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Western 'Pop' Culture in Lebanese Universities:

A Case Study

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By

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Dedication

This thesis is dedicated to my parents. To my father, David, who instilled in me a love of language and learning. And to Jenny, my mother and best friend, who set a shining example and never lost faith in me. Without their unconditional love and support this thesis would not have been possible.

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ABSTRACT

This thesis seeks to explore the extent to which modern western educational ideology influences, or even determines, educational development in the Middle East, and in particular in Lebanon. In the last decade, new forms of analysis for evaluating global educational trends have emerged giving rise to a growing body of international literature (Mundy, 2007). This literature links the processes of economic, political and social globalization to how education is constructed around the world. This thesis aims to add to that body of knowledge by exploring the spread of Western ideology to the architecture of Middle East education. The research component of this thesis sought to determine the presence, if any, of popular culture on Lebanese university campuses and the extent to which Western pop culture impacts the educational experience in Lebanon. Triangulation was used to further validate findings, with surveys, interviews and observations being the primary methods of data collection. The results collected support the original hypothesis, demonstrating that Western ideology, in particular pop culture, has indeed spread to Lebanese educational campuses. Finally, I present my conclusions in the hope that this work can provide fresh understanding of some of the factors and forces shaping the Lebanese higher education sector of 2008.

HYPOTHESIS:

The global architecture of education has been defined as a complex web of ideas, networks of influence, policy frameworks and practices, financial arrangements and organizational structures (Jones, 2007). This intricate system of power relations impacts heavily on how education is structured around the world, and how the post tertiary period is experienced. Is there evidence of the spread of contemporary Western ideology, in particular pop culture, to Middle East higher education campuses in Lebanon?

Chapter 1

1.1 Introduction

Education began with humanity's first day on earth. Everyone learns. From the day of our birth, humans, no matter where they live, become aware of the world around them and begin to acquire knowledge. Prior to the written word, in the pre-literate era, learning was achieved by word of mouth or by personal experience. Formal education, or schooling, is a relatively recent style of structured learning. For many, formal education remains a privilege with many nations struggling to provide basic education for the masses (Kagan, Ozment & Turner, 2007).

In 1994 Dieter Lenzen claimed that 'education began either millions of years ago or at the end of 1770'. Lenzen's perspective is derived from the idea that education as a science cannot be separated from the educational traditions which preceded it and therefore the history of education is as long as humanity itself (Namusa, 2005).

As early civilizations extended their knowledge beyond the struggle to survive and the basic skills of communicating, gathering food, hunting and trading, then formal education and schooling soon followed. Adults passed their skills to their young since the successful transmission of knowledge was essential to survival of the species and the evolution of culture. A basic human timeline for educational development can provide a useful historical context and demonstrate the developmental nature of education as an historical theme. For the purposes of this thesis, the following timeline has a particular

bias towards Western education and represents a compilation drawn from general readings.

In the beginning	Before there were written words (pre-literate era) everything humans learned was passed by word-of-mouth
3000 BC	Egyptian Temple Schools. Priests teach religion, writing and sciences
2000 BC	First formal schools in China
1500 BC	Priests in India teach religion, writing, philosophy and science
850 BC	Homer's Illiad and Odyssey relate Greek history and mythical Gods. In Greece, mostly free men (not slaves) have access to teachers
550 BC	Confucius, revered Chinese teacher and philosopher. Emphasised the importance of goodness, kindness, generosity and basic morality
400 BC	Sophists, wandering teachers in Greece, taught how to argue using logic. Socrates teaches in public squares. He places a higher value on truth than on winning arguments and encourages people to think for themselves
387 BC	Plato and Aristotle establish schools in Athens. Plato's school is called the 'Academy'. Plato writes the 'Republic' in which he outlines his vision for the perfect society and education

	based on social standing
100 BC	Organised educational curriculum appears. Romans named Cicero and Quintilian give voice to ideas still in use in today's western society. Cicero maintains education should be broad and include arts and sciences. Quintilian claims education should be based on the student's ability to learn
0 BC	Jesus teaches in Jerusalem
105 AD	Paper is invented in China
500-1500 AD	The Middle Ages of Western culture. Slow progress but advances in education do occur. Monks copy important texts by hand. The Catholic Church significantly influences teaching throughout this period. Priests teach religion, writing and sciences
500 AD	Nalanda, great Buddhist University in India, home to more than 10,000 students. Largest 'resident' place of learning in history at that time. Subjects included religious study, philosophy and medicine
999 AD	Avicenna, Iranian leading thinker on medicine writes The Canon of Medicine. This work and others by Arab, North African and Spanish thinkers has great impact on European educational ideas
1000 AD	Arabic learning. Europeans learn an Arabic number system still used in the West today.

1100 AD	Scholastics, a movement that helped bridge differences between purely religious teachings and philosophical and scientific thinking
1150 – 1250 AD	'Modern' universities founded. 1150 Paris Sorbonne, 1209 Cambridge, 1249 Oxford. Universities begin offering degrees in variety of subjects
1450	Printing press invented. This development begins leaps in literacy as access to books is increased
1499	Desiderius Erasmus, a Dutch teacher, advises teachers in Europe to think about literature, not just read or memorise it
1500	The Renaissance through to the 17 th century is a period of renewed interest in learning. Italy is especially active during this period. More women begin to pursue education. Many important mathematical texts are translated aiding the development of science
1517	Reformation begins and literacy improves. Printing of the bible in local languages increases literacy. Reformers start schools where subjects are taught in native languages
1592	Shakespeare's plays begin in England. Theatre provides a forum for teaching philosophical ideas
1609	Censorship in education. Galileo invents the telescope, announces the sun is at the centre of the universe, is denounced by the Catholic Church and ordered not to teach

	his findings.
1620	The slide rule is invented simplifying maths
1659	Comenius writes the first picture book for children. Czech educators encourage teachers to make the classroom more interesting for children
1690	English poet and philosopher John Locke argues that humans are born with blank minds and that education should begin early to develop each individual
1770	Importance of education for all. Thomas Jefferson and Benjamin Franklin link education and citizenship in new nations
1799	The Swiss educator, Johann Pestalozzi establishes the first 'modern elementary school' and uses 'object lessons, the senses and expression' to help children learn
1833	The first allocation of taxes to fund education, breaking Church and private monopolies
1837	First kindergarten opened by Friedrich Frobel
1852	First all-free education in US state of Massachusetts
1862	The King and I – Anna Leonowens takes Western educational ideas to children in the Royal Palace of Thailand
1880	Darwin's theories of evolution radically changes education
1890	Correspondence courses offered by Britain and the US, based on the ideas of Oxford and Cambridge universities

1905	Alfred Binet develops the first standard intelligence test
1918	All US states offer free education
1920	Italian Maria Montessori develops method to teach very young children the basics of life using very practical, sensory skills. Her ideas influence kindergartens and preschools
1921	First formal 'study abroad' program sends US students to France
1951	Television as teacher
1959	Continuing education for adults is introduced by television
1960	Multi-media reaches the classroom. Slides, filmstrip projectors and tape players become common
1964	Universities see beginning of student political protests
1969	Sesame Street debuts with puppets teaching the basics of reading, moral lessons and music by television
1970	Electronic calculators change mathematics forever
1980	Television and inexpensive VCR's brings video learning to the classroom
1981	Community colleges and technical schools become popular
1988	Apple and IBM bring computers to schools
1995	The internet changes the world. Instant information and instant communication revolutionize learning. Content develops quickly. Research available on almost any subject. E-learning courses developed

The preceding timeline includes those individuals, developments and discoveries immediately relevant to the progress of educational ideology in the West. Clearly, significant events in other parts of world (especially in India and China) also provided impetus to the growth of formal education, its theory and its practice. The timeline outlined above however, provides this thesis with a set of chronological and geographic reference points against which an understanding of Western educational philosophy can be attempted. The following section seeks to define some of the main terms, concepts and conditions associated with the major themes of this work. Working definitions of key terms are necessary to ensure clarity and to minimize potential confusion arising from the use, misuse and overlapping which occurs between cultures and between professional academic disciplines.

1.2 Definitions

Western culture/Western civilization:

Wikipedia describes Western culture or Western civilization as 'a term used generally to refer to most of the cultures of European origin and most of their descendants. It comprises the broad, geographically based, heritage of social norms, ethical values, traditional customs (such as religious beliefs) and specific artifacts and technologies as shared within the Western sphere of influence' (Wikipedia http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Western_culture). This definition is shared by historians

such as Jacques Barzen (2000), John Merriman (1996) and Isaac Asimov (1982). Western culture is a set of literary, scientific, musical and philosophical principles. More recently, Western culture has included themes such as materialism, industrialism, capitalism, commercialism, hedonism and imperialism.

Orientalism and Occidentalism:

Orientalism may be defined as the study of Near and Far Eastern societies and cultures, languages and peoples by Western scholars (www.en.wikipedia.org). Orientalism has been recently revived through the literature of the Palestinian author Edward Said. His book "*Orientalism*" argued that the Orient is not simply a geographic location adjacent to Europe but is also the place of Europe's greatest, richest and oldest colonies, the source of its civilizations and languages, its cultural contestant, and the provider of the image of each for the other. He claimed the Orient has helped to define Europe (or the West) as its contrasting image, idea, personality and experience (Said, 1978). Said's works mark the beginning of post colonial studies and have established the qualities, mannerisms and customs which characterize the Orient.

Occidental, oc.ci.den.tal, - of or related to the countries of the Occident or their peoples or cultures; Western. A native or inhabitant of an Occidental country: a Westerner.

Denoting or characteristic of countries of Europe and the Western hemisphere, occidental civilization (Collaborative International Dictionary of English).

Globalisation:

Often, globalization is used to refer to economic globalization or the integration of national economies into the international economy through trade, foreign direct investment, capital flow, migration and technology. However for the purposes of this thesis, globalisation can be defined as the process by which people of the world are unified into a single society (<http://sawaal.ibibo.com/>). This process combines economic, technological, sociocultural and political forces. Globalisation differs from internationalization in that global implies 'one world', as a single unit, while 'international' implies the co-existence of different nations, cultures, economies and ecosystems. Common use of the word globalization dates from about 1960 with many critics regarding globalization as the economically and politically powerful West globalizing the rest of the world.

Contemporary:

Dictionary and web-based definitions of 'contemporary' include characteristic of the present, belonging to the present time, a person or thing of nearly the same age as another, modern day or present day. The word comes from medieval Latin *contempor.rius*: Latin *co-* + Latin *tempus, tempor-*, *time*+Latin *-rius, ary* (www.wordnet.princeton.edu).

Ideology:

From the French word *ideologie* (1813), Noun, ide.ol.o.gy: visionary theorizing, a systematic body of concepts especially pertaining to human life or culture, thinking characteristic of an individual or group, integrated assertions, theories and aims (www.historycentral.com/Civics/I.html). For this work, ideology refers to the important 'belief systems' adhered to by groups or societies and which lead to a 'world view' or 'mindset' of how things are and ought to be. Ideology is those doctrines or beliefs that form the basis of a system and that provide a systematic set of ideas and values which underlie the practices of a society.

Philosophy:

A Greek word, *philosophia*, meaning love of wisdom, philosophy, often confused with ideology, is the discipline concerned with how one should live (ethics), what is the nature of things (metaphysics), what is genuine knowledge (epistemology) and what are the principles of reasoning (logic) (http://philosophy.lander.edu/logic/phil_log.html).

Curriculum:

While the idea of curriculum is not new, the way we understand and theorize it has evolved. The word has its origins in the running and chariot tracks of Greece. The word literally meant 'course'. In latin, curriculum was a racing chariot; *currere* was to run (Kelly, 1999). A more contemporary definition of curriculum is *n. pl. cur.ric.u.la* 1. All

the courses of study offered by an educational institution. 2. A group of related courses, often in a special field of education. 3. The planned educational experiences offered by an institution which can take place anywhere at any time, in the multiple context of the school (Oxford Dictionary, 1989; Todd, 1965).

As with most things in education, there is no single agreed definition of curriculum, although it is generally agreed that 'curriculum' is not the same as syllabus. A syllabus is a statement of topics to be studied. A curriculum equally is not just a statement of intended outcomes, products or competencies, but is much more than any of these. For this thesis, curriculum will include the curriculum on paper (the statement of purpose, aims, content, experience and materials), the curriculum in action (the way in which the curriculum paper is put into practice), the curriculum learner's experience (what learners do, how they study, what they believe they should be doing etc) and the hidden curriculum (the behaviours, knowledge and performances that the learner infers to be important). This work will include references to the 'planned curriculum' and the 'received curriculum', the 'formal curriculum' and the 'informal curriculum' (Kelly, 1999; Snyder, 1971).

Lebanon:

10,452 km² sovereign country located in the Middle East at 33 50 N, 35 50 E. Lebanon borders the Mediterranean Sea between Syria and Israel, with a land boundary with Israel of 79km and with Syria 375km. With a coastline of 225km, Lebanon's lowest point is sea

level and its highest point is Qurnat as Sawda' at 3,088 metres. Beirut is the capital of Al Jumhuriyah al Lubnaniyah. In a League of Nations mandate under French administration, Lebanon gained its independence on November 22, 1943. Arabic, French, English and Armenian are spoken by the 4 million inhabitants. Predominant religious groupings are Muslim (including Shi'a, Sunni, Druze, Isma'elite, Alawite or Nusayri) and Christian (including Orthodox Christian, Catholic and Protestant), (World Factbook, 2003).

The Levant:

The Levant is an imprecise geographic term historically referring to a large area in the Middle East south of the Taurus Mountains, bounded by the Mediterranean Sea on the west, and by the Northern Arabian Desert and Upper Mesopotamia to the east (www.en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Levan). The term is sometimes used to refer to modern events or states in the region immediately bordering the eastern Mediterranean Sea such as Palestine, Lebanon and Syria.

