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Sanaa Al-Quaiti
Effat University, salquaiti@effatuniversity.edu.sa

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Relationship between Beliefs about the Functions of Dreams and Dream Attitudes: An Exploratory Study in Saudi Arabian Cultural Milieu

Sanaa Al-Quaiti

Department of Psychology
Effat University, Jeddah, Saudi Arabia

Abstract: Research on beliefs and attitudes towards dreams has been conducted across the world among different populations; however, a very limited number of these researches involve Arab samples. The purpose of this research is to explore the relationship between the beliefs about the function of dreams and the attitudes towards dreams. The sample is comprised of 200 adult participants of both genders from Jeddah, Saudi Arabia. The participants were asked to respond to a survey comprising of the items of two different scales: Revised Dream Attitudes and Olsen's list of Beliefs about the Function of Dreams, electronically via social media websites and applications. Results indicated a significant relationship between the beliefs about the function of dreams and dream attitudes. However, no significant differences were found between age, gender and beliefs about dreams. The results are discussed in the context of various dream theories and its implications in clinical and other settings. Further investigations exploring the significance and relationship of dreams with physical and psychological health, emotional states, etc., among varied samples in the Arab cultures are recommended.

Keywords: dreams, dream attitudes, dream functions, beliefs, dream research

I. INTRODUCTION

The topic of dreams, their interpretation, and analysis have been a popular area of interest for many scientists, philosophers, and thinkers. They have always been curious about topics such as what happens in the human brain while dreaming, the meaning behind dreams, and the impact they have on our emotional well-being (Aristotle, 350 B.C.E, Freud, 1913, and Jung, 1962). This interest is also shared by the public but in a more extreme manner. People are sometimes too invested in the content of their dreams and spend an extensive amount of time trying to extract meanings to associate them with their real-life experiences.

Dream research has been done across the world to assess different populations and their beliefs and attitudes towards dreams (Schredl, Kleinferchner, and Gell 1996; Szmigielska & Holda, 2007; and Olsen 2012) . However, not enough of these studies has hosted Arab samples. This is the main motive behind performing this study in Saudi Arabia. Because to acquire a holistic understanding of dreams and people's attitudes towards them, one cannot neglect a culture as widespread as the Middle Eastern culture. By conducting a study in Saudi Arabia, one of the largest Middle Eastern countries with a population of 28.83 million, as according to the World Bank in "Population, total | Data" (2015)[1], thus, the findings of the current study can be used to make inferences about the Middle Eastern society and encourage other researchers to carry out more studies in this region.

II. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

This study will investigate the Saudi population's beliefs about the function of dreams and their attitudes towards them while comparing between the gender and age differences within them. The research questions for this study are:

- 1- Is there a significant difference between scores in dream attitudes and positive beliefs about the function of dreams?
- 2- Is there a significant difference in scores between age groups regarding their beliefs about the function of dreams?
- 3- Is there a significant difference in scores on beliefs about the function of dreams between genders in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia?

In addition to answering the research questions, this study will append to the overall worldwide research base by providing a unique sample from the Middle East. It will also provide a discussion of the findings and recommendations for future research.

III. LITERATURE REVIEW

Dating back to the pre-scientific times, the topic of dreams has been discussed by many philosophers and thinkers, and it is still discussed and researched until this day and age. The following section will examine the topic of dreams, the beliefs about them, and the attitudes towards them throughout history.

According to the Oxford Dictionaries (2016), Dreams are "A series of thoughts, images, and sensations occurring in a person's mind during sleep"[2]. Hem (2002) found that dreams can take up to 6 years of the average life of a human being (as cited by Olsen, 2012)[3]. There is no one theory of the function or source of dreams. And people's beliefs about the source of dreams are directly related to their attitudes towards them. If one believes that the dream is a message from God, one will consider them more important as opposed to someone who believes that dreams are merely chemical messages being sent across the brain and hold no actual value or connection to their waking life.

Fishbein and Raven (1962) described beliefs as the perceived probability of the existence of a target[4]. In the Oxford Dictionaries (2016), belief is defined as "An acceptance that something exists or is true, especially one without proof"[5]. So, the 'beliefs about function dreams' are about what people believe the source and the purpose of dreams are. As stated earlier, people's attitudes towards dreams are dependent on their beliefs about the source of them. Throughout history, there have been many different theories about the source of dreams. Olsen (2012) divided the views into pre-scientific and scientific eras. Pre-scientific views were then categorized according to the historic era in which they took

