

Granting Saudi Women the Right to Drive in the Eyes of Qatari Media

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Abstract—This research attempts to evaluate the treatment provided by the Qatari media to the decision to allow Saudi women to drive, and then activate this decision after a few months, that is, within the time frame between September 26, 2017 until June 30, 2018. This is through asking several questions, including whether the political dispute between Qatar and Saudi Arabia has cast a shadow over this handling, and if these Qatari media handlings are used to criticize the Saudi regime for delaying this step. Here emerges one of the research hypotheses that says that the coverage did not have the required professionalism, due to the fact that the decision and its activation took place in light of the political stalemate between Qatar and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, which requires testing the media framing and agenda theories to know to what extent they apply to this case. The research dealt with a sample of five Qatari media read in this sample: Al-Jazeera Net, The New Arab Newspaper, Al-Sharq Newspaper, The Arab Newspaper, and Al-Watan Newspaper. The results showed that most of the authors who covered the decision to allow Saudi women to drive a car did not achieve a balance in their writing, and that almost half of them did not have objectivity, and this indicates the proof of the hypothesis that there is a defect in the professional competence in covering the decision to allow Saudi women to drive cars by means of Qatari media, and the researcher attributes this result to the political position between Qatar and Saudi Arabia, in addition to the fact that the Arab media in most of them are characterized by a low ceiling of freedom, and most of them are identical in their position with the position of the regime's official view.

Keywords—Saudi women, stereotypes, hate speech, framing.

I. INTRODUCTION

THE Kingdom of Saudi Arabia was unique in the sense that it was the only country in the world that prevented women from driving cars, and the fact that females were not allowed to drive was de facto in the absence of driving licenses for them, despite the absence of an explicit law prohibiting women from driving, and the issue of preventing women from leadership is a great debate in Saudi society, and the issue has occupied public opinion for various periods. Preventing Saudi women from driving was one of the main criticisms of the Saudi government in the field of human rights and equality between genders raised by human rights organizations.

The Saudi government has officially announced that women will be allowed to drive cars as of June 24, 2018, and the decision to enable women to drive was part of a series of initiatives covered by a reform program sponsored by Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman, who is the sole powerful leader to lift the ban on women driving cars [1].

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The decision taken by the Saudi government to allow women to drive a car in the Kingdom was initiated by the concerns of the media all over the world, and addressed by the media from different points of view, and reactions continued around the world after the permitting and among the media that dealt with the Saudi government's decision to allow women to drive the car.

What matters in this research is that the Qatari media's handling of the issue of allowing Saudi women to drive a car came in light of the political stalemate between Qatar and Saudi Arabia, which raises the question whether the political dispute between Qatar and Saudi Arabia has cast a shadow over this handling.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

The literature reviews the theories that explain the study, which is the theory of media framing and the theory of agendas, as well as the concept of hate speech, and definition of stereotype, in addition to the most important previous studies related to the current study.

A. The Two Media Theories Used

This research examines the degree to which Frame Analysis Theory and The Agenda-Setting Theory apply to Qatari media coverage of the decision to allow women to drive a car in Saudi Arabia.

Media Framing Theory

This theory is theorized by Goffman, who used the term framework to refer to a specific set of expectations that are used to perceive the social situation at a time, and the importance of the theory of news frameworks is that it provides a practical and systematic interpretation of how the cognitive and emotional effects of the media affect the public with its various classes and demographic characteristics [2]. The theory introduces explanatory paradigms that are employed in qualitative analysis to represent the salient aspects and features contained in the media message, i.e.: determining the frameworks for the expert coverage of various issues and events [3].

This theory is based on the premise that the events and contents of the media have no meaning in themselves unless they are set in a specific organization, context and media frameworks, and these frameworks regulate words, texts and meanings, and use prevailing social experiences and values [4].

The framing of media messages provides the ability to measure the content of these messages and explains their role in influencing different opinions and trends [5]. That is, this

theory is nothing but a specific construction of expectations used by the media to make people more aware of social situations at some point, then it is a purposeful process by the communicator when he reorganizes the message so that it falls into the category of people's perceptions and persuasive influences [3].

