

# [The use of surveillance cameras in a riyadh shopping mall](https://assignbuster.com/the-use-of-surveillance-cameras-in-a-riyadh-shopping-mall/)

[Sociology](https://assignbuster.com/essay-subjects/sociology/)

Cultural norms and traditions shaped the response of the security systems in the mall. Case in point, a patrol security officer once directed by the surveillance operator to two elderly women sitting on the floor failed to take action on them since as Alhadar and McCahill noted, “ Saudi cultural norms dictate that elderly people should be treated with respect and consideration” (322). In this case, traditional beliefs played an integral role in carrying out surveillance. On the other hand, the attitudes of the observers played a crucial role in monitoring visitors at the mall especially the women who wore veils. The attitudes are of crucial importance since wearing veils did not prevent women from talking and interacting with men who were not their kin as the Saudi traditions and values prohibit.
Faced with tough surveillance on them, Ahadar and McCahill noted that, “ Resistant strategies mainly involved localized efforts by the surveilled to avoid the moral gaze of surveillance camera operators” (323). In addition, the strategies used in the resistant were many and varied from one individual to the other. Such strategies included those used by single youths to gain entrance to the mall and contact women while avoiding the attention of the cameras. In addition, they effectively employed the use of technology by searching for members of the opposite sex using the Bluetooth technology while trying hard to avoid the hawk-eyed surveillance camera operators (Ahadar and McCahill 324). However, Ahdar and McCahill noted that young people visiting the mall “ mainly engaged in localized strategies of resistance rather than explicitly challenging wider power relations” (325). Nevertheless, the veiled women engaged in passive resistance in a sex-segregated society.
Finally, western societies use surveillance mainly to create and ensure sustenance of a constant flow of profits. On the other hand, non-western surveillance practiced in Saudi Arabia is different from the one practiced in western societies. In this regard, the primary use of surveillance technology is to impose public norms and religious values instead of the fundamental reason for surveillance in western societies of loss prevention. On the other hand, there was a blend of instrumental and moral values. For example, there were instances whereby the mall administration requested the assistance of the Moral Police to deal with large gatherings in order to satisfy their own consumerist needs. Conversely, the main use of the surveillance cameras was to ensure there was no breach in traditional values that ensured there was an absence of the Moral Police.