram” filmindeki temsilini incelemektir. Çalışmada içerik analizi yöntemi kullanılmıştır. Araştırmanın bulguları, filmdeki ülke imajına ilişkin görsellerin toplam süresinin 28.9 dakika olduğunu göstermiştir. Ülkenin politik ve sosyal niteliği ve ülkenin kapasitesi / yeterliğine ilişkin imajlar en yüksek yüzdeye sahip olarak bulunmuştur. Bu sonuç filmlerin ülke imajı için önemli bir iletişim aracı olduğunu göstermektedir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Ülke imajı, Suudi Arabistan, film, temsil, iletişim

INTRODUCTION

Image is about the perceptions that publics have toward an organization, product or country. An image is a perception which exists in the mind of the receiver

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Makale Gönderim Tarihi: 11.09.2018 - Makale Kabul Tarihi: 23.10.2018

(Theaker 2004: 96). Countries also have images like people and organizations. It is possible to associate ‘country image’ with objects, events, persons from a country not only in international business but also in politics and culture (Mossberg and Kleppe 2005).

Since there are many different components it is not possible to evaluate the country image only from one perspective. It has more than one measure. These measures grouped by Heslop and his colleagues (2008) as, political and social character of the country, capacities/ competencies of the country, character of the people, competency of the people country and people evaluations, desired country associations. They also mention that the first two is the cognitive components of the country, the next two composed of the cognitive components of people, the following one is the evaluative affect and the last one is behavior-related issues (Table 1).

Table 1. Measures of Country Image

Cognitive Components of Country	
Political and social character of the country	e.g. political stability, democracy level, rights, environmental controls, role in world politics, peaceful, quality of life and education
Capacities/competencies of the country	e.g. technically advanced, industrialized, economic stability, well managed economy, wealth.
Cognitive Components of People	
Character of the people	e.g. trustworthy, friendly.
Competency of the people	e.g. well educated, hard working, industrious.
Evaluative	
Country and people evaluations	e.g. likeable, ideal, attractive.
Behavioral	
Desired country associations	e.g. interested in immigrants from, travel to, investment from, investing in, closer ties with.

Country image also has an important role on the beliefs and attitudes of the people related with a specific country, that’s why it has become one of the most important topics studied in the fields of marketing, tourism, international relations and media/ communication. In the marketing field, researchers analyzed the relationship between country image and its effects on consumers’ product evaluations (Laroche et. al 2005; Roth and Romeo 1992), product choice behaviors (Han 1990) and the importance of country of origin for product choice (Laroche et. al. 2005). In the field of tourism, the researches explored the

importance of country image on formation and branding of the countries (Busby et. al. 2013; Nadeau et. 2007) and how this effects the consumers' decision in destination choice (Warnick et. al. 2005). In the international relations discipline, the researches mainly focused on the importance of nation image on international relations (Anholt 2013; Wang 2006; Kunczik 2016). The researches undertaken in the field of media and communication generally dealt with the construction process of country image and the effects of media during this construction.

Since media is one of the most important medium for dissemination of the images, also the importance of movies as one of the main actors for creating and disseminating a country image has become a prominent subject. Some researchers also focused on film induced tourism (Juskelyete 2016; Busby et. al. 2013; Kozlovic 2009) in which they mainly evaluated the importance of movies on the destination choices of tourists (Busby et. al. 2013).

Especially Hollywood movies are known as one of the most dominant power that could influence the audiences towards a specific ideology or culture. Ryan and Kellner (1990: 1) mentioned the importance of Hollywood movies as;

“Films make rhetorical arguments through the selection and combination of representational elements that project rather than reflect a world. In so doing, they impose on the audience a certain position or point of view.”

Therefore, it is possible to say that movies could be influential and memorable through the plot, the characters, the setting or all these aspects together (Beeton 2016: 57). The movies are an important tool for gathering information towards to a specific country. Especially for the representation of Middle Eastern countries cinema, is known as one of the most important tools. In his book, Khtaib (2006: 1) emphasize that cinema which is known as a powerful tool of cultural production, stands at the heart of representation of the modern Middle East.