Studies in the field of media framing indicate that the media provide assistance to the public to understand and interpret events or issues that they cover, especially those that receive the greatest attention and follow-up by individuals, "where the role of the media is to place these events or issues within news frameworks, to shed focus on them and make them more prominent than the rest of the topics presented in these means, in order to facilitate understanding of their contents, and these frameworks are automatically linked to their subjects by individuals, in the light of which they can perceive and interpret them and make assessments and judgments about them, and thus this theory can be applied to the analytical and financial aspects" [6].

Vreese believes that the news medium which uses framing may depend on some mechanisms, like: the position occupied by the story and its specified space, the symbols, supporting materials, and graphics including subjectification, dramatic emotional temptation attempts, selectivity, partial inclusion, demonization, as well as selective choice of sources, introductions and closures used in the media content, in addition to headings, subheadings and headers [7].

Hassouna reviews a set of definitions presented by researchers, such as Bassiouni, who says that this theory is the angle of media handling, in a context that is present in the mind of the contactor, as the producer of the speech frames it in accordance with his/her ideas and agendas, by focusing on certain aspects and neglecting others, within the media discourse, and highlighting elements and marginalizing others, to achieve certain ideological or intellectual objectives related to the contactor or the news medium through which the speech was produced [8].

Hassouna believes that this theory studies the circumstances of the influence of the media message on the recipients, so the events and contents of media messages have no meaning in themselves unless they are set in the organization, context and media frameworks. These frameworks regulate words, texts and meanings, and they use the prevailing social experiences and values. Framing the media message provides the ability to measure the content of the message and explains its role in influencing opinions and trends. That is, when a particular accident occurs, the event may not have a major significance for people unless the media put it in a media framework in terms of language, wording and focus on a specific element until it becomes important at the heart of the entire social framework [8].

Agenda Setting Theory

The Agenda setting theory is concerned with studying the reciprocal relationship between the media and the masses exposed to the media in determining the priorities of political, economic and social issues of interest to society. This theory

assumes that the media cannot present all the issues that occur in society, but rather those who choose to focus on some of the topics that are heavily focused and control the nature and content [9].

The agenda theory is defined as: "The process in which the media highlights certain issues as important issues, and deserves the responses of the government and the public, by drawing their attention to those issues, so that they become a priority within their agenda, and that an individual who relies on a media outlet and is exposed to it will adapt realizing it according to the importance attributed to the issues and topics of this medium, in a manner consistent with the direction of its presentation, and the size of the attention accorded to it in that medium" [10].

The agenda-setting theory is a paraphrase of the events surrounding a new template, whose importance is arranged in the media outlet in proportion to the editorial policy of the media establishment aiming at persuading the public and changing its direction in line with the ideological orientations of that medium [11].

The theory is based on the fact that "the media succeed efficiently in introducing people to what they think, because they have a great influence on focusing the public's attention towards caring about certain issues or events and issues specifically. The public knows not only from the media about these issues, but also knows the order of their importance, there is a strong positive correlation between the importance of the topic in the media and its importance to the public" [9].

B. Hate Speech

Hate speech is defined as: "Any discourse that spreads hatred, incitement to disputes and conflicts based on color, race or sect, incitement to deny and marginalize the other, spread discord, and accuse the other of treason and corruption" [12].

Hate is usually shaped, nurtured, and directed by specific individuals or groups against individuals and other groups different from the dominant majority in ethnicity, language, or religion, often for political reasons, and hate messages can find fertile ground with broader social, economic, or political problems or divisions in society [13].

Al-Rubaie believes that there are many reasons for the emergence of hate speech, foremost among which is the wrong image of the other, fear of competition, and the perception that the other is the enemy, public culture, education, and how the history is read, as there are many peoples who remain captive to events, history, media and the absence of information, as many positions were adopted on the basis of the absence of information and preconceptions [14].

Maabara indicates that the reasons for hate speech lie in two things [15]:

- The media fall under the influence of politicians and their hands, and use it to meet their personal interests.
- The poor understanding of journalists of the potential impact of some unethical words and images, which encourage hatred and incite violence.

