

QATAR UNIVERSITY

COLLEGE OF ARTS AND SCIENCES

THE PORTRAYAL OF THE STATE OF QATAR IN THE MEDIA: AN ANALYTICAL
STUDY OF THE NEWSPAPERS OF THE GULF BLOCKADING COUNTRIES (FROM
24 MAY 2017 TO 21 SEPTEMBER 2017) OF THE GULF CRISIS 2017–2018

BY

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ABSTRACT

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Title: The Portrayal of the State of Qatar in the Media: An analytical study of the newspapers of the Gulf blockading countries (from 24 May 2017 to 21 September 2017) of the Gulf Crisis 2017–2018

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This research study investigates the ways in which the State of Qatar was portrayed in some of the Arabic-language newspapers of the three Gulf blockading countries. The main question addressed concerns the main characteristics of the portrayal of the State of Qatar in the media of the Gulf blockading countries during the Gulf Crisis of 2017. This study has adopted a quantitative content analysis. A total of 996 news stories were collected from the three newspapers, which consist of news reports, opinion articles, political caricatures, interviews, graphics, and so on. The selected newspapers were *Al-Ittihad* newspaper (UAE), *Al-Watan* newspaper (Bahrain) and *Al-Jazirah* newspaper (KSA).

The duration of this study is from 24 May 2017 to 21 September 2017, that is the first five months of the Gulf Crisis of 2017–2018. The collected data were divided into two main categories within which to analyze the portrayal of the State of Qatar in the selected newspapers: (1) What was said about Qatar; and (2) How it was said. The results of this study show that the image of the State of Qatar has been distorted by the three selected newspapers, and that the distortion has appeared in the majority of the contents of news stories and the specific frames within the political caricatures. Accordingly, the newspapers have portrayed the State of Qatar as the ‘financier of terrorism’ that poses a threat to the Gulf region.

This study reviews some literature that discusses the power and the performance of the media during political conflicts. Moreover, the study is theoretically linked with the Framing Theory that

provided a grounded understanding of the media in the Gulf blockading countries. The portrayal of Qatar in the media has been extensively addressed in the media, talk shows, conferences and opinion articles. However, there is a scarcity of academic studies which focus on the media portrayal of a GCC member in the media of other GCC countries during the Gulf Crisis 2017–2018. Therefore, this study will shed light on the framing of Qatar in the media, and it will potentially contribute to the enrichment of research studies on the ‘media framing’ of the Arabian Gulf.

DEDICATION

I dedicate this thesis

to my mother, Aisha, and my father, Ibrahim

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

The Gulf Crisis has received significant news coverage since it began on 24 May 2017. More importantly, the State of Qatar has been a focus for the media of the three Gulf countries, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA), the United Arab Emirates (UAE), and the Kingdom of Bahrain, who decided to cut relations with the State of Qatar on 5 June 2017, as well as for Egypt. The main aim of this study is to discover what was the portrayal of the State of Qatar in the Arabic-language newspapers of the three Gulf blockading countries, the KSA, the UAE, and Bahrain. It is worth clarifying that the Egyptian newspapers are not included in this study, as this study is only concerned with newspapers in the Arabian Gulf region. In more detail, the focus will be on how the State of Qatar was portrayed by the media of the blockading countries, and what were the specific images and words that were used and repeated in the news stories that they were publishing on some of the particular days of the crisis, which have been selected for this study. To clarify, the term 'media portrayal' will be covering all sorts of news stories that were published in the daily newspapers of the Gulf blockading countries, such as the political issues, economic topics, social issues, sports news, topics about religious occasions, opinion articles, and graphics. Political caricatures will be included in this study to be analyzed with the other forms of news stories.

The political caricatures are included among the other journalism genres because they usually include strong messages, which often can be more direct and latent. Besides, one may say that when the artists who draw the caricatures symbolize people or countries negatively and label them in specific frames, they are able to create a distorted image that can convey much of significance. Consequently, the images can remain in people's minds for a long time. In other words, it can be said that political caricatures often can be more powerful than texts, because of the particular distinction they have, such as the use of drawing techniques that symbolize people and place them in specific groups, such

as the frame of ‘terrorism’. In addition to that, political caricature has the ability to simplify the general idea and to create a certain ‘assumption’ by using different techniques, such as using a form of critical exaggeration that leads to underestimating a particular political leader or a country. In their study, *A Semiotic Analysis of Political Cartoons*, Lee and Goguen (2003) argue that “political cartoons historically and currently play a significant role in public discourse about serious and important issues” (Lee & Goguen, 2003, p.1). Therefore, one may add that the adverse use of political caricatures, and the frequent use of particular phrases within them, constitutes a massive attack against some countries, and can become derogatory and help in creating a negative reputation that distorts the image of the intended target.

The media during political crises

The choice of newspapers as a medium of investigation for this research study is because using newspapers as data in content analysis to study collective issues and social issues has gained a high level of credibility over the past years, more so than other types of media, such as online resources and television (Shin, Lee, and Lee, 2016; Armstrong, 2009; Kiouisis, 2001). In addition, Ampuja, Koivisto, and Väliverronen (2014) explain that “... it is argued not only that the media have taken on a larger role in the opinion-building process, but also that the media have become the most important arena for politics” (Ampuja, et al., 2014, p.112). Furthermore, researchers have been confirming the link between mass media systems and politics, which have always been bilateral and dependent on each other. The relationship between the two has continued to be influential (Ciaglia, 2013; Ampuja, et al., 2014). Besides, according to Ciaglia (2013), the use of the media in mobilizing public opinion and promoting ideological beliefs is considered to be one of the classic forms of political acts and political propaganda, for example, during the Second World War (Ciaglia, 2013).

However, one may argue that media platforms can be used both negatively and positively, which can in both cases provide some political perspectives that serve the agenda of the State. Several media scholars have emphasized the power and the influence of the media, especially during political crises (McQuail, 2010; Ahmed and Munawar, 2015; Payne, 2005; Jackall, 1995). The media coverage of the Gulf Crisis in 2017 played a role in deepening the political dispute between the State of Qatar and the Gulf blockading countries, as the media of the Gulf blockading countries keep defaming the State of Qatar and applying heavy-handed political propaganda that led to creating a negative portrayal of the State of Qatar (Erraji, 2017). In this regard, it can be said that studying the power and the implications of the ‘media portrayal’ matters because it can be considered as an instrument that is used to distort the reputation of some countries or individuals. Consequently, it can mobilize and direct public opinion to think of certain issues in a way that leads the public to receive misleading news about the world, in particular about targeted nations. In this connection, the portrayal of the State of Qatar will be investigated from the perspective of demonization, defamation, and sarcastic language, which are the specific techniques that have been used by the press of the Gulf blockading countries when they cover the State of Qatar during the Gulf Crisis of 2017–2018.

Significance of the research

The significance of this research study is to analyze the practical role of the media and to investigate the issue of creating the ‘media portrayal’ within the Arab Gulf region. The media portrayal has sometimes been used as a political instrument to mobilize people negatively against certain groups in society, or in the entire world (Jackall, 1995). In addition, it is believed that the media portrayal is backed by organized political propaganda, which is usually based on fabricated information (Taylor, 2003). This research study attempts to find out the different characteristics of the portrayal of the State of Qatar in the Arabic-language newspapers of the three Gulf blockading countries. It mainly

considers the type of language they have used repeatedly in their media to describe the State of Qatar during the specific time chosen for this study. Moreover, it is worth mentioning that the topic of the ‘the portrayal of Qatar in GCC media’ has been extensively addressed in the media, talk shows, conferences, and newspaper articles, but there is a lack of academic studies that focus on the media portrayal of the State of Qatar during the Gulf Crisis of 2017–18.

From another angle, according to Lumpp (2014), social media are among the most widely used platforms, especially during crises. In addition, Lumpp argues that social media are used to get different information, and as places where people can interact with each other and create groups, as well as discovering public opinion about certain issues. However, there is no guarantee of the reliability of the data taken from social media, considered as sources for factual information (Lumpp, 2014). On the other hand, there are several media scholars who depend on newspapers to get their data because they believe that printed media are reliable sources (Armstrong, 2009; Kioussis, 2001; Shin, et al., 2016). Furthermore, some media scholars claim that newspapers are known to be a pro-government platform (Taylor, 2003). In this regard, this research study has chosen the traditional media because, according to Coxall (2013), the newspapers are controlled by the governments. In addition, the “... newspapers are also known to be politically biased ...” (Kieran, 2002, p.2). Moreover, the newspapers in the Gulf countries are mostly echoing the government perspective.

Research problem

The portrayal of the State of Qatar has taken a wide focus in the Arabic-language newspapers of the Gulf blockading countries (KSA, UAE, and Bahrain) since the start of the Gulf Crisis in May 2017. Likewise, the reason for choosing the traditional media for analysis in this research study is because the newspapers usually have more restrictions that follow a particular framework, compared to the new media. Therefore, it is critical to look at their performance, as they are considered to be a formal

media platform, as well as one of the oldest media platforms used to spread political propaganda that serves certain agendas of the State. To extend this, it can be said that the Arabic-language newspapers of the Gulf blockading countries have been recurrently using some specific words that were intentionally linked with the name of the State of Qatar, such as ‘financing terrorism’. Most of these concepts were continuously mentioned in the political news and the opinion articles that were located on the front pages and the inner pages of the newspapers.

Misleading news was published about the fabricated situation in the State of Qatar to a large number of audiences inside and outside the Gulf region. This fabricated news portrayed the situation of the economy of Qatar in a negative way, and suggested a low level of loyalty of Qatari people to their leader, Sheik Tamim bin Hamad Al-Thani. In this regard, this research study attempts to provide a comprehensive picture of the Arabic-language newspapers of the Gulf blockading countries and how they cover the different types of news related to the Gulf crisis of 2017–2018. More importantly, the main target of this research study is to investigate the idea that the portrayal of the State of Qatar has been deliberately distorted in the media of the Gulf blockading countries, since the start of the Gulf Crisis in May 2017.

Research aims

As mentioned earlier, this research study aims to identify and explore the main characteristics of the portrayal of the State of Qatar in the newspapers of the Gulf blockading countries. The investigation includes all types of news related to the State of Qatar, as well as the political caricatures in the newspapers. This study focuses on a specific time of the Gulf Crisis of 2017–2018, that is between 24 May and 21 September 2017. It contains some days of the first four months of the blockade of Qatar, including some days from the week preceding the blockade, the last week of May 2017, specifically the day of the hacking of the Qatar News Agency, 24 May 2017.

The selection of this specific period of time of the Gulf Crisis of 2017–2018 is due to the importance of the dramatic events and the transformations that took place during the first weeks and months of the Gulf Crisis. The Gulf blockading countries were linking the name of the State of Qatar with the concept of ‘terrorism’ in order to attract international attention for the claims they had created against the State of Qatar. In other words, this can be described as a tactic of persuasion that has a political purpose behind it. For instance, in the first weeks of the Gulf Crisis, the President of the United States of America, Donald Trump, contributed to the support for the claims made by the blockading countries. This was clear in his speech when he mentioned that Qatar has to stop financing terrorism. Later on, the United States of American took another stand on the crisis, and on the allegations against the State of Qatar: they announced their admiration for the role played by the State of Qatar in countering terrorism. Moreover, the American position has been changing gradually, aligning itself with the position of the foreign policy of the United States of America, and they have also attempted to mediate to solve the disputes (Asweeq, 2017; Kabalan, 2018).

However, the media of the blockading countries, both the traditional and the new media, have continued to repeat some specific words in their newspapers to describe the State of Qatar such as “a State that funds terrorism”, “a threat”, “an enemy”, “an isolated country”, and “traitor State”. In this regard, there are two reasons why the Gulf Crisis of 2017–2018 is an important case for exploring and assessing the media portrayal of the State of Qatar. First of all, in terms of diplomatic crises between the Arab Gulf countries, it can be described as one of the most complicated diplomatic clashes within the GCC entity, as it reached a lamentable level of hostile media discourse. Second, according to the Gulf traditions, and to common media ethics, to witness a Gulf state being humiliated by the media in a way that the State of Qatar has experienced during this crisis was beyond standard

political practices. The aim of this research study is to provide a quantitative content analysis for the portrayal of the State of Qatar in the newspapers of the Gulf blockading countries.

Research question(s)

In order to achieve this goal, the study attempts to provide some specific answers to the key guiding question, including the sub-questions, as follows:

The main research question:

What are the main characteristics of the portrayal of the State of Qatar in the media of the Gulf blockading countries during the Gulf Crisis in 2017?

The sub-questions:

1. What were the recurrent themes in the newspapers of the Gulf blockading countries?
2. What sort of language was used by the newspapers of the Gulf blockading countries?
3. What was the message that the political caricatures of the newspapers communicated?
4. What was the nature of the tone – neutral, negative or positive – that dominated the published news?
5. What types of news – political, economic, social, religious, sports, and so on – were used for image distortion?
6. Who were the sources of the propaganda platform – local agencies or international – for news coverage?
7. What components were added in the journalistic genre for news stories?

The Gulf Crisis 2017–2018: Background to the crisis

This section provides an overview of this case study, the Gulf Crisis 2017–2018, starting with a brief summary of the Ambassadors Crisis of 2014, which preceded the current Gulf Crisis. Both of these crises happened between the same members of the Gulf Cooperation Council: the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates and the Kingdom of Bahrain on one side, and the State of Qatar on the other side.

The Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) was established in 1981, and it includes the six States members: the State of Qatar, Kuwait, Oman, the Kingdom of Bahrain, the United Arab Emirates, and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. The idea of protecting the security of the Gulf region was one of the important motives for the establishment of the GCC, especially after the conflicts that took place in the region during the 1970s, 1980s, and 1990s, for instance, the Iranian revolution in 1979, followed by the Iraq–Iran war in 1980 (the first Gulf War), which lasted for eight years until 1988, as well as the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait (the second Gulf War) in 1990.

In addition, the Gulf Cooperation Council has sought to create the idea of having a cohesive socioeconomic unit that would build strong relations between the GCC member states, and achieve stability in the Gulf region (Ulrichsen, 2017; Al-Hassan, 2015; Naheem, 2017). The GCC countries represent a homogeneous political structure that is combined with a historical experience linked by a geographic location and common borders. Therefore, these six states have decided to emerge as a collective entity that reflects their shared interests (Al-Hassan, 2015).

The Ambassadors Crisis of 2014

In March 2014, three of the Gulf Cooperation Council members – Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, and the United Arab Emirates – decided to withdraw their ambassadors from the State of Qatar. The three countries took that action in order to show their objections to Qatar’s policy. In their joint statement,

“Qatar was accused of breaching the 2013 GCC security agreement, of failing to commit to promises it made not to interfere in the internal affairs of fellow GCC states, and of harboring hostile media” (Al-Jazeera website, June 2017). Moreover, the dispute with the State of Qatar has escalated because of its support for the democratic Arab Spring revolutions and its opposition to the military coup in Egypt (Asweeq, 2017).

In addition, in his book, *The Gulf Security: The threats sources and the protection strategy*, Al-Rashdan (2015) points out that all of the six Gulf Cooperation Council countries have an agreement in determining some groups as terrorists who are considered to be a major source of threat to the security of the Gulf region, such as ISIS and Al-Qaeda. However, there is a lack of consensus on classifying other groups, such as the Muslim Brotherhood, who were classified as a terrorist group by the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates in 2014 (Al-Rashdan, 2015).

In June 2017, the kingdom of Bahrain declared the Muslim Brotherhood to be a terrorist group. In contrast, the States of Qatar, Kuwait, and Oman have not classified the Muslim Brotherhood as a terrorist group. Therefore, one may say that the lack of agreement on specifying the security threats may contribute to deepening disputes between the Gulf countries. Regarding that diplomatic dispute, Hassan (2015) has argued that the Ambassadors Crisis of 2014 happened because of the absence of an actual mechanism that solves such disputes among the GCC members. In this regard, if there is no immediate settlement for the disputes that happen between the Gulf Cooperation Council countries, it is likely that such disputes will be repeated, and the current Gulf Crisis 2017-2018 is clear evidence for this assumption. Moreover, Naheem (2017) has stated that the “... current division within the GCC affects the potential benefits of a united Council and must therefore be addressed through a proper discourse using tools that were created to serve as indicators during such disputes” (Naheem, 2017, p.266).

The Gulf Crisis 2017–2018

On 24 May 2017, the Qatar News Agency website (QAN) was hacked, and during that penetration, several fabricated statements were published, which were attributed to the Emir of the State of Qatar, Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad. Furthermore, although the State of Qatar announced that the Qatar News Agency had been hacked, and all the statements attributed to Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad were denied, some television channels, such as Al-Arabia (KSA) and Sky News (UAE), as well as other media outlets, continued to publish the fabricated statements as urgent news on their stations, and started to discuss them without taking into consideration the denial of the State of Qatar (Erraji, 2017). Moreover, the fabricated statements attributed to Qatar were praising Iran, Hezbollah, and Hamas, and talking about the tensions of the relationship between the State of Qatar and the administration of Donald Trump, the President of the United States of America (Asweeq, 2017).

After the hacking incident, the crisis evolved and escalated. On 5 June 2017, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, and the Kingdom of Bahrain decided to sever diplomatic relations with the State of Qatar. Other GCC members, Oman and Kuwait, did not take the same action, and remained neutral. More importantly, Kuwait and Oman have played the role of mediator between the blockading countries and the State of Qatar (Naheem, 2017).

The three Gulf blockading countries imposed a ban on air traffic with the State of Qatar, and have closed their land and sea borders. In addition, they asked Qatari people to leave their countries within 14 days, and they asked their own citizens to leave Qatar. Since that day, they have been called ‘the blockading countries. The blockade was a deliberate blockade; it is unusual in terms of State relations that a group of countries would take that action against another country during peacetime (Asweeq, 2017).

In addition, some other countries announced boycotts of Qatar, such as Egypt, the Maldives, Mauritius, and the Yemeni government in Riyadh. Later, the three Gulf blockading countries (KSA, UAE, and Bahrain) specified that the major reason that had led them to cut ties with the State of Qatar was that they accused Qatar of financing terrorism (Naheem, 2017). In addition, the State of Qatar has been accused of supporting Huthis in Yemen, and of cooperating with Iran, although Qatar's policy stands against the role of Iran in Syria and Yemen (Abdel Mawla, 2017).

Selected milestones of the Gulf Crisis 2017–2018:

The six milestones that were chosen for this research study are some of the most prominent events that happened during the first five months of the Gulf Crisis of 2017–2018. Moreover, these dates were selected in order to explore how the newspapers in the Gulf blockading countries have dealt with, and interacted with, these important events. The first selected date is 25 May 2017, which is the day following the hacking of the Qatari News Agency website, the incident that triggered the Gulf Crisis, as the Gulf blockading countries have taken their serious actions against the State of Qatar based on the fabricated statements that were attributed to Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad, the Emir of the State of Qatar. The second date is 7 June 2017, which is the day when the Turkish army arrived in the State of Qatar. The third date is 5 July 2017, which is after the 'Cairo meeting', where the Gulf blockading countries (KSA, UAE, Bahrain) – including Egypt – gathered to discuss the response of the State of Qatar to the 13-point list of demands that these countries issued. In this regard, Zafirov (2017) has stated that the 13-point list of demands "... were worded in such a way as to make them sound like ultimatums ...” (Zafirov, 2017, p.196). However, the writer added that the State of Qatar did not give serious attention to these demands (Zafirov, 2017). The following is a summary of what was mentioned in the 13-point list of demands:

Table 1

The 13-point list of demands

Demand No:	The 13-point list of demands
1	Reduce diplomatic ties with Iran.
2	Close the Turkish military base in Qatar immediately.
3	Cut ties with all terrorist, sectarian, and ideological organizations, such as the Muslim Brotherhood, Hezbollah, Al-Qaeda, and Fatah al-Sham.
4	Stop financing terrorist organizations that are included in terrorist lists of the Gulf blockading countries (KSA, UAE, Bahrain), in addition to Egypt.
5	Hand over all the listed ‘terrorist figures’ and the wanted individuals from UAE, KSA, Bahrain, and Egypt to their original countries.
6	Shut down Al-Jazeera channel.
7	Stop interfering in the internal affairs of the countries, and stop granting citizenships to wanted nationals from KSA, Bahrain, UAE, and Egypt.
8	Pay financial compensation for losses of life and other financial losses that were caused by Qatar.
9	Qatar has to be in line with the rest of the Gulf states on the military level, social level, and economic and security levels.
10	Hand over information on the political oppositions that have been supported by Qatar, and specify the type of support provided.
11	Close all the media outlets funded by Qatar.
12	Approve and respond to this list of demands within 10 days, otherwise it is considered null.
13	Agree to have periodic follow-up reports – once every month for the first year, once every three months in the second year, and once every year for ten years.