The objective of this study is to analyze the representation of country image in movies. “*Hologram for the King*” movie is selected as a case study to undertake the research. How Saudi Arabia's country image is represented is analyzed through using content analysis method. In the following pages, we review the literature on country image in international relations, Hollywood movies' approach to the Arab world. Next, the methodological approach, research questions, content analysis coding structure and findings is given. Finally, findings are discussed from an international relations perspective. The coding structure is adapted from the country image measures grouped by Heslop and his colleagues in 2008. The coding structure includes cognitive components of the country, cognitive components of the people, country and people evaluations and the final is behavioral-related.

1. INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS AND THE COUNTRY IMAGE

There has been a growing interest in the concept of "image" in the fields of political science and international relations since the 1950s. Kenneth E. Boulding's book *Image* (1956) is considered as the first scholarly work analyzing the impact of the image on international relations. Boulding defined image as "the total cognitive, affective, and evaluative structure of the behavior unit, or its internal view of itself and its universe" (Boulding 1959: 120). The images in international systems are "those which a nation has of itself and of those other bodies in the system which constitute its international environment" (Boulding 1959: 121).

Cognitive approaches in the study of International Relations (IR) received a great deal of attention during the Cold War. In that period, there was a tendency to focus on the perceived images of other nations (mainly the enemy). Enemy image associated with some metaphors like "paper tiger and falling dominoes" (Herrmann et.al. 1977: 407) became popular. The link between the images and the foreign policy formulation became a focus of scholarly work. A number of studies displayed the relationship between perceptions and the foreign policy decision-making (Holsti 1962: 244). Since the dynamics of world politics mainly rested on a superpower rivalry and confrontation, there was a special focus on the link between international conflict and beliefs of individual leaders during the Cold War years. Holsti focused on U.S. Secretary of State John Foster Dulles' belief systems and his perceptions of the Soviet Union (Holsti 1962). Hurwitz and Peffley (1990) have analyzed the link between the perceptions of the Soviet Union and the foreign policy attitudes. Rosati examined the impact of the beliefs of President Carter on the policy choices (Rosati 1987). It has been suggested by Wright that "international conflict frequently is not between states, but rather between distorted images of states" (Wright 1957: 266). According to that view, a decision-maker acts according to the images rather than the "objective" reality which creates the problem of the "stereotyped national images" (Holsti 1962: 244). In relation with this concern, Boulding states that "The national image, however, is the last great stronghold of unsophistication...Nations are divided into 'good' and 'bad'-the enemy is all bad, one's own nation is of spotless virtue" (Boulding 1959: 130).

In addition to the perceived images of other nations, "self-image" also became an issue of concern for the countries. The image building as a part of perception management in IR is considered as a part of public diplomacy (Ayvazyan 2010: 36). In the conditions of globalization and developments in international communication, the significance of country images increased. In the past, IR was seen as a discipline studying the relations between states solely. The perceptions related with the international system are changing now and the studies of IR also covers the role of media, public opinion, international organizations, non-governmental organizations and certain groups in international politics. In

addition to the changes in the actors, the concept of the “power” which is a key concept in international relations also altered. Traditionally, power was associated with military strength, coercion, oppression, domination, exploitation, force and violence. In 1990, Joseph Nye proposed a new understanding of power through coining the term “soft power”. According to Nye (1990: 166) this type of power emerges “when one country gets other countries to want what it wants—might be called co-optive or soft power in contrast with the hard or command power of ordering others to do what it wants”. National images are a part of a state’s soft power. In order to have the credibility to become a soft power, countries should engage in public diplomacy, image building and perception management. According to Ayvazyan (2010: 39), “the image is a non-tangible factor for a nation state’s power”. In a similar way, Kunczik (1997) argues that half of a nation’s power depends on image building.