C. Stereotypes

The media plays an important role in influencing people's attitudes, knowledge, opinions, perceptions and attitudes. By receiving a stream of information, pictures and news, we organize our knowledge of the world around us by sorting out the data, information and images that we receive. We simplify it to suit our perceptions, to delineate our knowledge systems [16]. These systems, with their various representations, are responsible for defining what we envision about others, responsible for what represents our vision of the world, and have a significant impact on the course of our daily lives through our relationship with our social environment, and what can be achieved from perception, understanding, emotion, expectation, and monitoring the situation [16].

Dente and Susan define a stereotype as: "the cognitive outcome and beliefs about certain groups are mostly negative" [17]; Debra indicated that a stereotype is a type of abbreviated characteristic, or a way to summarize a number of characteristics from another individual, or for a group of individuals, we tend to set them with a pattern of expectations, and then they are treated as if they were the same pattern [18].

The stereotype is based on specific experience and simple, general, fixed, distorted ideas extracted from current historical knowledge pathways that include the media, education, and various means of socialization [19].

D. Previous Studies

Because of the novelty of the topic related to allowing women to drive in Saudi Arabia, there is a dearth in previous studies that dealt with this topic - within the limits of the researcher's knowledge - but there are some previous studies that are indirectly related to the subject of the study, including the study of Arts and Paul that links between Islamists and liberals in Saudi Arabia, between this (liberal) approach and a women's demonstration demanding the right to drive a Saudi woman in the car in November 1990, speaking of 47 women who participated in business and academia, saying that it is the first step by the liberal current in Saudi Arabia [20].

Al-Rasheed pointed out in the study of the struggle of Saudi women on several levels, including the signing of reform petitions and their participation in the movement in defense of political prisoners and the lifting of the ban on women driving in Saudi Arabia. Al-Rasheed returns to 1990, when women drove their cars to a shopping center in Riyadh, to be arrested as a result of this. The situation changed between 2011 and 2014 through digital campaigns. Women drive their cars in separate cases in different regions of the Kingdom, and some of them escaped from the authorities while others were arrested, and they could take pictures and videos of themselves, unlike 1990; in an attempt to co-opt Selling the practice and encouraging the rest of the women, says Al-Rasheed, who states that this did not work but raised awareness of the problems women face as a result of the driving ban [21].

Khan addressed Saudi women in terms of status, rights and limitations, and showed that the religious establishment casts shadows on the daily lives of individuals, in addition to all

relationships, objecting to details such as preventing mixing and the presence of a religious police that will monitor the extent of commitment to this taking measures against those who violate these laws. In addition to the low rates of female employment in the Middle East [22].

Al-Mizar came with the aim of identifying the effects of Saudi women driving on the car, and this study showed that there are positive effects in terms of security, economic, social and cultural aspects, in the event that women are allowed to drive, and that this leads to achieving equality [1].

E. Study Problem

Many questions arise about the subjectivity and professionalism of the Qatari media's handling of the decision to allow Saudi women to drive taking into consideration the fact that the decision took place during the political crisis between Qatar and Saudi Arabia.

The crisis was reflected in the performance of the media, in a kind of media war between the two parties, which affected everything that falls under the official position of both countries, including the decision to allow Saudi women to drive which came as part of the reforms adopted by Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman, and the prince who is referred to as the owner of the largest role in imposing the blockade on Qatar with Gulf states and Egypt since June 5, 2017.

F. Study Hypothesis

The study assumes that there is an imbalance in the professionalism in covering the decision to allow Saudi women to drive cars by the Qatari media, and this defect is due to the political position between Qatar and Saudi Arabia, in addition to the fact that the Arab media have a low ceiling of freedom, and most of them are identical in their position with the position of the official view.

The study also assumes that there is stereotyping that took place through the Qatari media for Saudi women, as the study assumes that there is a certain level of hate speech in the body of media materials, whether it is against the Saudi regime that delayed this step until the moment, or about the clergymen who stood against this step for a long time.