place. These categories are Ancient History (~3000 BC), Classical History (~400 BC), and the Post-classical/Medieval times (~200 AC -1700 AC). The ancient history, exhibited in Mesopotamia, Egypt, and Greece, the common view was that God was the main source of dreams. According to this belief, dreams had “prophetic properties” and were important in decision-making. The ancient thinkers saw dreams as a divine inspiration rather than manifestations of the individual mind. They further acknowledged two different types of dreams: true or valuable dreams, and empty dreams. The former would hold significant importance and meaning for the dreamer, whereas the latter would only occur to mislead him/her as these dreams contained no real value, according to Freud (1913, p. 1-2)[6]. Antiphon, the first known author of a book discussing dreams, was against the idea that dreams are supernatural manifestations. Instead, he believed that they were results of natural conditions, according to Crisp (2012)[7]. In the Classical history, Asians and Hippocrates connected the origin of dreams to the human soul. The Asians believed that when we sleep, our souls leave our bodies and travel somewhere else, and this journey is depicted in our dreams. Hippocrates, on the other hand, believed that dreams are the result of some images our souls receive during the day which are then played in our sleep. Aristotle, however, had a different view focused on our physical being rather than our souls. In Aristotle’s book (On Dreams, 350 B.C.E), concerning dreams and their interpretation, he explained that dreams are mental images occurring in one’s sleep, as mentioned in Papachristou (2014)[8]. This book was the first to discuss the psychological aspect of dreams. In his theory on dreams, Aristotle explained a connection between dreams and physiology as some dreams might affect the person’s sensation (i.e., feeling hot or cold according to the environment in one’s dream). He thought that dreams contain warnings about our bodily dysfunctions and diseases. According to Van de Castle (1994), Aristotle was somewhat correct in this assumption as it was proved by researches done later. As for the Post-Classical/Medieval times, some American and Mexican tribes considered dreams messages from ancestors. Muslims believed -and most still believe- that God is the source of dreams (the good ones). Opposing views in Emperor Constantine’s period also existed as it was a common belief amongst some Christians that dreams are destructive and harmful messages sent by the devil/Satan.

The scientific approaches about the function of dream came in later in the 19th century. The psychoanalytic school of thought had been very popular in that time and was led by Sigmund Freud. He believed that dreams were derived from the unconscious mind displaying our deepest desires[6]. Another psychoanalyst, Carl Jung, brought up another perspective to this topic in his book *Memories, Dreams, Reflections*. He explained that dreams not only express our desires, but they are also useful in solving real-life problems, helping us understand ourselves, and based on that understanding, dreams can help in our journey towards self-growth, says Jung (1962)[10]. In 1953, REM-sleep was discovered, and this discovery lead scientists to try and develop cognitive theories about the function of dreams, says Hem (2002), as cited by Olsen (2012)[3]. In his research, Allan Hobson (2002) came up with his activation synthesis theory, which, if explained in the simplest terms, describes dreams as mere chemical transmissions of messages from the brain stem occurring in the human brain[11]. This theory was later disproved by Mark Solms’s conclusions that “patients with damaged brain stems still have dreams”, says Solms (2000), as cited by Olsen (2012)[3]. Wagner, Geis, Haider, Verleger & Born (2004) scientifically supported Carl Jung’s theory that dreams help us solve our personal problems[12]. It has also been hypothesized that there is a relationship between our real-life experiences and dreams. This hypothesis is called the *continuity hypothesis* and it states, “what we do or think about while awake is reflected in the content of our dreams – in other words, there is continuity between waking life and dreams”, according to Olsen (2012). These findings represent the main scientific theories on the function of dreams.

Some research has been done to assess the general population’s views on the function of dreams. In Szmigielska and Holda’s study in 2007, participants reported various sources of dreams such as; events of their life, thoughts of the day, the subconscious mind, their overall mood, wishes, fears, and desires, according to Szmigielska & Holda (2007)[13]. Female students who were participants of another study done by Morewedge and Norton in 2009 believed that their dreams were manifestations of the unconscious mind[14]. This supports Freud’s theory that the dreams are “a royal road to the unconscious”[15].

According to APA’s *Glossary of Psychological Terms* (2016), attitude is “the learned, relatively stable tendency to respond to people, concepts, and events in an evaluative way”[16]. In their book *The Psychology of Attitudes* (1993), Eagly and Chaiken defined attitudes as the “psychological tendency that is expressed by evaluating an entity with some degree of favor or disfavor”[17]. One can have one of