Soft power mainly lies in the domain of public diplomacy which attracts the attention of both practitioners of foreign policy and scholars of international relations. Public diplomacy deals with the construction and the promotion of positive national images. Different than from the traditional diplomacy, public diplomacy does not only target the foreign policy makers but also wider publics. Public diplomacy also maintains a link between different countries through creating channels for individual contacts rather than just relying on government-to-government relations. (Li and Chitty 2009: 4-5).

Different scholars studying on the role of image in IR suggests considering the image of countries in foreign policy analyses. “Image” is a very strong tool for the nation-states. Jervis argues that countries can influence other countries through changing their images. So, the image would become a major factor in the maintenance of national goals. On the other hand, prejudices and stereotypes are also created by the images. Nations may pay high costs for having an undesirable national image (Jervis 1970: 6).

2. HOLLYWOOD MOVIES AND THE ARAB WORLD

Images of nations in the minds of individuals might be formed through several ways. Many information sources are in process in the formation of national images. The process starts during the childhood through encountering with books, fairytales and theatre. But television and cinema are probably the strongest image shapers as Vidal asserts “popular feature films” have become “the lingua franca of the twentieth century” (Vidal 1993: 2-3).

Hollywood is the largest and the most popular film industry in the world. The popularity of Hollywood movies is not limited to the United States, they are watched by millions of people of all around the world. Therefore, Hollywood’s movies reach nearly everyone, and the cinematic illusions became a very important tool in the formation of beliefs and opinions about certain things including the countries and the different ethnic groups. In these movies, while

some of the ethnic groups may be represented in a more favorable manner, others may be depicted in a negatively biased way. Many images in the movies may play a critical role in the formation of stereotypes about certain countries and the people of different races including the Arabs.

Jack Shaheen was a prominent scholar specialized in the stereotypes in the Hollywood movies related with Arabs. In his most famous book, *Reel Bad Arabs: How Hollywood Villifies a People*, Shaheen (2001) documented and discussed more than 900 films released between 1896 and 2001 that contained portrayals of Arabs. The book was later turned into a documentary with the same title in 2006. In the documentary, Shaheen viewed 1000 films with Arab and Muslim characters with the following characteristics: 12 had portrayed positively, 52 were offering a measure of balance, and the 936 were negative. In the documentary, Shaheen displays that "Muslim Arabs have been the most maligned group in the history of the cinema, characterized by excessive stereotyping that exceeded negative images of Blacks, Native Americans, Asians, Hispanics and Jews" (Caruso 2008: 2).

In addition to Shaheen, other studies also show that Americans have stereotyped images of Arabs. Al-Farra talks about the myths related with Arabs "which often inspire directors, film producers" (Al-Farra 1996: 4-5). Ghareeb (1983) states that Arabs were so humanized in the American perceptions and the fear of Muslims and Arabs are shown as the reason for the negative portrayals of Arabs in the West. Savage made focus on the negative depictions of Arabs in Hollywood movies as follows "Hollywood has played a direct role in fanning the flames of suspicion and hatred towards Arabs and Arab Americans. This has been insidiously accomplished by representing them in thousands of roles as the source of all that is evil in world culture" (Savage 2002: 7).

There may be listed several reasons for the negative representation of Arabs in the West. Sharabi (1979: 176) makes focus on the historical and the religious factors in his analysis of the distorted image of Arabs. He believes that distorted image of Arabs cannot be solely explained by ignorance but rather a religious and racial antagonism against the Arabs rooted in the history. There are some important historical events which also shaped the distorted image, misconceptions and stereotypes. Creation of Israel is an important landmark for the negative depictions of Arabs in the West. Before the establishment of Israel in 1948, Arabs were the cultural 'other' which "were thought of in terms of camels, dancing girls and pyramids" (Hamada 2001: 7). Following the start of the Arab-Israeli Conflict, the issue started to be politicized and the Arabs were portrayed as "backward, fanatic, dishonest, fatalistic and lazy" (Ghareeb 1979: 61). Establishment of Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) in 1960 and the decision taken by OPEC to cut oil exports to the United States and other countries supporting Israel in Yom Kippur War in 1973 contributed to an increase in the negative opinions about Arabs in the West. The argument that the