The fourth date is 21 July 2017, which is the day when Sheik Tamim bin Hamad Al-Thani gave his first speech during the crisis to his people and the residents of Qatar. The fifth date is 25 August 2017, the time during which the issue of Al-Hajj (Pilgrimage) was raised in the media, as the Gulf Crisis has affected the conduct of this religious duty. Also, the government of Saudi Arabia began to accuse the State of Qatar of internationalizing the *Hajj* issue. The sixth and last date was the 19th September 2017, which is the day when Sheik Tamim bin Hamad Al-Thani gave his speech in the United Nations General Assembly, which is the second speech given by him during the Gulf Crisis of 2017–2018.

The propaganda campaign against the State of Qatar

The Gulf blockading countries (KSA, UAE, Bahrain) have deployed a propaganda campaign against the State of Qatar since the start of the Gulf Crisis of 2017–2018. Also, as mentioned earlier, the Gulf blockading countries have ignored the Qatari denial regarding the fabricated statements that were attributed to Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad, and they have taken the statements “... as fact and proceeded, on that basis, to accuse Qatar of being the weak link in the threat to regional stability from Iran and terrorism ...” (Ulrichsen, 2017, p.6).

In addition, according to Erraji (2017), there was a political purpose that the Gulf blockading countries wanted to achieve. Therefore, they have promoted a demonized image of the State of Qatar by preparing a well-organized media campaign of ‘propaganda’ that has followed the agendas of the authorities (Erraji, 2017). Erraji added that “... the anti-Qatar campaign has been designed as a prelude for a cache of propaganda and media warfare that goes beyond traditional norms, rules and principles governing standard professional practices” (Erraji, 2017, p.2).

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

This chapter reviews some of the existing literature that discusses media influence during political conflicts and crises. Moreover, this section opens the opportunity to investigate and analyze the case of the research study that focuses on the media portrayal of the State of Qatar in the newspapers of the Gulf blockading countries (KSA, UAE, Bahrain) since the start of the Gulf Crisis in 2017. For this reason, the Framing Theory has been chosen as a theoretical framework for this study to understand the media of the Gulf blockading countries, how the media function, and how the media are exploited to become political propaganda tools. It is crucial to provide information that shows the influence and the power of the media generally, and the role of the media in shaping public opinion about specific nations through specific methods and discourses.

Media power and its influence

According to McQuail (2010), “the expression ‘Media Power’ ... refers to a general potential on the part of the media to have effects, especially of the planned kind” (McQuail, 2010, p.463). Moreover, there are some scholars who have argued that numerous characteristics of the media have helped in keeping it as an influential instrument that creates great impacts on different situations. The media have the ability to construct various meanings of messages, through the way these messages are repeated, published, and organized. Besides, the more the news is repeated, the more important the issue becomes (McClain, 2011; Stewart, Gil-Egui, Tian, and Pileggi, 2006; Hester and Gibson, 2003).

Likewise, according to Ahmed and Munawa (2015), there are many roles of the media. For instance, the media have the role of spreading awareness and providing the audience with different types of information. In general, the media have great power in manufacturing public opinion, and in

influencing people's perceptions. In addition to that, the media can also control and direct the behaviour of the audience. Also, the media have the ability to construct specific images of different countries and people (Ahmed & Munawar, 2015).

More importantly, there are several studies that have emphasized the power and the influence of the media, specifically, when used as an instrument for political propaganda (Payne, 2005; Jackall, 1995). As mentioned earlier, the majority of the published studies related to 'the media portrayal' mostly focus on how a specific group or social class in a certain society of the world are portrayed in the media (e.g. Burke, 2014). Examples include the portrayal of men and women in the media (e.g. King, 2007), and the portrayal of Muslim people and Islamic countries in the American media (e.g. Ali, 2012; McCafferty, 2005; Shabir, Ali, and Iqbal, 2011; Ahmed and Munawar, 2015). As a point of clarification, it should be noted that there is a lack of studies that focus on the portrayal of a certain Arabian Gulf country in the press of other Arabian Gulf countries. Nevertheless, there are several opinion articles that are published in both the Arabic and the English languages that address the issue of the portrayal of the State of Qatar during the Gulf crisis of 2017. In this regard, this lack of academic studies on the issue of 'Qatar's portrayal in the media' is due to the fact that the Gulf Crisis of 2017–2018 is new of its kind, and perhaps some issues need to have more time to be observed in order for them to be studied and analyzed. In fact, one may say that it is unusual for the Arabian Gulf to witness such a political dispute that has reached a level of an abdication of the prevailing morals of Arabian Gulf society, and that was clear in the media coverage during the Gulf Crisis of 2017. In this regard, Cornish (2008) argues that the "media has a moral imperative to provide unbiased information" (Cornish, 2008, p.40). However, the newspapers in the Gulf blockading countries were not following media ethics, as they tend to unleash outflowing insults and publish rumors against the State of Qatar and its ruler. In this regard, one may add that the influence of the media can be used to

create some changes in the community, either in a positive way or in a negative way. Here is where the risk probably exists, because the media is usually described as a ‘double-edged sword’, and the nature of the agenda that is given to the media can decide what – and how – the outcomes may look like.

Additionally, according to Jackall (1995), the use of the media constitutes a political pressure tool that has been used by some states throughout history, especially during political conflicts such as the First and Second World Wars and the Cold War, and that has happened when some of these countries that were involved in the wars used the power of the media against their enemies by implementing certain systematic agendas or ‘propaganda’ in order to obtain particular political goals (Jackall, 1995; Coxall, 2013). Moreover, in his study ‘Building Consensus: The News Media's Agenda-Setting Roles’, McCombs (1997) argues that “... whatever the media do, they have an effect on the community they serve ...” (McCombs, 1997, p.438).

From another perspective, Shaw (1979) argues in his study that “people have the ability to decide their viewpoint of a new story; however, the way in which the media report a story can influence the audience whether the people are aware of it or not” (Shaw, 1979, p.97). Adding to Shaw’s statement, one may say that the influence of the media can – sometimes – be manipulated by states in a direct or indirect way, with the goal of serving the states’ interests. Therefore, there is a consciousness among political leaders all over the world about the power and influence of the media that makes the media an indispensable tool that can be used in different situations, such as in political conflicts and crises.

Example of media portrayal

According to the *Longman Dictionary of American English* (2004), the meaning of ‘portray’ is “to describe or show someone or something in a particular way according to your opinion of him ...” (p.697). Another definition of the word ‘portrayal’ is “the way someone or something is described or shown in a book, film, play, etc.” (p.697). Based on these definitions, we can understand the methods that were used by the newspapers of the three Gulf blockading countries in order to portray the State of Qatar in a specific way, which they insisted on displaying in their media since the start of the Gulf Crisis in 2017.

It is important to understand the ability of the media to direct the attention of the public to be focused on a certain issue, using the technique of publishing and highlighting different news about the same issue ‘repeatedly’, as the newspapers have repeatedly described and portrayed the State of Qatar and its Emir in different 'negative' ways by repeating words such as ‘immature leader’, ‘terror financier state’, ‘extremist state’, and ‘perfidious’, and by presenting Qatar as a source of threat to Gulf security. Moreover, the negative portrayal has been reflected in the political caricatures and in some graphics inside these three newspapers.

Furthermore, in his study, ‘American Print Media & Muslim World: Portrayal of the U.S. Allies, Enemies and Neutral Muslim Countries in “Newsweek” and “Time” Magazines: A Framing Perspective’, Ali (2012) has focused on the negative media portrayal of Muslim people in the American media. The study explored how twelve Muslim countries were covered and portrayed in two American magazines, *Newsweek* and *Time* during the period 1991 to 2001.

Although Ali’s study is a bit different from the main topic of this research study, and was made under different circumstances, it is addressing and studying the problem from almost the same angle. The study discovered that there are some specific words that were frequently repeated when the two

magazines were talking about Muslim people, such as ‘terrorism’, ‘radicalism’, and ‘extremism’. It is worth mentioning that Ali’s study is looking at the issue of media portrayal from a broader aspect, such as focusing on how the Western media are portraying Muslim people, whereas this research study is dealing with a narrower issue, focused on how an Arab Gulf country is portrayed in the media of other Arab Gulf countries during a specific political crisis, the Gulf Crisis of 2017–2018.

The theoretical framework of the study: The Framing Theory

This research study is theoretically linked with the Framing Theory. The reason of choosing Framing Theory is to give an oriented lens for the topic of this research study, and to analyze the areas where the techniques of this theory have been applied to the three selected Arabic-language newspapers of the Gulf blockading countries. In addition, the Framing Theory is well known for its use in media effects and, more importantly, its use for political influence (Ciaglia, 2013; Latiff, Rahman, Rouyan, & Rashid, 2016).

In this regard, it is useful to define the Framing Theory in order to clarify its influential roles in establishing political views and distributing messages that have certain purposes. Identifying this theory can help in creating a wider view of the different attitudes that are practiced by the media during political crises. More specifically, the Framing Theory is chosen as a theoretical framework to understand how the media of the Gulf blockading countries function, and how they were exploited as a political propaganda tool. Ogundola's study (2013) discusses one of the ideas provided by Reese (2007) regarding the main intents that lay behind the framing, saying that "... communicators strategically use framing as a tool to convey their intentions in order to achieve some desired political end" (Ogundola, 2013, p.11).

Reese (2007) has provided a general definition for the 'frames', saying that the "frames are organizing principles that are socially shared and persistent over time, that work symbolically to meaningfully structure the social world" (Reese, 2007, p.11).

In addition, according to Entman (2004), the framing can be defined as "selecting and highlighting some facets of events or issues and making connections among them so as to promote a particular interpretation, evaluation, and/or solution" (Entman, 2004, p.5). Additionally, according to Graber (1988), it is possible for journalists to construct a reality for the audiences by choosing the content

and framing it; this can particularly happen when the story deals with an uncommon issue and there is no way to examine its reliability (Graber, 1988). Besides, according to Scheufele (1999), the media frames can be described as an organizing storyline that sends meanings to the unfolding events (Scheufele, 1999).

According to Scheufele and Tewksbury (2009), the frames have the ability to make the audience think of a certain issue in a specific way. The writers provide a simple example for the word ‘frame’, saying that artists usually add frames to their paintings in order to allow people to see their work in a particular way, and that it is the same process that journalists “often subconsciously” are following when they describe political situations (Scheufele & Tewksbury, 2009, p.17). In addition to this argument, Bryant, Thompson, and Finklea (2012) argue that the way the news is presented can affect people’s perception of certain issues. Moreover, they argue that:

the mass media have the power to set our issue agendas, or tell us what to think about, and they also have the power, through the way they put together stories with words and images, to frame the information in such a way that can actually affect the way we think.

(Bryant, et al., 2012, p.100)

In this regard, there is a big responsibility that lies on the media, as they have the ability to either follow the principles of the media in covering the news, or they may manipulate the way they cover and produce the news to audiences, especially during political conflicts, when they become biased to one side without allowing the other sides to show their views. According to Obad (2003), framing is one of the crucial elements of news coverage. Obad adds that framing has the ability to influence the perspective of viewers regarding a specific issue in a way that can create either a positive or a negative image, or it can create a specific opinion on certain issues (Obad, 2003).

Freyenberger (2013) argues that "... media framing can potentially have an effect on any issue that is portrayed in the media ...” (Freyenberger, 2013, p.14). In this regard, one may add that journalists’ practices are mainly dependent on the type of agenda that they have to follow. For example, when the purpose of the agenda is to create a negative image in people’s minds about a certain nation, then the media will apply a systematic method or ‘frame’ in order to distort the image of others, and this is usually done on the basis of a certain plan that has a political target. That practice was observed in the press of the three Gulf blockading states (KSA, UAE, and Bahrain) from the start of the Gulf Crisis in 2017, when their media provided a negative portrayal of the State of Qatar.

In other words, one may say that the media, in general, have the ability to create the priority of an issue by highlighting it repeatedly, and the next step comes with the ‘type’ of the frame that the media uses to present a certain issue. The media may present or cover an issue in a positive way or a negative way, and in both cases, these are practiced for specific purposes. For example, when the media in the Gulf blockading countries choose the case of the State of Qatar to take up a wide amount of their everyday coverage, that can easily attract the attention of audiences. What comes next is the role of the media when it takes another stage, as it starts to put the State of Qatar in specific frames, such as ‘the state that finances terrorism’, which creates a negative portrayal of the country, and can affect the way people perceive any news about the State of Qatar in the future. In this regard, according to Scheufele and Tewksbury (2006), the framing "... is based on the assumption that how an issue is characterized in news reports can have an influence on how it is understood by audiences ...” (Scheufele & Tewksbury, 2006, p.11). Moreover, the process that the media has followed during the Gulf Crisis in 2017 may be defined as a political purpose that needs to produce a distorted portrayal of the State of Qatar in order to justify the decision of cutting relations with the country.

Brunken (2006) has discussed ‘tone’ as part of the Framing Theory, and also the Agenda-Setting Theory, saying that the media can affect the way the audience may think about certain issues. Brunken believes that ‘tone’ is used by the media as one of the agenda-setting elements, when print media use a negative or a positive tone to cover certain news to reach a specific target (Brunken, 2006). In addition, according to McCombs and Zhu (1995), framing has become the second measurement of agenda-setting research. McCombs believes that through the use of agenda-setting, the media can inform people ‘what to think about’, while the media can tell people through framing ‘how to think about it’ (McCombs & Zhu, 1995).

By referring to ‘how to think about it’, one may say that the media of the Gulf blockading countries have devoted massive efforts to changing the image (the portrayal) of the State of Qatar since the start of the Gulf Crisis in 2017. In other words, they are changing the way people think about Qatar, and that can happen by surrounding the country with specific – negative – frames.

According to Freyenberger (2013), Framing Theory is concerned with the presentation of the issues, while the Agenda-Setting Theory concerns making the issue well known, or ‘salience’. Freyenberger argues that “... when studying the media, framing is an important variable to consider and along with framing research, the agenda-setting theory of communication research should also be acknowledged” (Freyenberger, 2013, p.16). He elaborates that agenda-setting offers the information that can help people to have a good understanding of how people might be portrayed – in others minds – only by the journalists’ systematic practices (Freyenberger, 2013).

On the other hand, there are some scholars who believe that there is no link between the media Framing Theory and the Agenda-Setting Theory. For example, Pan and Kosicki (1993) stated that framing should not be presented as an extension of the Agenda-Setting Theory because framing starts from a clear intellectual perception, unlike the Agenda-Setting Theory (Pan & Kosicki, 1993).

To support these statements, Scheufele (2000) argues that “framing influences how audiences think about issues, not by making the issue more salient, but by invoking interpretive schemas that influence the interpretation of incoming information” (Scheufele, 2000, p.1,530). In her study of the focus on the images of ‘Muslim Women in International Magazines: A Case of *Time* and *Newsweek* (1979–2002)’, Rahman (2007) argues that “it is generally assumed that media texts do not ‘mirror’ realities as they are sometimes believed; they constitute versions of reality in ways which depend on the ideological disposition, social positions, interest and objectives of those who produce them” (Rahman, 2007, p.1). Ahmed and Munawar (2015) believe that media researchers are mostly using the media Framing Theory in order to understand texts and media messages. One may add that the ‘understanding’ that media researchers need is how the media texts are technically framed in a way that can build a specific portrayal of a certain nation and, most of the time, the texts are provided with some images that emphasize the general idea that the media want to create about the main target.

In their study, D’Angelo and Kuypers (2010) argue that framing research focuses on how the issues advocates, the stakeholders, and the politicians are using the journalists to convey their issues and meanings. D’Angelo and Kuypers explain the dual meaning that the word ‘use’ could have, saying that the journalists can be used as a source of information, and as a manipulation tool for information distribution. Besides, the writers think that the job of the news media when covering political issues is not only to provide facts, but also to create certain frames that can tell people how to perceive the policy controversies (D’Angelo and Kuypers, 2010). In this regard, one may say that this example has been seen since the start of the Gulf Crisis in 2017, where the journalists in the Gulf blockading countries were used as a tool to highlight the issues that were most important to the politicians, and they have been used as a channel of manipulation, as most of the news published against the State of Qatar was based on the fabricated statements attributed to Sheikh Tamim, the Emir of Qatar.

The news media of the Gulf blockading countries have placed – either directly or indirectly – the State of Qatar in a particular frame that they have created in order to reach a political target that they have probably planned – framing Qatar as the ‘funder of terrorism’. Based on what has been discussed above, the Framing Theory is a process that consists of the creation of some specific frames, which appear mostly as a negative image or ‘portrayal’ of particular individuals or countries, whether during political crises or in normal cases.

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to introduce a comprehensive explanation of the research style used for this study, and to explain the empirical techniques that have been applied for this research study. The chapter is divided into four sections. In the first, there is a brief interpretation of the quantitative content analysis method, which has been chosen for this research study. The next section is about the duration of the study and the milestones, which represent some of the prominent events that happened during the first five months of the Gulf Crisis of 2017–2018. In addition, this chapter explains the process by which the sampling procedure was carried out. Finally, it provides brief information about the research approach of this study and the type of its sources.

Quantitative content analysis

Shuttleworth (2008) has described the general importance of research, saying that it is a systematical or “methodical” study that is meant to answer certain questions or provide some hypothesis. Content analysis research design is one of the approaches that has been widely used in the academic fields that focus on examining the political messages in all types of media platforms (Graber and Smith, 2005; Neuendorf and Kumar, 2002). In addition, the content analysis approach is used extensively for studying media portrayals (Metag, 2016).

According to Neuendorf and Kumar (2002), “content analysis has been defined as the systematic, objective, quantitative analysis of message characteristics” (Neuendorf & Kumar, 2002, p.1). Riff, Lacy, and Fico (2014) have defined quantitative content analysis as “... the systematic and replicable examination of symbols of communication which have been assigned numeric values according to valid measurement rules ...” (Riff, et al., 2014, p.19). Moreover, according to He (2010), the

quantitative content analysis method “does not explore the internal meanings and relationships between texts” (He, 2010, p.84). He adds that this method is used for counting the frequency of the materials – which can be some of the newspapers’ contents – without analyzing the inner meanings and deep inferences of these contents (He, 2010). Jong and Van der Voordt (2002) have pointed out some of the characteristics of the quantitative approach, such as the feature of providing a systematic data analysis by using software such as SPSS and Microsoft Excel. The quantitative method has a high level of objectivity (Jong and Van der Voordt, 2002). Similarly, according to Zegeye, Worku, Tefera, Getu, and Sileshi (2009), the definition of the quantitative method is “... the systematic and scientific investigation of quantitative properties and phenomena and their relationships ... this approach typically concentrates on measuring or counting and involves collecting and analyzing numerical data and applying statistical tests” (Zegeye, et al., 2009, pp.36–37). Accordingly, this research study has adopted a quantitative content analysis approach in order to provide systematic and numbered data that show the amount of the news published about the State of Qatar in the three selected Arabic-language newspapers from the Gulf blockading countries during the time specified in this study from the Gulf Crisis 2017–2018: *Al-Ittihad* from UAE, *Al-Watan* from Bahrain, and *Al-Jazirah* from KSA.

The duration of the study and the milestones

As mentioned earlier, this analytical study aimed to investigate the portrayal of the State of Qatar in the newspapers of the Gulf blockading countries (KSA, UAE, Bahrain). In order to achieve this, some of the most prominent events that occurred during the time specified by this research study (24 May to 21 September 2017) have been selected. For the sake of this research study, there are six events that have been chosen from the Gulf Crisis 2017, because they are considered to be key milestones in the crisis. They selected events are:

Table 2

The selected milestones

The date	The event
25 May 2017	The day following the hacking of the Qatari News Agency website.
7 June 2017	The arrival of the Turkish army in the State of Qatar.
5 July 2017	After the Cairo meeting that discussed the Qatari reply to the 13-points demands.
21 July 2017	The first speech of Sheik Tamim bin Hamad Al-Thani during the crisis.
25 August 2017	The issue of Al-Hajj (Pilgrimage).
19 September 2017	The second speech of Sheik Tamim bin Hamad Al-Thani.

Sampling procedures

The researcher collected the data by selecting three daily newspapers from KSA, UAE, and Bahrain, which are written in the Arabic language. The daily newspapers that were selected are *Al-Ittihad* newspaper from the UAE, *Al-Jazirah* newspaper from KSA, and *Al-Watan* newspaper from Bahrain.

To elaborate, it is worth clarifying that the term ‘news stories’ in this research study includes political news, economic news, social news, opinion articles, interviews, graphics and political caricatures, and so on – all that collected material has been treated as the 'sample' of this research study.

The data for this research study were collected by choosing all the relevant news stories, the opinion articles, political caricatures, and so on that were published in the newspapers during the specified milestones. In addition, the collection of the data has included all of the news stories that were published in the newspapers one day before each of the specified milestones, and all of the news stories that were published for two days after each of the specified milestones. In this way, the researcher has chosen 24 pieces from the newspaper from each country, leading to a total number 72 pieces. Furthermore, as this study was adopting a quantitative content analysis method, every news item related to the Gulf Crisis of 2017–2018 was counted, and the total number of all the analyzed news items was 996, that is, all the news stories related to the State of Qatar during the study time.