three attitudes towards dreams: positive/approving, negative/disapproving, or neutral. The approving attitudes are positively correlated with the ability to recall the dream, according to Cernovsky (1984)[18]. Although Watkins (1986) found that individuals of Western culture considered dreams meaningless, as cited in Meyer & Shore (2001)[19]. In David King's thesis for the degree of Honors Bachelor of Science in Psychology (2006), he concluded that most people believe that their dreams are important and contain valuable information. This shows the possibility of a change in individual attitudes from the same culture occurring over time[20]. Schredl, Kleinfelchner, and Gell (1996), explained how individuals are reflective of their dreams' content and admit that they represent aspects of their waking life[21]. Later, King (2006) found that although some individuals did not consider their dreams important, they still believed there was a connection between dreams and their waking life. However, individuals who experience nightmares actively try to interpret their dreams and some even try to change aspects of their lives because of the content of these nightmare, says Kothe & Pietrowsky (2001)[22]. Selterman (2016), studied the connection between dream attitudes and subjective well-being of individuals. The results of this study suggested that having a positive attitude towards dreams resulted in greater life-satisfaction and increased subjective psychological well-being[23]. Meyer and Shore (2001) studied children's attitudes towards dreams. They found that as children grow older, they share the same beliefs as adults that their dreams are unreal or just "in their head"[19]. These findings are directly related to Watkin's suggestion about individuals of the Western culture and their assumptions about dreams[24]. Schredl (2009) found that women are more likely to share their dreams than men and are better at recalling the content[25]. This could be linked to Cernovsky's findings that having positive attitudes towards dreams results in better recollection[18]. This leads us to assume that women place more importance on dreams than men do and therefore, they are better at recalling them and are more likely to share them. This assumption was later proven in a study conducted by Schredl, Berres, Klingauf, Schellhaas, and Göritz in 2014, which aimed to develop a questionnaire on several dream-related aspects including dream recall and dream attitudes, the researchers found that "women tend to tell dreams more often, attribute more often meaning to dreams, and have more positive attitudes towards dreaming"[26]. Consistent with a study by Schredl and Piel (2008) based in Germany, the results of Salem, Ragab, and Abdel Razik (2009), showed that females are more likely to seek interpretation of their dreams than males[27] &[28].

In Islam, there are three types of dreams: visions (good dreams), nightmares (bad dreams), and dreams from one's self. These dreams were mentioned in the following prophetic Hadith: "There are three types of dreams: a righteous dream which is glad tidings from Allah, the dream which causes sadness is from Shaitan, and a dream from the ramblings of the mind", according to myIslamicDream (2017)[29]. Kinberg (1993), demonstrated how some of the "good dreams" have either literal meaning --they have a clear, spoken message that does not need much explanation-- or symbolic meaning, in the sense that they require interpretation[30]. The interpretation of dreams plays a role in most Muslim societies across history, according to Green (2003)[31]. This statement can be supported by Salem, Ragab, and Abdel Razik (2009), in their research regarding the significance of dreams among university students in the United Arab Emirates[28]. In their study, Salem *et al.*, 2009, concluded that the participants placed high importance on their dreams, allowed their daily lives to get affected by them, and were very serious about the content of their dreams. Hoffman (1997), concluded that "dreams provide Muslims with direct experiential confirmation for their faith" (as cited by Salem *et al.*, 2009)[32].

In summary, three main factors in this study make it a novel contribution to the knowledge base: the unique combination of the tested attributes (belief about function of dreams & dream attitudes), and the Arab, Muslim participants providing a cultural variance to the overall world-wide data.

IV. METHODOLOGY

This study investigated participants' a) beliefs on the function of dreams, and b) attitudes towards dreams. Olsen's list of statements about the beliefs on function of dreams measure the former, and the revised version of Dream Attitudes Scale measure the latter. These measures were used in studies with similar research questions, such as with Selterman (2016) and Olsen (2012). And after they have been reviewed and translated, they appeared to be suitable for the sample of this study. The research targeted adult males and females in the Jeddah, Saudi Arabia. The two measures were distributed in English and Arabic through social networking applications (WhatsApp, Twitter, Path).

Participants

The sample included 205 participants from Jeddah, Saudi Arabia (69 males and 136 females). 135 of the participants were between the ages (18-35), 58 were between the ages (36-55), and 12 were 55 years old and above.

Procedure

The scales were sent in form of surveys made in English and Arabic via Google Forms across different social media outlets (WhatsApp, Twitter, Path) to draw the needed number of participants. The sampling method therefore was convenience sampling.

Measures

To assess the participant's beliefs on the function of dreams, a list of items developed by Olsen (2012) was used in this study. This list contained twelve items. Each item was a statement that represents views on the function of dreams. The items had statements like "Dreams are the result of random chemical messaging in our brain" and "Dreams contain messages from God or other non-human sources". The participants answered this scale by either agreeing or disagreeing with these statements on a 5-item Likert scale.

The Dream Attitudes Scale revised version (DAS-R) was used to measure dream attitudes. DAS was developed to determine a) whether people believe that dreams contain important information, and b) if so, then, what are the topics that these dreams contain important information about. The first part was measured by answering a simple true/false/not sure statement. The second part was measured by a checklist of 8 items. Each item represented a topic that dreams may contain information about. These topics were "my personality, my mood, my spiritual beliefs, my current physical health, my past, decisions I am currently making, relationships, and future events", as suggested by King (2006)[20]. The participants were supposed to check the topic that they consider their dreams contained important information about. They were also able to add any other topic they had in mind if it was not listed amongst the items. In the revised version of DAS, another item was added to narrow down the participant's responses and focus on the most important one. This item stated: "if you have checked more than one option above, please indicate which one is most important/significant to you by circling that choice."

Both scales were translated into Arabic to be more convenient for the Saudi population as the first language in Saudi Arabia is Arabic. Adequate measures were taken to assess the reliability of the Arabic versions of scales.

V. RESULTS

The total number of participants in this study were 205 male and female adults of different ages from Jeddah, Saudi Arabia. To answer the research questions, a one-way ANOVA analysis was conducted to compare between groups regarding their age and gender, to compare between their scores on both scales, and find out whether there are significant differences or not.