G. Study Questions

The study seeks to answer the following questions:

- What kind of press material did the Qatari press cover for Saudi women driving? And what are the job titles of the writers?
- Are the authors of journalistic material having objectivity?
- What are the attitudes of the press materials covered in the sample?
- What kinds of Lobbying are used in press materials, if any?
- Did the press articles include hate speech or stereotypes?

III. METHODOLOGY AND DATA COLLECTION

A. Methodology

This study relied on the content analysis methodology, which mainly depends on converting the written information into numbers describing the phenomenon being studied. Suliman defines the method of content analysis as: "an objective method of quantitative and qualitative judgment at the same time, and contributes to taking the appropriate decision, as it helps in achieving the goals of scientific research that is concerned with studying in this field. In particular, research related to analyzing media or journalist content" [23]. Neuendorf believes that content analysis is: "a quantitative summary analysis of the content, which is based on the scientific method, including objectivity, internal subjectivity, initial design, reliability, truthfulness, generalizability, reproducibility, and hypothesis testing, and is not limited to the types of variables that can be measured, nor on the context in which the content is displayed" [24].

There are many studies that have used the content analysis method in their methodology, especially studies related to media and media content analysis, such as Al-Mansour's study that aimed to analyze the content of Arab newspapers in its handling of Trump's decision to consider Jerusalem as the capital of Israel [25].

B. Monitoring Sample

Research deals with five read Qatari media outlets: Al-Jazeera Net, The New Arab Newspaper, Al-Sharq Newspaper, The Arab Newspaper, and Al-Watan Newspaper. The monitoring period from the day the decision was issued to allow women to drive in Saudi Arabia, and during the period September 26, 2017 to June 30, 2018.

C. Data Collection Technique

This study relied on two types of information sources, which are primary and secondary, as secondary information was done through review and survey of books, references, articles and previous studies related to the field of study in order to lay the scientific foundations and theoretical frameworks for them and reach hypotheses based on theoretical foundations.

As for the primary information, it was obtained through analyzing the content of the Qatari newspapers, the study sample, during the period September 26, 2017 to June 30, 2018, through a monitoring scout who has been arbitrated by a number of professors specializing in the media.

IV. DATA ANALYSIS

A. The Media

Through Table I it is clear that Al-Jazeera Net and Al-Arabi Al-Jadeed are the two newspapers that most cover the decision of the Saudi woman driving the car, as their coverage percentage from the sample reached 38.1% for each of them. It is also noted from the table that the lowest newspaper covering the decision was Al-Arab newspaper, with 2.4% only, while Al-Sharq got 11.9%, and Al-Wata got 9.5%.

TABLE I
QATARI MEDIA READ IN THIS SAMPLE

Media	Frequency	Percentage
Al-Sharq Newspaper	5	11.9%
Al-Jazeera Net	16	38.1%
The New Arab Newspaper	16	38.1%
Al-Watan Newspaper	4	9.5%
The Arab Newspaper	1	2.4%
Total	42	100%

B. Type of Press Material

TABLE II
TYPE OF PRESS MATERIAL THAT DEALT WITH WOMEN DRIVING IN SAUDI ARABIA

Press Type Material	Frequency	Percentage
News	10	23.8%
Dialogue	00	00
Article	12	28.6%
Journalistic Investigation	00	00
Report	18	42.9%
Portrait	00	00
Other	2	4.8%
Total	42	100%

From Table II it is clear that Reports were the most types of press material used in the Qatari media, in their coverage of Saudi Arabia's decision to allow women to drive a car, which constituted 42.9%. It is also noted that some press materials were not used at all, namely: Dialogue - Journalistic investigation - Portrait.

C. Job Titles for Writers

TABLE III
JOB TITLES FOR WRITERS

Job titles	Frequency	Percentage
intellectual	00	00
Reporter	00	00
journalist	27	64.3%
University Professor	00	00
Political analyst	00	00
expert	00	00
Religious personality	00	00
scientific researcher	1	2.4%
Other	14	33.3%
Total	42	100%

It is noted from Table III that most of those who dealt with the decision to allow Saudi women to drive in the Qatari newspapers are journalists constituting 64.3%.