The following table shows in detail all the selected days within the specified time for this research study, from 24 May 2017 to 21 September 2017, and it presents the six milestones in bold:

Table 3

The selected days for the study

<i>Al-Jazirah</i> newspaper (KSA)	<i>Al-Ittihad</i> newspaper (UAE)	<i>Al-Watan</i> newspaper (Bahrain)
24 May 2017	24 May 2017	24 May 2017
25 May 2017	25 May 2017	25 May 2017
26 May 2017	26 May 2017	26 May 2017
27 May 2017	27 May 2017	27 May 2017
6 June 2017	6 June 2017	6 June 2017
7 June 2017	7 June 2017	7 June 2017
8 June 2017	8 June 2017	8 June 2017
9 June 2017	9 June 2017	9 June 2017
4 July 2017	4 July 2017	4 July 2017
5 July 2017	5 July 2017	5 July 2017
6 July 2017	6 July 2017	6 July 2017
7 July 2017	7 July 2017	7 July 2017
20 July 2017	20 July 2017	20 July 2017
21 July 2017	21 July 2017	21 July 2017
22 July 2017	22 July 2017	22 July 2017
23 July 2017	23 July 2017	23 July 2017
24 August 2017	24 August 2017	24 August 2017
25 August 2017	25 August 2017	25 August 2017
26 August 2017	26 August 2017	26 August 2017
27 August 2017	27 August 2017	27 August 2017
18 September 2017	18 September 2017	18 September 2017
19 September 2017	19 September 2017	19 September 2017
20 September 2017	20 September 2017	20 September 2017
21 September 2017	21 September 2017	21 September 2017

It is worth mentioning that the researcher has reached all three newspapers: (*Al-Ittihad*, *Al-Jazirah*, and *Al-Watan*) via their formal websites, knowing that there is both an online archive and a PDF version of each newspaper. The PDF versions contain more details than the materials on the website, so this research study has depended on the PDF versions of each newspaper, as these provide the ability for the viewer to reach all previous data at any time. The researcher accessed each news item by writing the specified date in the Archive box on each website. All the required news items were printed out in A4 form. The main focus for this research study was to determine the main characteristics of the portrayal of the state of Qatar in the newspapers of the Gulf blockading countries during the first five months of the Gulf Crisis of 2017, and this was accomplished by considering the frequent language used in all the news items that mentioned the State of Qatar, and how it was symbolized in the political caricatures. The location of the collected news items was different in each newspaper; some of the news items were located on the front pages, while some of them were located on the inner pages.

However, most of the front-page news had a sequel in the inner pages of each newspaper. The researcher used an HP laptop ENVY i5 to collect the data from the websites of the three selected newspapers, and an HP printer DeskJet Ink Advantage 4535 was used to print out the data. All of the data were manually collected and counted, and the researcher – with the support of two research assistants – used Microsoft Office Excel and Microsoft Word in order to complete the data input process. These two programs were used to create a number of tables, pie charts, and bar charts. Knowing that there was no software available that could be used to count and analyze the Arabic-language data, all the collected data was counted manually.

The researcher specified two main questions, and some sub-units that helped in the progress of analyzing the collected data. The two major questions were: ‘What was said about the State of Qatar

during the Gulf Crisis of 2017–2018’ and ‘How it was said’. Examples of the sub-units include: the tone in which the name of the State of Qatar was mentioned in the three newspapers, and whether the tone was positive, negative, or neutral. By ‘negative mentions’, we mean words that criticize and describe the State of Qatar in a negative way, or when the newspapers present the State of Qatar in a way that makes it appear as a ‘threat’ to the security of the Gulf region. For instance, there was a headline that says “Qatar, the bad neighbor” (e.g. 7/6/2017, *Al-Ittihad*), which was classified as negative.

In addition, the units were prepared to look at the frequency of each mention of, for example, “Qatar funds terrorism”, “Qatar cooperates with Israel”, “Qatar supports ISIS”, or “Qatar supports Al-Qaeda”. One of the sub-units is about the location of the news that covers the State of Qatar, or the page prominence (front page, inner page, last page). Chapter 4 provides more information, with extensive detail about the main categories and the sub-units that have been specified to help answer the main question of this research study.

Research approach and type of source

It is known that most descriptive research is focused on explaining the reality – as it is – based on an organized and systematic restricted method. In addition, neutrality and objectivity are two of the advantages of descriptive research (Jong and Van der Voordt, 2002). Therefore, this study has adopted a descriptive approach in order to provide systematic results. The secondary data of this research study were obtained from three Arabic-language newspapers of the Gulf blockading countries: *Al-Ittihad* newspaper from the UAE, *Al-Jazirah* newspaper from KSA, and *Al-Watan* newspaper from Bahrain. This type of data (the secondary), is usually available for free and can easily be obtained by any researcher, because it is usually archived, as in the case of the newspapers (Trzesniewski, Donnellan, and Lucas, 2011).

CHAPTER 4: RESEARCH FINDINGS

As this research study is adopting a quantitative content analysis method, the data are presented in different forms, such as frequency tables, pie charts and bar charts, which were created using Microsoft Excel and Microsoft Word. The following frequency tables were used in order to provide some answers to the main research question: what are the main characteristics of the portrayal of the State of Qatar in the newspapers of the three Gulf blockading countries (KSA, UAE, and Bahrain) during the Gulf Crisis of 2017–2018? The data show the type of language used and the recurrent themes that were used to describe the State of Qatar. As mentioned, 72 issues of newspapers were collected, with 24 issues of the newspaper from each of the three Gulf blockading counties (see Table 4).

Table 4

The selected issues from each newspaper

Number of selected issues from each newspaper of each country		
<i>Al-Ittihad</i> newspaper (UAE)	<i>Al-Jazirah</i> newspaper (KSA)	<i>Al-Watan</i> newspaper (Bahrain)
24	24	24
Total = 72		

The process of sampling produced a total of 996 news stories collected (including a variety of journalistic forms, such as political news, opinion articles, interviews, and political caricatures) from each of the three newspapers, as shown in Table 5.

Table 5

The number of news stories in each newspaper

The number of news stories in <i>Al-Ittihad</i> newspaper (UAE)	[n= 524]
The number of news stories in <i>Al-Watan</i> newspaper (Bahrain)	[n= 257]
The number of news stories in <i>Al-Jazirah</i> newspaper (KSA)	[n= 215]

Total = 996

Note: Figure 1 shows that Al-Ittihad newspaper from UAE played the leading role in terms of the number of news stories published during the time specified in this study.

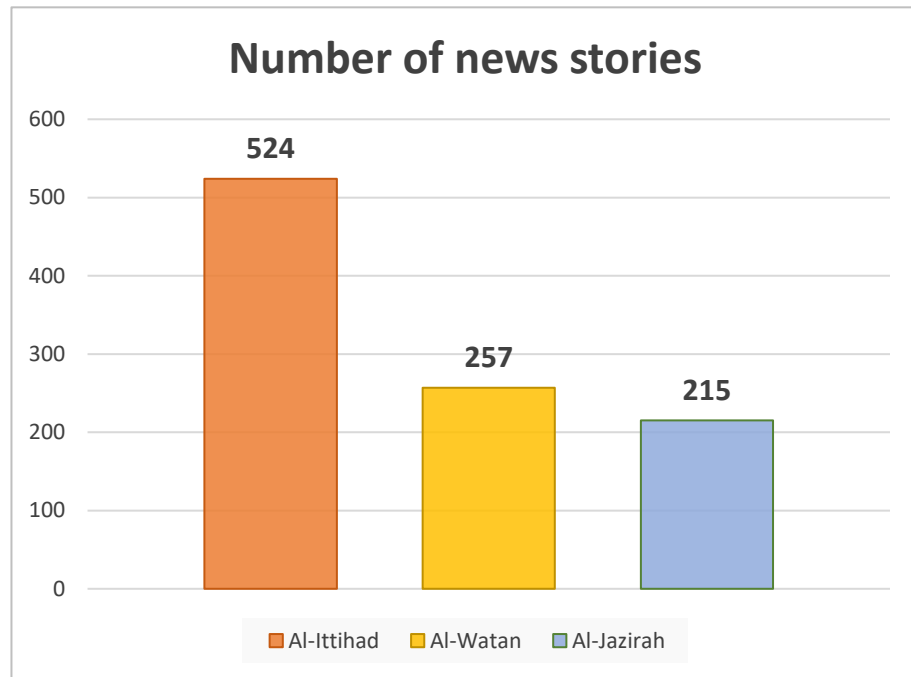


Figure 1: Number of news stories selected from each newspaper

The researcher used the following forms to analyse the data and to present the most important news stories that were published in the newspapers of the three Gulf blockading countries. It is worth mentioning that the researcher has adopted some of the ideas related to the forms of content analysis from previous research studies (for example, Al-Belushi, 2014; Khashoot, 2016; Sahqallha, 2017). Accordingly, in order to answer the research questions of this study, the researcher created two main categories with different sub-categories, or units, to analyse the news stories. The first category is: ‘What was said about the State of Qatar during the Gulf Crisis in 2017’; the second category is: ‘How it was said’.

Under the first category of ‘What was said about the State of Qatar’, the researcher has included the following units:

Table 6

First list of units under "What was said about Qatar"

The type of topic	The months that had the highest number of publications about Qatar	The source of the news stories
Political news	Between 24 May 2017 and 21 September 2017	International news agencies Local news agencies The journalist <i>Al-Itihad</i> (UAE) <i>Al Jazirah</i> (KSA) <i>Al-Watan</i> (Bahrain) Multiple sources Without source
Economic news		
Sport news		
Social news		
Religious news		

Note: the following units also belong to the first category, ‘What was said about the State of Qatar’:

Table 7

Second list of units under "What was said about Qatar"

The recurrent (negative descriptions) of the State of Qatar
“Financing terrorism”
“Threat to stability”
“Supports ISIS”
“Evasive country”
“Cooperates with Israel”
“Supports Al-Qaeda”
“Isolating Qatar”
“Serving Iran”
“Collapse of economy”
“Treacherous country”
“Supports Houthis”

Under the second category, ‘How it was said’, the researcher included the following units:

Table 8

List of units under "How it was said"

The journalistic genres	The location of the news stories	The tone in which Qatar was mentioned	The shape of the news stories
News reports	Front page	Positive	Vertical shape
Opinion articles	Inner page	Negative	Horizontal shape
Political caricatures	Last page	Neutral	News with images
Graphics			News without images
Interviews			

Table 9

The recurrent portrayals in the political caricatures

The recurrent portrayals within the political caricatures
Financing terrorism
Destruction of Gulf entity
Underestimating Qatar
Cooperation with Iran

News stories and news sources

The purpose of this research study is to investigate the main characteristics of the portrayal of the State of Qatar in the media during the Gulf Crisis of 2017–2018, specifically in the newspapers of three of the Gulf blockading countries: *Al-Ittihad* (UAE), *Al-Watan* (Bahrain), and *Al-Jazirah* (KSA). This section provides a descriptive and systematic analysis of the collected data, which are represented in tables and graphics to show frequencies and percentages. This section also provides some clustered columns, bar charts, and pie charts for the data. These tables and graphics have helped in answering the main research question, including the sub-questions. In this regard, as mentioned earlier, this research study has used two main categories, and some sub-categories to answer the main

research question. Under the first main category, ‘What was said about the State of Qatar’, the results of the first column of the sub-categories were as follows:

Table 10

News stories according to each news category

Categories of the news stories	Name of the newspaper					
	<i>Al-Ittihad</i> (UAE)		<i>Al-Watan</i> (Bahrain)		<i>Al-Jazirah</i> (KSA)	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Political news	358	68.3	206	80.2	185	86.0
Economic news	103	19.5	45	17.5	22	10.2
Sports news	45	8.5	2	0.8	5	2.3
Social news	9	1.7	2	0.8	2	0.9
Religious news	9	1.7	2	0.8	1	0.5
Total =	524	100%	257	100%	215	100%

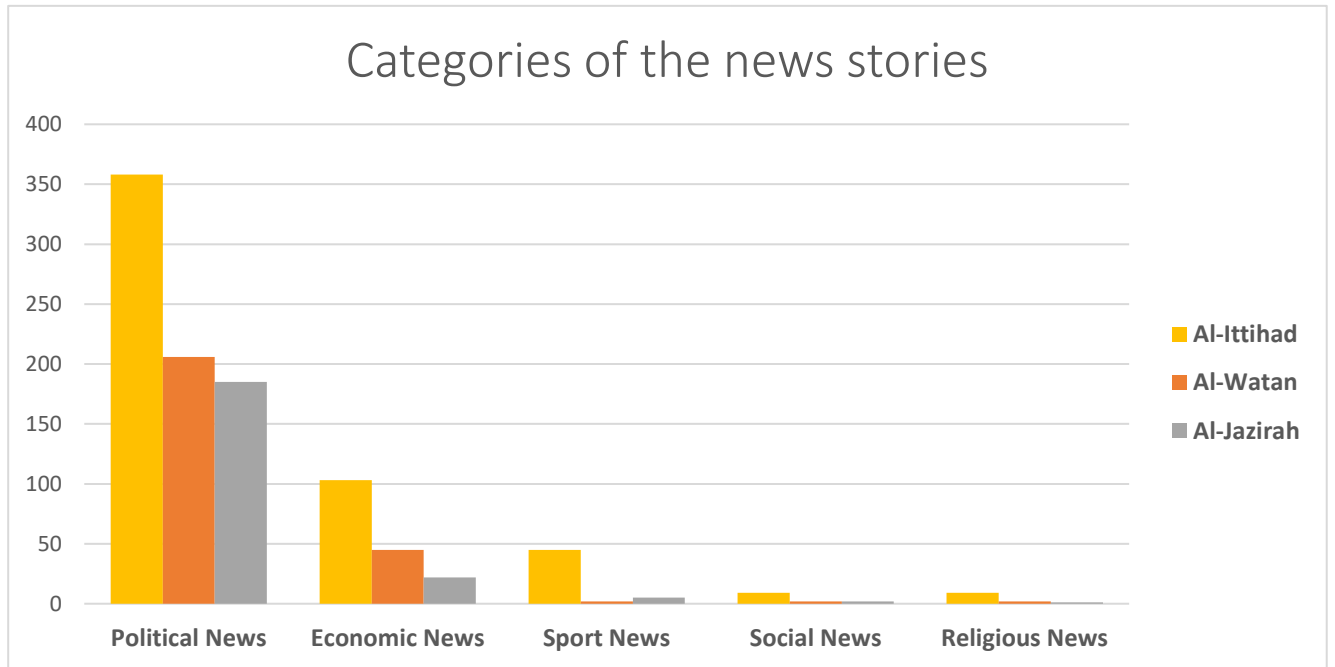


Figure 2: News stories according to each news category

The first sub-category, the type of topic in Table 10, includes five units: Political news, Economic news, Sports news, Social news and Religious news. The results show that the coverage of ‘Political news’ has the highest percentage of the type of topics that were used to cover the events of the Gulf Crisis in the three newspapers. The percentage of ‘Political news’ coverage in *Al-Ittihad* newspaper (UAE) was 68.3%. It was 80.2% in *Al-Watan* newspaper (Bahrain), and 86.0% in *Al-Jazirah* newspaper (KSA).

The results show that the coverage of ‘Economic news’ came as the second most frequent type of news in the three newspapers. In *Al-Ittihad* newspaper, the percentage of economic news was 19.5%. In *Al-Watan* newspaper, it was 17.5%, while the percentage of economic news coverage in *Al-Jazirah* newspaper was 10.2%.

According to the results, ‘Sports news’, ‘Social news’ and ‘Religious news’ have taken lower percentages. In *Al-Ittihad* newspaper, the percentage of sports news was 8.5%, in *Al-Jazirah* newspaper, the percentage of sports news was 2.3%, while, in *Al-Watan* newspaper, sports news coverage was only 0.8%. The results show that the lowest percentages went to social news and religious news. In *Al-Ittihad* newspaper, these two types of news coverage had the same percentage, 1.7%. In *Al-Watan* newspaper, as well, these two types of news had the same percentage, 2%. In *Al-Jazirah* newspaper, the coverage of sports news was 0.9%, and the percentage of religious news coverage was 0.5%.

Table11

The months with the highest number of publications

The months of the highest number of publications about the State of Qatar (24 May 2017 to 21 September 2017)			
Month	<i>Al-Ittihad</i> (UAE)	<i>Al-Watan</i> (Bahrain)	<i>Al-Jazirah</i> (KSA)
May	28	0	11
June	188	91	91
July	166	98	80
August	68	36	18
September	74	32	15
Total =	524	257	215

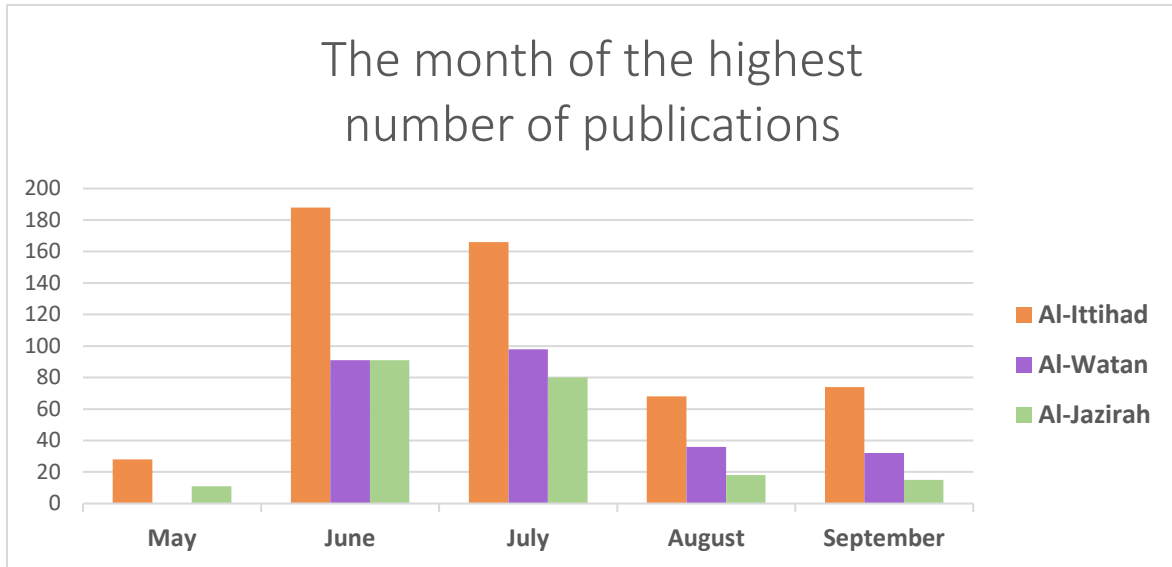


Figure 3: The months with the highest number of publications

In Table 11, which specifies the month with the highest number of publications in each newspaper, the results show that *Al-Ittihad* newspaper had the highest number of publications in June, with 188 news stories about the State of Qatar during that month. The same was true for *Al-Jazirah* newspaper: the month of the highest number of publications was June, with 91 news stories. For *Al-Watan* newspaper, July had the highest number of publications, with 89 news stories.

Table 12

The source of news stories in each newspaper

Source of news stories	Name of newspaper					
	<i>Al-Ittihad</i> (UAE)		<i>Al-Watan</i> (Bahrain)		<i>Al-Jazirah</i> (KSA)	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
International news agencies and local news agencies	203	38.7	125	48.6	44	20.4
The journalist	152	28.7	128	49.8	134	62.0
<i>Al-Ittihad</i> (UAE)	138	26.1	0	0.0	0	0.0
<i>Al Jazirah</i> (KSA)	0	0.0	0	0.0	37	17.1
<i>Al-Watan</i> (Bahrain)	0	0.0	4	1.6	0	0.0
Multiple sources	22	4.2	0	0.0	0	0.0
Without source	9	1.7	0	0.0	0	0.0
Total =	524	100%	257	100%	215	100%

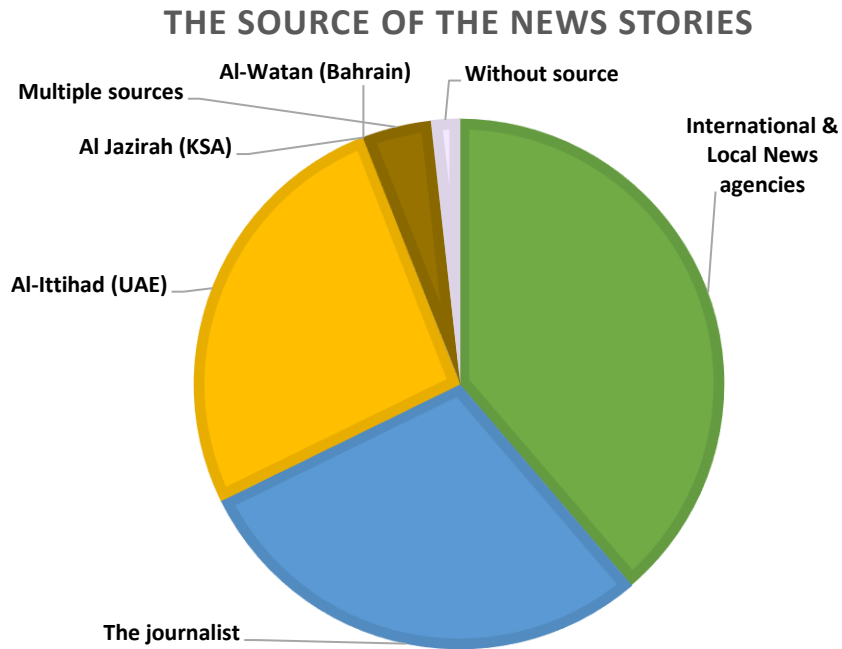


Figure 4: Sources of news stories in the three newspapers

In Table 12, which shows the sources of the news stories in each of the newspapers, the results show that the source of the most news stories published in *Al-Ittihad* newspapers was ‘International and local news agencies’, with 38.7%. The source of the other news was from ‘The journalist’, at 28.7%, while 26.1%, of the news stories were published with ‘*Al-Ittihad* (UAE)’ as the source, and 4.2% of the published news was from ‘Multiple sources’ (1.7% of the published news was ‘without source’).