Multilateral Education and Comparative Education:

Mul.ti.lat.er.al means having many sides or involving more than two parties (Webster Dictionary). Mutlilateral education is a recent term referring to educational developments whose contributing forces originate in more than one country (Jones, 2007; International Encyclopedia of Education, 1994). Comparative education refers to a field of study that applies historical, philosophical and social science theories and methods to international problems facing education (Epstein, 1994; Bereday, 1964).

The Middle East:

The 'Middle East' is defined as including the countries of southwest Asia and north Africa, and usually considered to include those countries extending from Libya on the west to Afghanistan in the east (www.tigerhomes.org/animal/curriculum/film-vocabulary-pc.cfm). For the purposes of this work, countries referred to as 'Middle Eastern countries' include Algeria, Bahrain, Cyprus, Egypt, Iran, Iraq, Israel, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya, Oman, Palestine, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Syria, Turkey, United Arab Emirates and Yemen. It should be noted that Algeria, Egypt and Turkey are included due to their geographical location.

The Gulf Co-operative Council (GCC):

The Gulf Cooperation Council was created in 1981 and comprises Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Oman, Qatar, Kuwait and the United Arab Emirates. It is a forum whose purpose is to coordinate and integrate economic policies between these six countries (www.globalknowledge.msu.edu/resourceDesk/glossary.asp).

Democracy:

Derived from two ancient Greek words 'demos' (the people) and 'kratos' (strength), democracy denotes a system of government in which governance of the people is by elected representatives. As a political system, democracy has many different meanings and can take different forms. Often incorrectly used as a synonym for capitalism, democracy is fundamentally a means of government of, by and for the people. In the West, and for this thesis, democracy refers to a system of government which derives its

power from the consent of the majority and governs according to the will of that majority (www.historycentral.com; www.wordnet.princeton.edu/perl/webwn).

Accreditation:

Educational accreditation refers to the process of evaluating the academic qualifications of standards of an institution or program of study in accordance with pre-established criteria. Institutions of instructional programs attain accreditation once they meet the standards set by an outside reviewing organization. This validation by an independent organization must involve established standards for judging quality

(www.mba.gradview.com/glossary; Epstein, 1994).

Popular Culture:

Popular culture, often referred to as 'pop culture' is literally, 'the culture of the people or of the masses' (Hassabain, 1999). Pop culture consists of widespread cultural elements in any given society and is often defined by objects, images, artifacts, literature, and music of ordinary people. Pop culture is a shared set of practices and beliefs that have attained global acceptance and which can normally be characterized by : being associated with commercial products; developing from local to national to global acceptance; allowing customers to have widespread access; and are constantly changing and developing (www.aroweducation.org/glossary.htm, 2008). For the purposes of this thesis pop culture will refer to those Western influences which find expression in mass circulation in areas such as fashion, music, sport, film, media and communication.

1.3 Thesis Scope

It is clearly the case that elements of Western culture and civilization have significantly influenced people of many other cultures. The impact of Western culture on other cultures worldwide has been pervasive in the last 250 years. More recently, technology and globalization have forcibly accelerated the pace of western influence across the face of the globe. The growth of globalization has been accompanied by an expanding literature which attempts to understand the notion of contemporary world change. This thesis attempts to contribute to that growing body of literary work by capturing a small fragment of the evolving processes and interactions that by definition involve local, national, international, transnational and global forces (Castells, 1997).

Phillip Jones maintains that the development of education is inextricably bound with global dynamics, structures, norms and ideologies – what he calls the ‘global architecture of education’ (Jones, 2007, p. 325). Jones takes the traditional links regarding education’s role in peace, international understanding, promotion of human rights, economic growth and poverty reduction, and questions the underlying assumption which is that all these positive objectives rest on the provision of the ‘right’ kind of education (Jones, 2007, p.325-326). Each modern state or nation should be able to establish and maintain, free of external interference or control, its own patterns of education. Education becomes an expression of statehood. Global power relations and the domination of Western culture on patterns of educational experience and practice are the focus of this thesis – does contemporary Western ideology exist and influence the Lebanese education sector.

Which Western principles and ideologies are evidenced in the Lebanese education and to what extent is this influence impacting, diluting or morphing education in modern Lebanon and the arrangements it is making for educational provision?

This thesis seeks to explore the degree to which contemporary Western ideology and its popular mass expression influences educational settings in the Middle East, and uses Lebanon as a case study. Case studies provide a form of qualitative descriptive research that look intensely at an individual or participant pool. A case study approach was adopted because case studies typically examine the interplay of variables in order to derive as complete an understanding as possible. This type of comprehensive understanding is arrived at through a process known as 'thick description' involving in-depth description of what is being evaluated, the circumstances, the people involved, and the nature of the community in which it takes place.

Unlike quantitative methods of research, such as the survey, case studies are a preferred strategy when there is a contemporary focus within a real life context, and when a situation requires a holistic understanding (Yin, 2003). Unlike statistically based, quantitative studies which search for quantifiable data, the goal of a case study is to offer new variables and questions for further research. This is the reason a case study approach was chosen to anchor this work. The thesis also contains specific research data collected from campuses across Beirut.

This chapter has sought to introduce the topic of this work, to offer definitions for the major themes and terms, and to delineate the scope and structure adopted. The following chapter will explore the elements of 'Western ideology'.

Chapter 2

2.1 The Origins and Evolution of Western Culture

This chapter attempts to outline the major themes and traditions generally attributed to 'Western culture and ideology'. It begins by outlining the origins and evolution of Western culture highlighting some of the major milestones and contributing forces. The many fields in which Western culture has impacted humanity's development and the scope of that impact, is then addressed. Finally, Western colonial domination and supremacy and its links to globalization are examined in the context of the Middle East.

The notion of a specifically 'Western' culture is generally linked to the classical definition of the Western world. Western culture is best defined by the set of scientific, literary, musical and philosophical principles which differentiate it from other cultures. Recently, themes such as imperialism, capitalism, materialism and commercialization have come to characterize the West, and with the impact of globalization and mass migration, the West has developed a negative reputation for dominating, overwhelming and even destroying other cultures (Farooqui, 2008).

As with most things, Western culture is neither homogenous nor unchanging. Anything involving humanity evolves and changes over time. Most generalities about Western culture have their origins in a particular time and place, and big scale statements about any culture encounter exceptions. Western culture had three main contributors, ancient

Greeks, the Romans, and Christianity (Catholic and Protestant). These three sources are often referred to collectively as the West's Greco-Roman Christian roots (Barzen, 2000).

The major themes and traditions of Western culture include the Latin or Greek alphabet, the importance of law, Christian mythology, ethics, art, architecture, philosophy, the scientific method, human rights, and liberal democracy. Generalities about Western culture are difficult given the span of its development. The politics of the Greeks is not the same as today's American superpower, the games of the gladiators differ from modern football, the art of Pompeii is neither the art of the Louvre nor of the Guggenheim (NY), and the architecture of the Romans is far from modern construction methodologies. It is however possible to track the evolutionary milestones of Western culture and in that process, identify similarities to, and differences from other civilizations.

The ancient Greeks provided a cultural foundation for the Romans who spread the Greek and Latin languages along with Roman law across Europe for 500 years (Jones & Pennick, 1995). The rise of Christianity during the Roman era significantly influenced Rome's tradition and culture and extended to include Germanic, Slavic and Celtic groups. Despite the fall of Rome and the subsequent political anarchy, Christian thought had taken root from the 5th century and art, literature, law and education became expressions of the Church. Cathedrals, monasteries and universities were built by religious groups and those seeking power, sought the Church.

Common, civil and cannon law formed the basis of Western legal scholarship and from this the ideas (ideology) of civil rights, justice, equality before the law, and democracy were formed. These are key features of Western ideology and tradition. Islamic culture had preserved the knowledge of ancient Mesopotamia, Egypt, India, and Persia. Arabic was the international language of communication of the medieval age and Medieval European scholars who wanted to share in this learning first needed to master the Arabic language (Kazi, 2005). During the Middle Ages, Western scholars translated many Arabic texts into Latin and these influences contributed to the Renaissance. Western culture began to spread to other parts of the globe in the 15th to 17th centuries as explorers and missionaries moved around the world. Imperialism accelerated the spread of Western culture and ideology between the 17th and 20th centuries. The spread of Western influence has been nothing short of phenomenal, and has critically and positively shaped human development. Many in today's world however regard the West and Western influence as dominating, pervasive and destructive.

2.2 The Positive Influence of Western Culture

For many Westerners and non-westerners, modernization, scientific achievement and technological advancement, are synonymous with 'Westernization'. In addition, while story-telling, literature, music and dance form part of every culture, an overwhelming volume of the arts and performance originated in the West. The ballet is a distinctively Western dance performance, as is the polka, the square dance and the Irish jig. Classical,

Country and Folk are genres of music born in the West. Jan Van Eyck was the first oil painter and the first artist in recorded history to produce a drawing of the moon (Whitehouse, 1999). Perspective drawing and painting began in Florence, while photography and sculpture, along with the arch, the dome and the flying buttress all originated in the West. Doric, Corinthian and Ionic columns and the skyscraper are Western innovations. The symphony originated in Italy, while the violin, piano, saxophone, trombone and clarinet, solo piano, symphony orchestra and string quartet are also all from the West. The Iliad, the novel, and other epic types of literature are Western.

The West's focus on science and technology produced the radio, photography, the movies, television and music video. Steam power, electricity, new processes and materials, engines, nuclear power, and transformers are inventions of the West. The locomotive, the bicycle, the aircraft, the car, the memory chip and the transistor are all Western technologies. Concrete, aluminum, clear glass, rubber, and polypropylene were created in the West as were bridges, steel ships and petrochemicals. The West communicated their discoveries by developing devices and systems including the pencil, ball-point pen, the photocopier, laser printer, plasma screen, telegraph, the telephone, navigational satellites, mobile phones and the internet. Westerners explored the globe and beyond, being the first to circumnavigate the world, reach the Poles, fly into space, orbit the earth, land on the moon and send robots to Mars. Given the span and scope of Western invention and enterprise it is not surprising that Western culture is seen to dominate the modern age (Stein, 1976; McClellan and Dorn, 1999).

Elements and aspects of Western culture have significantly influenced other world cultures and it is not surprising that the notion of 'modernization' is often linked to the notion of 'westernization' (Singh, 1997). However, some have extended this link to infer that the technological progress of the West, along with associated harmful negative values, are the rationale for rejecting Western culture and ideology. For many in today's world, 'modernity' is incompatible with the vision and values of more traditional cultures. Whether one agrees with this view or not, what is uncontested is that the core of discovery, technology and innovation which makes up 'modernization' was developed by the Western world and is now adopted and used globally.

The more traditional definition of culture as a shared set of beliefs, customs and ideas that joined people together in self-identified groups has been recently challenged by academics from many disciplines. The notion of cultural coherence has been questioned as modern sociological research has revealed that members of close-knit groups can, and do, hold radically different views and perspectives of the world (McLuhan, 1962). In this sense culture is not simply a knowledge system strictly inherited from ancestors. Rather, it is a set of ideas and principles that change as people react to changing circumstances (Bamyeh, 2000). In this sense, anthropologists and sociologists are able to track the spread of Western ideology and modern ideas to other cultures and map the rapid diffusion of modernity. The following section seeks to explore the dark historical period of Western expansionism in order to demonstrate how the spread of Western ideology evolved and how it can be mapped.

civilizations could only gain entry to developed humanity if they accepted Western superiority and domination. The application of the West's supreme self-view resulted in extermination of certain Arab groups, the Indians of North America, the aboriginals of Tasmania (Australia), the spread of contagious diseases by European troops and discoverers, population displacement following invasions, the use of mass indigenous labour, the systematic levying of food, and then recruitment for the First World War. European penetration and exploitation of the globe was deadly, and was all in the name of Western civilization.

Few contested the West's quest for new colonies and their associated ravaging of parts of the world as anything but legitimate except to question the financial cost, or the damage to trade. The glorious European spirit and natural right-to-rule went unchecked. The imposition of Western civilizing pretensions was undertaken in the name of the values of Western civilization (Bessis, 2003). The acts of conquest and colonization due to Western expansion led to the creation of a 'pioneer myth' and the glorification of white territorial advancement. An entire body of literature championed colonial enterprise and detailed the savagery of African tribes, and the barbarism of American Indians and other indigenous groups.

This 'Europeanizing' of the world gained a new dimension in the early 1900's as the West not only conquered, colonized and civilized but also began to populate continents only 'inhabited by savages'. The New Worlds became home to millions of European settlers bringing with them the benefits of Western civilization and promoting the new

2.3 The negative Influence of Western Culture and Western Supremacy

During the 1800's Western civilization sought to expand its realm of influence through colonialism. This geographic push was based on the West's belief in its own superiority as a civilization and was the origin of racism and the notion of white supremacy. The West's sense of superiority was based on the perceived genius of the white races for their scientific, technological, cultural and political advancements and discoveries. Caucasians regarded themselves as superior to all other ethnic groups and excluded other civilizations, such as Africa, from their perception of world order. Western historians even relocated the achievements of the Egyptian civilization to the Mediterranean (and therefore linked to Greeks and Romans) rather than acknowledge Egypt's position as an African country. By the close of the 1800's there was widespread belief by Westerners for white supremacy, purity of bloodlines, racism, and natural selection (Ankerl, 2000).

As Western civilization expanded through colonization it legitimized the enslavement of black people and justified exploitation, segregation and extermination. There was a common belief between the ruling elites of Old Europe and the New Worlds of Australia and the Americas, of the West's absolute right to supremacy. This view spread from the elite to the middle and lower classes when education became available to the masses. Sophie Bessis maintains that the education system 'anchored a popular belief in racial superiority and democratized the culture of supremacy' within Western civilization (Bessis, 2003, p.32). As the nineteenth century closed, the West had constructed a pyramid of the human race with Europeans at the apex. More primitive races and

lands to the rank of 'civilized'. In this way the West offered itself as a model to societies held back by genetic inferiority from further evolution. The West...