world's largest oil supplies and the oil prices are controlled and manipulated by the "greedy Arabs" came into picture (Al Farra 1996: 2). Although, OPEC was seen as synonymous with Arabs, in reality, only seven of the thirteen OPEC members are Arab countries. Finally, after the terrorist attack of September 11, 2001, American films have strengthened screen images of Arabs as "mad bombers, religious fanatics, suicide murders" (Kozlovic 2007: 215).

For an analysis of how Arabs are depicted in the Hollywood movies, first, it is important to focus on the term "Arab" itself. Hollywood movies have a reductionist approach in their analysis of the "Arabs". The word "Arab" is used to describe an individual from the Middle East but these people are from the different countries, cultures and beliefs (Al-Farra 1996: 1). There are 22 Arab states and 422 million Arab people in the world. However, in the movies, the people and the countries of the Arab world are reduced to a single framework. The most used nationalities in the movies are Egyptians and the Palestinians which are representing the "Arab". Another understanding is that the Arabs are often equated with Islam. In a similar way, Islam is also seen as the synonym of Arab. In reality, there are about 15 million Arab Christians reside in the region. Shaheen (2001: 4) writes that "A majority of the world's 1.1 billion Muslims are Indonesian, Indian and Malaysian, but only 12 percent of the world's Muslims are Arab".

Symbols are frequently used in the depiction of Arabs in the Hollywood movies. According to Kozlovic, Arab-Muslims are portrayed "as one of the three "Bs", namely, billionaires, belly dancers or bombers". Shaheen (2003: 175-178) focuses on the depiction of Arabs as villains and sheiks. In his analysis, he argues that Arabs are equated with "evil" assaulting their enemies, raping and killing Western characters. Another symbol that is used in the movies in their representation of the Arabs is "sheikh", especially started to be used after the 1973 oil crisis. Sheikh literally means wise and elderly person or the head of an Arab tribe, family, or village. However, in the movies, they are shown as wealthy and cruel people "getting rich at the expense of red-blooded Americans" (Shaheen 2003: 180). Arabs are also characterized as anti-modern, uncivilized and antagonistic. Through that way, they are dehumanized, and Hollywood creates its other which generates xenophobia and hostility. It doesn't mean that Arabs would never be portrayed in a negative way in the Hollywood movies but most of the depictions of the Arabs in the movies are negative.

Arab women in the Hollywood movies are also portrayed in a stereotypic way. They are either eroticized as belly dancers, maidens or portrayed as virtually invisible which are always silent and do not have any identity with their black cloths. Arab women are not shown as having a professional occupation. The portrayal of women as invisible and mute with their black burkas ignores the role of the women in the Arab world. In reality, they are serving very important roles in their societies just like any other ethnic group.

3. ABOUT A HOLOGRAM FOR THE KING MOVIE

“*Hologram for the King*” movie’s scenario based on a novel written by Dave Eggers. The director of the movie is Tom Tykwer. It was released in April 2016. The runtime of the movie is 1 hours 48 minutes. The main character of the movie is Alan Clay (Tom Hanks) who works for a company operates in US named “Reliant Group”. King Abdullah demands an offer from this company for a hologram projection system. Alan's company assigned Alan to make the presentation to King Abdullah and he travels to Saudi Arabia.