D. The Methods Used by Writers

TABLE IV
METHODS USED BY WRITERS

journalist writers methods	Frequency	Percentage
Propaganda methods	12	28.6%
Discussion methods	00	00
Analytical methods	8	19.0%
Mixed	1	2.4%
Other	21	50.0%
Total	42	100%

From Table IV it is noted that most of the writers in the Qatari newspapers who dealt with the decision to allow Saudi women to drive the car followed in their writing other methods that were not mentioned within the categories of analysis and by 50%, and 28.6% of them followed the propaganda methods in their writing, which are the approved methods on emotional excitement and depicting facts in a dramatic way to achieve specific goals behind propaganda. It is also noticed that 19.0% of the writers in the Qatari newspapers followed the analytical methods, the approved arguments, evidence, proofs and numbers to prove a specific issue in their writings, and 2.4% followed mixed methods. Table IV data indicated that the discussion methods were not used at all.

E. Supporting Material

TABLE V
THE NATURE OF SUPPORTING MATERIAL

Supporting material	Frequency	Percentage
Video	2	4.8%
Animation	00	00
Still image	33	78.6%
Video-Taped News Report	00	00
Recorded report	00	00
Interview	00	00
Maps	00	00
Infographic	00	00
Caricature	00	00
Other	00	00
Mixed	2	4.8%
Sound effects	00	00
Promo	00	00
None	5	11.9%
Total	42	100%

From Table V it is clear that the most supportive materials used by the Qatari newspapers in its coverage of the decision to allow Saudi women to drive the car were still image, with a rate of 78.6%, followed by the non-use of any supporting material at a rate of 11.9%, video or mixed supportive materials at a rate of 4.8% for each.

F. The Extent of Balance

TABLE VI
THE WRITER BALANCE

Media	Frequency	Percentage
writer achieved balance	8	19.0%
writer did not achieve balance	18	42.9%
Other	16	38.1%
Total	42	100%

From Table VI it is clear that 42.9% of the writers in the Qatari newspapers who dealt with the decision to allow Saudi women to drive the car did not achieve the balance, and 19% achieved the balance in their writing. That is, the general feature was the lack of balance in writing.

G. Writer's Objectivity

It is noted from Table VII that 47.6% of the writers were

objective in their approach to the decision to allow Saudi women to drive in the Qatari newspapers, and 45.2% were not objective, and that 4.8% of them were neutral.

TABLE VII
WRITER'S OBJECTIVITY

objectivity	Frequency	Percentage
writer was objective	20	47.6%
writer was not objective	19	45.2%
neutral	2	4.8%
Other	1	2.4%
Total	42	100%

H. Professionalism

TABLE VIII
PROFESSIONALISM

direction	Frequency	Percentage
Positive	00	00
Negative	19	45.2%
Neutral	20	47.6%
Other	3	7.1%
Total	42	100%

Table VIII indicates that 45.2% of the articles that dealt with the decision to allow Saudi women to drive in the Qatari newspapers were negative, 47.6% were neutral, and there was no positive article.

I. Temptations Used

TABLE IX
TEMPTATIONS USED

Temptations	Frequency	Percentage
Religious	2	4.8%
Emotional	1	2.4%
Scientific knowledge	00	00
Legal	00	00
Humane	5	11.9%
Pragmatic	1	2.4%
Political	1	2.4%
Mixed	11	26.2%
Unclear	21	50.0%
Other	00	00
Total	42	100%

From Table IX it is clear that 50% of the temptations were unclear, that 11.9% were humanitarian temptations, and 4.8% religious, and 2.4% were either pragmatic, political, or emotional TEMPTATIONS.

J. Hate Speech

From Table X it is clear that 54.1% of the press material that dealt with the decision to allow Saudi women to drive in Qatari newspapers did not contain hate speech; while 21.4% of those articles contained Emotional mobilization and 2.4% contained an Accusation.