The results show that the source of the most news stories published in *Al-Watan* newspaper was ‘The journalist’, with 49.8%. The other source of news was ‘International and local news agencies’, at 48.6%. The lowest percentage in term of news sources was ‘*Al-Watan* (Bahrain)’, with only 1.6%.

In *Al-Jazirah* newspaper, the results show that the source of most of the published news was 'The journalist', with 62.0%. The source that came second was 'International and local news agencies', with 20.4%. The lowest percentage in term of news sources was for '*Al-Jazirah* (KSA)', with 17.1%.

Note: In this table, the researcher has specified some of the recurrent descriptions of the State of Qatar that have been used repeatedly in the three newspapers.

Table13

Negative descriptions of Qatar

Negative descriptions against Qatar	Name of the newspaper					
	<i>Al-Ittihad</i> (UAE)		<i>Al-Watan</i> (Bahrain)		<i>Al-Jazirah</i> (KSA)	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
“Financing terrorism”	183	30.70	64	42.9	124	40.39
“Threatens the stability”	60	10.07	17	11.41	39	12.70
“Supports ISIS”	29	4.87	0	0	7	2.28
“Evasive country”	10	1.68	1	0.7	10	3.26
“Cooperates with Israel”	17	2.85	6	4.0	17	5.54
“Supports Al-Qaeda”	36	6.04	1	0.7	10	3.26
“Isolating Qatar”	23	3.86	3	2.0	15	4.89
“Serving Iran”	110	18.46	36	24.16	57	18.57
“Collapse of economy”	83	13.93	16	10.73	13	4.23
“Traacherous country”	6	1.01	3	2.0	6	1.95
“Supports Houthis”	39	6.54	2	1.4	9	2.93
Total =	596	100%	149	100%	307	100%

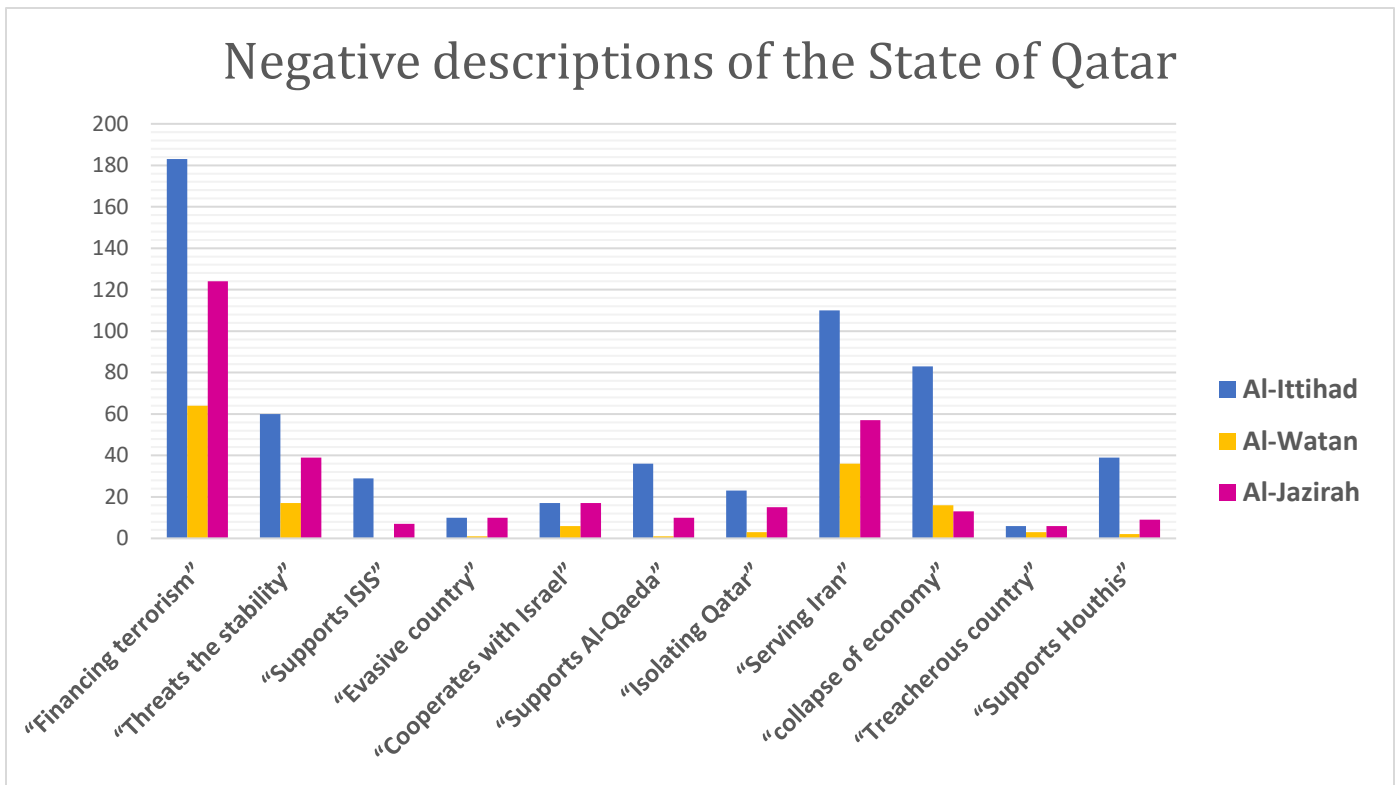


Figure 5: Negative descriptions of Qatar

Table 13 shows the specific negative descriptions of Qatar, and how many times they were repeated in the three newspapers. There were 11 descriptions, as follows: "Financing terrorism", "Threatens the stability", "Supports ISIS", "Evasive country", "Cooperates with Israel", "Supports Al-Qaeda", "Isolating Qatar", "Serving Iran", "Collapse of economy", "Traacherous country", "Supports Houthis".

The results show that the description "Financing terrorism" has the highest percentage. In *Al-Ittihad* newspaper, this description was repeated 183 times, so the percentage was 30.70%. In *Al-Jazirah* newspaper, this description was repeated 124 times, so the percentage was 40.39%. In *Al-Watan* newspaper, this description was repeated 64 times, and the percentage was 42.9%.

The second description, “Threatens the stability”, came next in terms of frequency. The results show that in *Al-Ittihad* newspaper, this description was repeated 60 times, so the percentage was 10.07%. This description was repeated in *Al-Jazirah* newspaper 39 times, and the percentage was 12.70%. In *Al-Watan* newspapers, the description was repeated 17 times, and the percentage was 11.41%.

The results show that the percentage of “Supports ISIS” descriptions was 4.87% in *Al-Ittihad* newspaper, and was 2.28% in *Al-Jazirah* newspaper. It was not mentioned in *Al-Watan* newspaper during the duration of this research study.

According to the results, the percentage of “Evasive country” description in *Al-Ittihad* newspaper was 1.68%, as it was repeated 10 times during the time of this study. In *Al-Jazirah* newspaper, this description was repeated 10 times, and the percentage was 3.26%. In *Al-Watan* newspaper, this description had the lowest percentage, 0.7%, as it was mentioned in the newspaper only once.

It can be seen from the results that the description “Cooperates with Israel” was 2.85% in *Al-Ittihad* newspaper, as it was repeated 17 times. In *Al-Jazirah* newspaper, this description was repeated 10 times, and the percentage was 5.54%. In *Al-Watan* newspaper, this description was repeated only 6 times, and it received the lowest percentage, 4.0%.

Based on the results, the description “Supports Al-Qaeda” was repeated in *Al-Ittihad* newspaper 36 times; it has reached the highest percentage among the newspapers: 6.04%. *Al-Jazirah* newspaper comes next, as this description was repeated 10 times, and the percentage was 3.26%. However, the results show that in *Al-Watan* newspaper, this description was only used once, and the percentage was 0.7%.

According to the results, the description “Isolating Qatar” was repeated 23 times in *Al-Ittihad* newspaper, with a percentage of 3.86%. It was repeated 15 times in *Al-Jazirah* newspaper, with

a percentage of 4.89%. In *Al-Watan* newspaper, this description was repeated only 3 times, with a percentage of 2.0%.

The description “Serving Iran” was repeated in *Al-Ittihad* newspaper 110 times, with a percentage of 18.46%. In *Al-Jazirah* newspaper, this description was repeated 57 times, with a percentage of 18.57%. This description was repeated in *Al-Watan* newspaper 36 times, with a percentage of 24.16%, which is the lowest among the newspapers of this research study.

According to the results, the description “Collapse of an economy” was repeated in *Al-Ittihad* newspaper 83 times, with a percentage of 13.93%. *Al-Watan* newspaper came next, with 16 repetitions of that description; the percentage was 10.73%. In *Al-Jazirah* newspaper, the results show that the description was repeated 13 times, with a total percentage of 4.32%.

The results show that the description “Traacherous country” has been repeated in *Al-Ittihad* newspaper 6 times, with a total percentage of 1.01%. This description was repeated in *Al-Jazirah* newspaper 6 times, with a percentage of 1.95%. In *Al-Watan* newspaper, the description was used 3 times, with a percentage of 2.0%.

According to the results, the description “Supports Houthis” was used in *Al-Ittihad* newspaper 39 times, with a total percentage of 6.54%, which is the highest among the newspapers. This description was repeated in *Al-Jazirah* 9 times, with a percentage of 2.93%. In *Al-Watan* newspaper, this description was only used two times, with a percentage of 1.4%.

For the second main category, ‘How it was said’, the results were as shown in Table 7.

Table 14

The journalistic genres in each newspaper

Journalistic genres	Name of the newspaper					
	<i>Al-Ittihad</i> (UAE)		<i>Al-Watan</i> (Bahrain)		<i>Al-Jazirah</i> (KSA)	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
News reports	475	80.1	204	76.1	90	31.1
Opinion articles	50	8.4	51	19.0	125	43.3
Political caricatures	46	7.8	0	0.0	24	8.3
Graphics	13	2.2	11	4.1	48	16.6
Interviews	4	0.7	2	0.7	1	0.3
Total =	588	100%	268	100%	288	100%

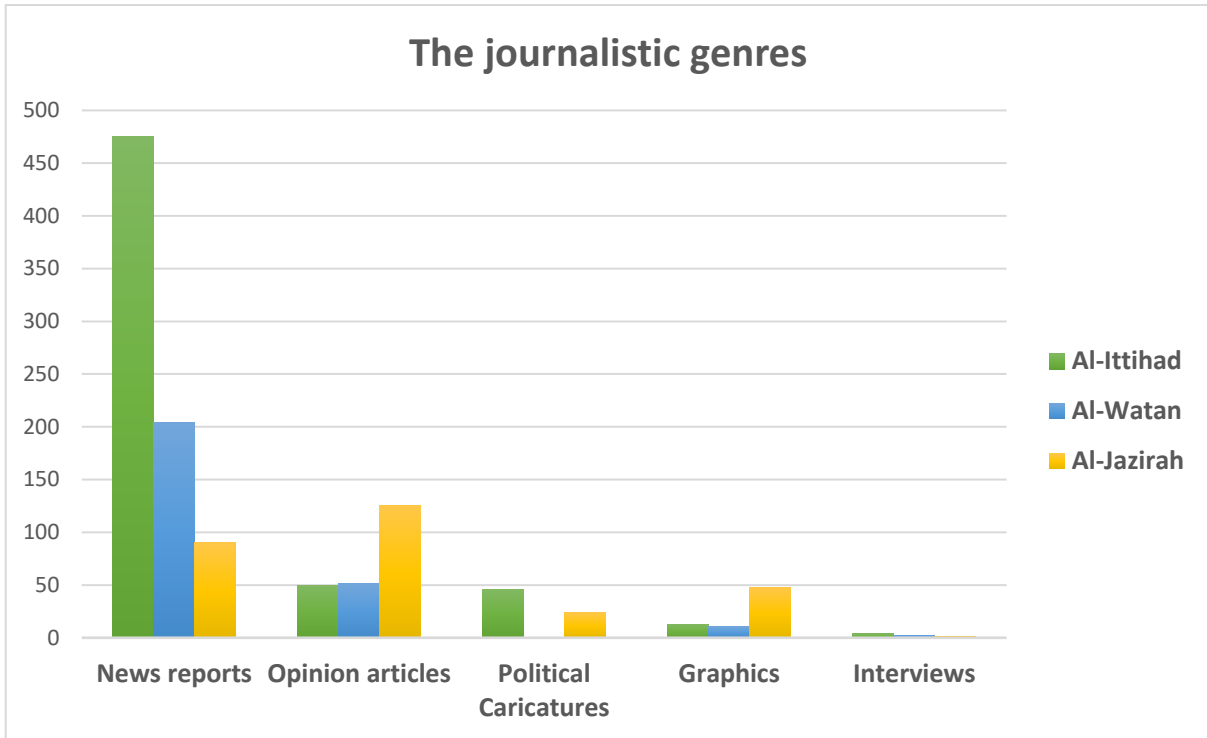


Figure 6: The journalistic genres in each of the three newspapers

Table 14 relates to the most used journalistic genres: “News reports”, “Opinion articles”, “Political caricatures”, Graphics”, and” Interviews”.

The results show that “News reports” was most used by *Al-Ittihad* newspaper, with a percentage of 80.1%. Likewise, *Al-Watan* newspaper used this journalistic type more than the other types, with a percentage of 76.1%. For *Al-Jazirah* newspaper, the use of “News reports” had a percentage of 31.1%.

The results show that “Opinion articles” was used by *Al-Ittihad* newspaper with a percentage of 8.0%. The use of “Opinion articles” in *Al-Watan* newspaper was 19.0%, while the use of this journalistic genre by *Al-Jazirah* newspaper was 43.3%.

Based on the results, the use of “Political caricatures” in *Al-Ittihad* newspaper was the highest percentage – with a total of 46 political caricatures, the percentage was 7.8%. The use of political caricatures in *Al-Jazirah* newspaper was of 8.3%, with 24 political caricatures. There were no political caricatures published in *Al-Watan* newspaper.

For “Graphics”, the results show that *Al-Jazirah* newspaper had the highest percentage, with 16.6%. *Al-Ittihad* newspaper came next, with a total of 2.2%, while *Al-Watan* newspaper had 4.1%.

The use of the “Interview” has the lowest percentages in all three newspapers. In *Al-Ittihad* newspaper, it had a percentage of 0.7%. In *Al-Watan* newspaper, it was also 0.7%. In *Al-Jazirah* newspaper, the use of interviews was only 0.3%.

Table 15

Location of the news stories within each newspaper

Location of the news stories	Name of the newspaper					
	<i>Al-Ittihad</i> (UAE)		<i>Al-Watan</i> (Bahrain)		<i>Al-Jazirah</i> (KSA)	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Front page	26	4.9	27	10.5	29	13.4
Inner page	479	91.4	216	84.0	157	73.0
Last page	19	3.6	14	5.4	29	13.4
Total =	524	100%	257	100%	215	100%

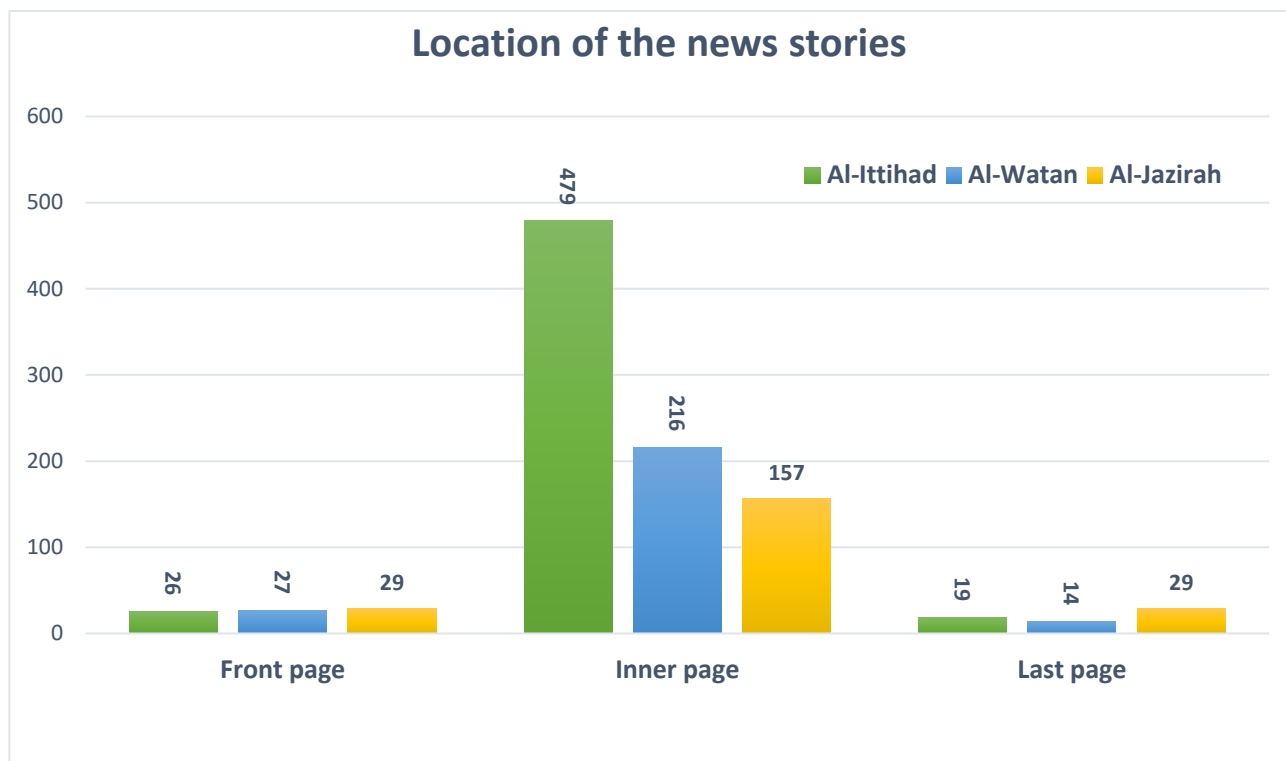


Figure 7: the location of the news stories in each of the three newspapers

Table 15 shows the results that relate to the location of the news stories that were published in the three newspapers: “Front page”, “Inner page”, and “Last page”.

In this regard, the results show that the news that was published on the “Inner pages” has the highest percentage. In *Al-Ittihad* newspaper, the percentage of the news published on the inner pages is 91.4%. In *Al-Watan* newspaper, the percentage of the news published on the inner pages was 84.0%. For *Al-Jazirah* newspaper as well, most of the published news was on the inner pages, with a total percentage of 73.0%.

The second location was the “Front page”, which reached a close percentage for the three newspapers. In *Al-Ittihad* newspaper, the number of published news stories on the front page was 26, that is 4.9%.

In *Al-Watan* newspaper, the total of front-page news stories was 27, or 10.5%. In *Al-Jazirah* newspaper, the total number of front-page news stories was 29, or 13.4%.

Based on the results, the third location, the “Last page” had the lowest percentages in *Al-Ittihad* newspaper and *Al-Watan* newspaper, unlike *Al-Jazirah* newspaper. In *Al-Ittihad* newspaper, the total of the news stories published on the last pages was 3.6%. In *Al-Watan* newspaper, the percentage of news stories published on the last pages was 5.4%. In *Al-Jazirah* newspaper, the number of news stories published on the last pages was higher than the other newspapers, at 13.4%.