Alan is in a desperate situation when he arrives in Saudi Arabia. He is newly divorced with a daughter, depressed and having financial problems. In Saudi Arabia he stays at a five-star hotel (Hyatt Regency). In order to meet with King Abdullah he needed to wait for weeks because the King and his assistants postponed the meeting several times. The driver named Yousef (Alexander Black) carrying Alan to The Kings Metropolis of Economy and Trade (KMET) become friends. Although KMET has a technically advanced and well- equipped building, Alan and his team is given a tent –lack of technology- in order to prepare their presentation. During his stay, Alan has some health problems, he has a cyst on his back which needs to be removed. Yousef gets him to hospital and at the hospital Alan meets with a female surgeon named Dr. Zahra Hakem (Sarita Choudhury). Once they get to know each other well, they start to have a romantic relationship. However since Dr. Zahra Hakem is still married with her husband in those days, therefore they keep their relationship as a secret. But at the end of the movie she get divorced.

After several weeks, Alan presents their Hologram system to the King, however a Chinese company gets the job. At the end of the movie Alan decides to stay in Saudi Arabia with Dr. Zahra and doesn’t go back to USA.

4. METHOD

4.1. Research questions

This research seeks to examine the representation of country image in the movie “Hologram for the King”. Regarding this, the research questions of the current study are;

RQ1 Which country image measure has the highest share in the movie?

RQ2 How is the political and social character of the country shown in the movie?

RQ3 How is the capacities and competencies of the country shown in the movie?

RQ4 How is the character of the people shown in the movie?

RQ5 How is the country and people evaluations shown in the movie?

RQ6 How is the desired country associations shown in the movie?

4.2. Instruments

The aim of this study is to analyze the representation of country image of Saudi Arabia in the Hollywood movie *“Hologram for the King”* through using content analysis method. Content analysis method generally preferred to be used in social sciences. This method defined by Neuendorf (2002: 1) as, systematic, objective, quantitative analysis of message characteristics through the examination of human interaction; the analysis of character portrayals in media or novels and so. For these reasons it is one of the most frequently used analysis method in the social sciences, especially in communication related topics.

4.3. Coding

The bases of the coding structure are adapted from the country image measures grouped by Heslop and his colleagues in 2008. Since country image consisted up of more than one structure, the researchers analyzed the movie through each measure. The coding structure of the research is shown in Table 2.

Table 2. Coding Structure

Main Category	Sub-category	Direction (Positive Association or Negative Association)	Duration
Political and social character of the country	Peaceful		
	Democracy level		
	Rights		
	Quality of life		
	Education		
	Religion		
Capacities/competencies of the country	Technically advance		
	Industrialized		
	Wealth		
Character of the people			
Competency of the people	well educated		
	Hardworking		
Country and people evaluations	Likeable		
	Ideal		
Desired country associations	Immigrants		
	Investment		
	Closer ties with other countries		

For the cognitive components of country, the elements coded as positive could be listed as emphasis on the peaceful environment, women’s right to work,

luxurious cars and the flats, education level, technology used in working spaces. The negatively coded elements include obligatory veiling, lack of labor rights, execution of death penalty in a public space and problems for women seeking divorce.

Cognitive components of people have two sub-categories; character of the people and the competency of the people. Characteristic features of the people in the movie are grouped under nine features. These are unreliable, impolite, trustworthy, selfish, chatty, funny, friendly, hardworking and brave. Competency of the people are analyzed through people’s education level and their working habits.

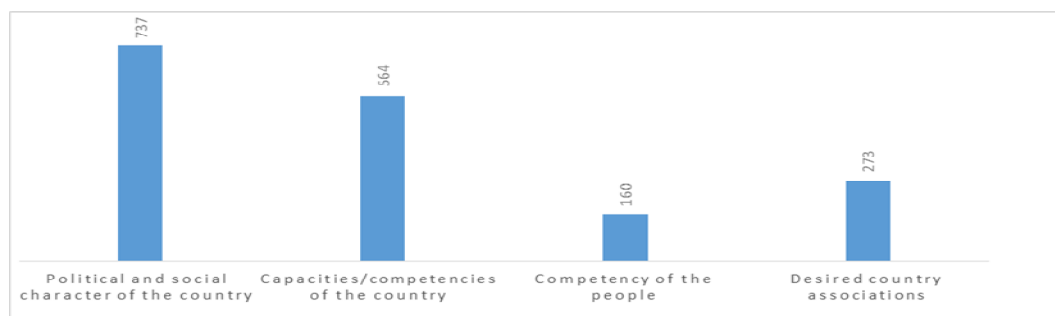
Desired country associations are grouped under three categories as immigrants, investment from abroad and closer ties with different countries. Saudi Arabia is reflected as a country attracting immigrants from USA, Philippines, Denmark, etc. Many global brand placement practices are also seen in the movie. Some of these brands include Hyatt Regency, Starbucks and KFC. Saudi Arabia is portrayed as a globalized country having links with major powers including USA and China.