'...proclaiming itself the secular arm of progress, exhorted the world to accept its inevitability and to comply with the prescriptions of modernity – but only on the condition that modernization was in accordance with its own model and did not interfere with its interests' (Bessis, 2003, p.42).

Modern day historians and researchers rightly question the imperial enterprise, recognizing the falsity of the Western claim to superiority on the basis of race, religion and scientific register. The Caucasians claim to be culturally superior and the natural masters of lesser races, allowed Western culture to permeate and dominate the globe throughout the 18th, 19th and 20th centuries (Adas, 1989). Does Western culture still dominate? To what extent is its influence felt in the Middle East region? This is the focus of the following section.

2.4 Globalization, and Western Influence in the Middle East

The domination of Western culture and ideology over three centuries has irrevocably altered the pattern of civilization on earth. The forces of Western culture have reached around the globe to such an extent that many now claim Western expansion, with few exceptions, is globalizing the human experience.

The Encyclopedia Britannica (2009) defines cultural globalization as 'a phenomenon by which the experience of everyday life, as influenced by the diffusion of commodities and ideas, reflects a standardization of cultural expressions around the world. Further, propelled by the efficiency or appeal of wireless communications, electronic commerce, popular culture and international travel, globalization has been seen as a trend toward homogeneity that will eventually make human experience everywhere essentially the same'.

McLuhan's (1962) concept of the global village recognizes the worldwide spread of television and the internet as the mediums which accelerated the communication of western culture and produced a 'cultural implosion' of human experience. This view is supported by the work of Kevin Kelly with his notion of a borderless world (Kelly, 1994). Opponents of this global uniformity and unilateralism are fearful of the loss of national identity and diversity, and the growth of anti-globalization blocks is well documented (Vedrine, Moisi & Gordon, 2001). Anti-globalism organizations and movements are now found throughout the world.

Supporters of globalization, and skeptics of the negative effects of globalization, view the increasingly standardized experience of everyday life since the 1960's as a positive development and cite the technological 'marvels' which many in Europe and North America take for granted as having a profound affect on the quality of life of billions of people in the less developed world. Everyday life in such countries has been revolutionized by refrigeration, hot water, screened windows and bottled cooking gas.

Despite the advantages that technology has brought, cultural origins remain a powerful influence in every day existence. People are tied to places, and places to particular norms and values. Perhaps the appearance of uniformity and conformity is a deceptive feature of the common notion of globalization. Just because inhabitants of Madras, Vietnam and Georgia occasionally enjoy a McDonalds, watch the Oscars or wear designer jeans, does not make them 'global'. Outward appearances do not necessarily reveal the individual meanings which people assign to cultural innovation (Bamyeh, 2000; Encyclopedia Britannica, 2009).

Globalization in the Middle East and the Gulf

The globalizing influence of modernity through technology, new media, and the flow of labour, commodities and information has contributed to a cultural revision on the national level in many parts of the Arab world. The significance of this influence varies. For those who identify globalization as a new economic, political and cultural force which has formulated a new capital power system driven by multinationals to serve western values, globalization is a negative development in their region. This view is mirrored in the popularity and new connotations attributed to the Arabic term for 'globalization' – '*awlama*'. Gaber Asfour maintains that from a sociolinguistic perspective, Arab apprehension of the new world order (a powerful centre dominating peripheral nations) is expressed as '*awlama* is inflected *faw'al*, an infinitive connotating coercion, and homologous to *qawlaba*, the Arabic for 'moulding'. For Asfour '*awlama* denotes falling under pressure to conform (Asfour, 2006, pp.141-142). For many Arabs whose focus is on local community, close-knit social and family life and extended kindred networks,

globalization and its associated structure-dependent, and business and military control can be threatening and challenging to their deeply rooted social values. The United Nation's publication 'Crossing the Divide' (2002) has encouraged Arab intellectuals to challenge compulsory globalization and prevent their culture from being reshaped by external forces.

It is evident that globalization can have both positive and negative effects, that it has costs as well as benefits, and nowhere are those costs and benefits as evident as in the Arab world. Arab countries have been engulfed by globalizing forces which have stimulated inequality and cultural conflict while also providing many material benefits (Hudson, 2006). The Gulf, and in particular the United Arab Emirates (UAE) has emerged as 'the Arab's world's flagship of globalization' (Hudson, 2006, p148). The Gulf nations have knowingly and deliberately become integrated into the global networks of trade, communication, technology, tourism and trade. Accelerating during the 1990's, globalization has reshaped the domestic affairs and economy of the Gulf, and linked the society and economy of the Middle East to countries around the globe in unprecedented and unforeseen ways.

Since the expansion of the airline industry in the 1960's international travel has become an everyday experience for millions of people. Travel no longer involves adapting to unfamiliar cultures, languages, foods or customs. The United Arab Emirates' strategic plan is to position itself as a regional travel hub for world airline routes. As such, Dubai and Abu Dhabi welcome millions of businesspeople and tourists every month who fly to,

or through the UAE. Western style beds, toilets, showers, restaurants, fitness centres, appliances and climate control constitute the global standard provided.

Berger and Huntington (2003) maintain that the processes of globalization have affected Euro-American, and Western-world academic agendas by creating a world-wide 'faculty club'. They define this 'faculty club' as an international network of people sharing similar views, attitudes and research goals. Members of this international faculty club have significant influence through their association with educational institutions and through professional conferences. International conferences are instrumental in promoting themes such as environmentalism, feminism, human rights and other major world issues. The UAE is fast becoming the number one destination for professional conferences worldwide, providing a central meeting place for educationalists, researchers and scholars.

The pattern and volume of 'immigrant work' throughout the world has changed dramatically over the last 50 years. Since the middle of last century spiraling numbers of migrant workers have left their home countries seeking work and sending their salaries back to relatives. In 2005, it was estimated that migrant workers made up 95 percent of the UAE workforce in the private sector (Human Rights Watch, 2006). Many such workers from the Indian subcontinent and from South East Asian countries like the Philippines, Thailand and China have become contract workers in the Middle East, more particularly in the Gulf countries. By the turn of the century these workers had access to

mobile phones and were able to regularly communicate their experiences and circumstances to their families at home.

In this sense the Gulf played a role as secondary contributor to the globalizing processes of western culture as its hosting of Western norms, customs and ideas allowed non-Westerners to experience essentially Western cultural expressions in the Gulf. Everyday life for these immigrant workers involves feelings of appropriateness, comfort and correctness for Western norms. The experiences that define their personal preferences and changing tastes were being shaped by Western practice and ideology, and these changes were being communicated to their families and kinship networks. As a result of their stay in the Middle East, transnational workers are adopting common Western perceptions of what represents an appropriate and fulfilling lifestyle. Coping with globalization poses many challenges for the Arab world, and for the world at large. Since the height of Arab nationalism in the 1960's, the region appears to have fallen-in with a new kind of global imperialism. Globalization is 'engulfing the Gulf' just as it is engulfing other regions of the world (Hudson, 2006).

This chapter has sought to explore the source and development of Western culture, addressing its most positive features and its more negative impact. Modernity, western supremacy and the spread of globalization have been described. Finally, the impact of globalization on the Middle East and particularly in the Gulf, has been reviewed. The following chapter will examine the influence of Western culture on the structure of

higher education in Lebanon, by linking the globalizing effects of popular culture to tertiary learning environments.

Chapter 3

3.1 Theories of Contemporary Education

Having established the origins of Western culture, and traced evolutionary links between western ideology, modernity and globalization, the previous section laid a foundation for close examination of the role of education in the modern world. This chapter will examine the structure of the higher education sector in the Middle East, and more particularly in Lebanon. The two major models of contemporary Middle Eastern university structure will be described before undertaking an in-depth look at the higher education experience in Lebanon. Finally, expressions of Western popular culture within the university context will be assessed. Education and its role within the processes of globalization is a major theme for this chapter.

3.2 Higher Education in the Middle East

Sociologically speaking, Arab societies remain largely unexplored and this is compounded by the difficulties of empirical research and the constraints of freedom of thought (Batatu, 1977). Some of the many forces and processes that have affected the life of present day Arabs include the consequences of the industrial revolution, the advance of Western power and capital, technology, Western ideology, the English French and Italian conquests, the disintegration of the Ottoman Empire, the establishment of dependent monarchies, republics and sheikhdoms, exploitation of oil resources, the settlement of European and Oriental Jews in Palestine, and the explosion of 'oil wealth' (Batatu, 1977,

p.4). The resultant structural consequences have been far-reaching, particularly for the development of the education sector.

Matta Akraw asserts that there are two basic types of higher education in the Arab world, the traditional classical Arab-Islamic education which has its origins with the start of Islam in the seventh century AD, and the modern Western type of university education which was introduced to the Middle East region in the early nineteenth century (Akrawi, 1977). This view is supported by Samir Seikaly whose work explores learning in Middle Eastern bicultural contexts (Seikaly, 1979). These two models of higher education have largely operated independently of one-another, overseen and monitored either by religious governance, or by Ministries of Education or Higher Education. These two models differ in their structural organizations, their curricula, in the training of their staff, and in the purposes and priorities which underpin their existence.

Following the start of the Islamic movement in 610AD, Islamic education began in the path of the Prophet Muhammad with the mosque at the centre of both prayer and learning. The *Qur'an*, the Holy book of Islam, was at the centre of all teaching. The word *Qur'an* translates literally to '*the act of reading*'. The evolution of Islamic education accelerated between the 7th and 9th centuries as Islamic Sunni and Shiite schools of theological doctrine and law developed. Following the translation of many Greek works of science, medicine, mathematics, astronomy, philosophy and logic, the Arabs added Indian mathematics to their own knowledge of medicine, algebra and botany (Akrawi, 1977, pp. 40). Teaching mosques and *madrasahs* educated in the service of God and were

identified with the interpretation and spread of Islam. This system produced most of the religious and administrative leaders of the Arab and Islamic world and peaked during the first 5 centuries of its evolution. As Arab society began to decline, it lost the creative ideas and doctrine of its earlier era and slid into a phase characterized by commentary and memorization. By the late 1700's the Islamic higher education system was a shadow of its former brilliant origins (Akrawi, 1977, pp. 42).

With the expansion of European domination many Arab leaders were forced to recognize the military and administrative superiority of the West. With the defeat of the Ottoman Empire by the Europeans, and as Bonaparte occupied Egypt, several Arab rulers had begun by 1720 to send students to Europe and to invite European advisors who quickly established military, engineering and medical schools using Western science as their base. Over time a whole new system of education developed which sat alongside the existing Islamic model. The following key milestones mark the growth of the Western style higher education institutions in the Middle East region and have been compiled from general readings;

1866	The first modern Western style university institution in the Arab world was the Syrian Protestant College established in Beirut by American missionaries
1875	The French Jesuit Order established the Universite' St. Joseph in Beirut
1859	The French government in Algeria founded schools of medicine, law, science and pharmacy
1909	These schools are combined to form the University of Algeria

1908	The Private Egyptian University was established in Cairo
1920	The Syrian Protestant College became the American University of Beirut
1919	The American Protestant Mission in Egypt funded the American University of Cairo
1923	The first Arab public university was founded in Syria, now the University of Damascus
1925	The second public university was the State Egyptian University
1942	The State University of Alexandria was established

To these 7 modern, foreign and national universities should be added the three Arab-Islamic university mosques of Zitouna in Tunis established in the 8th century AD, the Qarawiyyin in Fez established in 859AD, and the Al-Azhar in Cairo founded in 970AD bringing the total number of higher education institutions in the Middle East before the end of World War II to ten universities – 7 modeled on Western traditions and 3 teaching traditional Islamic content (Akrawi, 1977, pp.43). This chronology clearly indicates that modern higher education was not an evolutionary development of the older Arab-Islamic system, but a dual system of 2 very different types of university, one with a traditional Islamic religious base, the other an import from the West to meet the needs of Arab countries in a modern world (Tibawi, 1972). Educational expansion in the Middle East was modeled largely on the higher education structures of the Western world (Mundy, 2007, pp.346).

Following World War II, modern secular and religious universities sprang up across the Middle East as more and more Arab countries regained their independence. Universities, either modern secular or religious, soon established in Algeria, Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Saudi, Somalia, Sudan, Syria, Tunisia and Yemen. A strong motivation behind the rapid expansion of higher education institutions was the need by the newly independent States to train their own administrative personnel to enable economic and social development. The number of new religious universities also grew as Islamic universities were established in Libya, Sudan and Saudi Arabia, and a Catholic Maronite University in Lebanon. Most Arab countries sought to standardize university degrees within the national boundaries.

Western style higher education institutions in the Middle East today vary but generally adhere to certain common features. Most public universities are overseen by either a Ministry of Education or Ministry of Higher Education. Most have university councils which are responsible for determining policy, development and co-ordinating institutional processes such as admissions, examination and assessments, academic staff, degree structures, finance and administration. Most adopt a similar organizational pattern involving faculties, departments, schools or institutes with each sub-area being represented in the Council or Senate. University Councils or Senates approve policy, grant degrees, approve budgets and programs, determine curricula, recommend appointments and promotions, and participate in planning. Academic staff is divided into ranks including professor, associate/assistant professor, instructor, demonstrator, and

trainer. Other ranks exist but can usually be subsumed into the preceding list (Griswold, 1957).

The curriculum at Middle Eastern universities generally falls into five areas of influence: Arab-Islamic, American, French, British and Egyptian. Lecture and tutorial are the prevalent teaching methodologies. Prescribed textbooks and refereed journals are used as the principal source of knowledge. Laboratory, workshop and fieldwork underpin the science and technology areas. Medical, pharmacology and veterinary sciences access hospitals, laboratories, and clinics as supplementary teaching environments. Graduate study and research is now a common component of higher education in the Middle East. Towards the end of the 20th century the growth of enrolment in Arab higher education exceeded the world average (Akrawi, 1977).