Table16

The tone in which the State of Qatar was mentioned in the three newspapers

The tone in which the State of Qatar was mentioned	Name of the newspaper					
	<i>Al-Ittihad</i> (UAE)		<i>Al-Watan</i> (Bahrain)		<i>Al-Jazirah</i> (KSA)	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Positive	5	0.9	2	0.8	0	0.0
Negative	498	95.0	245	95.3	214	99.5
Neutral	21	4.0	10	3.9	1	0.5
Total =	524	100%	257	100%	215	100%

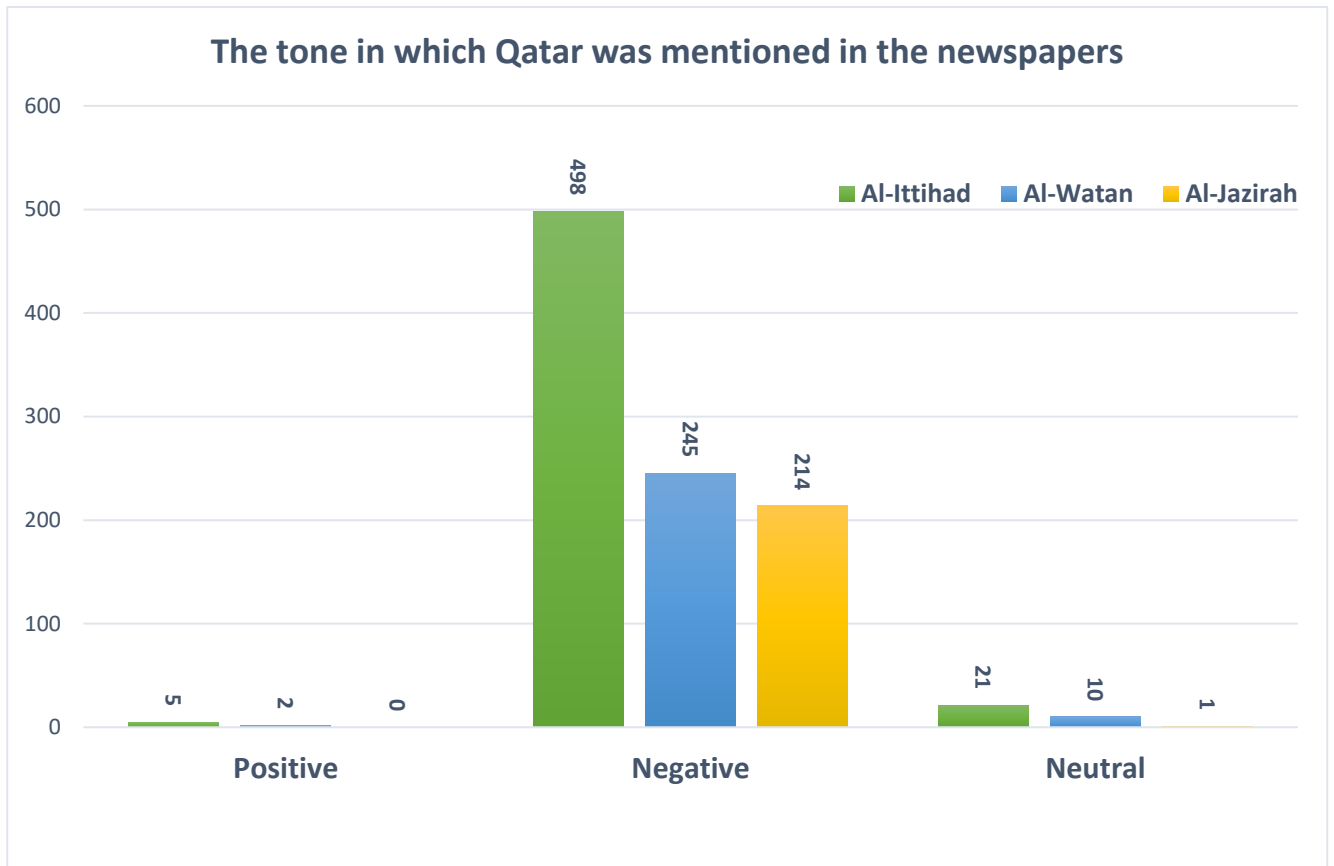


Figure 8: The tone of mentioning Qatar in the three newspapers

Table 16 presents the results that relate to the tone in which the State of Qatar was mentioned in the three newspapers: “Positive”, “Negative”, or “Neutral”.

According to the results, the ‘Negative’ tone related to the type of published news has the highest percentage. In *Al-Ittihad* newspaper, the percentage of news stories with a negative tone was 95.0%. Similarly, in *Al-Watan* newspaper, the percentage of the news with a negative tone was 95.3%, while in *Al-Jazirah* newspaper, the percentage of the news with a negative tone was 99.5%.

Based on the results, the percentage of news with “Neutral tone” in *Al-Ittihad* newspaper was 4.0%. In *Al-Watan* newspaper, the percentage of the news published with a neutral tone was 3.9%. In *Al-Jazirah* newspaper, the percentage of the news with a neutral tone was only 0.5%.

The results show that the news with “Positive tone” has the lowest percentages in all three newspapers. In *Al-Ittihad* newspaper, the percentage of news with positive tone was 0.9%. In *Al-Watan* newspaper, the percentage of news stories with positive tone was 0.8%, while there were no news stories published in *Al-Jazirah* newspaper with a positive tone.

Table 17

The shapes of the news stories in each newspaper

Shape of the news stories	Name of the newspaper					
	<i>Al-Ittihad</i> (UAE)		<i>Al-Watan</i> (Bahrain)		<i>Al-Jazirah</i> (KSA)	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Vertical shape	157	29.7	81	31.5	79	36.6
Horizontal shape	372	70.3	176	68.5	137	63.4
News without images	189	35.7	126	49.0	77	35.6
News with images	340	64.3	131	51.0	139	64.4

Table 17 shows the results related to the shape of the news stories published in the three newspapers: “Vertical Shape”, “Horizontal Shape”, “News with images”, News without images”.

According to the results, the “Horizontal shape” has the highest percentage among the shapes used by the three newspapers. In *Al-Ittihad* newspaper, the percentage of news with horizontal shape was

70.3%. In *Al-Watan* newspaper, the percentage using the horizontal shape was 68.5%. In *Al-Jazirah* newspaper, the percentage of horizontal shape use was 63.4%.

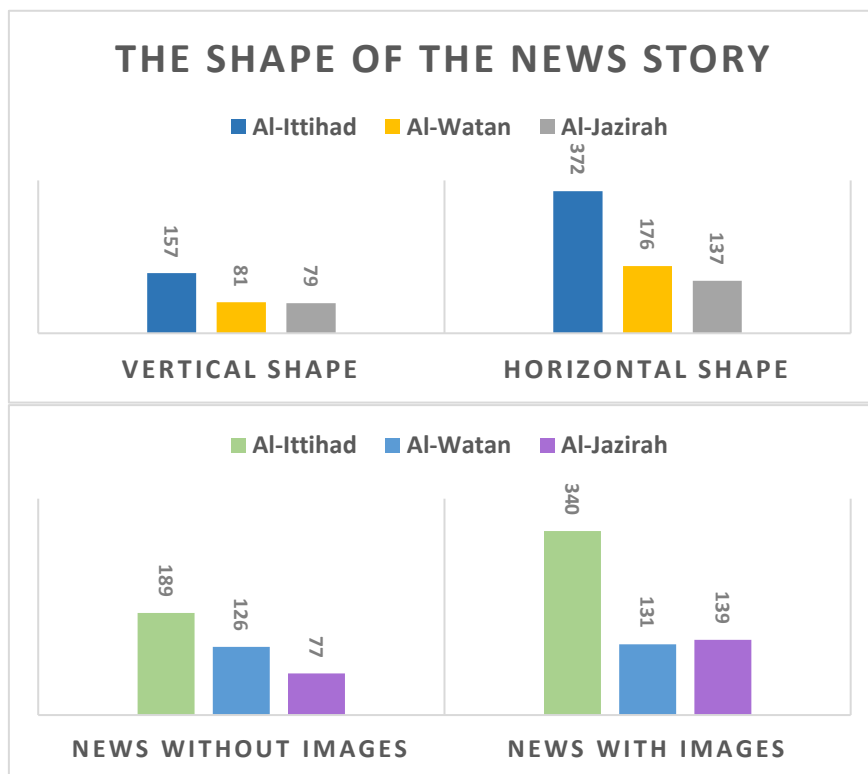


Figure 9: The shape of the news stories in each newspaper

On the other hand, the use of the “Vertical shape” in all the newspapers has the lowest percentages. In *Al-Ittihad* newspaper, the use of vertical news has reached 29.7%. In *Al-Watan* newspaper, the percentage of the news with vertical shape was 31.5%. In *Al-Jazirah* newspaper, the percentage of the news using the vertical shape was 36.6%.

In terms of “News with images” and “News without images”, the results show that the percentage of news published with images was higher than the news without images. The percentage of the news “with

images” in *Al-Ittihad* newspaper was 64.3%, with a frequency of 340. In *Al-Watan* newspaper, the percentage of the news with images was 51.0%. The percentage of news stories that contain images in *Al-Jazirah* newspaper was 64.4%, with a frequency of 139.

According to the results, the percentage of news “without images” that were published in *Al-Ittihad* newspaper was 35.7%, with a frequency of 189. In *Al-Watan* newspaper, the percentage of news stories without images was 49.0%, with a frequency of 126. Lastly, in *Al-Jazirah* newspaper, the percentage of news stories without images was 35.6%, with a frequency of 77.

Analysis of the political caricatures

This section of the study analyses the political caricatures that appear in two of the three selected newspapers: *Al-Ittihad* (UAE) and *Al-Jazirah* (KSA). As shown in Table 18, the researcher has gathered a total of 70 political caricatures – 46 caricatures from *Al-Ittihad* (UAE) and 24 caricatures from *Al-Jazirah* (KSA). The researcher made the decision to analyze the political caricatures because of their symbolic power and their political effects, which they may convey in direct and indirect ways.

Table 18

The number of political caricatures in each newspaper

The number of political caricatures in each newspaper		
<i>Al-Ittihad</i> (UAE)	<i>Al-Watan</i> (Bahrain)	<i>Al-Jazirah</i> (KSA)
46	0	24
Total = 70		

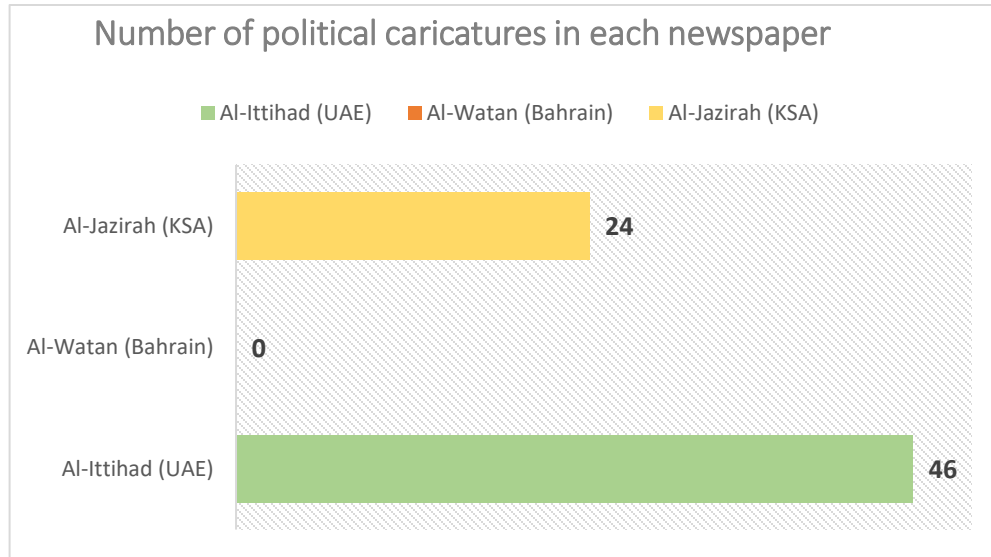


Figure 10: The number of political caricatures in Al-Ittihad and Al-Jazirah newspapers

Table 19

The recurrent portrayals of Qatar in the political caricatures

The portrayals of Qatar in the political caricatures	Name of the newspaper					
	<i>Al-Ittihad</i> (UAE)		<i>Al-Watan</i> (Bahrain)		<i>Al-Jazirah</i> (KSA)	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
“Financing terrorism”	17	36.9%	0	-	7	29.1%
"Destruction of Gulf entity”	4	8.6%	0	-	0	0.0
“Underestimating Qatar”	24	52.1%	0	-	14	58.3%
“Cooperation with Iran”	1	2.1%	0	-	3	12.5%
Total=	46	100%	0	100%	24	100%

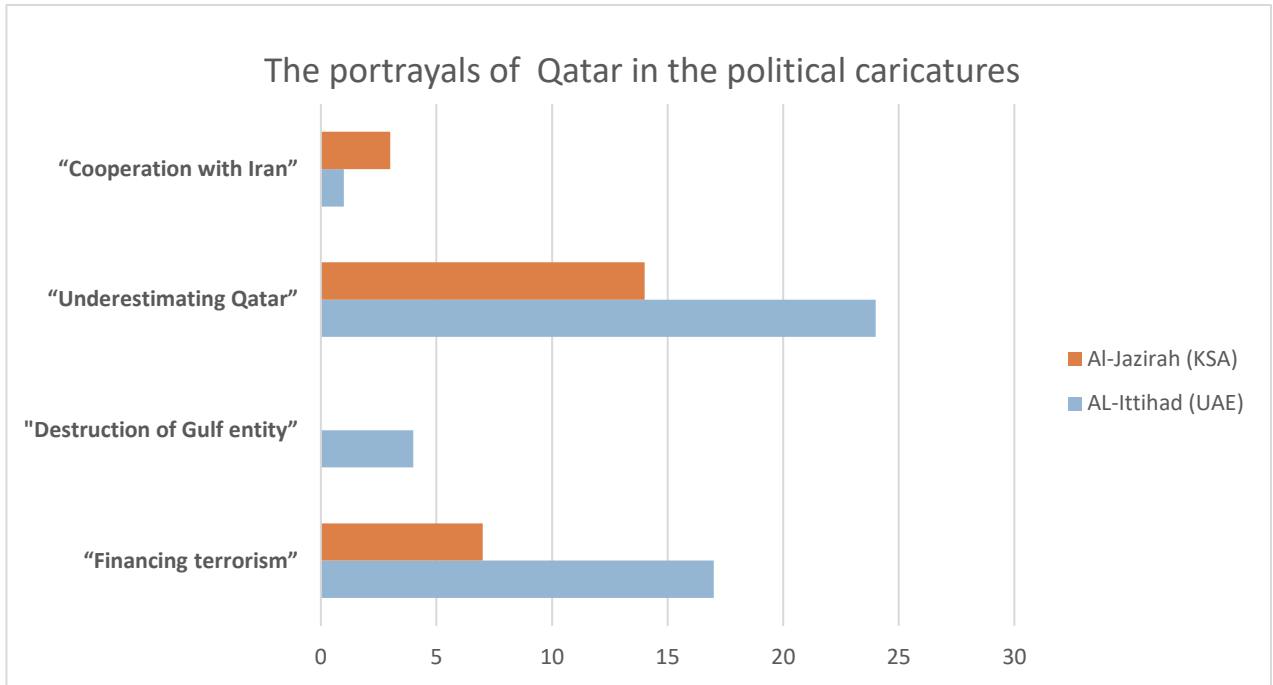


Figure 11: The recurrent portrayal of Qatar in the political caricatures

Table 19 shows the contents of the political caricatures in the newspapers in terms of some specified and recurrent portrayals, such as: “Financing terrorism”, “Destruction of Gulf entity”, “Underestimating Qatar”, and “Cooperation with Iran”.

The results show that the portrayal of “Underestimating Qatar” has the highest percentage inside *Al-Ittihad* (UAE) and *Al-Jazirah* (KSA) newspapers. In *Al-Ittihad* newspaper, this portrayal was repeated 24 times, for a percentage of 52.1%. In *Al-Jazirah* newspaper, the portrayal that focuses on underestimating Qatar, was represented in the political caricatures 14 times, with a percentage of 58.0%.

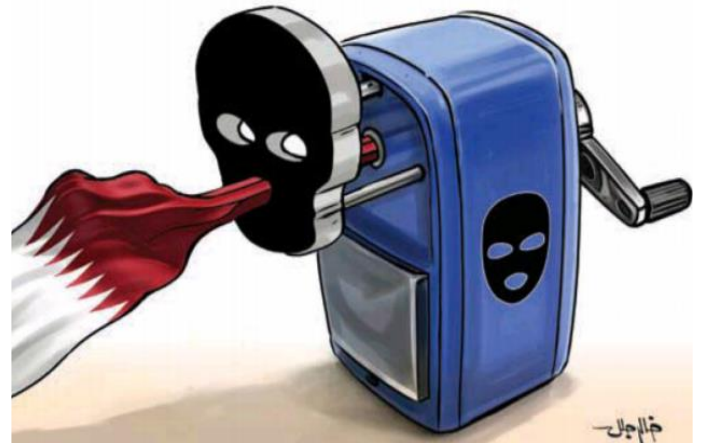
According to the results, the percentage of the “Financing terrorism” portrayal was 36.9% in *Al-Ittihad* newspaper, whereas the percentage of this portrayal in the political caricatures of *Al-Jazirah* newspaper was 29.1%.

In the political caricatures of *Al-Ittihad* newspaper, the percentage of the portrayal of “Destruction of Gulf entity” was 8.6%, as it was repeated 4 times in the newspaper. There was no use of this portrayal in the political caricatures of *Al-Jazirah* newspaper.

According to the results, the percentage of the portrayal of “Cooperation with Iran” in the political caricatures of *Al-Ittihad* newspapers was only 2.1%. In *Al-Jazirah* newspaper, this portrayal was applied three times, for a percentage of 12.5%.



1- A caricature that portrays Qatar as a funder of terrorism, published on 8/6/2017



2- A caricature that portrays Qatar as an engine of terrorism, published on 21/9/2017



3- A caricature that portrays Qatar as a destructor of the GCC entity, published on 20/7/2017



4- A caricature that portrays Qatar as a destructor of the GCC entity, published on 27/5/2017



5- A caricature that underestimates Qatar, which is focusing on hosting the World Cup 2022, published on 5/7/2017



6- A caricature that underestimates Qatar, published on 21/9/2017

Figure 12: Portrayals of Qatar in the caricatures of Al-Itihad newspaper (UAE)

Figure 12 provides a collection of some political caricatures that were published in *Al-Ittihad* newspaper (UAE), during the time specified for this study. These caricatures involve some of the portrayals mentioned in Table 19, such as “Financing terrorism”, "Destruction of Gulf entity”, and “Underestimating Qatar”. In addition, these frames and portrayals were listed under one of the main categories of this study, ‘How it was said’, namely, how or (what) are the different journalistic forms that the three newspapers have used in order to communicate their ideas, and to portray the State of Qatar in some specific ways.

Financing terrorism

For instance, caricature number 1, published on 8/6/2017, portrays the State of Qatar – symbolically – as the funder of terrorism, by showing a large hand that provides different types of weapons. The caricature shows the term “*the Qatari regime*” written on the hand, which is considered to be a direct accusation against Qatar. Likewise, caricature number 2, published on 21/9/2017, shows a machine that manufactures terrorism, showing the Qatari flag being produced from this machine. The symbolic idea that can be understood from this caricature is that Qatar is an engine of terrorism.

Destruction of Gulf entity

Caricature number 3, published on 20/7/2017, shows a character with term “*the Qatari regime*” written on his back destroying a palm, which is symbolically referring to the GCC entity. The caricature represents the logo of Al-Jazirah channel as a hammer that destroys the Gulf entity. Addressing the same issue, caricature number 4, published on 27/5/2017, shows the State of Qatar as a destroyer of the GCC entity by drawing a large character who breaches the ‘Gulf Ship’ with the intention of sinking it. Another symbolic idea is represented by the different directions that the GCC

members are taking in this caricature: it shows that the GCC members are walking straight, while the Qatari figure walks the opposite way.

Underestimating Qatar

Caricature number 5, published on 5/7/2017, is an example of how the State of Qatar was underestimated in the newspapers of the blockading countries. This caricature shows a small character that holds a big size World Cup of 2022, which sends a message that the State of Qatar is unable to host this important event. Moreover, caricature number 6, published on 21/9/2017, shows a character who is sitting on the floor and sharpening support from the countries around the world. Also, this caricature shows the character with a stamp of “*Qatari regime*” written on his cloth.

It can be understood that these caricatures have intentionally disrespected the political leader, by using different symbolic ideas, such as using a small size cartoon figure to represent “*the Qatari regime*”, as *Al-Ittihad* newspaper calls it, and showing the character carrying out unacceptable and exaggerated actions. As mentioned earlier, the political caricature is one of the journalistic forms that has a power that can sometimes be more powerful than words. Thus, it may be argued that the newspapers of the blockading countries have used this journalistic form in their media campaign in order to strengthen their propaganda.