To control the reliability and the suitability of the coding scheme, inter-coder reliability has been applied by two experts in the field. Krippendorff’s Alpha was calculated based on the agreement and disagreement of the experts (Neuman 2014: 376) and 97 % consensus achieved.

5. RESULTS

The findings of the research could be summed up in five categories. Country image relates scenes were 1734 seconds (28, 9 minutes) in total. The main categories and the durations of the scenes related with that categories are shown in Figure 1. The scenes that shows; the political and social character country is 737 seconds, capacities and competencies of the country 564 seconds, desired country associations 273 seconds, and competency of the people 160 seconds. From these findings, it is possible to say that majority of the scenes that are related with country image is about the political and social character of the country.

Figure 1. Main Categories and Durations



The second analysis is conducted to explore the distribution of durations according to the sub-categories (Table 3). The direction of associations (Positive (P) or Negative (N)) related with subcategories are also analyzed. The results demonstrated that religion related scenes have the highest amount of share with 356 seconds. Quality of life follows this with 162 seconds in total, but 101 seconds of which is negative and 61 seconds positive. From these findings it is observed that majority of the scenes related with the quality of life in Saudi Arabia has a negative direction. The scenes related with the democracy level of the country are 132 seconds. The level of democracy associated with negative attributes, whereas education associated with positive attributes which comprise of 40 seconds of the total category. Rights follows by the education. The scenes related with rights are 37 seconds in total, 31 seconds of which is related with positive aspects and 6 seconds with negative. Ten seconds is about the peaceful sub-category. The direction is positive which means that the associations with the peace level of Saudi Arabia are showed in a positive way.

Table 3. Directions and Duration of Sub-categories Under Political and Social Character of the Country

Main Category	Sub-category	Direction (Positive Association? / Negative Association?)	Duration	
Political and social character of the country	Peaceful	Positive	10 sec.	737 sec. (12 min.)
	Democracy level	Negative	132 sec.	
	Rights	Positive	31 sec.	
		Negative	6 sec.	
	Quality of life	Positive	61 sec.	
		Negative	101 sec.	
	Education	Positive	40 sec.	
Religion		356 sec.		

The distribution capacities and competencies are grouped under three sub-categories; technologically advanced, industrialized and wealthy. The scenes related with the item “technologically advanced” have the highest share with 267 seconds. The scenes generally have positive associations. Scenes related with wealth are the second, in total there are 260 seconds, 160 of which is about positive associations. So it is possible to say that, majority of the scenes related with Saudi Arabia’s wealth were shown positively. The third category is “industrialized”, the scenes related with that sub-category is only 67 seconds, all of which is shown in a positive manner. (Table 4).

Table 4. Directions and Duration of Sub-categories (Capacities/competencies of the country)

Main Category	Sub-category	Direction (Positive Association?/Negative Association?)	Duration	
Capacities/competencies of the country	Technologically advanced	Positive	267 sec.	564 sec. (10 min.)
	Industrialized	Positive	67 sec.	
	Wealthy	Positive	160 sec.	
		Negative	100 sec.	