K. Stereotyping Saudi Women

From Table XI, it is clear that the press articles that dealt with the decision to allow Saudi women to drive the car were devoid of any stereotyping of Saudi women, at a rate of 95.2%.

TABLE X
HATE SPEECH

Hate speech	Frequency	Percentage
Emotional mobilization	9	21.4%
Incitement	00	00
Insults	00	00
Libel and slander	00	00
Stigma	00	00
Profiling	00	00
Accusation	1	2.4%
None	24	57.1%
Mix	8	19.%
Total	42	100%

TABLE XI
STEREOTYPING SAUDI WOMEN

Stereotyping	Frequency	Percentage
Shape Stereotyping	00	00
Behavior Stereotyping	1	2.4%
Character Stereotyping	00	00
Attitudes Stereotyping	1	2.4%
Reactions Stereotyping	00	00
There is no Stereotyping	40	95.2%
Total	42	100%

V. DISCUSSION & CONCLUSIONS

The results of the study showed that most of the coverage of the decision to allow Saudi women to drive in the Qatari newspapers was in the form of reports; this indicates that the topic did not come in the form of a dialogue, a prototype, or other forms of journalism. The justification for this is that the coverage of the decision was for a long period of nearly 6 months, the good news needs to be timely, the dialogue in the read newspapers is ineffective enough, and the newspaper investigation needs an incomprehensible or unknown issue to be confirmed, but the decision to allow the Saudi woman to drive the car was clearly defined and fixed-term.

The results also showed that the coverage of the decision to allow Saudi women to drive a car was not propaganda, that is, it did not depend on emotional arousal and depiction of facts in a dramatic way to achieve certain goals behind the propaganda, and was not a discussion, so there is no need to brainstorm and seek opinions and suggestions from the participants, and it was not an analysis, as it did not rely on arguments, evidence, proofs, and numbers to prove or explain a specific issue.

The results also showed that most of the authors who covered the decision to allow Saudi women to drive a car did not achieve a balance in their writing, and that almost half of them did not have objectivity. This indicates the proof of the hypothesis that there is a defect in the professional competence in covering the decision to allow Saudi women to drive cars by means of Qatari media. The researcher attributes this result to the political position between Qatar and Saudi Arabia, in addition to the fact that the Arab media in most of them are characterized by a low ceiling of freedom, and most of them are identical in their position with the position of the regime's official view.

It is clear from the results of the study that the temptations in the press articles that dealt with the decision to allow Saudi women to drive the car were mostly unclear, and the Qatari media were keen enough to avoid focusing on stereotyping the image of women, as 95.2% of the press articles were devoid of any form. Among the forms of stereotyping of women, most journalistic articles were free of hate speech at a rate of 57.1%. And this indicates the negation of the second hypothesis, which assumes the existence of a stereotype that occurred through the Qatari media for Saudi women, or the presence of a certain high level of hate speech in the group of media materials.

The researcher reached a set of conclusions that can be summarized as follows:

- Al-Jazeera Net and Al-Arabi Al-Jadeed are the two newspapers that most cover the decision of the Saudi woman driving the car.
- The most types of press material used in the Qatari media coverage of Saudi Arabia's decision to allow women to drive a car are Reports.
- Most of those who dealt with the decision to allow Saudi women to drive in the Qatari newspapers are journalists.
- Most of the writers followed in their writing other methods that were not mentioned within the categories of analysis, followed the propaganda methods in their writing, which are the approved methods on emotional excitement and depicting facts in a dramatic way to achieve specific goals behind propaganda.
- The most supportive material used by the Qatari newspapers in its coverage of the decision to allow Saudi women to drive the car was images.
- Most of the writers in the Qatari newspapers who dealt with the decision to allow Saudi women to drive the car did not achieve balance and objectivity.
- Almost half of the writers were objective in their approach to the decision to allow Saudi women to drive in the Qatari newspapers, and half of the temptations were unclear.
- Most of the press material that dealt with the decision to allow Saudi women to drive in Qatari newspapers did not contain hate speech.
- Press articles that dealt with the decision to allow Saudi women to drive the car were devoid of any stereotyping of Saudi women.

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