Seikaly maintains that modern Western forms of education use the university classroom as the nucleus for the acquisition of a Western 'organized, consistent and practical body of knowledge...imparted by educators...who extol the superior merits, vigor and vitality of Western civilization' (Seikaly, 1979, pp. 78-79). In this sense, the university classroom is transformed into a medium for uni-cultural enforcement. Akrawi agrees, claiming that modern Arab higher education is essentially borrowed from the West, its organization, its content and its methods. Teaching is underpinned by Western research and experimentation. With few exceptions the teaching of social and behavioral sciences, medicine, public health, international politics, law, economics, management and business subjects is undertaken with knowledge drawn from Western sources, with little inclusion

of the indigenous character. Study of Arab-Islamic culture is generally contained within the specific study of religion, Arabic language and literature, pre and Post Islamic history and (recently) some study of the modern Arab world.

3.3 Popular Culture in Lebanese Universities

The definition of 'popular' and the definition of 'culture' are both contested concepts, making a definition of 'popular culture' especially problematic. For the purposes of this work, popular culture (or pop culture) will be: that which is popular within the social context; that which is perceived to be popularly accepted; and the widespread cultural elements that are perpetuated through daily interactions, needs, desires and 'cultural moments' that make up the everyday lives of the mainstream (wikipedia, www.dictionary.com, www.arroweducation.org/glossary.htm, 2008). In 'Cultural Theory and Popular Culture' John Storey (2006) provides six detailed definitions of popular culture. His third definition linking pop culture with 'mass culture' and 'commercial culture', and then linking all three to American culture, is the definition of most interest to this work. Storey maintains that popular culture originated from the urbanization of the industrial revolution and finds its expression in the mass circulation of items from music, sport, fashion, film, food, entertainment and literature.

As pop culture began in the 1950's its appeal was mostly to the younger generation, and it was difficult for adults to understand or participate. Today however, adults and youth alike 'engage' with pop culture either directly or indirectly. Pop culture changes

constantly, updating and evolving new dimensions. It forms currents and trends and is characterized by an interlacing of mutually-interdependent sets of perspectives and values which influence society and its institutions in many ways. The influence of pop culture on society is contentious and Storey maintains that the political dimension of pop culture (the neo-Gramscian hegemony theory) defines pop culture as the site of a struggle between the 'resistance' of subordinate groups in society and the forces of 'incorporation' operating in the interests of dominant groups (Williams, 1985). As a theme, pop culture can be linked to the forces of globalization, and just like the 'globalization' dispute, two strong opposing groups either decry the impact of pop culture on today's world, or approve of its influence.

Whether supportive of pop culture, or against it, most agree that pop culture has become pervasive in most facets of society. Its reach is extended and accelerated by movements in media, including print, online and on screen. Those opposing the influence of pop culture maintain that it reflects the shortcomings of mass society and is largely to blame for the growing shift away from traditional family values and religious beliefs. This group believes that pop culture is purely lower class and that the more educated layers of society are being threatened by the increasingly commercial values of the masses (Gallissot, 1994).

Those holding the contra-view believe that pop culture is a mirror reflecting the true nature and interests of people generally, and that because it is based on a blend of cultures, races and classes of people, it creates a truly unifying framework for global

society as a whole (Dahlgren, 1995). Regardless of the particular perspective, popular culture is a demand driven phenomenon, and the demand continues to drive. Television, magazines, newspapers, websites, the evening news, board games and childrens' cartoons integrate aspects of pop culture into every hour of the day. Pop culture has entered the education sector with the emergence of professional fields of study dedicated to researching its origins and impact. Study of pop culture is a common component of most communication, media and cultural courses, and professional journals and teaching seminars are regularly dedicated to the exploration of the influences of pop culture on the modern age.

University students today, from all over the world, form a 'millennial generation' (Coomes & Debard, 2004). This generation, influenced by numerous cultural icons, is at ease with technology and accustomed to a 24/7 world. Rapid growth in visual modes of communication has increased the zone of influence for pop culture, impacting many aspects of higher education. Universities see today's students more as customers or clients, than students, and universities have become increasingly commercialized. University advertising, use of logos on uni t-shirts and caps, and big-scale orientation programs illustrate the impact of pop culture on university planning.

Popular culture has also influenced the places academics and students now value as sources of information and knowledge. The internet has become the most valued research site for students, replacing the traditional library experience. As a direct result, the internet has also created its own rules for grammar and spelling which now determine

what is commonly acceptable. Movies and historical documentaries are a common medium for learning history with many students unable to connect with historical contexts except through visual media (Considine & Baker, 2006). Popular culture has impacted our daily speech, influencing vocabulary, patterns of conversation, writing, and the very attitudes and values which students bring to the university campus.

Popular culture has significantly influenced the classroom experience and teaching styles with many university lecturers incorporating videos and DVD's into lesson plans in order to lengthen students' attention spans. Today's generation is often characterized as bored, lazy, unable to focus academically, and as not being able to engage with formal study. Lecturers strive to plan class activities to counter these trends, with those that 'deliver a lecture' less popular than those who 'engage students in open discussion' (Costa, Van Rensburg, & Rushton, 2006). But the discussion must relate to contemporary issues and target topics of interest to the young. This situation presents a serious challenge to those educators seeking to impart the more traditional theoretical knowledge. While pop culture has positively contributed to the lesson plan by bringing diverse ideas within more relaxed contexts, this is often achieved at the expense of core frameworks through which formal instruction can take place.

We live in the 'instant' age, where there is an abundance of things: too many messages, too many options, too many choices, too many issues. Pop culture overwhelms the senses, often leaving both student and teacher feeling unsure. The American talk-show phenomenon, the rise of the McDonald society and impact of global media have created

the notion that any idea can be expressed, and we need to do it instantly (Arriaga, 1984).

Many students demand the right to be heard and to speak out at will. The results of this can include impatience with practicing a presentation or drafting a speech, loss of critical thought, and failure to listen to one-another in the classroom setting. Students are disappointed when their presentations or communication efforts are not instantly successful, or when their papers take too much time to prepare. Instantaneous gratification takes too long.

The views outlined above portray a relatively negative view of the inter-relationship between pop culture and education. A counterview exists. The counter-impulse to regarding pop culture as a dark force within education highlights its outward looking relevance, and supports its broad influence on the wider society (Graff, 2004). Gerald Graff maintains that since World War II higher education has put aside the narrow focus of scholarship, favoring academics who can generalize their specialities and demonstrate their wider application. He believes that academia has become part of the mass culture industry which disseminates and popularizes academic theories and trends. Following the post-war knowledge explosion and the accompanying increased diversity of students, faculty and curricula, popular culture has given rise to the democratization of higher education.

Authors like Graff draw a direct link between the positive influence of pop culture on higher education and a creeping intellectualism fascinated with the university context and the experience of teaching and learning. Evidence of this popularity is demonstrated in

films such as *Dead Poets Society*, *Educating Rita*, *Dangerous Minds*, *The Mirror Has Two Faces*, *Good Will Hunting* and *Legally Blonde*. It is further demonstrated through cerebral cartoon television programs such as *The Far Side*, and *The Simpsons*. Academic writing is now popularized not just by the media but also by university presses themselves. Where once a university press was known for publishing particular forms of academic specialization, now university publishing houses advertise their book lists as 'contemporary', 'paradigm-smashing', 'path-breaking', 'broad appeal'. This shift reflects the broadening of traditional higher education. The impact of popular culture has brought about a new proximity between academe and the media, between academics and journalists.

Ideas that matter have a way of spreading, being translated and then recycled for various audiences throughout the knowledge food chain (Graff, 2004; and Dahlgren, 1995).

While not everyone thinks the changes in academe have been for the best, accusing universities and academic writers of selling out to trends and fads, most believe the content of academic intellectual output is now richer, more compelling, and more closely linked to popular culture. In this sense the university is not simply a host for popular culture, but has itself become an active component of popular culture. The content of university curricula has undergone revolutionary change and the border between academic writing and journalism has become blurred.

The two polar schools of thought regarding the influence of popular culture on today's university sector are increasingly well documented. Pop culture has been dismissed as

trivia, condemned as propaganda and a tool of mass deception designed for fashion victims and those with short concentration spans. Alternately, supporters of pop culture see its influence on the education sector as valuable material for the study of social life, and as critical to the building of a framework for global understanding and tolerance. Higher education's capacity to embrace popular culture has the potential to affect how we see ourselves, others, those who make distinctions between social classes and nations, production and consumption, and the struggle between power and resistance.

Critics and supporters agree that popular culture is molding the current generation, and that an important site in this shaping process is the university campus. Strauss and Howe's 'peer personality' or 'collective consciousness' (Strauss & Howe in Coomes & Debard, 2004) is significantly influenced by 'urban higher education'. The collective persona of the millennial generation is being shaped by the structural and organizational advances of our time. The development of the contemporary student is influenced by 3 models of student development; psychosocial-identity formation, cognitive development structures and the evolution of personal preferences, styles and types. Each of these models is influenced by popular culture, and is in turn culture defining (Strange in Coomes & Debard, 2004, pp.49).

Research into the new 'millennial generation' and the new 'urban higher education experience' indicates millennials are a 'special' generation possessing attitudes towards diversity specific to this era. Described as 'special, sheltered, confident, conventional, team-oriented, pressured, achieving, and pop-culture driven, the higher education sector

needs to prepare for the onslaught of this new generation who are changing the face of our world in general and our colleges and universities in particular.

Chapter 4

4.1 Research Abstract

This paper has explored the notion of 'pop culture' and its presence on Lebanese University campuses. The methodology related to the collection of data, in the form of a questionnaire, observations and a series of interviews has been investigated with specific reference to participants, materials and procedures. This study is a work in progress and the potential for future research has also been discussed.

4.2 Research Question and Definitions

The latter half of the twentieth century has witnessed changes in popular culture with substantial research being undertaken in a plethora of related areas such as the effects of television, film, advertizing, fashion, music and the desensitization of today's youth. Little research however focuses on the complex relationship between modern pop culture and education. If we believe that popular culture has a direct effect on youth behavior and attitude, then is it not fair to suggest that these influences, in turn, affect the current educational system? Popular culture reflects and informs society and aids in shaping the attitudes of the masses. The same can be said of formal instructional education. Thus, what transpires in an educational arena directly and profoundly affects society as a whole. For this reason I have chosen to expand current research in the field by examining the presence, if any, of pop culture on university campuses, in particular Lebanese university campuses.

The results of my study, however insignificant in a strictly academic sense, will surely provide 'food for thought' and a possible platform to further research in this arena. It is my hope that this study generates discussion and provides an opportunity to explore the effects of popular culture and the implications which arise from the inter-relationship of popular culture and modern educational institutions.

Research Question

According to students, is there a western 'pop culture' presence on their university campus?

For the purposes of clarification, the following paragraphs provide working definitions of the major themes of my research. Broader definitions of these key concepts, along with related terminology, are provided in Chapter 1, section 1.2.

Popular Culture

Popular culture, often referred to as 'pop culture' is literally, 'the culture of the people or of the masses' (Hassabain, 1999). Pop culture consists of widespread cultural elements in any given society and is often defined by objects, images, artifacts, literature, and music of ordinary people. Pop culture is a shared set of practices and beliefs that have attained global acceptance and which can normally be characterized by: being associated with commercial products; developing from local to national to global acceptance; allowing customers to have widespread access; and are constantly changing and developing (www.arroweducation.org/glossary.htm, 2008). For the

purposes of this study, pop culture will refer to those Western influences which find expression in mass circulation in areas such as fashion, music and language.

Western Culture

Wikipedia describes Western culture or Western civilization as 'a term used generally to refer to most of the cultures of European origin and most of their descendants. It comprises the broad, geographically based, heritage of social norms, ethical values, traditional customs (such as religious beliefs) and specific artifacts and technologies as shared within the Western sphere of influence (Wikipedia http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Western_culture). This definition is shared by historians such as Jacques Barzen (2000), John Merriman (1996) and Isaac Asimov (1982). Western culture is the set of literary, scientific, musical and philosophical principles. More recently, Western culture has included themes such as materialism, industrialism, capitalism, commercialism, hedonism and imperialism.

4.3 Survey

Methodology

In order to obtain information regarding the presence of pop culture on university campuses in Lebanon, I decided to conduct a survey at 2 prominent universities in Beirut. The first university I chose to examine is the Lebanese American University (LAU). The second was the Beirut Arab University (BAU). I hypothesize that the data collected will differ greatly from one university to the other, reflecting polarized student beliefs. Additionally, I believe the results of my study will indicate a higher

degree of popular culture presence at the Lebanese American University than at the Beirut Arab University.

Participants

The samples I have chosen to complete this questionnaire are:

Sample 1: 30 random students on the LAU campus (15 boys and 15 girls)

Sample 2: 30 random students on the BAU campus (15 boys and 15 girls)

I believe the samples elected to participate will be 'typical' or reflective of the university population as a whole. I have chosen LAU due to its American ties and the Arabian University for its more traditional reputation.

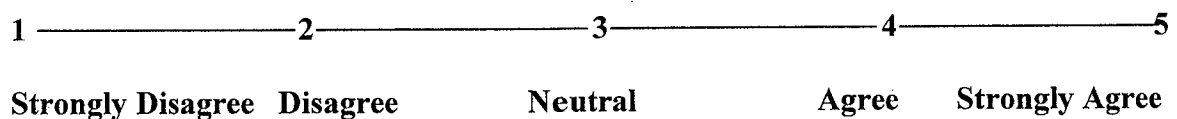
Materials/Instrumentation

For the purpose of this study, I have chosen to use a simple questionnaire instrument (see appendix) to gather information from a predetermined population (LAU and BAU students) this method of data collection is often referred to as a cross-sectional survey (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2006). Although the data collection tool I have developed does not allow participants to direct the questions, I determined it was the appropriate choice for collecting a reasonably large amount of data from participants which would be reflective of individual opinion and beliefs.