Personal Data of Respondents:

This section will represent personal data of the 205 participants (see Table 1). For the participants' convenience, two versions of the questionnaires were made available; one in English, and the other in Arabic. (87.3%) of the participants answered the Arabic version while (12.7%) answered the English version. Females had a higher response rate of (66.3%) while the male respondents were (33.7%). Participants' ages were divided into three age groups: (18-35), (36-55), and (55+). (65.9 %) of the participants were between the ages 18 and 35. (28.3%) were between the ages 35 and 55, and 5.9% of the total participants were 55 and above.

TABLE 1: PERSONAL DATA OF RESPONDENTS

	Personal Data	Number of Respondents(f)	Percentage
Language	English	26	12.7%
	Arabic	179	87.3%

Gender	Male	69	33.7%
	Female	136	66.3%
Age	18-35	135	65.9%
	36-55	58	28.3%
	55+	12	5.9%

Reliability Statistics

In this study, there were two assessment tools used: 1) Beliefs About Function of Dreams Scale, and 2) Revised Dream Attitude Scale.

Reliability Statistics for Beliefs About Function of Dreams (BFD)

The reliability of the Beliefs About Function of Dreams Scale after the removal of items 3 and 4 was 0.746 (see Table 2).

TABLE 2: RELIABILITY STATISTICS FOR BFD

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.746	10

General DAS-R statistics

Regarding the first item on the Dream Attitudes Scale - Revised, which stated "I believe dreams contain important/relevant information", 50.2% of the participants selected 'true', 39.5% selected 'not sure', and 10.2% selected 'false'.

Table 3 will demonstrate the participants' responses to Item 2, in which they chose from a checklist the topics they believed their dreams contained important information about.

TABLE 3: THE PARTICIPANTS' RESPONSE PERCENTAGE FROM GREATEST TO LEAST

Topics	Percentage (%)
My moods	77.1%
Current decisions I am making	63.9%
My personality	52.7%
My current physical health	46.8%
My spiritual beliefs	44.9%
My past	28.3%
Future events	5.4%
My relationships	2%

Participants who chose 'others' were given an option to write the attitudes their dreams contained: "messages from God", "traumas", "non-important information", and "my wishes".

In the last item of DAS-R, participants were meant to indicate the most important/significant topics from the previous checklist. There was a tie between participants who selected "my moods" and "current decisions I am making" of 28.3%. 15.6% of the participants chose "my personality", 14.6% of the participants chose "my spiritual beliefs" while 6.3%, 3.9%, 2%, 0.5% were "my current physical health", "my past", "others", and "future events" respectively. "My relationships" was not rated as more important/significant by any of the participants.

The following section will demonstrate the results of this study by, addressing each research question, presenting the personal data of the participants and the reliability of the used assessments.

Research Question 1: Is there a significance between scores in dream attitudes and positive beliefs about the function of dreams?

There was a statistically significant difference between scores of BFD and Dream Attitude Scale's first item as determined by one-way ANOVA [$F(2, 202) = 19.967, p = .000$] (see Table 4).

Post hoc comparisons using the Tukey HSD test indicated that the mean score for people who chose 'true' ($M = 36.9, SD = 6.1$) was significantly different than a) the ones who chose 'false' ($M = 29, SD = 5.8$) at ($p = .000$) and b) the ones who chose 'not sure' ($M = 33.6, SD = 5.1$) at ($p = .000$). There was also a significant difference between the participants who chose 'false' and a) the ones who chose 'true' at ($p = .000$), and b) 'not sure' at ($p = 0.003$). Significant differences were also found between the choice 'not sure' and a) 'true' at ($p = .000$), and b) 'false' at ($p = 0.003$) (see Tables 5 & 6).

TABLE 4: ONE-WAY ANOVA ANALYSIS BETWEEN BFD AND DAS1 SCORES

ANOVA					
TotalBFD					
	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	1277.593	2	638.797	19.967	.000
Within Groups	6462.387	202	31.992		
Total	7739.980	204			

TABLE 5: DESCRIPTIVES OF PARTICIPANT SCORES ON DAS1 COMPARED WITH TOTALBFD

Descriptives								
TotalBFD								
	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean		Minimum	Maximum
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound		
True	103	36.90	6.058	.597	35.72	38.09	19	50
False	21	29.00	5.797	1.265	26.36	31.64	18	42
Not sure	81	33.60	5.059	.562	32.49	34.72	20	42
Total	205	34.79	6.160	.430	33.94	35.64	18	50

TABLE 6: POST HOC COMPARISONS USING TUKEY HSD

Multiple Comparisons
Dependent Variable: TotalBFD
Tukey HSD

(I) DAS1	(J) DAS1	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
True	False	7.903 ^a	1.354	.000	4.71	11.10
	Not sure	3.298 ^a	.840	.000	1.31	5.28
False	True	-7.903 ^a	1.354	.000	-11.10	-4.71
	Not sure	-4.605 ^a	1.385	.003	-7.88	-1.33
Not sure	True	-3.298 ^a	.840	.000	-5.28	-1.31
	False	4.605 ^a	1.385	.003	1.33	7.88

*. The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

Research Question 2: Is there a significant difference in scores between age groups regarding their beliefs about the function of dreams?

