

## Challenging Barriers to the Evolution of the Saudi Animation Industry Life-Cycle

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**Abstract :** The animation industry is one of the creative industries that have attracted recent historiographical attention. However, there has been very limited research on Saudi Arabian and wider Arabian animation industries, while there are a large number of studies that have covered this issue for North America, Europe and East Asia. The existing studies show that developed countries such as USA, Japan and the UK have reached the Maturity stage in their animation industry life-cycle. On the other hand, developing countries that are still in the Introduction phase of the industry life-cycle face challenges to improve their industry. Saudi Arabia is one of the countries whose animation industry is still in its infancy. Thus, the aim of this paper is to address the main barriers that hinder the evolution of the industry life-cycle for Saudi animation - challenges that are also relevant to many other early stage industries in developing countries. These barriers have been analysed using the early mobility barriers defined by Porter, to provide a conceptual structure for defining recommendations to enable the transition to a strong Growth phase industry. This study utilized qualitative methods to collect data, which involved in-depth interviews, document analysis and observations. It also undertook a comparative case study approach to investigate the animation industry life-cycle, with three selected case studies that have a more developed industry than Saudi animation. Case studies include: the United Kingdom, which represents a Mature animation industry; Egypt, which represents an established Growth stage industry; and the United Arab of Emirates, which is an early Growth stage industry. This study suggests adopting appropriate strategies that arise as findings from the comparative case studies, to overcome barriers and facilitate the growth of the Saudi animation industry.

**Keywords :** barriers, industry life-cycle, Saudi animation, industry

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