Design

There are numerous advantages to using surveys as a method of data collection such as the standardized way in which data can be gathered and the speed at which information can be collected. It can be said however that surveys also pose disadvantages for the researcher such as the potential for superficial answers and the ability of participants to forget or not recall vital or relevant information. (Milne, J. 1999). "The nature of questions and the way they are asked are extremely important in survey research" (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2006). Close ended questions were used in my design in order to measure opinions, attitudes and knowledge. A rating scale (1- strongly disagree to 5- strongly agree) was utilized to determine how accurately each statement reflects the students opinions. For example;

- 1) There is a stereotypical 'Western' presence on my campus in the form of language used by my fellow students (e.g. Yo, Dude, Bro, Homies etc)**



For the students at the BAU, the rating scale was reversed in order to reflect the Arabic style. As the Arabic language is read from right to left, applying this style helps to eliminate confusion and possible validity issues. Students at LAU are required to complete their courses in English so I am assured that an English style rating scale will offer no problems. However if I were to give the same rating scale to students who

operate linguistically in Arabic on a day to day basis such as those at BAU, the rating scale may be misinterpreted thus rendering my findings unusable. I would very much like to provide students at BAU with a survey written in Arabic, however I have neither the time nor the resources to ensure direct, correct translation.

The questions I have developed for this survey are directly related to stereotypical elements of Western pop culture such as language, music and dress. The purpose of asking such questions is to elicit information from the students regarding the degree to which they believe such elements are present on their campus. I attempted to make the questions as clear as possible in order to eliminate confusion or misunderstanding as surveys do not always give the researcher a chance to ensure participants are understanding what is being asked.

Procedure

The questionnaires were distributed in person, face-to face, using an identical procedure for each participant in order to eliminate validity issues. Each university was visited twice and on the same days of the week (e.g. both LAU and BAU were visited on a Monday and Friday during different weeks). Additionally, surveys were distributed at the same time of day on each campus, around lunchtime.

Although the participants were chosen at random, this is a purposive study, as the sample I have chosen has characteristics I wish to study. It is also a convenience sampling, as the universities I have chosen are, in themselves, polarized in their reputations and therefore may display potential biases. Often, biased samples are avoided for the simple fact that

they produced biased results (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2006). In the case of my research, I feel that potential biases are not an issue as I looked forward to comparing the results and confirming or disputing current generalizations about American universities and Arab universities in Beirut.

Method of analysis

Although the majority of researchers may use a computer program to analyze the results of their study, I will analyze my findings manually. My sample is not very large (60 participants), therefore I think it will be challenging but not impossible to draw conclusions from my findings without the aid of a software program.

The raw data collected will be presented in tabular form in 2 groups. Group A tables will represent the questionnaire results by University thus enabling an relatively straight forward comparison between the responses from each university. Group B tables show a breakdown of the results by University and by gender. The gender break down may be useful in highlighting significant differences between the genders in their response to specific questions.

The literature review I have conducted has helped me to determine what areas of this field of study have *already* been explored, allowing me to follow on from these and conduct my own study. However, I believe that as my study unfolds, many new ideas and areas for study will be exposed.

4.4 Observation

Non-participant observation is a research technique where by the researcher observes the subjects of their study without actively taking part in the situation. This technique is often employed by researchers who do not wish to be influenced by or do not wish to influence the participants (see for example, Fraenkel & Wallen, 2006). This method is often criticized on the grounds that the researcher can unknowingly influence the participants (the Hawthorn effect) (<http://www.encyclopedia.com/doc/1O88-nonparticantobservation.html>). However in the case of this research, being a student myself assisted in limiting this obstacle.

Methodology

Although the survey component of my research provided rich data for analysis, adding observation to my research allowed me to identify patterns of behavior which the original survey participants may not have been able to identify themselves. Although surveys shed light on participant's thoughts, attitudes and values, observation allows researchers to ascertain what participants actually *do* (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2006). For this reason, I assumed the role of a non-participant observer and conducted 6 hours of observation on the LAU and BAU campuses. As hypothesized in the previous section of this research, I predicted the results of this observational study would indicate a higher degree of distinctly Western pop culture presence (as represented through student dress, language and music choices) at the LAU campus than at the BAU campus.

Participants

The participants of this observation were the students on campus at the time the study was conducted.

Materials/Instrumentation and Design

Data collected from observational research can be very hard to analyze if the parameters of the study are not set in advance. In order to obtain data directly related to my area of study, which could be compared from one campus to another, I prepared a checklist highlighting the behaviors I believed to be most important for my observation.

Additionally, I defined the elements of my observation in advance in order to eliminate confusion and make the process as simple as possible. For the purpose of this study;

- 'Western style dress' was considered to be: baseball caps, jeans, short skirts or shorts or clothing displaying Western logos such as Nike, American Eagle, Puma, Levi etc.
- 'Languages' refers to the languages spoken by students in conversations which I overheard.
- 'Colloquial/Modern language' refers to words/sayings overheard in speech, such as 'dude, bro, homie' etc.
- 'Music' heard on campus came from ringtones or laptops.

Procedure

In order to obtain a sufficient amount of observational data, I chose to attend each university campus twice (once on a Monday and once on a Friday). Each visit lasted one

and a half hours. In order to ensure my data was representative of the whole student body I divided my time and the campus into 3 sections. I identified 3 places at each university where students gathered to socialize and spent a 30 minute period in each section.

4.5 Interviews

Methodology

Triangulating research involves using one or more methods of data collection in order to explore the same phenomenon. Not only does triangulation improve the quality of data collected, it is also known to improve the accuracy of the researcher's interpretations. (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2006). In the case of my study, I thought it important to utilize not only surveys and questionnaires but also a third method to further validate my findings. Validity is often defined by asking the question; Are you measuring what you think you are measuring? (Kerlinger, 1979, p. 138, cited in Kvale, 1996, p. 238). By comparing data which has been measured with different tools, one can determine how effective the collection method has been and how similar the results are. Thus, methodological triangulation is an attempt to improve validity by combining various techniques into one study (<http://jpo.sagepub.com/cgi/content/abstract/16/4/194>).

My research attempts to examine the presence, if any, of distinctly Western pop culture on Lebanese university campuses and after surveying students and observing their behavior, I thought it imperative to include student interviews in my research, thus utilizing not only quantitative but also qualitative research methods.

Participants

For the interview component of my study, I enlisted 6 participants, 3 students from LAU and 3 from BAU. Students were of differing ages and genders.

Materials/Instrumentation and Design

For the purpose of my study, I thought it appropriate to use a structured interview. Open-ended questions were prepared in advance which explored not only the definition of pop culture but also the elements which I have examined throughout my research; music, language and dress. The questions asked of participants were;

- 1) How would you define the term 'pop or popular culture'?
- 2) Do you believe pop culture relates to language, clothing and music?
- 3) Do you think there is a visible Western pop culture presence on your university campus? If so, what features can you nominate/observe to support it?
- 4) When on campus, what music do you hear/listen to?
- 5) What are the most popular clothing labels worn at your university?
- 6) When students speak English at your university, do they use modern slang such as 'bro' or 'dude'? If so, can you give me some examples?

The purpose of question 1 was to determine whether or not the participant had an understanding of the topic being addressed. Question 2 attempted to ascertain whether or not the participant believed music, language and dress to be elements of popular culture. Question 3 was a broad question designed to elicit information from the participants'

personal experiences, while questions 4, 5 and 6 sought to probe deeper into the elements which form the main themes of this thesis and which I specifically wished to address.

Procedure

Although interviews were conducted on different days, in differing locations, I ensured that all interviews took place in a private, quiet location. Before the interviews began, I attempted to connect with the participants in order to make them feel at ease. I informed each participant of the purpose of my study, asked that they speak their mind and assured them that their names would remain confidential. Each interview took approximately 15 minutes.

4.6 Literature Review

The process of conducting a literature search in the fields of pop culture and education has revealed a surprising amount of literature. This search has also brought to my attention the 'key scholarly sources' and 'key players' and their contributions to academic study. What follows is a form of annotated bibliography in which I outline the sources, some scholarly and some more generally accessed and read, which underpin this thesis. I follow this with more detail on some of the major themes which dominate pop culture literature.

I have utilized many web-based refereed journals, on-line magazines and interactive sites. In addition, I have read broadly from the more traditional sources such as books and articles.

Several prominent electronic refereed journals specifically address pop culture issues.

Foremost among these are the following;

- PMC (Post Modern Culture) was founded in 1990 as an experiment in scholarly publishing on the internet and has become the leading electronic journal of interdisciplinary thought on contemporary cultures. PMC publishes the work of noted writers and commentators such as Kathy Acker, Bruce Robbins and Susan Howe. PMC is published by Johns Hopkins University Press and since this web-based journal can publish still images, sound, animation, text and full motion video, these mediums lend themselves very effectively to the study of pop culture themes such as music, cinema and fashion.
- 'Social Text' is an archive only journal published by Duke University Press. Social Text publishes four journals a year covering a broad spectrum of social and cultural phenomena. Social Text is a daring and controversial leader in the field of cultural studies, with pop culture a dominant theme.
- The Journal of Computer Mediated Communication is a wide ranging journal published by the University of Southern California and covering many contemporary pop culture themes.

pop culture enthusiasts is Richard Maltby's *Passing Parade: A History of Popular Culture in the Twentieth Century* (1989).

Books associated with dominant themes within pop culture studies include the following:

- Television and fashion; Robert Allen's book *Channels of Discourse Reassembled* (1992) on television, Ien Ang's book *Rethinking Media Audiences for a Postmodern World* (1996) on media, and Roland Barthes (1983) work on the fashion world all contribute to a better understanding of the impact and reach of pop culture.
- Mass culture and mass images; these themes are comprehensively covered in the works of Alexander Doty – *Interpreting Mass Culture* (1993), and Elizabeth and Stuart Ewen's *Channels of Desire-Mass Images and the American Consciousness* (1982).
- Consumerism; Sut Jhally's *The Codes of Advertising* (1987) and Ann Kaplan's *Rocking Around the Clock: Music Television, Postmodernism and Consumer Culture* (1987) use fully developed theoretical models and case studies to examine identity formation in youth.
- Music; a broad study linking pop culture to the roots of rock and roll music is provided by Greil Marcus's *Mystery Train: Images of America in Rock and Roll Music* (1976). Ray Pratt's book titled *Rhythm and Resistance: The Political Uses of Popular Music* (1994) examines the role of music in shaping American culture. Arguably the best book on rap music, Tricia Rose's *Black Noise* (1994), explores

- 'Pop Matters: A Magazine of Global Culture' is an excellent pop culture focused journal offering theoretically informed criticism of the major elements of popular culture.
- 'Cultronix' is another web-based journal offering scholarly comment on contemporary cultural studies.
- The Boston Review provides readers with a literary and political forum, with specific sections addressing pop culture, film and fiction.
- Pop culture and feminist themes are broadly represented by Journals such as 'Differences: A Journal of Feminist Cultural Studies' and 'Sexuality and Culture: An Interdisciplinary Journal'.
- The journals 'Cultural Dynamics' and 'Public Culture' address interdisciplinary pop culture themes with particular focus on globalization.
- Another excellent source of literary information on pop culture themes is available through 'Popwire', a web-based 'news, reviews and commentary site from the world of Popular Culture' (www.popmatters.com).

In printed media, books dedicated to popular culture topics abound. An excellent generic work to provide a background for those seriously interested in pop culture is Fred Schroeder's work titled '*5000 Years of Popular Culture: Popular Culture Before Printing*' (1980). Much of the motivation for Schroeder's book is mirrored in another fine work by Robert Root. In his piece '*The Rhetorics of Popular Culture*', Root addresses issues such as advertising, advocacy and entertainment. He introduces a variety of critical approaches to popular culture. Another broad background read for

the political origins of rap music and its texts. *Dancing in Spite of Myself: Essays on Popular Culture* is a very entertaining work by Lawrence Grossberg (1997) in which he explores pop culture and 20th century rock music within an historical critique. In *America's Musical Pulse; Popular Music in 20th Century Society*, Kenneth Bindas (1995) regards popular music as a primary document of society. He maintains that music documents popular experience by recording its progress in sound, claiming that regardless of musical genre the underlying impulse reveals the attitudes of an era.

- Politics; David Jackson's book *Entertainment and Politics; The Influence of Pop Culture on Young Adult Political Socialization* (2002) addresses topics such as mass media and youth, political socialization, social life and customs and youth.

An expansive range of literary sources on pop culture themes is readily available, and this literary well (described above) has provided rich preparatory and background reading for this thesis. There is however, very little research or literary output that specifically targets pop culture and formal education. The ways in which popular culture, in its various forms, interacts with formal schooling environments remains largely unexplored. Pop culture and its relationship with the university campus has not attracted research interest of any magnitude. I find this very surprising especially given the fact that generic research into pop culture supports the notion that young people can be significantly affected/ molded/ shaped/ influenced and led by the currents of popular culture. What scholarly activity that does exist in linking these

two areas appears to be limited to the effects of media, such as television, on education.

Researchers, such as Neil Postman (1985) discuss the impact and influence of television on the education system and acknowledge the recent appearance of 'two curricula' the first being 'TV curricula' and the second being 'school curricula'. The most prevalent issue related to this school of thought is the students' preferred choice between the 2 curricula and the impact their choice may have on the future of formal education.

Television receives serious scrutiny from one expert in the field, Postman, who maintains television is inextricably linked with entertainment and is dangerous when it attempts to be serious. He argues that television has such resonance that our ability to take the world seriously has diminished. Postman believes a new 'worldview', a new ethos or approach to life has been brought about by the assimilation of television into the culture of the masses. According to Postman, media "has the power to fly far beyond (its original) context into new and unexpected ones...It imposes itself on our consciousness and social institutions in myriad forms. It sometimes has the power to become implicated in our concepts of piety, or goodness, or beauty. It is always implicated in the ways we define and regulate our ideas about truth" (1985).