There was no significant difference found among age group in their total BFD scores. However, in items 11 and 6, the statistical significance was found at ($p = .010$) and ($p = .037$) respectively. Item 6, which was "Dreams have a creative/problem-solving function" showed statistically significant differences among age groups. A one-way ANOVA analysis indicated a statistically significant difference among age groups in their scores on item 6 [$F(2, 202) = 4.743, p = .010$] (see Table 8). The mean score of participants between the ages 18 and 36 ($M = 3.19, SD = 1.13$) was significantly different than the mean score of participants between the ages 36 and 55 ($M = 3.71, SD = 1.11$). However, no significance was found between the mean scores of participants between (18-36) and the ones between the ages (55+) that had the mean and standard deviation of ($M = 3.08, SD = .996$) (see Table 7).

Post hoc comparisons using Tukey HSD showed that the mean score of participants between the ages (18 and 36) was significantly different than the mean score of participants between the ages (36 and 55) at ($p = 0.009$). However, no significant difference was found between the age groups of (18-35) and (55+) or (36-55) and (55+) (see Table 9).

TABLE 7: DESCRIPTIVES OF PARTICIPANT SCORES ON ITEM 6 WITH RESPECT TO THEIR AGE GROUPS

Descriptives									
		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean		Minimum	Maximum
						Lower Bound	Upper Bound		
BFD6	18-35	135	3.185	1.1276	.0970	2.993	3.377	1.0	5.0
	36-55	58	3.707	1.1083	.1455	3.415	3.998	1.0	5.0
	55+	12	3.083	.9962	.2876	2.450	3.716	1.0	5.0
	Total	205	3.327	1.1357	.0793	3.170	3.483	1.0	5.0

TABLE 8: ONE-WAY ANOVA ANALYSIS OF ITEM 6'S SCORES COMPARED BETWEEN AGE GROUPS

ANOVA						
		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
BFD6	Between Groups	11.798	2	5.899	4.742	.010

	Within Groups	251.304	202	1.244		
	Total	263.102	204			

TABLE 9: POST HOC COMPARISONS OF ITEM 6'S SCORES COMPARED BETWEEN AGE GROUPS

Multiple Comparisons							
Tukey HSD							
Dependent Variable	(I) Age	(J) Age	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
						Lower Bound	Upper Bound
BFD6	18-35	36-55	-.5217	.1751	.009	-.935	-.108
		55+	.1019	.3360	.951	-.691	.895
	36-55	18-35	.5217	.1751	.009	.108	.935
		55+	.6236	.3537	.185	-.212	1.459
	55+	18-35	-.1019	.3360	.951	-.895	.691
		36-55	-.6236	.3537	.185	-1.459	.212

*. The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

Item 11 stated "Dreams contain messages from the diseased/dead". As determined by one-way ANOVA analysis, there was also a significant difference among participants between the age groups in their scores on item 11 [$F(2, 202) = 3.338, p = .037$] (see Table 11). The mean score of participants between the ages 18 and 36 ($M = 3.02, SD = 1.25$) was significantly different than the mean score of participants between the ages 36 and 55 ($M = 2.48, SD = 1.47$). However, no significance was found between the mean scores of participants between (18-36) and the ones between the ages (55+) that had the mean and standard deviation of ($M = 2.92, SD = 1.51$) (see Table 10).

Post hoc comparisons using Tukey HSD showed that the mean score of participants between the ages (18 and 36) was significantly different than the mean score of participants between the ages (36 and 55) at ($p = 0.028$). However, no significant difference was found between the age groups of (18-35) and (55+) or (36-55) and (55+) (see Table 12).

TABLE 10: DESCRIPTIVES OF PARTICIPANT SCORES ON ITEM 11 WITH RESPECT TO THEIR AGE GROUPS

Descriptives									
		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean		Minimum	Maximum
						Lower Bound	Upper Bound		
BDF11	18-35	135	3.022	1.2546	.1080	2.809	3.236	1.0	5.0
	36-55	58	2.483	1.4659	.1925	2.097	2.868	1.0	5.0
	55+	12	2.917	1.5050	.4345	1.960	3.873	1.0	5.0
	Total	205	2.863	1.3471	.0941	2.678	3.049	1.0	5.0

TABLE 11: ONE-WAY ANOVA ANALYSIS OF ITEM 11'S SCORES COMPARED BETWEEN AGE GROUPS

ANOVA	
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		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
BDF11	Between Groups	11.843	2	5.921	3.338	.037
	Within Groups	358.333	202	1.774		
	Total	370.176	204			

TABLE 12: POST HOC COMPARISONS OF ITEM 11'S SCORES COMPARED BETWEEN AGE GROUPS

Multiple Comparisons							
Tukey HSD							
Dependent Variable	(I) Age	(J) Age	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
						Lower Bound	Upper Bound
BDF11	18-35	36-55	.5395	.2091	.028	.046	1.033
		55+	.1056	.4012	.963	-.842	1.053
	36-55	18-35	-.5395	.2091	.028	-1.033	-.046
		55+	-.4339	.4224	.561	-1.431	.563
	55+	18-35	-.1056	.4012	.963	-1.053	.842
		36-55	.4339	.4224	.561	-.563	1.431

*. The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

Research Question 3: Is there a significant difference in scores on beliefs about the function of dreams between genders in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia?