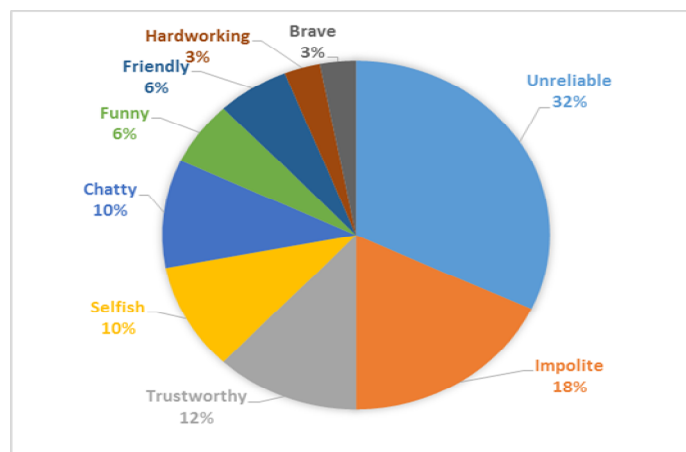
Once the competencies of the people analyzed, the total scenes related with that category is found as 160 seconds. The association is positive and in 90 seconds of that 160 seconds people of the country is shown as hardworking, and in 70 seconds as well educated.

Table 5. Competency of the People Shown in the Movie

Main Category	Sub-category	Direction (Positive Association?/Negative Association?)	Duration	
Competency of the people	well educated	Positive	70 sec.	160 sec. / (2 min.)
	hardworking	Positive	90 sec.	

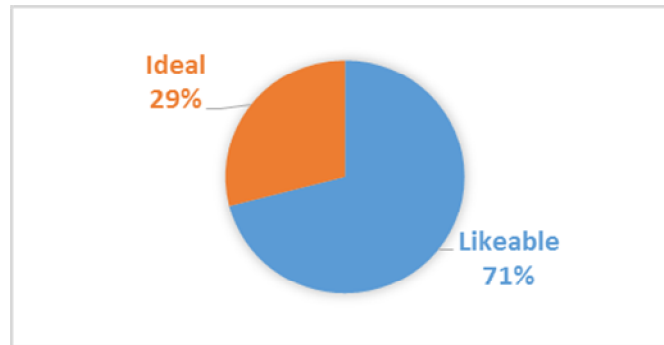
In the movie there are also scenes related with the character of the people. The results reveal that nine different character types are prominent within the movie. Top three of these are, unreliable (32%), impolite (18%) and trustworthy (12%). Other characteristic features of the people are, selfish, chatty, funny, friendly, hardworking and brave (Figure 2).

Figure 2. The Characteristic Features of the Characters in the Movie



Country and people evaluations grouped under two main categories which are likeable and ideal. Likeable is 71% and ideal is 29% (Figure 3).

Figure 3. Country and People Evaluations in the Movie



Desired country association is 273 seconds in total. Closer ties with other countries have the highest share with 107 seconds, and these ties are shown in a positive way. Investment from other countries is also displayed in the movie. There are brand placements of the international chains such as; KFC, Hyatt and Starbucks. 88 seconds consists of the investment from other countries. Another finding shows that also immigrants from other countries are depicted in the movie, about 78 seconds. The immigrants’ home countries are China, Philippines, Denmark and USA.

Table 6. Desired Country Associations

Main Category	Sub-category	Direction (Positive Association? / Negative Association?)	Duration	
Desired country associations	Interested in immigrants from (China, Philippines, Denmark, USA)	Positive	78 sec.	273 sec. (4,5 min.)
	Investment from (KFC, China, Hyatt, USA, Starbucks)	Positive	88 sec.	
	Closer ties with USA	Positive	107 sec.	

DISCUSSION

The findings of the current study reveal that, once the country image related scenes taken into consideration political and the social character of the country has the highest share with 42% of the total category. Negative associations mainly observed under the sub-categories of democracy level, rights, quality of life and wealth. However positive associations found to be slightly higher than the negative ones (1395 seconds positive, 339 seconds negative).