Postman and writers like him question why society, in the face of compelling research indicating that television has a negative effect on individuals, condones extensive television exposure for young people. According to the American Academy of Child

and Adolescent Psychiatry, 'by the time of high school graduation, they (students) will have spent more time watching television than they have in the classroom' (<http://www.aacap.org/>).

Similar concerns and questions have been raised by other researchers in this field. The affects of popular culture on individual identity is a theme closely linked to the research question of this thesis. Since young people are at a stage in their life where their personal identity development is susceptible to external influences, significant impact from the influences of pop culture can be expected, and since a significant portion of their lives is spent in higher education environments, the university campus becomes a key location for observation and research.

A large body of empirical research on television violence exists. This research has demonstrated that media violence can be one contributing factor leading a person to exhibit aggressive attitudes and behavior. 'While the contribution of media exposure may be small, research consistently and significantly demonstrates that exposure to media violence can increase the probability of both short and long-term harmful effects. These effects however, are mediated by characteristics of the viewer (demographics, psychological states, personality variables, etc.) in addition to situational characteristics' (Navarro & Riddle, 2007). In other words, media violence does not affect all viewers in the same way.

Since research has demonstrated that media violence can indeed be harmful, it would be logical to suggest the possibility that elements of popular culture could also have a profound affect (either negative or positive) on the individual. For the purposes of this thesis then, current research has established that young people are impressionable and can be influenced in varying ways and to varying degrees by the forces of popular culture.

Represented in the literature listed above are many reputable social scientists who concur that popular culture is molding the current generation. It is the contention of this thesis that an important site in this shaping process, and one that has remained largely unexplored, is the university campus. Strauss and Howe offer the view that 'peer personality' or 'collective consciousness' (1991, p.32) is significantly influenced by 'urban higher education'. If this is indeed the case, then the collective 'personality' of the millennial generation is being shaped by the structures and organizations of our time, and the university campus is one such important structure. The development of the contemporary student is influenced by 3 models of student development; psychosocial-identity formation, cognitive development structures and the evolution of personal preferences, styles and types. Each of these models is undoubtedly influenced by popular culture (Strange in Coomes and Debard, 2004, pp.49).

The relative newness of 'pop culture' as a subject for academic research has resulted in a broad and varied number of researchers contributing to the field and this reflects

the dynamic nature of contemporary social change. This literature review has attempted to capture a reflective sample of literature in the fields of 'popular culture', and then 'popular culture and education'. While significant literature exists on pop culture, material is scarce when the topic is further delimited to target links between pop culture and the university experience. My eyes have been opened to the limitless scope offered by the broad nature of this area of inquiry and to the endless possibilities for future research. The modest research component of this thesis seeks to take a first step, to determine if students themselves perceive the influence of pop culture on their university campus.

Chapter 5

Chapter 4 provided a literature review and an overview of the methodologies related to each form of data collection utilized. This chapter presents the results of the survey, the observations and the interviews and finally provides an interpretation of the collected results.

5.1 Survey Results

KEY:

LAU	Lebanese American University
BAU	Beirut Arab University
SA	Strongly agree
A	Agree
N	Neutral
D	Disagree
SD	Strongly disagree
(M)	Male
(F)	Female

A. RESULTS BY UNIVERSITY

Q.1 Do you think that the term 'Western Pop Culture' refers to many different things such as the way people dress, the music people listen to or the way people speak?

	YES	NO	TOTAL
LAU	28	2	30
BAU	29	1	30

Question 1:

The purpose of question 1 was to establish an explicit and agreed definition of 'Western pop culture' with the questionnaire participants. Only those respondents who agreed with the definition have been regarded as valid. Those who did not agree have been deemed 'invalid responses'. Three questionnaires were regarded as invalid. Two of the invalids were collected at the LAU campus, the other from BAU.

Q.2 There is a stereotypical 'Western' presence on my university campus in the form of language used by my fellow students (e.g. Yo, Dude, Bro, Homies, chillin etc).

	SA	A	N	D	SD	TOTAL
LAU	5	23	2	0	0	30
BAU	0	0	4	22	4	30

Question 2:

The results from question 2 clearly indicate that students at LAU believe there to be a strong 'Western' presence in the form of language used on their campus. Of the 30 LAU students questioned, 28 responses fell into the 'agree' and 'strongly agree' sector of the rating scale, with only 2 participants selecting neutral. In contrast, 26 of the 30 responses collected from BAU were found to be in the 'disagree' or 'strongly disagree' region of

the response scale. 4 respondents from BAU were neutral in their opinion. It is therefore reasonable to conclude that LAU students perceive a strong 'western' presence in regard to language used on campus while BAU students have selected a strongly contrasting position in which no participants affirmed 'Western' language presence at their university. The results of question 2 demonstrate a definitive and polarized difference between the perceptions of students from the two campuses surveyed.

Q.3 When I am at university, I sometimes talk about or hear others talking about stereotypically 'Western' things such as American TV shows or American music.

	SA	A	N	D	SD	TOTAL
LAU	5	22	3	0	0	30
BAU	0	5	4	21	0	30

Question 3:

Question 3 aimed to address the presence, if any, of casual talk about stereotypically 'Western' things such as American television shows or music. The results were not as polarized as those demonstrated in question 2, but again the LAU responses were very positive with 27 of those questioned agreeing or strongly agreeing. In comparison, only 5 of those questioned at BAU agreed that students discuss stereotypical 'Western' things. Of the remaining 25 participants from BAU, the majority (21) disagreed with the statement. There were a total of 7 neutral responses for question 3. Three neutrals were obtained from LAU and 4 from BAU. Thus it can be said that although a handful of students at BAU believe that stereotypical 'Western' things are discussed on campus, the

majority do not believe these types of discussions exist or they are simply unaware of them. LAU's results however, reflect a definite presence of such topics of conversation on campus.

Q.4 When at university, I hear more American music than Arabic music.

	SA	A	N	D	SD	TOTAL
LAU	1	25	4	0	0	30
BAU	0	0	2	24	4	30

Question 4:

Question 4 addressed the type of music heard most frequently by students when on campus. Students were asked if American music was more commonly heard at their university than Arabic music. 6 of the 60 questioned responded with a 'neutral' selection. This may indicate that the students do not often hear music on campus, do not recall hearing music on campus or, they may not have any feelings on the matter. Of the remaining participants, all 26 LAU responses confirmed the statement indicating that American music is more commonly heard on campus than Arabic music by selecting the 'agree' or 'strongly agree' options. In stark contrast, not one BAU respondent agreed with the statement, with all 28 responses 'disagreeing' or 'strongly disagreeing'. It is interesting to note that double the number of 'neutral' responses were obtained at LAU than at BAU. One can conclude from these results that American music is heard more frequently at the 'American' University than that of its local counterpart.

Q.5 My friends at university often listen to American music in their cars, on their phones or on their iPods (MP3 players).

	SA	A	N	D	SD	TOTAL
LAU	12	16	2	0	0	30
BAU	0	4	0	19	7	30

Question 5:

Question 5 examined the student's perceptions of their peer's music preferences not only on campus but on their phones, MP3 players and in their cars. This question recorded very few neutral responses, with strongly polarized positions taken by each university. As with previous questions, students from LAU selected either 'agree' or 'strongly agree' (28), indicating the presence of American music in the students' cars, phones and MP3's. Students from BAU were equally strong in dismissing the frequency of American music in the cars, phones or MP3's of students from their campus. While 4 respondents from BAU acknowledged some American music, 26 recorded a 'disagree' or 'strongly disagree' response to this question. One may conclude from these results that students attending the American University demonstrate a higher frequency of listening to Western music, while students from the local Arab University, BAU, appear to listen to non-Western music more often.

Q.6 When I'm at university, I often see people wearing Western clothing brands such as Levi, FCUK, American Eagle, Diesel, Puma, Nike etc.

	SA	A	N	D	SD	TOTAL

LAU	25	5	0	0	0	30
BAU	0	17	6	7	0	30

Question 6:

Question 6 examined the presence of 'Western' clothing brands worn by students on campus. Of all 9 questions in the questionnaire, this question elicited the single strongest response from LAU students with no selection from either 'neutral', 'disagree' or 'strongly disagree' categories. All 30 LAU respondents selected either 'strongly agree' or 'agree', indicating an overwhelming majority perceive 'Western' clothing to be pervasive on the LAU campus. Even at BAU, 17 respondents agreed that a high presence of 'Western' clothing exists on their campus. Only 7 BAU students disagreed. BAU registered a strong number of neutral responses-6, compared to no neutral responses from LAU students. Possible explanations for this high number of neutral responses include socioeconomic factors, religious conservatism or general disinterest in fashion related issues.

Q.7 I think that 'the West' has a strong influence on my peers in regard to how they dress.

	SA	A	N	D	SD	TOTAL
LAU	16	12	2	0	0	30
BAU	0	10	10	10	0	30

Question 7:

The remaining 3 questions of the questionnaire (7, 8 & 9), were designed to validate earlier questions. In particular, question 7 sought to validate responses from question 6, question 8 sought to validate responses from question 2, and question 9 sought to validate responses from questions 4 and 5 collectively. Questions 2, 6, 4 and 5 sought responses to specific 'Western' influences (particular brand, particular speech and specified music contexts). Questions 7, 8 and 9 however were designed to elicit responses to generic 'Western' influences. It is noteworthy that all 3 validating questions (7, 8 & 9) did in fact echo the earlier results.

Question 7 sought to expand the parameters of question 6 by exploring 'Western' influence on dress choices. Students were asked if they believed the 'West' influenced how their peers dressed. With only 2 selecting 'neutral', 28 LAU respondents either strongly agreed or agreed that the 'West' significantly influences their peer's clothing and dress style. By comparison, BAU respondents were equally spread across 'agree', 'neutral' and 'disagree' with 10 selections for each. Again, additional factors such as cost and the prevalence of religion over fashion may explain the different responses from each of the university campuses.

Q.8 I think that 'the West' has a strong influence on my peers in regard to how they speak.

	SA	A	N	D	SD	TOTAL
LAU	5	23	2	0	0	30
BAU	0	1	3	21	5	30

Question 8:

Question 8 looked at the 'Western' influence on speech patterns. Significantly polarized results confirmed that LAU students consider the 'West' has a strong influence on vocabulary choices and speech patterns. 28 LAU students either 'strongly agreed' or 'agreed' with this statement. Conversely, 26 students from the BAU campus rejected the notion that speech patterns on their campus were strongly influenced by 'Western' norms and mores. A significant factor influencing the results for this question may be found in the language of instruction at the two universities. Since English is the language of instruction at LAU, it is logical to conclude that English is the language most likely to be heard on campus. At BAU, Arabic is the official language of instruction and it is equally logical to conclude that the language most often heard on campus is Arabic.

Q.9 I think that 'the West' has a strong influence on my peers in regard to the music that they listen to.

	SA	A	N	D	SD	TOTAL
LAU	18	9	3	0	0	30
BAU	0	1	4	10	15	30

Question 9:

Question 9 asked respondents to comment on the influence of the 'West' in regard to generic choice of music. LAU respondents perceive that the 'West' has a strong influence on music selection by their peers. By contrast, students from the BAU campus do not

perceive the 'West' as influencing music choice. Very few students from either campus selected a 'neutral' response.

This section has sought to provide the raw data collected from the questionnaire. A concise interpretation of the data has also been presented and has been linked directly to the research hypothesis. The results clearly indicate a strong polarization between the LAU and BAU campuses. LAU students perceive the presence of strong 'Western' influences in the areas of language, music and dress on their campus. Conversely, BAU students do not regard 'Western' pop culture as having a significant influence on the BAU campus experience.

B. RESULTS BY UNIVERSITY BY GENDER

Q.1 Do you think that the term 'Western Pop Culture refers to many different things such as the way people dress, the music people listen to or the way people speak?

	YES	NO	TOTAL
LAU (F)	14	1	15
LAU (M)	14	1	15
BAU (F)	15	0	15
BAU (M)	14	1	15

Q.2 There is a stereotypical 'Western' presence on my university campus in the form of language used by my fellow students (e.g. Yo, Dude, Bro, Homies, Chillin etc).

	SA	A	N	D	SD	TOTAL
LAU (F)	1	12	2	0	0	15
LAU(M)	4	11	0	0	0	15
BAU (F)	0	0	1	12	2	15
BAU(M)	0	0	3	10	2	15

Q.3 When I am at university, I sometimes talk about or hear others talking about stereotypically 'Western' things such as American TV shows or American music.

	SA	A	N	D	SD	TOTAL
LAU (F)	2	10	3	0	0	15
LAU(M)	3	12	0	0	0	15
BAU (F)	0	2	2	11	0	15
BAU(M)	0	3	2	10	0	15

Q.4 When at university, I hear more American music than Arabic music.

	SA	A	N	D	SD	TOTAL
LAU (F)	1	11	3	0	0	15
LAU(M)	0	14	1	0	0	15
BAU (F)	0	0	1	12	2	15
BAU(M)	0	0	1	12	2	15

Q.5 My friends at university often listen to American music in their cars, on their phones or on their iPods (MP3 players).

	SA	A	N	D	SD	TOTAL
LAU (F)	11	3	1	0	0	15
LAU(M)	1	13	1	0	0	15
BAU (F)	0	1	0	10	4	15
BAU(M)	0	3	0	9	3	15

Q.6 When I'm at university, I often see people wearing Western clothing brands such as Levi, FCUK, American Eagle, Diesel, Puma, Nike etc.

	SA	A	N	D	SD	TOTAL
LAU (F)	13	2	0	0	0	15
LAU(M)	12	3	0	0	0	15
BAU (F)	0	9	4	2	0	15
BAU(M)	0	8	2	5	0	15

Q.7 I think that 'the West' has a strong influence on my peers in regard to how they dress.