After conducting one-way ANOVA, there was no significant difference in scores of BFD between males ($M = 39.4$, $SD = 6.4$) and females ($M = 39.9$, $SD = 6.1$).

VI. DISCUSSION

In a study done by King (2006) that also used the Dream Attitudes Scale, the participants' choices for the final item, which asked participants to circle the most important/significant dream attitude ranked from most important to least important were as follows "decisions I am currently making", followed by "relationships, future events, my moods, my past, my personality, and my spiritual beliefs". The current study showed that moods and current decisions were the leading topics participants believed dreams included important information about. These results were consistent with King's (2006) where the highest percentage of participants chose "current decisions I am making". "My spiritual beliefs" ranked least important by the participants in King's study which was comprised of university students in Ontario, Canada. In the current Saudi sample however, "my spiritual beliefs" was rated as the third most important attitude after "current decisions I am making" and "my moods". Explanations of this choice can be easily made because religion and spirituality are an integral part of the Saudi society while it might not be so among the students in Canada. According to Salem *et al.* (2009), "the basic references to dreams and dreaming found in the Qur'an and Hadith are still influential in the modern Muslim world, reflecting the idea that Muslims generally regard dreaming highly"[28]. Hoffman (1997) also made similar conclusions in his study "The Role of Visions in Contemporary Egyptian Religious Life"[32]. Surprisingly enough, none of the participants rated "my relationships" as the most important/significant attitude, which, in King's research was the second most ranked choice. An explanation for participants' avoidance of this choice may be because translating the term "relationships" into the Arabic, used the word 'علاقاتي' which is generally used to describe romantic relationships rather than family bonds. These participants may have misunderstood this term as being restricted to only romantic relationships which are, among some people in Saudi, considered a cultural taboo. It is possible that because the Saudi population is secretive about romantic relationships, the participants tended to refrain from discussing them even when complete anonymity is guaranteed. "Future events" was ranked third in King's study, while it was second last in the

current study. This may be because the current study included samples of all ages, rather than being confined to university students who are mostly preoccupied by planning their future, their dream jobs, and career, wherein people who are no longer students and are already in jobs do not have much future events in mind. And perhaps, they are mostly concerned about the here and now rather than the future. This could be a possible explanation for why only 0.5% of the participants rated “future events” as most important/significant attitude. While “current decisions I am making” and “my moods”, which are concepts relatively related to the present were rated as the highest two.

Regarding the scale of Beliefs About Function of Dreams, items 3 and 4 were deleted due to their similar content, and negative effect on the inter-reliability of the scale. The items stated, “Dreams are garbage products of the mind”, and “Dreams are the result of random chemical messaging in our brain”. These two statements imply that the dreams are meaningless and were damaging to the inter-reliability of the scale, and were therefore deleted.

Research Question 1: Is there a significance between scores in dream attitudes and positive beliefs about the function of dreams?

The research successfully found statistically significant results between the total score of Beliefs About Function of Dreams scale and item 1 from the Dream Attitudes Scale (TotalBFD & DAS-1). Meaning, participants who scored high on BFD also chose “True” on item 1 on the Dream Attitude Scale which asked about whether the participants believe in the importance of dreams or not. This conclusion is understandable because individuals who believe that dreams are meaningful will have a positive attitude towards them.

Research Question 2: Is there a significant difference in scores between age groups regarding their beliefs about the function of dreams?

Although there was no significant difference found in the results of BFD with regards to the participants' age, items 11 and 6 showed significant differences among age groups. Item 6 was “Dreams have a creative/problem-solving function”. And in this item, participants between the ages (36-55) had higher means than participants between the ages (18-35). This may be understood in the sense that people between the ages (36-55) are more reflective about their dreams, and therefore, they ponder upon the content of their dreams in their waking life, and by that deliberation, they draw conclusions that help them solve real-life problems, according to Chard (2014)[33]. However, younger adults are more sentimental about their dreams and are mostly concerned with how the events in their dreams made them feel, rather than reflecting upon them in a more functional manner. In item 11 that stated, “Dreams contain messages from the diseased/dead”, participants between the ages (18-36) scored significantly higher means than the participants between the ages (36-55). This was surprising because usually, older adults are the ones known for their mystic beliefs rather than the younger ones. An explanation for this could be that dealing with grief is harder for young adults compared to older adults. As a person grows older, he/she becomes more and more accustomed to death and loss. That is not the case, however, if the person is still young. Therefore, derived from their passion towards the people they lost or might lose, and as a means of dealing with grief, they dream about them, and believe that these dreams are messages from them. Both items failed to find any significant differences with participants who were 55 and above. This could be because participants that were 55 and above only formed 5.9% of the sample. According to Smith (2008), studies that examined survey participation and nonparticipation, younger populations were more likely to respond to surveys compared to older populations. This could explain why the study had insufficient representation from older populations [34].