7- A caricature that portrays Qatar as an incubator of terrorism, published on 22/7/2017



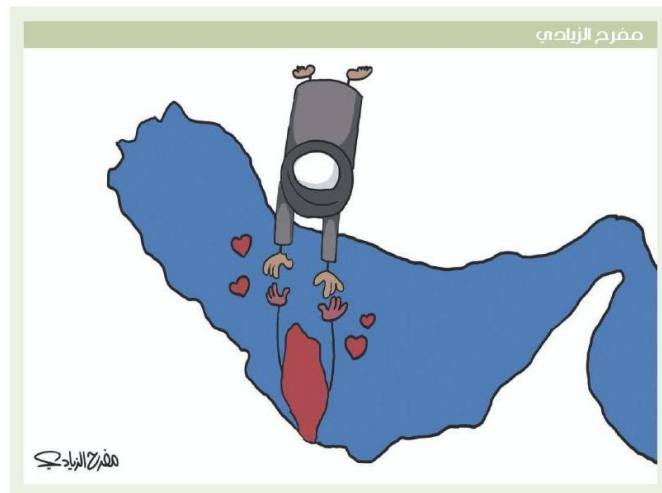
8- A caricature that portrays Qatar as a monster, published on 8/6/2017



9- A caricature that depicts (and underestimates) the Qatari people as hypnotic individuals, published on 26/8/2017



10- A caricature that shows a "Qatari" character tangled with the crisis, published on 8/6/2017



11- Political caricature that shows Qatar-Iran relations, published on 9/6/2017



12- Political caricature that shows Qatar-Iran relations, published on 9/6/2017

Figure 13: Portrayals of Qatar in the caricatures of Al-Jazirah newspaper (KSA)

Figure 13 provides some political caricatures that were published in *Al-Jazirah* newspaper (KSA) during the time specified for this study. The caricatures involve some of the portrayals that are mentioned in Table 19, such as “Financing terrorism”, “Underestimating Qatar”, and “Cooperation with Iran”.

Financing terrorism

Caricature number 7, published on 22/7/2017, creates a symbolic idea by showing a figure of a big egg that is about to be hatched. This egg is stamped with a “terrorism” label, and the Qatar flag is planted on the edge of the egg’s nest, in an attempt to portray the State of Qatar as the official financier of terrorism. Moreover, caricature number 8, published on 8/6/2017, represents the State of Qatar as a ‘monster’ with sharp canines, which symbolically indicates the concept of threat.

Underestimating Qatar

Caricature number 9, published on 26/8/2017, presents two characters, one of whom (located on the right) represents the Qatari people. This caricature shows the Qatari figure as a person who is exposed to ‘hypnosis’. This caricature suggests that the Qatari people are under a certain power (located on the left) that controls their minds. Likewise, caricature number 10, published on 9/6/2017, shows a Qatari character who is wrapped and tangled with his traditional headwear, called *Agal* in the Arabic language, as a sign of how complicated the Qatar crisis is, and how this has reflected on the Qatari people, according to *Al-Jazirah* newspaper (KSA).

Cooperation with Iran

Caricature number 11, published on 9/6/2017, represents the State of Qatar in a way that suggests strong and tolerant relations with Iran. It shows an Iranian character, who wears the Iranian black turban, extending his hands to the State of Qatar. *Al-Jazirah* newspaper has repeatedly promoted this idea as one of the major reasons for taking the decision of cutting relations with the State of Qatar, as Saudi Arabia considers Iran to be a major threat to the region.

Similarly, caricature number 12, which was also published on 9/6/2017, shows that Qatar stands based on Iranian (economic and political) support. It shows two characters, a Qatari and an Iranian. The Qatari character is passing on the rope; the Iranian character tries to provide the support, saying “*keep going, we are standing with you*”. At the same time, the caricature shows that the Iranian character holds a pair of scissors, attempting to cut the rope on which the Qatari character is standing. The general idea that can be understood from these two caricatures is to show why KSA has decided to cut relations with Qatar, and to show that Iran is a threat and cannot be trusted.

Discussion and analysis

This research study attempted to identify the portrayal of the State of Qatar in the newspapers of the Gulf blockading countries. Based on this aim, the researcher has specified the main question, with some sub-questions. Moreover, to collect the data and provide the results, two main categories have been applied, including several sub-categories and units, as has been explained in Chapter 4. This section reviews and discusses the main results of the research study.

The main research question of this study was what are the main characteristics of the portrayal of the State of Qatar in the media of the Gulf blockading countries during the Gulf Crisis of 2017? The results of this study have provided significant answers to the main question and the sub-questions, which were formatted based on some of main themes mentioned in the two categories of this study.

The sub-questions were as follows:

- What were the recurrent themes in the newspapers of the Gulf blockading countries?
- What sort of language was used by the newspapers of the Gulf blockading countries?
- What was the message that the political caricatures of the newspapers communicated?
- What was the nature of the tone – neutral, negative, or positive – that dominated in the published news?
- What types of news – political economic, social, religious, sports, and so on – were used for image distortion?
- Who were the source of the propaganda platform – local agencies or international – for news coverage?
- What components were added in the journalistic genre for news stories?

According to the results of the study, it can be said that the three newspapers were depicting the State of Qatar as a terrorist country that constitutes a threat to the Arabian Gulf region. This idea has been reflected and symbolized in the political caricatures in the newspapers as well. Moreover, the contents of the newspapers have communicated a precise idea by the intentional use of specific types of media discourses since the start of the Gulf Crisis in May 2017. All of this has consequently created a negative portrayal of the State of Qatar.

This has happened by manifesting a political propaganda, which was represented in the different sorts of journalistic forms, such as the news stories, opinion articles, and political caricatures, all of them working to communicate a specific distorted portrayal of the State of Qatar. This was basically focused on portraying the State of Qatar as the funder, the incubator, and the supporter of terrorism, which was one of the main recurrent themes that the three newspapers have shown. For instance, according to Table 13, the term “Financing terrorism” has received the highest percentages among the other negative descriptions of Qatar. In *Al-Ittihad* newspaper (UAE), this direct accusation was repeated 183 times, with a percentage of 30.70%. Moreover, in *Al-Jazirah* newspaper (KSA), this description was repeated 124 times, with a percentage of 40.39%. With *Al-Watan* newspaper (Bahrain), the percentage use of this term was 42.9%. Moreover, Figure 5 shows the other negative descriptions that received a high percentage, such as “Serving Iran”, as this term has been used by *Al-Ittihad* newspaper 110 times, with 18.46%. In *Al-Watan* newspaper, the percentage use of this term was 24.16%, while in *Al-Jazirah* newspaper, the percentage use of the term was 18.57%. All of this indicates another direct accusation against the State of Qatar. From the same table, the results show the other descriptions that have been used in the news stories, opinion articles, and so on.

In addition, one can assume that these negative terms and descriptions were repeatedly used in order to lead to the underestimation of the country, and to stamp these descriptions with the name of Qatar.

In other words, these newspapers tried to show that Qatar is an extreme threat to the Gulf region, which needs to be avoided with all efforts. In this regard, it can be argued as certain that these three newspapers have consolidated the media discourse in line with the goals of political propaganda.

Additionally, the results in Table 16 show that *Al-Ittihad* newspaper (UAE) has published 95.0% news with a negative tone about Qatar, with only 0.9% news with a positive tone. Similarly, *Al-Watan* newspaper (Bahrain), has published 95.3% negative, with 0.8% positive news, while the majority of the published news stories in *Al-Jazirah* newspaper (KSA) were negative, with a percentage of 99.5%, with no positive news about Qatar.

Furthermore, in terms of the most used types of news, Table 10 shows that most of the news stories that were published in the three newspapers were mainly focusing on the political news and economic situation in Qatar. For instance, *Al-Ittihad* newspaper published 68.3% political news. Also, based on Table 14, the news reports were the journalistic genre that got the highest percentage, at 80.1% in *Al-Ittihad* newspaper. Besides, *Al-Watan* newspaper has published 80.2% of political news, which mainly came in the form of news reports, with a total percentage of 76.1%. Moreover, *Al-Jazirah* newspaper has published 86.0% political news, and the most used journalistic genre in this newspaper was the opinion articles, with a percentage of 43.3%. Accordingly, it can be said that these were the types of topics and journalistic genres that have been most used for image distortion of the State of Qatar. In addition, according to Table 12, the results have shown that the sources of such news were local and international agencies; in *Al-Ittihad* newspaper, this has reached 38.7%. The same is the case with *Al-Watan* newspaper: 48.6% of the news source was from local and international agencies. For the *Al-Jazirah* newspaper, 62.0% of the news source was from the journalist of the same newspaper.

Furthermore, according to the results in Table 19, one may say for certain that the 70 political caricatures in *Al-Ittihad* newspaper and *Al-Jazirah* newspaper have communicated the same messages. For instance, the results have clarified that 36.9% of *Al-Ittihad* newspaper's caricatures have portrayed the State of Qatar as the "financer of terrorism". Also, 52.1% of the caricatures have provided a distorted image of the country, which is classified in this study under the frame of 'underestimating Qatar'. Figures 12 and 13 have provided some examples of these caricatures.

Moreover, *Al-Jazirah* newspaper has come in line with *Al-Ittihad* newspaper: 58.3% of their caricatures have attempted to provide a disrespectful image of Qatar and the political leader of the country, which is classified under the frame of 'Underestimating Qatar', with caricatures number 9 and 10 in Figure 12 as examples. In addition, 29.1% of the political caricatures of *Al-Jazirah* newspaper have framed the State of Qatar as the funder of terrorism, with caricatures 7 and 8 in Figure 13 as examples. Appendix A and B provide more examples of the portrayal of the State of Qatar in the political caricatures of *Al-Ittihad* newspaper and *Al-Jazirah* newspaper.

From the results of this study, it can be realized that the type of political propaganda that has been employed by the newspapers of the three Gulf blockading countries was to a certain extent the same. However, the results of *Al-Ittihad* newspaper (UAE) have indicated that there was an extra effort applied to fulfil the goals of the political propaganda campaign, as this newspaper has published 524 different news stories during the time specified for this study. Unlike *Al-Watan* newspaper (Bahrain), which has published 257 news stories, and *Al-Jazirah* newspaper (KSA), which has published 215 news stories.

It can be argued that these results give us an indication that the media campaign that was led by the three Gulf blockading countries had no intention to quit the planned agenda that they have set and spread through their newspapers.

Understanding the term propaganda

It is important to discuss some of the different interpretations of the term ‘propaganda’, in order to specify which definition has been adopted and used for achieving a better understanding of the case of the research study. According to the *Longman Dictionary of American English* (2004), the term propaganda is defined as “information which is false or which emphasizes just one part of a situation, used by a government or other group to make people agree with them ...” (p.722).

According to Willcox (2005), the term ‘propaganda’ has been defined in many different ways, and a single scientific definition has not been adopted for the term, and that could refer to the changes in the situations in each era, which can be reflected in the general interpretation of the word (Willcox, 2005). Lasswell (1927) has defined the theory of political propaganda as “... the management of collective attitudes by the manipulation of significant symbols” (Lasswell, 1927, p.627). Lasswell clarified the word ‘attitudes’ as the tendency that people relate to certain types of valuations. Ellul (1965) described propaganda as “a set of methods employed by an organized group that wants to bring about the active or passive participation in its actions of a mass of individuals, psychologically unified through psychological manipulations and incorporated in an organization” (Ellul, 1965, p.61). Taylor (2003) has provided a short definition of the term, saying that “Propaganda is simply a process by which an idea or an opinion is communicated to someone else for a specific persuasive purpose” (p.7). In addition, Taylor believes that the persuasion can happen by applying different forms of media communications, which can manifest itself in speeches, songs, art, postage stamps, and also radio waves. Moreover, he states that during the First and the Second World Wars in 1914 and 1939, the political propaganda model was practiced broadly by some of the countries that were involved, such as the United States of America, France, Russia, England, and Germany.

At that time, radio was the means used by politicians to spread political propaganda in order to deliver their views and to pass their ideologies to their people and to the enemies. Besides, he adds that during the Cold War after 1945, political propaganda was used as an alternative instrument to an actual or traditional war (Taylor, 2003). In addition to that, according to Jackall (1995), during the First and the Second World Wars, the United States of America and England were both using political propaganda in order to mobilize their people on one hand, and to demonize the image of the others – the enemies – on the other hand, when the ‘others’ are portrayed as the aggressors and the satanic violators of moral and conventional standards.

In addition, it has been argued that “... war propaganda holds great allure for those with the talent and expertise to manufacture and manipulate mass symbols ... Propaganda attains eminence as the one means of mass mobilization that is cheaper than violence, bribery or other possible control techniques” (Jackall, 1995, pp.5–17). Taylor (2003) argues that political propaganda is grounded on process of organized persuasion, unlike the war which is about violence. Additionally, the effects of wars are usually physical, but the results of political propaganda are usually psychological – it has the ability to control minds (Taylor, 2003).

In their book, *Propaganda and Persuasion*, Jowett and O’Donnell (2006) state that “Propaganda is the deliberate, systematic attempt to shape perceptions, manipulate cognitions, and direct behaviour to achieve a response that furthers the desired intent of the propagandist” (Jowett and O’Donnell, 2006, p.7). Willcox (2005) discusses the use of propaganda during political conflicts. He has provided some of the propaganda themes that were evident in some of the political conflicts that happened in the Middle East, saying that one of the techniques of propaganda is to “demonize the enemy” in order to justify the war against any country, and that, as he states, was what the media (print media and

other forms of media such as television) have done to justify the invasions of Afghanistan and Iraq, which also lead to humanitarian crises.

It is clear from the definitions above that the term 'propaganda' has highlighted and included the word 'manipulation', which indicates a negative understanding of the term 'propaganda'. In this regard, Coxall (2013) has defined media manipulation as a series of manipulative techniques that are related in a way that allows the biased media workers to create an argument or an image that matches their interests, instead of that of other parties. Types of techniques can include the use of some propaganda techniques and the use of some rational fallacies, as well as the repression of certain opinions by crowding them out, and that can happen by persuading people not to listen to certain arguments, or by distracting attention onto something else (Coxall, 2013). On the other hand, Willcox (2005) has discussed the notion that surrounds the term propaganda: many people understand the word as a negative concept that contains the intent to manipulate the thoughts of the public and spread lies, while propaganda can be sometimes used in a positive way (Willcox, 2005).

Romarheim (2005) has called for that idea that "propaganda should be understood as a means: it can be applied towards ends that may be immoral or moral" (Romarheim, 2005, p.6). This research study uses the definition of propaganda provided by Jowett and O'Donnell (2006). This definition has been chosen because it covers some of the main elements that we previously highlighted in this study. For example, describing the propaganda model as a systematic process that seeks to create manipulated cognitions that can influence the perceptions of the recipients and generate new persuasions. That part represents one of the prominent practices of propaganda, which is the ability to affect the way that people may receive things, and that happens by different types of media manipulations, which can sometimes appear through exaggerated media distortion about certain countries or specific parties.

In this regard, that part of the definition can also lead us to think of the Framing Theory, which follows a systematic pattern that supports and completes the role of political propaganda. However, in this definition the authors have not mentioned one of the techniques of political propagandas that focuses on the quest towards ‘demonizing others’, by creating a distorted image of them to achieve specific political purposes or to justify any action taken against them, as these ideas have been discussed earlier by Jackall (1995) and Taylor (2003).

According to the above discussion, the three Arabic-language newspapers of the Gulf blockading countries (KSA, UAE, and Bahrain) have applied systematic political propaganda during the Gulf Crisis of 2017–2018. The different propaganda techniques are usually practiced during political conflicts, such as portraying the ‘others’ in a negative way in order to reach a specific target, or even to justify the offensive attack against certain countries. (Willcox, 2005). Furthermore, in his article *‘The Gulf Crisis: Demonizing Qatar through Fabrication’*, Erraji (2017) makes an important point, saying that the media theories are considering the ‘State-media’ as a “... government-sponsored tool which makes it closer to propaganda than to media in achieving political and strategic goals. Such media often does not enjoy any freedom. But if freedom did exist, it would be limited to the extent allowed by the government ...” (Erraji, 2017, p.42). This statement is – to some extent – compatible with Taylor’s (2003) notion, when he discusses the propaganda theory, saying that “a great deal of the theory works on the assumption that information is power, and whoever controls the flow of information, therefore, wields power over the recipient” (p.8).

According to Nikou (2016), “... propaganda can relate to framing in the sense that they both cover issues in a certain way in order to support or promote particular viewpoints in line with power interests. ... propaganda is used to defame opponents or to deify a certain cause in line with power interests” (pp.20–21). One may say that the three selected newspapers have relied on the factors that

form the Framing Theory in serving political propaganda, which the Gulf blockading countries have employed since the start of the Gulf Crisis in 2017.

Demonization

In this respect, analyzing the results of this study has revealed one of the main propaganda techniques, which is to ‘demonize’ the others, who are usually defined as the enemies. This ‘technique’ has been clearly performed by the three newspapers of the Gulf blockading countries. For instance, the State of Qatar was portrayed as the “incubator and the funder of terrorism”.

As discussed earlier in this research study, demonization is one of the practices that the media is using as political pressure, seeking to distort the image of an individual country or political leader to achieve a goal. In this regard, one may argue that all of the components of the studied newspapers – consisting of political caricatures, news stories, opinion articles and graphics – have contributed to the intention of demonizing the State of Qatar. The three newspapers, *Al-Ittihad* (UAE), *Al-Watan* (Bahrain), and *Al-Jazirah* (KSA), have used certain terms and language when they mention the name of the State of Qatar, such as “*Qatar is threatening the Gulf region*”, “*Qatar funds terrorists*”, “*Qatar is evasive State*”.

Furthermore, Erraji (2017) has argued that during political conflicts and crises the media usually follows certain agenda under a planned propaganda campaign, and this agenda is set by political authorities who have specific purposes, such as demonizing the others, which could be a certain population or a leader figure. In other words, it can be said, according to Erraji, that this type of media campaign can only be sustained by satisfying the ambitions of the political leaders in different countries. Moreover, according to the author, a ‘demonization language’ that is used in the media

may not represent the actual opinion of the journalists. Thus, he believes that publishing this type of media is considered to be as a violation of media ethics. (Erraji, 2017).

In this regard, one may argue that based on the case of the Gulf Crisis of 2017–2018, freedom of expression has been restricted, as journalists are directed to show a particular point of view and to present one side of the story, which can only represent the opinion of the political authority. In addition, one may say that even if there are some opinions that support the statement that indicate the role of some political authorities in the deterioration of media performance, especially during political crises, it can be said that not only the governments should be blamed, even when these governments are dominating the media and have a great ability to impose what must be said through media outlets. In contrast, one may assume that journalists must adhere to the ethics of the media and have a personal responsibility towards their journalism. Moreover, it may well be argued that both can be blamed: the governments that give the instructions, and the journalists who obey and publish the content of media.

During the Gulf Crisis of 2017–2018, the Gulf media witnessed an extreme media escalation because of its attacked performance, which can be seen as an example of what has been discussed previously in the literature review in Chapter 2. Additionally, the Gulf Crisis 2017–2018 has led the newspapers in the three Gulf blockading countries (KSA, UAE, and Bahrain) to use explicit language against the State of Qatar, and that language seemed to be intended to demonize the entire image of the country, in order to achieve certain political aims.

It may be argued as certain that the media – especially the traditional media – have become a tool in the hands of the political leaders, who work – directly and indirectly – to pass on their political views and messages through the media outlets. This may be due to the power of authority and its ability to control the media, as well as its capability to set up the media agenda for the journalists, imposing the contents of the media to reflect the views of the political leaders. In that case, it is more likely that

this type of media would adversely affect the credibility of the media in general, and specifically within the Gulf countries, which also leads to a shift away from media ethics.

Additionally, in her study '*The role of the media in deepening democracy*', Coronel (2003) has given some examples of the different uses of the media, saying that "... the media are sometimes used as proxies in the battle between rival political groups, in the process sowing divisiveness rather than consensus, hate speech instead of sober debate, and suspicion rather than social trust ... Unfortunately, the media have sometimes fanned the flames of discord by taking sides, reinforcing prejudices, muddling the facts and peddling half-truths" (Coronel, 2003, pp.1–2). In that study, the author has discussed some of the elements that she believes can increase anti-democracy, as she attempts to encourage the idea of 'democratizing the media' in order to have an independent media that has no intervention from the 'media owners' or the government (Coronel, 2003).

In this regard, it can be said that democratizing the media is a necessary idea, which is a step that would help to get rid of the restrictions around the media, as well as to reduce the authorities' control of media content. However, it may be argued as certain that it is hard to apply this in the Arabian Gulf region, as the vast majority of the media outlets in this region are directed to express the opinion of governments. In addition, one may wonder if we can consider granting the media democracy, and being free from the State's restrictions, is an idea that corresponds with Arab Gulf society? If that were possible, then to what extent may we see the reflection of that flexibility on media performance? Ali (2012) mentions in his research study that journalists are considered to be political actors. In addition, the news media is a central political force in the government, and one may argue that here is where the major importance lies. Concerning this, media platforms can be used in a way that serves and supports the point of view of the political regime, even when they provide false news for the audience.