	SA	A	N	D	SD	TOTAL
LAU (F)	14	1	0	0	0	15
LAU(M)	2	11	2	0	0	15
BAU (F)	0	5	5	5	0	15
BAU(M)	0	5	5	5	0	15

Q.8 I think that 'the West' has a strong influence on my peers in regard to how they speak.

	SA	A	N	D	SD	TOTAL
LAU (F)	3	11	1	0	0	15
LAU(M)	2	12	1	0	0	15
BAU (F)	0	0	1	11	3	15
BAU(M)	0	1	2	10	2	15

Q.9 I think that 'the West' has a strong influence on my peers in regard to the music that they listen to.

	SA	A	N	D	SD	TOTAL
LAU (F)	5	9	1	0	0	15
LAU(M)	13	0	2	0	0	15
BAU (F)	0	1	2	5	7	15
BAU(M)	0	0	2	5	8	15

Interpretation of Results

The research component of this thesis represents a modest attempt to determine Beirut university student perceptions of Western pop culture on their individual tertiary campuses. As stated in the methodology, it is my hypothesis that the data collected will reflect not only the general perceptions of Beirut university students in regard to Western

pop culture and its presence on university campuses but also the polarized opinions which I believe exist on the two campuses. Additionally, it is my belief that the results will indicate a higher degree of pop culture presence on the LAU campus than that of BAU. The following section of this chapter attempts to analyze the raw data collected from each question (tabulated in 5.2), thus enabling me to draw conclusions which may or may not support the hypothesis.

5.2 Observation Results

According to Fraenkel and Wallen, “certain kinds of research questions can best be answered by observing how people act or how things look” (2006, p.449). For this reason, I chose to observe the students of LAU and BAU on their campuses and recorded by observations and findings in relation to the 3 areas I have addressed throughout my research; dress, language and clothing.

Day 1: (Monday) 3:00-4:30pm

	LAU	BAU	Total
Dress:			
Traditional Arabic (Headscarf)	18	36	54
Western Style	53	35	88
Language:			
Speaking English	61	40	101

Speaking Arabic	29	55	84
Colloquial/Modern English Language/Phrases	6	1	7
Music:			
Arabic Music	0	12	12
English Music	9	2	11

Day 2: (Friday) 10:00-11:30pm

	LAU	BAU	Total
Dress:			
Traditional Arabic (Headscarf)	15	39	54
Western Style	48	22	70
Language:			
Speaking English	52	37	89
Speaking Arabic	14	41	55
Colloquial/Modern English Language/Phrases	8	0	8
Music:			
Arabic Music	2	5	7
English Music	4	0	4

Notes:

- Headscarfs were worn in a variety of ways on both campuses, however the majority were worn very conservatively, covering all the hair.
- Majority of students wore blue denim jeans.
- Many Western clothing labels were observed.
- Short sleeved shirts, open V-neck tops and short skirts were worn on LAU campus but not seen on the BAU campus.
- The majority of conversations at LAU were conducted in English.
- Many conversations at BAU were conducted in English but the quality of the spoken English was not as good as those at LAU (smaller vocabulary and not as articulate).
- Colloquial language was widely used at LAU. "Yo" was very popular as was "Man" and "Cool".
- The only colloquial word observed at BAU was "Bro".
- Formal university signage on both campuses was in Arabic and English, however informal notices and flyers on boards and walls was in Arabic on the BAU campus.
- I heard many Arabic ringtones at BAU. Only 2 examples of English music were observed on the BAU campus (both were ringtones).
- The majority of ringtones at LAU were English (1 was Arabic).
- Arabic music was also heard on a student's lap top at LAU.

Interpretation of results

It is clear from the physical observations undertaken on both LAU and BAU campuses that a distinct variation exists in both the presence and degree of western style influences evident on each campus.

The observation process sought to quantify the frequency of examples of Western dress, speech and music on each campus. All three areas of Western influence offered clear confirmation by observation. Dress, language and music were easily identifiable, and recording the frequency was a straight forward process.

The recorded number of sightings of Western characteristics, confirm the expectation that LAU displays a significantly higher incidence of observable Western influence than does the more conservative BAU.

5.3 Interviews

After conducting surveys, I thought it imperative to include an interview element to my research in order to give students the chance to explain, in detail, their views regarding the presence of pop culture on their university campuses. Open ended questions were prepared in advance in order to allow students freedom in their responses. Additionally, open ended questions permitted me to follow-up and probe deeper into issues raised by the participants. The transcripts of these interviews can be found in Appendix B.

Interpretation of Results

Question 1

The common terminology participants used when defining pop culture was "what people like" and "what is popular". It is interesting to note that 5 of the 6 participants made reference to pop culture being a product of the United States or the 'West'.

Question 2

All 6 respondents believed that music, clothing and language were all elements of pop culture. When asked if they believed language, dress and clothing to be directly related to popular culture the answers ranged from a direct "yes" to more elaborate responses such as "Yes I do. All of those things. Pop culture makes people behave in a certain way, so if you see someone on television wearing something maybe you want to wear it also". I was very pleased with this result as this was a qualifying question and the positive responses ensured that the following questions could be answered by the participants.

Question 3

Five participants reported a visible presence of pop culture on their campus. Although the degree to which they observed it differed. Some respondents answered in a way which left no room for doubt ("of course"), while others showed less conviction ("sometimes"). Only one BAU participant reported no visible presence of pop culture on their campus.

Question 4

All LAU participants reported hearing or listening to English music on campus with students reporting the presence of "English ringtones". One BAU participant reported hearing only Arabic music on campus while the other 2 BAU respondents reported hearing both Arabic and English music.

Question 5

In relation to clothing worn by students on campus, all LAU participants believed the most popular labels were designer brands or "anything expensive". They also gave specific examples such as Armani and Burberry. In comparison, BAU participants were not definitive in their responses. BAU respondents appeared to be unsure, with all 3 replying "I don't know".

Question 6

All LAU participants reported hearing modern 'slang' on their campus. Some examples provided by respondents were "cool", "my bad", "chillin", "wassup" and "man". In contrast, none of the BAU participants reported hearing such terminology on campus. They admitted to knowing the 'slang' but reported hearing it in movies or on television rather than on their campus.

In conclusion, I feel that my research question; According to students, is there a Western pop culture presence on their university campus? was answered clearly by all participants. The responses gathered from interviews with LAU participants demonstrated clear use of Western jargon and idioms. In comparison to BAU students, the LAU interview participants were generally more articulate and expressed themselves more fully and more easily. Similarities in answers were noted, with all participants being able to clearly define pop culture. All students also agreed that music, dress and language were fundamental elements of Western pop culture. While all LAU participants reported a Western pop culture presence on their campus, one BAU student claimed it did not exist. While all participants confirmed the presence of music on their campus, BAU participants reported hearing mainly local Arabic music and could not confirm that English slang was spoken at their university. After careful analysis, it can be said that the results of the student interviews support the original hypothesis that a higher degree of popular culture is found on the LAU campus than that found on the BAU campus.

Chapter 6

Conclusion

This thesis had its origins during an undergraduate course I undertook at Middlesex University in Dubai in 2004. Part of that degree program included work on 'cultural sharing' and the influences, good and bad, that some cultures have on others. Living and learning in a culture which is not my own has proven a wonderfully motivating and stimulating experience for me. I am confronted, on a daily basis, with norms and perspectives and opinions which are often quite different from my own. During more than six years of studying throughout the Middle East and the GCC, I have been exposed to a variety of teaching and learning styles and experiences. I feel privileged to have had this opportunity, and to a large extent, the major themes of this thesis reflect issues and concepts which have attracted my interest and attention in the course of my own tertiary experiences.

This thesis takes as its dominant theme: 'the influence of modern Western culture' i) on other cultures ii) on the Middle East iii) on Middle Eastern higher education and iv) on Lebanese university campus life. Research and analysis into global educational trends is a huge subject area, the fabric of which consists of many thousands of individual research strands. These tiny fibers may seem singularly unimportant and insignificant. However when combined and woven together they can form broader, international patterns and motifs which may otherwise be invisible. This thesis is one of those tiny fibres, a single, modest strand in a much more elaborate global research fabric. This thesis is, by design,

highly focused and as a result provides a very particular fragment of academic inquiry. It raises more questions than it answers, and its value lies in its singular contribution to a greater academic whole.

Although this thesis is a modest attempt to examine the presence of popular culture in academic settings, it is undeniable that educators can benefit from acknowledging the impact and relevance of popular culture on the members of modern society. It is my hope that this thesis proves to be beneficial for educators who recognize the impact and influence of contemporary culture on students and their learning processes.

This thesis began with twelve months of reading. Familiarity with a broad range of literature was necessary to establish the historical, economic, political and social foundation into which the theme is embedded. While the architecture of Middle East higher education was a major subject, links to literature from many other areas was a necessary starting point. I began with the provision of working definitions for the main themes of this work, and I had two reasons for this. The first was personal. I needed to be sure that I knew what I meant when referring to the basic building blocks of this work. Secondly, definition and interpretation is a major driver in how information is perceived and understood.

'Working definitions' provide an agreed platform from which further exploration is possible. Not everyone needs to agree with a particular definition, but if the definition is explicit and agreed for the purposes of a given process, then misinterpretation is reduced.

It was my intention that working definitions for the key terms would provide clarity and minimize potential confusion from use, misuse and overlapping which may occur between cultures and between professional academic disciplines. Sources for the definitions of the major terms and concepts involved in this work were limitless. Books, journals and professional papers were supported by the now boundless resources of the internet.

Clearly, Western culture and civilization are dominant themes in this work. The origins and evolution of western culture and the pervasive impact of the West on other cultures worldwide were explored in chapter 2. The contribution of technology and globalization in the acceleration of the West's influence was similarly reviewed. The notion of contemporary world change and the evolving processes which impact local, national, international, transnational and global experience was investigated as a forerunner to exploring the development of education itself. '*Awlama*' (the Arabic term for globalization) is shaping life in the Middle East and the Gulf nations as they become hosts of Western norms, customs and ideas. Modernity, Western supremacy and the spread of globalization to the Middle East formed the focus of chapter 2.

Chapter 3 opened with a review of the development of higher education in the Arab world. Both the traditional classical Arab-Islamic structure and the modern Western type of university are described, and their interrelationships and the sequence of their development explained. A questioning of the vital role played by education in peace, international understanding, promotion of human rights, economic growth, and poverty reduction was at the heart of the third chapter. An examination of the structure of the

higher education sector in the Middle East was followed by the introduction of the concept of 'popular culture' or 'pop culture' to the thesis.

A probing of popular culture's influence on university life, academics, the curricula and the millennial generation allowed a glimpse of the tangible reality of Western influence on the daily tertiary experience in the Middle East. Links between pop culture and education, both positive and negative, were presented for study and analysis. At this point, the thesis identified pop culture as a major force molding the current generation, and an important site in this shaping process is in fact, the university campus. The 'collective persona' of the millennial generation was then introduced to the narrative of this thesis - the 'big picture' notion of 'Western influence' was distilled to the level of the individual. The end of chapter 3 marks the point in this work where discussion moved from concepts, notions and theories to the specific.

Chapter 4 initiates the triangulated research component of this work. The chapter begins by posing the research question: "According to students, is there a Western 'pop culture' presence on their university campus?" A thorough literature review underpinned the research component and included works in the fields of pop culture, media, curricula, mass culture, peer personality and collective consciousness. A research methodology was developed with particular attention given to sample, materials, tools, design, procedure and method of analysis.

The research was conducted over a six month period and chapter 5 contains the raw data results from each method of data collection. For the survey, the results were broken down by question, by university and by gender. Interpretations of the results were presented based on the responses; written, verbal and observed, from each of the two Lebanese universities and their students which were included in the study. Results of the study indicated a strong polarization between LAU and BAU campuses, with LAU students perceiving a strong presence of Western influence in the areas of language, music and dress on their campus, while BAU students did not regard western pop culture as having a significant influence on their campus experience.

The research component of this thesis is deliberately narrow. It sought merely to establish levels of perception on two leading Lebanese university campuses in Beirut.

Triangulation aided in highlighting the polarization of the results however these vastly differing outcomes may be explained in a variety of ways. Participants in the study from LAU clearly feel a stronger influence of Western trends on their campus. In contrast, BAU students either don't see, or don't admit to the presence of Western pop culture on their campus. Further research involving larger samples and more expansive questions would be highly useful. The perception of tertiary teachers on Western influence on their campus would provide another interesting dimension.

In addressing a large body of secondary literature in preparation for this thesis, I have been strongly motivated by the writing of John Tomlinson on the influence of Western culture on the world scene. His 1991 work titled 'Cultural Imperialism' asks its readers to

reconsider the scope and impact of Western culture on non-Western regions. Tomlinson offers a broad overview of the state of this field and provides an interesting critique of the definition of culture. Tomlinson is, like me, broadly interested in modernity's spread in the world, and more specifically, in measuring cultural influence abroad. I agree with Tomlinson's position that perhaps it is time to turn scholarly attention away from 'nation-culture' and focus instead on modernity, which he describes as 'the cultural direction of global development' (Tomlinson, 1991, p.27).

If as I have asserted in chapter 2, culture is not static, is not fixed, but is ever evolving, then the concept of Western influence is not subject to regional definition. Pop culture itself is no longer 'Western' but a product of modernity itself. In this sense, what LAU participants recognized on their campus was less the impact of Western cultural ideology, and more the spread of cultural modernity. My research is evidence perhaps that a form of global modernity is displacing or replacing an outdated concept of cultural imperialism with a socially constructed, largely symbolic notion of culture.