Research Question 3: Is there a significant difference in scores on beliefs about the function of dreams between genders in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia?

There were no significant findings in the results of BFD with respect to the participants' gender. This could be due the lack of male representation in the participants. As males formed only (33.7%) of the participants. That may be because a) males were not as accessible as females were, as the questionnaire was sent out through the author's social media accounts in which females formed the clear majority, b) the research topic did not interest them, as the topic of dreams is more interesting for females than males. According to Olsen (2012), it is very common in dream research to have to more female

participants than males, or c) because males are less likely to respond to surveys than females, according to Smith (2008).

VII. CONCLUSION

From this study, it can be concluded that most people who consider dreams as meaningful also have a positive attitude towards them. Although no significant differences were found between ages or genders, the study has provided some valuable information about the dream topics that are most important in this society. It is anticipated that further research will investigate this topic to answer other dream-related questions that still have not been answered.

The limitations of the study concern a) the sample size, b) gender and age representation, c) randomization, and d) translation. The questionnaires were only sent out in an electronic form through social networking programs, which might have been a drawback in the sampling procedure because it did not reach enough members of the population. The percentage of female participants was (66.3%). Females were more accessible and therefore, they formed most the participants. Thus, the lack of accessibility resulted in having lesser male respondents. The study also had unequal representation from different age groups. The majority being individuals between the ages (18-35). According to a study done by Simsim in (2011) on "Internet Usage and User Preferences in Saudi Arabia", "92.5% of people with ages between 19 and 25 years old are using the Internet, whereas only 69.8% of people older than 45 years are using the Internet" [35]. This could also be expanded to include social networking websites. Thus, this explains the lack of older participants in the study. Printing out the surveys and physically distributing them in public places would have been harder to administer, but that might have made the sample more representative of the population in terms of adding more variety to the respondents' age and gender. The lack of randomization in the sample is another limitation for the study. Convenience sampling is not enough to produce generalizable results. Questionnaires were only distributed through social media websites which host similar users in terms of socioeconomic background and educational level. Regarding translation, the scales were originally in English and were translated for the convenience of the Saudi population whose native language is Arabic. It is assumed that the translation might have negatively affected the reliability of the scale due to the confusion it may have caused and therefore, harmed the overall results of the study.

In future research, variables such the socio-economic status of the participants, and their level of education could be considered as well, to develop a better understanding of the topic from all angles. The reliance on survey data could be reduced, and other qualitative methods like structured, unstructured, or semi-structured interviews could be added to the instruments. In addition, a representative sample size of the male gender would be better to compare between the genders more thoroughly. Moreover, the responses collected from the interviews can help in developing new questionnaires that are suitable for the Saudi society. To avoid misunderstanding due to translation, more extensive translation procedures should have been conducted on the scales, and parallel-forms reliability should have been repeatedly performed to ensure the consistency of results between the two versions. To explain the reasons why female have always scored higher in dream-related attributes, more research can be done that is specific to female participants and provides an in-depth insight on their dream attitudes. Researchers can also expand the topic of interest to include culture-specific variables such as religious beliefs, spirituality, social norms, and customs; and study their relationship with dreams to develop a comprehensive understanding of dreams in the Islamic, Arab, and Middle Eastern society. More age-specific studies can also be conducted to examine the differences among children, teenagers, adults, and elderlies separately in relation to their dream beliefs and attitudes.

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Appendix A

Participant Consent Form in Arabic

استمارة موافقة المشاركة

هذا الاختبار جزء من مشروع تخرج طالبة من قسم علم النفس في جامعة عفت.

هذه الدراسة مكونة من استبيانين: مقياس وظيفة الأحلام ومصدرها ومقياس السلوك تجاه الأحلام.

مقياس وظيفة الأحلام ومصدرها يقيس اعتقادات الناس حول وظيفة الأحلام في حياتهم ومصدرها. مقياس السلوك تجاه الأحلام يحدد أهمية الأحلام عند الناس واعتقاداتهم عن محتويات أحلامهم.

موافقة المشاركة في الاختبار تنص على أنني:

- أتفهم أن أجوبتي في هذا الاختبار سوف تستخدم في تحليل وكتابة تقرير نهائي (مثلاً في نتائج دراسة منشورة).
- أتفهم أن أي معلومات شخصية لي سوف يتم التعامل معها بسريّة تامة.
- أتفهم أنني لن اتعرض لأي عواقب سلبية خلال مشاركتي في هذه الدراسة.
- أتفهم أن لي حرية الانسحاب من هذه الدراسة في أي وقت.
- أتفهم بأنه في حال وجود أي تساؤلات حول هذه الدراسة فإنه بإمكانني التواصل مع رئيس مجلس مراجعة الأخلاقيات بجامعة عفت.