It has been discussed in the relevant literature that the Arabs have been generally portrayed in negative ways in the Hollywood movies. The general concept explaining that situation is the “dehumanization” of Arab people through their representation as evil, terrorists, backward, uncivilized, anti-modern, cruel and barbaric. However, there is an understanding that after September 11 attacks,

Arabs started to be portrayed in a more realistic and less biased way (Shaheen 2008). Shaheen states that "refreshingly, about a third of the post-9/11 films [...] a total of 29, projected worthy Arabs and decent Arab Americans: Arab champions—men and women—are displayed in 19 movies; Arab Americans appear as decent folk in 10 of 11 films." (Shaheen 2008: xv). *Babel* (2006), *Rendition* (2007), and *the Kingdom* (2007) would be shown as the examples which depicted Arabs in a more realistic way and having likeable characters.

"*Hologram for the King*" movie would also be given as another example for the representing Arabs as ordinary human beings having positive/negative aspects and strengths/weaknesses. The movie tries to keep a balance between the positive and the negative aspects of the people. Saudi Arabian King and the officials of the The King's Metropolis of Economy and Trade (KMET) are portrayed as unreliable and impolite people (never coming to their appointments). Two leading actors of the movie (Driver Youssef and Doctor Zahra) are shown as educated, trustworthy and modern people having links with the West. The movie reflects that Saudi Arabian people also have the same type of problems and worries as the Western people. "*Hologram for the King*"'s attempt to display a positive image of Arabs is evident. It reflects that rather than making categorizations about the character of the people belonging to a nation which lead to stereotypes and prejudices, each person should be evaluated individually.

Shaheen argues that "you would never guess from Hollywood's portrayal of Arab women that they are diverse and talented as any others.....Not only do the reel Arab women never speak but they are never in the work of place, functioning as doctors, computer specialists, school teachers, print and broadcast journalists" (Shaheen 2003: 184). The representation of Saudi Arabian women over Medical Doctor Zahara challenges Shaheen's argument. Doctor Zahra is at the center of the movie and portrayed as a liberated, strong and hard-working woman. She is on the way of divorce and starts an emotional relationship with the leading character Alan Clay. There is also a Saudi Arabian woman working as the Public Relations officer at KMET.

Related with the representation of the country, Saudi Arabia is shown as an undemocratic country which lacks political and social rights. (obligatory veiling, no syndicates, execution of death penalty in a public space). On the other hand, the country portrayed as a technologically advanced and an industrialized one. KMET is shown as an autonomous region symbolizing relative liberalism where international staff is working, women are uncovered and treated as equals of men. However, some part of the movie is shot in a small village in Saudi Arabia, showing the miserable life of the local people. There is a clear focus on the dichotomies of Saudi Arabia. Although, the negative images related with the country are given, Saudi Arabia is visualized as like a box of chocolates in which you never know what you're going to get which reflects the dichotomies of the country (Veiled women passing in front of a lingerie shop). However, the film

includes several stereotypes through making focus on oriental symbols like camel, oasis, bead, finger food and floor table.

The movie is also about globalization. It shows how the global markets are integrated with each other. Saudi Arabia is seen as affected by the waves of economic globalization deeply. It is shown as a country interested in immigrants from USA, Philippines and Denmark. The leading actor of the movie, Alan Clay (Hanks) is an American businessman travelling to sell a software program to Saudi Arabian King. Many global brands are also displayed in the movie which reflects that Saudi Arabia is attracting foreign investment (Hyatt Regency, Starbucks, KFC). The movie also displays American-Chinese rivalry over Saudi Arabia and in that competition, the winner is China. Alan was a manager in a bicycle company named as Schwinn during the 1980s. His decision to outsource Schwinn's manufacturing to China destroyed the company and haunted him. This time, Alan is in Saudi Arabia to sell a 3D teleconference system to the King, but the King decided to buy a cheaper and a faster Chinese version of the product. In that sense, the movie would also be regarded as a statement of American- Chinese rivalry, the self-perception of US as a superpower in decline and its position in the Middle East.

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