Media ethics and the Gulf Crisis of 2017–2018

In their book, *Media Ethics: Issues and Cases*, Patterson, Wilkins, and Painter (2018) discuss the argument about the ethics concept, saying that ethics is something that we inherently ‘have’, not something that we ‘do’, and based on this, every person can – generally – learn the meaning of ethics, but not all people would adopt it for their lives (Patterson, et al., 2018). Furthermore, in his book, *Ethics in Media Communications*, Day (2005) argues that “Ethics reflects a society's notions about the rightness and the wrongness of an act and the distinctions between virtue and vice” (Day, 2005, p.3).

To focus on media ethics, it is required that journalists divorce facts from opinions to make sure that stories are objective. In addition, journalists need to be as independent as possible when they ‘frame the stories’ that they are writing, in order to reach a reasonable level of accuracy. Besides, it is important that a journalist gives people written about in a story a sort of self-respect, in a way that would show the value of each person regardless of the story itself or the particular role the person plays (Patterson, et al., 2018). According to Kieran (2000), “journalism is a profession, a vocation founded on ethical principles which direct and regulate the conduct of the practitioner” (Kieran, 2000, p.3).

According to these interpretations, one may argue that a journalist’s decision to respect and follow media ethics could sometimes be beyond their will. In other words, it is illogical to assume that all journalists are ignoring the importance of applying media ethics in their jobs, but they might be subjected to a sort of political pressure, usually coming from the decision-makers of their country. And the type of pressures that journalists may experience is likely to increase during political crises. In this regard, Kieran (2002) has discussed one of McNair’s (1998) arguments that talks about the relations between journalism and politics, saying that the journalists have to preserve their relations

along with the politics, in order to compact the politicians' attempts to control the agenda of the news in way that serve their interests, which are different from the interests of the public (Kieran, 2000).

These instances lead us to rethink and evaluate the performance of the media in the Gulf blockading countries since the start of the crisis in May 2017. In this regard, it can be said that the results of this research study can be taken as an example of the 'negative' role of the media, as it has reached a high scale of irresponsibility, and it has moved away from the principles of media ethics. We should bear in mind that the journalists who have applied distorting political propaganda were possibly pressured and directed by the decision-makers to implement their plans. In addition, the results of this study have shown the Gulf blockading countries have deployed their efforts with the purpose of distorting the reputation of the State of Qatar, and to label it as a State that 'finances terrorism'. Moreover, it can be argued as certain that these three Gulf blockading countries (KSA, UAE, and Bahrain), have together set their agendas for the media for the sake of demonizing the State of Qatar to justify their decision to cut their diplomatic and economic ties with Qatar and impose the blockade.

CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSION, RECOMMENDATION AND LIMITATIONS

Conclusion

The prime objective of this research study was to explore and analyze the main characteristics of the portrayal of the State of Qatar in three Arabic-language newspapers: *Al-Ittihad* newspaper from UAE, *Al-Watan* newspaper from Bahrain, and *Al-Jazirah* newspaper from KSA. These three Gulf countries decided to cut relations with the State of Qatar on 5 May 2017. One of the main justifications that the Gulf blockading countries have provided is that the State of Qatar is financing terrorism. Since then, the media of the Gulf blockading countries have been making massive efforts in order to prove their claims and to justify their actions against the State of Qatar. Therefore, they have organized a political propaganda campaign that contains a unified media discourse, which has been expressed through different journalistic forms. This research study has studied the portrayal of Qatar during a specified time, from 24 May 2017 to 21 September 2017. This period includes some dates from the week preceding the blockade, and some dates of prominent events that have happened during the first five months of the Gulf Crisis of 2017–2018.

This research study has adopted a quantitative content analysis in order to study the three selected newspapers and to extract systematic and numbered data, which are required to answer the research question(s) and meet the objective of this study. According to the results, it can be said that the objective of this study has been fully met, as the study has explored the different ways in which the State of Qatar was portrayed in the newspapers of the Gulf blockading countries. Additionally, Chapter 4 has provided a comprehensive analysis and discussion regarding the portrayal of Qatar in the three newspapers. The results of this study have shown that the three newspapers have deployed

a solid media campaign that aimed to communicate specific messages that the Gulf blockading countries wanted to convey. Furthermore, by the use of different journalistic forms and genres – including news reports, opinion articles, and political caricatures – the three newspapers have contributed to creating a distorted atmosphere around the name of the State of Qatar. That performance has appeared in many ways, such as the negative descriptions of Qatar that were used frequently in the news stories. This was shown in Table 6, which has listed the most recurrent negative descriptions that were used in the three newspapers, such as “financing terrorism”, “evasive country”, “serving Iran”, “supports ISIS”, and so on. Also, the political caricatures of *Al-Ittihad* newspaper (UAE) and *Al-Jazirah* newspaper (KSA) have both come in line to craft specific messages, representing them in the caricatures, according to the frames and the portrayals mentioned in Table 19, which shows how the State of Qatar was framed and portrayed in 70 of the political caricatures. For instance, Qatar was portrayed as a State that finances terrorism and cooperates with Iran, and as the destroyer of the Gulf entity. Additionally, the majority of the political caricatures of these two newspapers were focused on ‘underestimating Qatar’. Figures 12 and 13 (as well as Appendix A and B) provide samples of these frames and portrayals, represented in the political caricatures.

Furthermore, in Chapter 2 this study has discussed the influence of the media, especially during political conflicts and crises, and how the media can be exploited to become a political instrument. Also, it discussed one of the mass communication theories, Framing Theory, which was chosen as the theoretical framework for this study. This section also discussed the correlation between Agenda-Setting Theory and the Framing Theory, as together they can be used to implement political propaganda. However, the focus of this study is based on the Framing Theory. In this respect, this study has argued that the efforts played by the three newspapers in implementing some of the political propaganda techniques, such as providing distorted images about certain countries, or ‘demonizing’

the ‘others’ (which usually happens to justify any attack made against ‘the others’), have allowed the three newspapers to contribute, extensively, to placing the State of Qatar within specific negative frames. Accordingly, one may say that all of these components have helped in portraying the State of Qatar as a factor that threatens the Gulf region by incubating and funding terrorism. The State of Qatar has been labelled by the newspapers as the destroyer of the GCC entity. They have also declared – via news stories and political caricatures – the necessity of isolating the State of Qatar from the rest of the GCC countries. Choosing the Framing Theory as a theoretical basis has been useful for this study; it has provided a grounded understanding of how the media of the blockading countries has been functioning and how it became a tool to spread their political propaganda against Qatar. Also, it can be said that the framing mechanisms (which are located in the distorted news stories and political caricatures) were used to project support for the blockade of Qatar, and to justify the negative actions against the country.

Contributions of the study

The topic of this research study has been chosen according to its importance and influence on the Gulf Crisis 2017–18. Moreover, due to the lack of academic studies of the portrayal of Qatar, this study has managed to uncover the negative portrayal of the State of Qatar in the media of the Gulf blockading countries during the time specified for this study. The study has also analyzed numerical data that were gathered in a systematic procedure, as the study has adopted a quantitative methodology, which is known for its high objectivity (Jong and Van der Voordt, 2002). In addition, the topic of this study was linked with one of the media theories, the Framing Theory, and the mechanisms of Framing Theory were applied to the units of the analysis – all types of news stories, including political caricatures. Although the portrayal of Qatar has been addressed by the media, this study has examined the portrayal of the State of Qatar in a scientific way. In other words, the results

of this research study have been based on scientific tools. Therefore, the results can be used in media-politics studies and Gulf studies, which concern the performance of the Arabian Gulf media during the Gulf Crisis 2017–2018, in order to allow a fuller investigation of the impact of the media on the crisis.

Recommendation

Limitations

This research study has chosen a quantitative method, as it is considered an objective approach. Moreover, although this study has achieved its aims by using this quantitative method, there were some limitations that need to be mentioned. It can be said that the quantitative method allows the researcher to describe the case as it is, namely answering questions that start with ‘what’, while, other approaches, such as the qualitative methods, provides the opportunity to answer and interpret ‘why’ a certain incident happened. Therefore, it is believed that integrating the two methods may provide a more in-depth analysis for this studied case.

This research study selected the first five months of the Gulf Crisis of 2017–2018. Adding extra months could help in exploring more angles and themes of what was said about the State of Qatar, and how it was portrayed in the media. However, because of the limited time available to complete this study, the researcher has selected only the first five months of the Gulf Crisis. At the start of this study, there was no expectation of how long this crisis may last. So far, the Gulf Crisis of 2017–2018 has lasted one year and 10 months. In addition, one of the challenges that this study has faced is the lack of a universal software tool that can deal with Arabic language texts. All of the data were extracted manually, which in some cases may affect the accuracy of the counting.

According to the results of this research study, which has shown how the portrayal of the State of Qatar has been distorted by three newspapers of the Gulf blockading countries (*Al-Ittihad*, *Al-Watan*

and *Al-Jazirah*), it is significant to realize how strong can be the effect of political power and crises on the role and performance of the media. This study has provided the negative side of how the media may become when it is restricted by negative political propaganda, which serves the interests of certain political power. In addition, one may say that in such ‘media-politics’ studies, addressing the role of the Qatari media in countering the media of the Gulf blockading countries could help in completing the whole picture of ‘the role and performance of the Gulf media during the crisis’. Therefore, this can be one of the suggestions for future studies, which may use a mixed research method (qualitative and quantitative approaches) in order to look at the case from a wider perspective.

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Appendices

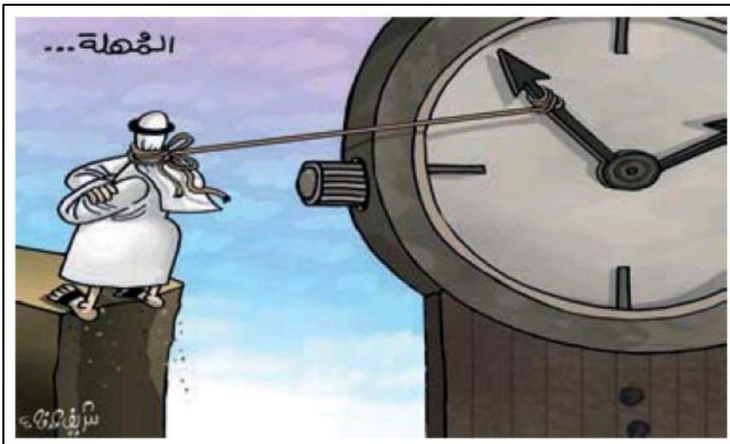
Appendix A: Political caricatures from *Al-Ittihad* newspaper (UAE)



Caricature that mocks the Qatari response to the fabricated statements attributed to the Emir of Qatar.
Source: *Al-Ittihad* newspaper (UAE), published on 26-5-2017.



Caricature that mocks the size and role of the State of Qatar in the region.
Source: *Al-Ittihad* newspapers (UAE), published on 7-6-2017.



Caricature that depicts a Qatari character, with a rope attached around its neck and a huge clock; to refer to the deadline to reply to the 13 demands.

Source: *Al-Ittihad* newspaper (UAE), published on 4-7-2017.



Caricature that portrays Qatar as an incubator of Muslim Brotherhood
 Source: Al-Ittihad newspaper (UAE), published on 6-7-2017.



A caricature that shows Qatar challenging the world.
 Source: Al-Ittihad newspaper (UAE), published on 21-7-2017.



The idea of this caricature says that Qatar is internationalizing the crisis, rather than choosing reconciliation.
 Source: Al-Ittihad newspaper (UAE), published on 22-7-2017.



Caricature that shows Al-Jazeera channel as a supporter of terrorism.
 Source: Al-Ittihad newspaper (UAE),
 published on 23-7-2017.



Caricature that shows Al-Jazeera channel as a supporter of terrorism.
 Source: Al-Ittihad newspapers (UAE),
 published on 25-8-2017.



Caricature that shows Qatar as a human rights violator.
 Source: Al-Ittihad newspaper (UAE),
 published on 26-8-2017.



Caricature that portrays Qatar as a supporter of terrorism.
 Source: Al-Ittihad newspaper (UAE), published on 27-8-2017.



Caricature that hints about changing the ruler of Qatar.
 Source: Al-Ittihad newspaper (UAE), published on 18-9-2017.



Caricature that portrays Qatar as the financier of terrorism.
 Source: Al-Ittihad newspaper (UAE), published on 19-9-2017.



Caricature that hints about changing the ruler of Qatar.

Source: Al-Ittihad newspaper (UAE), published on 20-9-2017.



Caricature that portrays Qatar as the financier of terrorism.

Source: Al-Ittihad newspaper (UAE), published on 19/9/2017

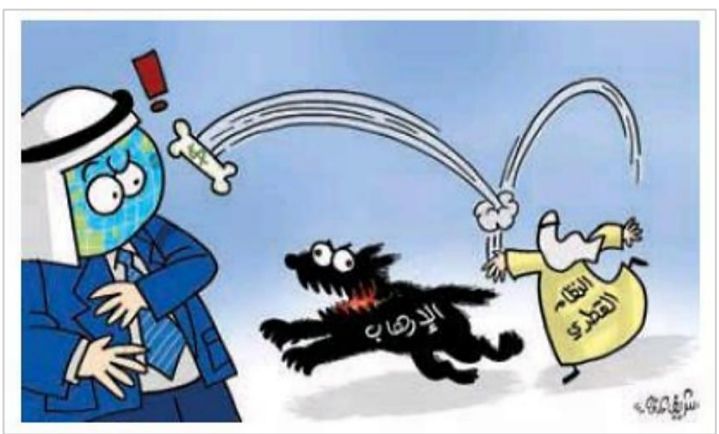


Caricature that portrays Qatar as an engine of terrorism through Al-Jazeera channel.

Source: Al-Ittihad newspaper (UAE), published on 6/6/2017



Caricature that portrays Qatar as a supporter of terrorism.
 Source: Al-Ittihad newspaper (UAE), published on 9/6/2017



Caricature that portrays Qatar as a supporter of terrorism.
 Source: Al-Ittihad newspaper (UAE), published on 24/8/2017



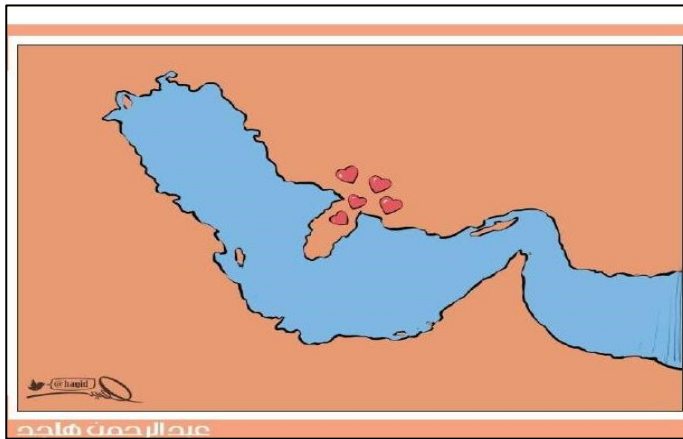
Caricature that show a Qatari figure that descends into darkness, in a different direction from the rest of the World.
 Source: Al-Ittihad newspaper (UAE), published on 7-7-2017.

Appendix B: Political caricatures from *Al-Jazirah* newspaper (KSA)



Caricature that shows Qatar as if drowning.

Source: Al-Jazirah newspaper (KSA), published on 6-6-2017.



Caricature that shows Qatar-Iran relations.

Source: Al-Jazirah newspaper (KSA), published on 6-6-2017.

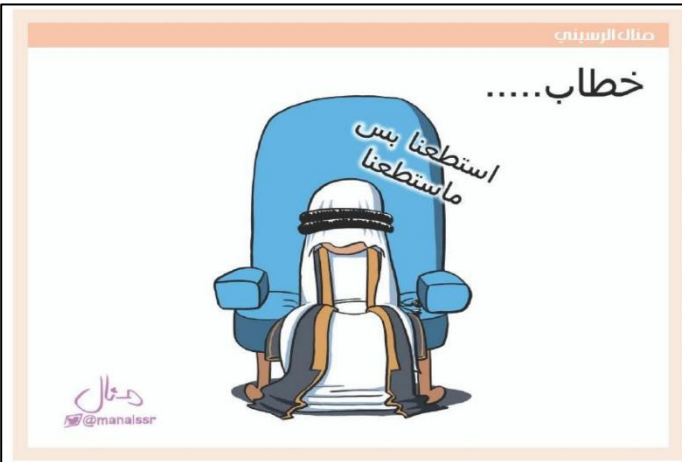


Caricature that portrays Qatar as the incubator of terrorism.

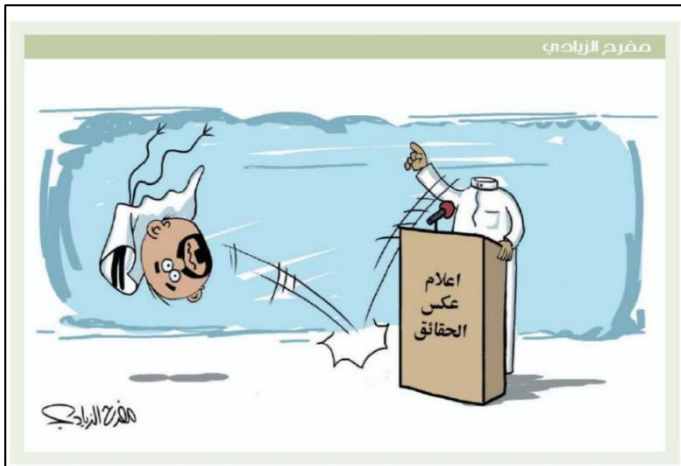
Source: Al-Jazirah newspaper (KSA), published on 7/6/2017



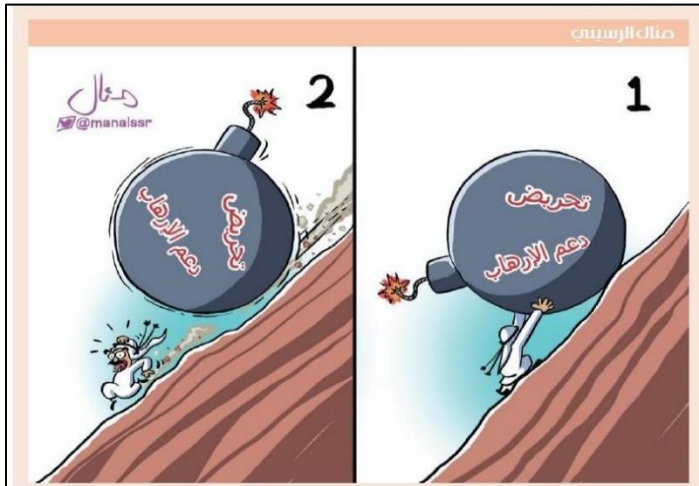
Caricature that shows Qatar as an isolated country.
Source: Al-Jazirah newspaper (KSA), published on 8-6-2017.



Caricature that mocks one of the speeches given by the Emir of Qatar.
Source: Al-Jazirah newspaper (KSA), published on 23-7-2017.



Caricature that mocks the Qatari media.
Source: Al-Jazirah newspaper (KSA), published on 23-7-2017.



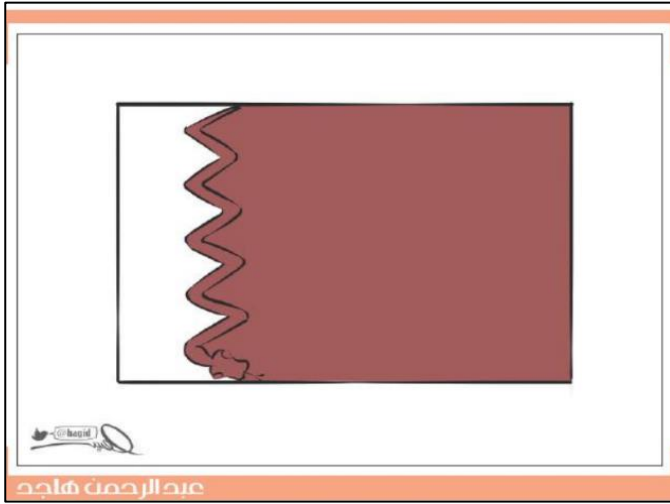
Caricature that portrays Qatar as a supporter of terrorism.
 Source: Al-Jazirah newspaper (KSA),
 published on 24-8-2017.



Caricature that mocks the Qatari media.
 Source: Al-Jazirah newspaper (KSA),
 published on 19-9-2017.



Caricature that portrays Qatar as the funder of terrorism.
 Source: Al-Jazirah newspaper (KSA),
 published in 23/7/2017.



Caricature that portrays Qatar as a snake, Source: Al-Jazirah newspaper (KSA), published on 9/6/2017.