Appendix B

Beliefs about the Function of Dreams in Arabic

مقياس وظيفة الأحلام ومصدرها

لكلٍ ممّا يلي، يرجى تقييم إلى أي مدى تتوافق/تتوافقين مع كل عبارة، وذلك باستخدام المقياس الموضّح أدناه:

أوافق بشدة	أوافق	محايد	أعترض	أعترض بشدة	
					١- تسمح الأحلام المدخلات من اليوم السابق من أجل تعزيز الذاكرة.
					٢- تحتوي الأحلام على رسائل من الله أو مصادر أخرى غير مستمدة من البشر.

					٣- الأحلام هي منتجات ذهنية غير مفيدة.
					٤- الأحلام ناتجة عن رسائل كيميائية عشوائية في الدماغ.
					٥- يمكن أن تمدنا الأحلام بمعلومات عن حالتنا الجسدية.
					٦- للأحلام خاصية مبتكرة في حل المشاكل.
					٧- تعكس الأحلام العناصر والأحداث التي تشغل بالنا خلال اليوم.
					٨- الأحلام هي تكهنات تخبرنا عما ينتظرنا في المستقبل.
					٩- ترتبط الأحلام بالتوتر والصراعات التي نمرّ بها.
					١٠- الأحلام رسائل من أنفسنا من اللاوعي.
					١١- تحتوي الأحلام على رسائل من المرضى/الأموات.
					١٢- تصوّر الأحلام أمانينا التي لم تتحقق.

Appendix C

Dream Attitudes Scale in Arabic (Revised)

مقياس السلوك تجاه (معدّل)

الرجاء الإجابة على الأسئلة التالية حسب اعتقادك الخاصة عن الأحلام:
١- أعتقد أن الأحلام تتضمن معلومات مهمة/ذات صلة (أختر واحد)

- صح
 خطأ
 غير متأكدة

٢- أعتقد أن الأحلام تتضمن معلومات عن (أختر جميع الخيارات الملائمة لك):
 شخصيتي

- مزاجي
- اعتقاداتي الروحانية
- صحتي الجسدية الحالية
- ماضي
- قراراتي التي اتخذتها حالياً
- علاقاتي
- أحداث مستقبلية
- غير ذلك، الرجاء التحديد

٣- إذا اخترت أكثر من خيار أعلاه، رجاءً أشير/أشيري للخيار الأكثر أهمية بالنسبة لك وذلك بوضع دائرة على ذلك الخيار.

Appendix D

Participant Consent Form

The following scales are a part of my final research project in the department of Psychology at Effat University. The research aims to measure dream attitudes and beliefs about the function of dreams for individuals from different age groups and both genders in the community of Jeddah, Saudi Arabia. It includes two standardized scales taken from prior studies: the revised Dream Attitudes Scale (DAS-R) and a scale measuring beliefs about the function of dreams.

Participation Consent:

- I understand that some of what I say during this study may be used in the analysis and writing of the final report (i.e. published research results).

Al-Quaiti: Relationship between Beliefs about the Functions of Dreams and Dream Attitudes

- I understand my anonymity and confidentiality will be preserved always, and that the comments and responses to questions that I give will be reported in general (i.e. without reference to me).
- I will not suffer any negative consequences because of my participation in this research project.
- I understand that I am free to withdraw and discontinue participation at any time.

- I understand if I have any concerns about this research I can contact the chair of the Research Ethics Institutional Review Committee (REIRC) at Effat University.

Appendix E**Dream Attitudes Scale (Revised)**

Please answer the following questions in relation to **your own** beliefs about dreams.

1. I believe dreams contain important/relevant information (check one).

_____ True _____ False _____ Not Sure

2. I believe dreams contain information about (check all options that pertain to you):

_____ My personality

_____ My moods

_____ My spiritual beliefs

_____ My current physical health

_____ My past

_____ Decisions I am currently making

_____ My relationships

_____ Future events

_____ Other, please identify: _____

3. If you have checked more than one option above, please indicate **which one is most** important/significant to you by circling that choice.

Appendix F

Beliefs about the Function of Dreams

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
1- Dreams "clean up" the input from the past day, for memory consolidation					
2- Dreams contain messages from God or other non-human sources					
3- Dreams are garbage products of the mind					
4- Dreams are the result of random chemical messaging in our brain					
5- Dreams can give us information about our physical/bodily condition					

Al-Qaiti: Relationship between Beliefs about the Functions of Dreams and Dream Attitudes

6- Dreams have a creative/problem-solving function					
7- Dreams reflect the elements and events that occupy our mind while we are awake					
8- Dreams are prophetic - they tell us something about what awaits us in the future					
9- Dreams are dealing with distress/emotional conflicts that we have					
10- Dreams are messages about ourselves from the unconscious					
11- Dreams contain messages from the diseased/dead					
12- Dreams portray the unfulfilled wishes that we have					