It is my belief that, economic factors aside, people are largely able to determine most aspects of their own fate. Cultures don't borrow 'wholesale'. The Middle East is able to choose the extent to which it allows its existing culture and traditional structures to be influenced by outside forces. Culture is not a homogeneous construct and it does not stand still. Further research into the method and measure of outside influence on Lebanese tertiary experience may help to identify those aspects of modernity which can productively contribute to education's part in how our world develops. Equally, further research may help to identify potentially harmful aspects of outside cultural influence.

Tomlinson concludes that "Culture is never 'fate' but always, ultimately, decision"
(Tomlinson, 1991, p.161). If this is so, then much remains to be done by scholars
committed to original research into Middle Eastern studies.

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Appendix A

Questionnaire Tool

POP CULTURE ON MY CAMPUS SURVEY

Please answer the following questions by ticking yes or no or by circling the answer which best represents your feelings regarding the statements.

1. Do you think that the term 'Western Pop Culture' refers to many different things such as the way people dress, the music people listen to or the way people speak?

YES NO

2. There is a stereotypical 'Western' presence on my university campus in the form of language used by my fellow students (e.g. Yo, Dude, Bro, Homies, chillin etc).

1 ————— 2 ————— 3 ————— 4 ————— 5
Strongly Disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly Agree

3. When I am at university, I sometimes talk about or hear others talking about stereotypically 'Western' things such as American TV shows or American music.

1 ————— 2 ————— 3 ————— 4 ————— 5
Strongly Disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly Agree

4. When at university, I hear more American music than Arabic music.

1 ————— 2 ————— 3 ————— 4 ————— 5
Strongly Disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly Agree

5. My friends at university often listen to American music in their cars, on their phones or on their iPods (MP3 players).

1 ————— 2 ————— 3 ————— 4 ————— 5
Strongly Disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly Agree

6. When I'm at university, I often see people wearing Western clothing brands such as Levi, FCUK, American Eagle, Diesel, Puma, Nike etc.

1 ————— 2 ————— 3 ————— 4 ————— 5
Strongly Disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly Agree

7. I think that 'the West' has a strong influence on my peers in regard to how they dress.

1 ————— 2 ————— 3 ————— 4 ————— 5
Strongly Disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly Agree

8. I think that 'the West' has a strong influence on my peers in regard to how they speak.

1 ————— 2 ————— 3 ————— 4 ————— 5

Strongly Disagree

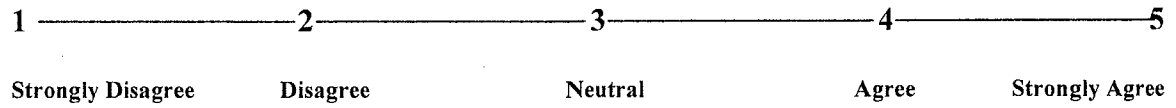
Disagree

Neutral

Agree

Strongly Agree

9. I think that 'the West' has a strong influence on my peers in regard to the music that they listen to.



I very much appreciate your participation in this survey,

Thank you for your time!

Appendix B

Interview Results

Legend: A) Amelia P) Participant

Participant 1- Mohammad, age 21, LAU student

A) Hello Mohammad, thank you very much for taking the time to answer my questions today. You are a student at LAU is that right?

P) Yes.

A) Let me begin by asking you a question related to my area of research. Mohammad, how would you define the term 'pop or popular culture'?

P) Well, I think it talks about what's popular with people. Like what it fashionable. I think it changes too.

A) Changes in what way?

P) Well, what's popular today isn't what will be popular in like 5 years.

A) Ok, that's great. So do you think its right to say that pop culture relates to clothing and language and dress, like what people wear?

P) Yes.

A) Ok, so that being said, do you think there is a visible presence of Western pop culture on your university campus?

P) Of course.

A) Can you tell me of some examples you may have seen that can support that?

P) Well, I see people dressing and looking 'Western' all the time. America has a big influence on people here in Lebanon, especially our age.

A) You say people are influenced by America. Do you think it influences the music you listen to? What music do you hear or listen to on campus?

P) I don't hear much music on campus.

A) What about people's laptops or ringtones?

P) Oh yeah.... Umm... there are a lot of English ringtone. Trance and techno music is really popular and a lot of that music is western. And my girlfriend listens to RNB music on her laptop (laughs), so yeah I think most of what I hear at uni is English music.

A) That's really interesting. What about the clothes people wear? What would you say are the most popular clothing labels people wear at LAU?

P) (laughs) Anything expensive! People love designer brands at LAU. Umm, I don't know. I see a lot of designer brands and jeans, Armani is popular with the guys. I don't know about the girls.

A) Well, do you think the students here look western? If you were to take this University and put it in America would the students look out of place or would they fit in?

P) I think they would definitely fit in. I don't see much difference between how people dress at LAU and how they dress at American Universities. Maybe they dress better here (Laughs).

A) And my final question, when people speak English at LAU do they use modern 'slang', like not traditional language... do they use words like 'bro' or 'dude'?

P) Yeah they do. They don't talk like Shakespeare or anything (Laughs). They use the word 'bro' and other words that are popular.

A) Like what? What other words are popular?

P) umm... words like 'cool'. I don't know what else.

A) That's great. Thanks a lot for your time Mohammad, you've been a great help.

P) No problem.

Participant 2 - Yasmeen, age 19, LAU student

A) Hello Yasmeen, thank you very much for taking the time to answer my questions today. You are a student at LAU is that right?

P) Yeah I am.

A) Let me begin by asking you a question related to my area of research. Yasmeen, how would you define the term 'pop or popular culture'?

P) I think pop culture is the expression of people, it's what young people like... it comes from the Western world...like the United States.

A) Ok, that's great. So what features do you think characterize pop culture? Would you say language, clothing and music?

P) umm... (pause) I guess, things like music and dancing, and youth having a good time. And also clothing. (coughs) Young people around the world like to dress the same way. The way people speak is effected to yeah.

A) Ok, do you think there is a visible presence of Western pop culture on your university campus?

P) Yeah, I see it every day.

A) Can you tell me some examples you may have seen that can support that?

P) Yes, I see my friends listening to Western bands and trying to dress and look 'American' all the time. The States and Europe influence me and my friend's ktir (a lot). America tells us what's cool and what's not.

A) You say people are influenced by America. Do you think it influences the music you listen to? What music do you hear or listen to on campus?

P) There are many English ringtones, (coughs). I heard a great Indian one earlier today, but mostly they're from US or European artists. I have new ones every week. We don't download them or anything we share them around.

A) That's really interesting. What about clothing and fashions on campus? What would you say are the most popular clothing labels people wear at LAU?

P) Mostly we wear jeans. I bought some Victoria Beckham jeans in January, everyone has them. You can see all the best labels and designer clothes. It's a good uni. The students care about how they look and everyone looks at everyone else (laughs).

A) Well, do you think the students here look western? If you were to take this University and put it in America would the students look out of place or would they fit in?

P) I think we dress even better than students in the States. From the shows and movies I've seen, I'd say we take more time with what we wear and how we dress, its important. Most girls will do their hair and makeup too.

A) And my final question, when people speak English at LAU do they use modern 'slang', like not traditional language... do they use words like 'bro' or 'dude'?

P) Yes, I hear those words, and other ones. I don't always understand them, but I can tell they are new words from the States that someone has heard on the TV or on a DVD or something. Things like 'my bad'. I didn't know what that meant but now I hear it all the time. Even my sister says it.

A) That's great. Thanks a lot for your time Yasmeen.

P) I can answer more questions if you like.

Participant 3- Ali, age 20, LAU student

A) Hi, thanks a lot for taking the time to answer a few questions for me. The first question I have for you is how would you define the term pop or popular culture?

P) Ahhhh...I don't know. The culture that's popular? ...ummm...I mean... people like it.

(long pause)

A) Ok...so to broaden your definition a bit, do you think popular culture originates from any place in particular?

P) Yeah America...or you know... the West.

A) Do you believe pop culture relates to language, clothing and music?

P) Clothing yeah, yeah and music...and maybe drinking (laughs)

A) What about language? Do you think it relates to pop culture?

P) Yeah it does, slang language... 'cool' people, teenagers speak like that.

A) Do you think there is a visible Western pop culture presence on your university campus? If so, what feature can you observe to support it?

P) Yeah of course at LAU, more than anywhere on this earth (laughs).

A) Can you give me some examples?

P) LAU is a fashion show. The clothes people wear are influenced by other countries like America or England or maybe even Italy, like the fashion capitals.

A) What about music or language, can you give me some examples from the LAU campus that relate to that?

P) All the music I hear at Uni is English. The 'cool' people try and speak 'cool' English like slang and stuff.

A) What are the most popular clothing labels you see people wearing on your campus?

P) Burberry...fake Burberry (laughs) Armani...and fake Armani. All designer stuff, although most of them are fake.

A) Why do you think they wear designer stuff?

P) To show they're cool and to show people that they are wearing designer stuff so they will be like... 'Oh wow, nice' you know. People want to show they have money.

Lebanese like to look the best and these labels are the best.

A) When students speak English at your university do they use modern slang such as 'bro' or 'dude', can you give me some examples if they do?

P) I don't hear 'dude' but I hear other slang like 'chillin' and they swear a lot in English. 'Wassup man' and 'man' are really common too.

A) Ok, thank you very much for your time, you have been a great help.

P) No problem.

Participant 4- Miriam, age 23, BAU student

A) Thank you for taking the time to answer a few questions for me today.

P) You're welcome.

A) I want to start by asking you, how would you define the term 'pop' culture?

P) I'm sorry, can you repeat?

A) Yeah sure, can you tell me a definition, your definition, of 'pop' or 'popular' culture?

P) Oh yes, we learned this in classes. It is about what is popular with the people. There is also pop art yes?

A) Yes, I think there is. Can you tell me though, do you think pop culture relates to music and dress and language?

P) Ummm... (long pause) I think yes. Popular clothing, popular music and what was the other one?

A) Language.

P) Yes language also.

A) So when you think about Western pop culture, do you think you can see it on your university campus?

P) I don't understand.

A) Well, when you think of western pop culture, what do you think of?

P) I think of English music and American people and the way they live.

A) And do you see this on your university campus?

P) Not really. We are not Western, so no I don't really see it.

A) Ok great, so when you are at university, what music do you hear or listen to?

P) Sometimes I hear some music but not much.

A) And what type of music is it?

P) Arabic music. The music like Nancy Ajram and Wael.

A) And what about the clothes people wear? What are the most popular labels students wear at your university?

P) I don't know. Maybe Jack and Jones. Me and my friends like to shop there. People just wear clothes, I don't know what they are (laughs quietly).

A) And finally, when people speak English at your University, do they use modern 'slang'... I mean... words like 'bro' or 'dude'? And if they do can you give me some examples?

P) No I only hear this on television. I don't hear my friends saying such things.

A) Thanks a lot for your time, I really appreciate it.

P) Welcome.

Participant 5- Lama, age 22, BAU student

A) Thank you very much for meeting me today. I understand you are a student at BAU.

P) Yes I am.

A) My first question Lama is, how would you define the term 'pop' or 'popular' culture?

P) I think it is how people behave and television makes them want to behave like this.

And its America that makes the television. Is that right?

A) It's your definition, there is no right or wrong answer.

P) Oh ok.

A) So to be clear, you think that America is responsible for pop culture?

P) Yes because they make the television and then people around the world watch it and then they want to be like this. Pop culture comes from the West.

A) So, do you think pop culture relates to language, clothing and music?

P) Yes I do. All of those things. Pop culture makes people behave in a certain way, so if you see someone on television wearing something maybe you want to wear it also. You understand what I'm saying?

A) Yes I understand. So, can you see this pop culture on your campus?

P) Sometimes yes. Sometimes the students will wear fashion like you see in America. I don't care about fashion but I see other people who dress like this.

A) And when on campus, what music do you hear or listen to?

P) Sometimes I hear popular music but I don't hear much music there.

A) What about peoples ringtones? And what do you mean by popular music?

P) Ah, yes, I hear ringtones, some are Arabic some are English. Popular music I mean like what is on the radio. The top 10. Like this.

A) And what about clothing? What are the most popular clothing labels people wear on your campus?

P) Clothing labels? Like brands?

A) Yes.

P) I don't know where they shop (laughs) you need to ask them.

A) OK (laughs). And finally, when people speak English at your university, do they use modern slang... words like 'bro' or 'dude'.

P) I don't think so. Maybe I don't know. Maybe they do. I don't really listen too much. I talk with my friends in Arabic so I can't tell you from my friends but maybe the other students do, really I don't know.

A) Thank you so much for your time today, you have been a great help.

P) Ok, thank you.

Participant 6- Yousef, age 24, BAU student

A) Hi, and thank you for helping me with my research today. Let me begin by asking you... can you define the term 'pop' or 'popular' culture?

P) Well, I think it's all about the mass media telling us what to do what is cool and what's not.

A) When you say 'mass media' what do you mean exactly?

P) I mean the television and movies and the radio, all of that.

A) The local television stations and local movies?

P) No, no, satellite. American movies mainly.

A) Ok, so do you think pop culture relates to things like clothing, music and language?

P) Yes absolutely.

A) And can you see this 'pop' culture on your campus at university?

P) Yeah I guess so. I can see my friends wearing clothes like they do on TV. Even though this is the 'Middle East' it's not really. We are very Western. Maybe it's also the French influence.

A) And when you're on campus, what music do you hear or listen to?

P) I hear some English and some Arabic. But not many.

A) What about clothing? What are the most popular brands or labels students wear?

P) I see Armani t-shirts..umm... I don't know. I don't see so many brands at University, not like when I go out to the shops or City Mall, there you see many brands.

A) Ok that's great, and finally, when students speak English at your University, do they use modern slang, words like 'bro' or 'dude'?

P) Dude where's my car (laughs). That's a good movie. No I don't hear this. I hear 'bro' maybe but we say 'Khaya' In Arabic and I hear this a lot. We don't speak too much English at Uni.

A) Ok, well thank you very much for your time, you've been great.

P) That's ok. Good luck.

A) Thank you.