*Caricature that shows Qatar as if falling down. failling down.
Source: Al-Jazirah newspaper (KSA),
published on 6/7/2017*



Published in Al-Ittihad newspaper, on 9-6-2107



Published in Al-Ittihad newspaper, on 21-7-2107

قطر.. تنتشر

كفى يا قطر

قائمة «المطالب العربية».. قانونية وتهدف إلى حماية الأمن القومي العربي

21

قطر تشتري كميات كبيرة من «أسلحة وأدوات مكافحة الشغب وتفريق التظاهرات»

تعالى «تميم» يثير استياء القطريين

أوطية (القطر)

تداول مستخدم مواقع التواصل الاجتماعي - تويتر - مقطع فيديو لأحد قطر تميم بن حمد - يهدف فيه مواطنًا قطريًا كان موجودًا بجوار سيارته في أثناء خروجه من إحدى الشافات، وأثار الفيديو حالة من الاستياء بين المواطنين القطريين، مطالبين تميم، بالاعتذار للمواطن القطري. بعد التعالي والغرور اللذين ظهرتا منه في المنقطع، وخوفه على سيارته أكثر من خوفه على شعبه.

وعلى المنوال نفسه، نشر مستخدم مواقع التواصل الاجتماعي مقطع فيديو، يوضح الفارق بين تميم بن حمد والملك الراجل عبد الله بن عبد العزيز آل سعود - خلال عمره الموقوت. مما لا كان التمسرف، مختلفًا وأكثر تواضعًا وإسائة. على ملك تميم. ملك الملك عبد الله الحرمي الملكي لمحاكته إبعاد مواطنين سعوديين عن سيارته.

Published in *Al-Ittihad* newspaper, on 5-7-2017

AL-JAZIRAH
الجَزِيرَة

36
صفحة

www.al-jazirah.com

AL-Jazirah Newspaper Tuesday 6-6-2017 G Issue 16322 57th Year
صحيفة يومية تصدرها مؤسسة الجزيرة للصحافة والنشر - الرياض 57 السنة 16322 العدد 2017 (حزيران) 6 يونيو

أيشس
لتأجير السيارات
الآن مع خدمة توصيل السيارة لباب بيتك
920028281

AL-Jazirah Snap
Snap
صديقك... شاشتك

4 | خادم الحرمين الشريفين يوجه بالبدء بصرف مخصصات شهرية لمشايخ ومعرفي القبائل

مجلس الوزراء برئاسة الملك: قطع العلاقات مع قطر لحماية أمن المملكة الوطني من الإرهاب والتطرف

قطر.. بئرا الخيانة!!

سلطات الدوحة مارست انتهاكات جسيمة على مدى سنوات سراً وعلناً بهدف بثق الصف الداخلي السعودي تحريض ضد المملكة للخروج على الدولة واحتضان جماعات إرهابية ووطنية متعددة تستهدف استقرار المنطقة الإدارة الأمريكية: الكثير من تصرفات قطر مثيرة لقلق جيرانها في الخليج والولايات المتحدة

خادم الحرمين مقرئاً جلسة مجلس الوزراء




Published in Al-Jazirah newspaper, in 6-6-2017

3 محليات

التاريخ: 10 من شوال 1438 هـ، 4 يوليو (الثلاثاء) 2017م العدد: 16350
local@al-jazirah.com.sa

بقلق تعيشه وسط أبناء عن غضب في الشارع القطري دفعها لاستعانة عسكرية تركية ومن الحرس الثوري!!

الدوحة «تتحسب» لربيع قطري!!

قطر تشتري أسلحة ومعدات لمكافحة الشغب وتفريق الحشود ومواجهة المظاهرات من البرازيل

قرارات قد تطبق على قطر حال «مكابرتها»

- تعليق عضويتها في الأمانة العامة لدول مجلس التعاون
- تعليق عضويتها في جامعة الدول العربية
- قطع جميع التعاملات المالية معها وتجميد أرصعتها في الدول الخليجية والعربية
- إقامة قاعدة عسكرية خليجية وعربية كبرى في البحرين
- تخيير الشركات الكبرى إما العمل مع دول الخليج أو قطر
- الرفع لمجلس الأمن الدولي للاستخدام

توافق سعودي - ألماني على وقف الدوحة لدعم وتمويل الإرهاب والمنظمات المتطرفة

أبرز محطات الأزمة القطرية

الرئيس الفرنسي يؤكد على ضرورة مكافحة تمويل الجيبي: نتمنى أن يكون رد قطر على مطالب دول



Published in Al-Jazirah newspaper, on 4-7-2017

Appendix F: Examples of news stories' titles from Al-Jazirah newspaper (KSA)



AL-JAZIRAH

40 صفحة

www.al-jazirah.com

AL-Jazirah Newspaper Wednesday 24-5-2017 G.Issue 16309 57th Year



40 صفحة

www.al-jazirah.com

AL-Jazirah Newspaper Wednesday 24-5-2017 G.Issue 16309 57th Year

أي شس

لتأجير السيارات

الآن مع خدمة توصيل السيارة لباب بيتك

920028281

الأربعاء 28 من شعبان 1438هـ - 24 مايو 2017 العدد 16309

المملكة تدين انفجار «مانثستر» الإرهابي.. و«التحالف» يدين محاولة اغتيال مبعوث الأمم في اليمن | 32

الشراكة الصحية بين القطاعين العام والخاص تعزز الدور التوعوي نحو رفاهية المجتمع



جدة، المملكة العربية السعودية - مايو 17، أصبح القطاع الصحي من القطاعات التي تشهد تطوراً كبيراً في تعزيز التواصل وتبادل الخبرات والتعرف بالفضل المتراكم في القطاع الصحي وتقديم أحدث التقنيات والخدمات المتعددة علماً، فضلاً عن زيادة التوعية والإرشاد في المجتمع المحلي والتواصل المباشر مع المجتمع من مختلف فئات ومستويات الثقافة، عبر العديد من المبادرات والمساقات التي جمعت القطاعين بهدف نشر الوعي الصحي بين مختلف فئات المجتمع، وجاءت مبادرة (وعي) التي أطلقها وزير الصحة محمد بن إبراهيم التويجري، لزيادة الوعي الصحي بين المواطنين، حيث اشركت العديد من الشركات والمؤسسات الصحية والجمعيات الخيرية والشركات والمؤسسات الصحية التي تهدف إلى رفع الوعي الصحي لدى جميع أفراد المجتمع، للحد من الإصابة بالأمراض المزمنة والتشخيص والتدخل الطبي، وقد قامت المؤسسة في أربعة مسارات

حذر من المساس ببلاده واستنكر ربطها بالإرهاب

أمير قطر يطعن جيرانه بـ«خنجر» إيران!!

اشرف العشري - مدير تحرير جريدة الامرام - القاهرة

أمير قطر في تخريب المجديين، لا حكمة في عداة إيران فهي قوة إسلامية

الشيخ تميم، ليس من الحكمة التصعيد مع إيران فهي ثقل



قناة قناة الحدث لتصريحات أمير قطر

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هيوط السمات السيادية الدولية لقطر استحقاق 2026

لنح - رويترز

تراجعت السمات السيادية الدولية لقطر استحقاق 2026 من جديد

أسوأ تسجل أقل مستوى منذ تصدق مارس في حين وصلت تكلفة التأمين على بون قطر مقربة من أقل مستوى في أربعة أشهر

وهيوط السمات السيادية الدولية لقطر استحقاق 2026 بواقع



الاقتصاد

الجزيرة - سفر السفح

وجعلت الحرب

توقع اقتصاديون حدوث زوال اقتصادي في قطر نتيجة انكسار قطع العلاقات الدبلوماسية خصوصاً مع تزايد عدد الدول التي انضمت إلى قائمة الدول التي أعلنت مقاطعة بقيادة المملكة والإمارات والبحرين، وقال الاقتصاديون لـ«الجزيرة»

وسط ضغوط على الموازنة وميزان المعاملات الجارية.. اقتصاديون لـ الجزيرة: المقاطعة تزلزل اقتصاد قطر والقطاعات تبدأ مرحلة الانهيار

«القطرية» تخسر 266 رحلة أسبوعياً مع المملكة والإمارات والبحرين

قطر من أهمها ارتفاع أسعار السلع بشكل عام نظراً لوجود حظر الاستيراد والتصدير، وانخفاض قيمة العملة القطرية نتيجة لوقف البنوك المركزية التعامل بالريال القطري، وبالتالي سحقت أزمة اقتصادية وتضخم وتباطؤ اقتصادي، وأضاف آل الشيخ: هذا الواقع سيؤثر على الخطوط القطرية تغيير مساراتها إلى مسارات أخرى بعيدة خصوصاً رحلات

صادرات المملكة إلى قطر تمثل أكثر من 50% من صادرات الدول العربية

حاداً لأكثر من 7% في جلسة الاثنين تجاوزاً مع أسوأ قطع العلاقات وبيع بعد صدور القرار مباشرة، وهذا إن دل على شيء فإن الأمر يدل على ارتباط الشركات القطرية بالتجارة الدولية خارج قطر وعدم اعتمادها في تجارتها على التجارة المحلية، وعن أثر إغلاق الحدود السعودية، قال: سيؤثر العمل في معبر أبو سمرة وإيقاف دخول ثمان مئة شاحنة يومياً، وأشار الرشيد إلى أن تكلفة المواد الأساسية

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ناصر بن حمد: قطع العلاقات خطوة لحماية الأمن من أعمال قطر العدائية

الإرهابية المسلحة، وتمويل الجماعات الخارجة عن القانون للقيام بالتخريب ونشر الفوضى في البحرين. كما بعث سموه أيضاً بقرية إلى صاحب السمو الملكي الأمير سلمان بن حمد آل خليفة ولي العهد الأمين نائب القائد الأعلى النائب الأول لرئيس مجلس الوزراء، أكد من خلالها وقوفه إلى جانب الإجراءات التي تم اتخاذها تجاه قطر بعد أن واصلت الانتهاكات الصارخة للاتفاقيات والمواثيق الدولية دون أدنى مراعاة لقيم أو قانون أو أخلاق أو اعتبار لمبادئ حسن الجوار، أو الالتزام بتأويست العلاقات الخليجية والتكرار لجميع التهديدات السابقة ودعمها للجماعات المتطرفة التي عانت منها الدول العربية.

لتنظيمات وجماعات إرهابية مرتبطة بإيران تحاول زعزعة الأمن ونشر الفوضى في المملكة والمساس بسيادتها، علاوة على دعمها واحتضانها عناصر داعمة لجماعات إرهابية تكفيرية ومتطرفة مثل تنظيم القاعدة وداعش وميليشيا الحوثي وجماعة الإخوان المسلمين». كما بعث سموه بقرية مماثلة إلى صاحب السمو الملكي الأمير خليفة بن سلمان آل خليفة رئيس الوزراء، أيد من خلالها الإجراءات التي اتخذتها الحكومة بقطع العلاقات مع قطر بعد إصرارها على المضي في زعزعة الأمن والاستقرار بمملكة البحرين والتدخل في شؤونها المحلية والاستمرار في التصعيد والتحرير الإعلامي ودعم الأنشطة

وأشار سموه إلى أن هذه الخطوة تأتي حماية من تلك الدول لأنها الوطني بعد استمرار الأعمال العدائية التي تقوم بها قطر تجاه الدول الخليجية والعربية، وتعد خطوة مستحقة ضد جهة كرسست جهودها لضرب الاستقرار العربي ودعم الإرهاب والعمل على بث الفرقة بين الأشقاء. وأضاف سموه في برقيته «إننا جميعاً نقف إلى جانب جلالتكم وإخوانكم قادة الدولة الشقيقة والصديقة في الخطوات التي تم اتخاذها تجاه قطر، والتي تؤكد اهتمام جلالتكم وحرصكم على تعزيز الأمن الوطني للمملكة والأشقاء العرب، ونرفض في ذات الوقت أشكال العبث بالأمن والاستقرار التي تقوم بها السلطات في الدوحة عبر دعمها



سمو الشيخ ناصر بن حمد آل خليفة

العربية الشقيقة والدول الصديقة المتمثلة بقطع العلاقات الدبلوماسية مع دولة قطر.

قال سمو الشيخ ناصر بن حمد آل خليفة ممثل جلالته الملك للأعمال الخيرية وشؤون الشباب رئيس المجلس الأعلى للشباب والرياضة رئيس اللجنة الأولمبية البحرينية، إن إجراءات البحرين والدول الأخرى في قطع العلاقات الدبلوماسية مع دولة قطر، تأتي لحماية تلك الدول أمنها الوطني بعد استمرار الأعمال العدائية التي تقوم بها قطر تجاه الدول الخليجية والعربية.

وبعث سمو الشيخ ناصر بن حمد بقرية تأييد إلى حضرة صاحب الجلالة الملك حمد بن عيسى آل خليفة عاهل البلاد المفدى، للإجراءات التي اتخذتها مملكة البحرين والمملكة العربية السعودية ودولة الإمارات العربية المتحدة والدول

«الشرق السعودية»: قطر مؤلت الإرهاب بـ 64.2 مليار دولار منذ 2010



آسيا وأفريقيا وشبه الجزيرة العربية. وامتد الدعم المالي القطري للجماعات الإرهابية ليشمل «جبهة النصرة» في كل من سوريا ولبنان، بشكل يجعل هذه الجماعة المصنفة إرهابية، تبدو وكأنها «ذراع قطري صرف»، حسب تعبير الصحيفة. وأضافت الصحيفة أن قطر «دعمت في ليبيا شخصيات إرهابية عدة، من بينهم رجل الدين «صديق قطر» علي الصلابي، وعبد الحكيم بلحاج رجل القاعدة السابق، وعبد الباسط غويلة، وعناصر إرهابية معروفة».

كشفت صحيفة «الشرق» السعودية، نقلاً عن مصادر مقربة من النظام السياسي في الدوحة، أن «قطر مؤلت أنشطة إرهابية بمبلغ 64.2 مليار دولار من عام 2010 وحتى 2015». وأكدت الصحيفة أن الرياض «تملك وثائق تثبت تورط الدوحة بدعم عمليات العنف والإرهاب في المنطقة». وذكرت الصحيفة، نقلاً عن المصدر الذي لم تسعه، أن قطر خصصت مبلغ 7.6 مليارات دولار لتمويل عمليات إرهابية في 2010، وارتفع المبلغ إلى 10.4 مليارات دولار في 2011، قبل أن يقفز إلى 11.4 مليار دولار في 2012. وفي عام 2013، زادت دولة قطر المبالغ المالية إلى 12.2 مليار دولار، ليقفز المبلغ مجدداً إلى 12.6 مليار دولار في 2014، قبل أن ينقلص إلى 9.9 في 2015، حسب الصحيفة. واستشهدت الصحيفة بتقارير غربية أشارت إلى أن قطر تعد أكبر دولة في المنطقة تقض الطرف عن تقديم التمويل للجماعات المتطرفة والإرهابية، رغم أن قوانينها الداخلية تجرم تلك الممارسات. وتشمل دائرة التمويل، حسب الصحيفة، مقيمين في قطر يعملون بأنشطة مشبوهة تقض السلطات القطرية الطرف عنها، بهدف تديير التمويل لجماعات إرهابية، وجماعات في

قطر تستجيب للخليجيين أم تهرول للإرهابيين؟

اعتبر تقرير لمجلة «فورين أفيرز» الأميركية أن أمير قطر تميم بن حمد آل ثاني في موقف لا يعطيه سوى خيارين من أجل التعامل مع العزلة التي فرضت عليه بسبب سياسات بلاده.

وبحسب المجلة، فإن الخيار الأول هو قبول الأمير بالمطالب والشروط الخليجية والعربية من أجل عودة العلاقات إلى سابق عهدها.

ويعني ذلك تخلي قطر عن سياستها الداعمة لجماعة الإخوان والجماعات المتطرفة في المنطقة، والتراجع عن علاقاتها المتنامية مع إيران وميليشيات حزب الله.

وفي هذا السياق، قالت المجلة إن قطر بدلاً من الامتثال لمطالب سابقة من الجيران الخليجيين، قد دعمت المتمردون الحوثيين في اليمن وتقربت من ميليشيات حزب الله.

لكن هذا الخيار يشكل تحدياً داخل الأسرة الحاكمة في قطر، فقد يخاطر الأمير بخسارة علاقته بالحرص القديم وبوالده الأمير السابق حمد بن خليفة آل ثاني، ووزير الخارجية الأسبق ذي النفوذ القوي حمد بن جاسم.

وكانت السعودية والإمارات والبحرين ومصر واليمن ولبيا قد قطعت علاقاتها الدبلوماسية والسياسية مع قطر يوم

كلمة الوطن

كفى شراً من قطر

يوسف النخيل

للبصير حدود، وانتهت حدود الصبر الآن بقرار قطع العلاقات مع الشقيقة قطر دون أن تتحمل الحكومة القطرية مسؤوليتها تجاه أشقائها الخليجيين والعرب، بل تمادت وأصرّت على نشر الفساد والفوضى في المنطقة، وأثرت دفع الثمن والدخول في عزلة لم تعشها دولة خليجية قط. نفذ صبرنا، ونحن نسمع ونشاهد قناة الجزيرة الممولة من حكومة قطر طيلة 21 عاماً تعرّض على الإرهاب، وتشوّه السمعة، وتدمر المنجزات الحضارية للبحرين.

نفذ صبرنا ونحن نكتشف يوماً بعد آخر المال القطري متورط في الأعمال الإرهابية التي شهدتها البحرين خلال السنوات الماضية. نفذ صبرنا ونحن نرى العاصمة الدوحة قد أصبحت مأوى للشخصيات الراديكالية والإرهابية التي تعمل ضد البحرين.

نفذ صبرنا بعد أن تألعنا ونحن نرى التجاهل القطري الصريح عندما فزعت قوات درع الجزيرة إلى البحرين لحمايتها من المؤامرة التاريخية عام 2011.

نفذ صبرنا بعد أن اكتشفنا عمق التورط القطري مع جماعات وتنظيمات راديكالية عملت على إسقاط النظام الشرعي في مملكة البحرين. نفذ صبرنا ونحن نواجه إيران وإرهابها وتطرفها مع الأشقاء من دول مجلس التعاون الخليجي، ونرى قطر تقيم تحالفاً وثيقاً مع طهران ولا تكتفّر بالموقف الخليجي.

نفذ صبرنا ونحن نحارب حزب الله الإرهابي 35 عاماً لتورطه في تكوير ودعم خلايا إرهابية في البحرين، وتظهر قطر لتمجد هذا التنظيم وتعتبره تنظيم مقاومة.

نفذ صبرنا عندما اتضح أن المشاركة القطرية في حرب اليمن شكلية، وصدمننا بالدعم القطري الكبير لجماعة الحوثيين.

شرّ تلو شرّ جاءنا من قطر، وحان أوان إيقافه واجتثاثه، فلكل شر حدود، ولا يمكن أن نقبل بأي شر وإن صدر عن بلد شقيق مثل قطر، فمصالحنا الوطنية ومصالح الأشقاء الخليجيين فوق كل اعتبار.

جميع تلك الحقائق عرفها قادة وحكومة قطر جيداً، وقيلت لهم رسماً، ولم يواجهوا بها شعبيهم، بل أصرّوا على الاستمرار في دعم الإرهاب حيثما ظهرت الفوضى أو أرادت الدوحة الفوضى، فكانت النتيجة فوضى من الخليج إلى المحيط، ومن الشمال إلى الجنوب. ابتعدت الحكومة القطرية عن الرشد بعد أن سلكت الشر، ومن الواضح أن قيعة أهل الخليج العربي لديها أقل بكثير من قيمة أهل طهران.

تعويلنا على الشعب القطري الذي نكن له كل المحبة والتقدير في تصحيح مسار تاريخي خاطئ لبلاده، ولا نعتقد أن الأشقاء القطريين يقبلون بمثل هذه الممارسات والسياسات، فهم شعبٌ أصيلٌ ينتمي لخليج أصيل. حفظ الله دولنا من المؤامرات والفتن، وأدام عليها الأمن والاستقرار.



قطع العلاقات مع

قطر



غلق الأجواء
البحرينية أمام
الطيران القطري



منع البحرينيين
من السفر للدوحة



قطع العلاقات
الدبلوماسية

14

منح المقيمين والزوار القطريين مهلة 14 يوم
لمغادرة البحرين



منع القطريين من دخول
البحرين

إمهال البعثة الدبلوماسية
القطرية 48 ساعة للمغادرة

سحب البعثة الدبلوماسية
البحرينية من قطر

لماذا قطعت البحرين علاقاتها مع قطر؟



التصعيد الإعلامي
القطري ضد البحرين



دعم قطر للإرهاب



صيانة الأمن والحفاظ
على الاستقرار



الدعم القطري للأنشطة
الإرهابية المسلحة في
البحرين



إصرار قطر على زعزعة
الأمن والاستقرار في
البحرين



عدم إمكانية السكوت
على الممارسات القطرية
الخطرة



التدخل القطري في
الشؤون الداخلية البحرينية



تمويل الجماعات المرتبطة
بإيران في البحرين



عمل قطر على إسقاط
النظام الشرعي في
البحرين

الوطن
أنفوجرافيك

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