

News as Brands: Branding Television News Channels in the Arab World

A Case Study of Aljazeera, Al-Arabiya, AlEkhbariya and Nile Television News Channels

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Abbreviations

ANOVA	Analysis of Variance
BBC	British Broadcasting Corporation
CCTV	Closed-Circuit Television
CNN	Cable News Network
ERTU	Egyptian Radio and Television Union
EU	European Union
ITV	Independent Television
KSA	Kingdom of Saudi Arabia
LBC	Lebanese Broadcasting Corporation
MBC	Middle East Broadcasting Centre
MENA	Middle East and North Africa
MSA	Modern Standard Arabic
SD	Standard Deviation
SPSS	Statistical Package for the Social Sciences
UK	United Kingdom
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
US	United States

Abstract

This research is an attempt to examine the use of news programmes as a means of branding television news channels in the Arab World. The researcher used a quantitative content analysis of the news programmes as well as semi-structured interviews with officials representing the four selected television news channels to explore their strategies in branding their television news channels via news programmes. News of the four selected Arabian television news channels (Aljazeera and Al-Arabiya, as Pan-Arab television news channels and the Nile and Al-Ekhbariya as government supported television news channels representing their regions), were analysed to test how they were used as a means of branding their television news channels in order for them to compete in the Arab media landscape, which is described as a saturated media environment. The study aims, specifically, at testing the differences among the selected television news channels on utilising elements of branding via their news programmes. The other aim of the study is to investigate how these channels reflect their promises which are claimed in their slogan via their news coverage. Moreover, it tries to establish a theoretical and practical perspective based on the specific results of the study regarding to branding television news channels via their news programmes. The study indicates that television news channels used their news bulletin to build and / or enhance their brands through three main groups of elements (news content, news presenters and news production techniques). The study revealed that twenty-two elements of branding were found to be significant.

Due to the lack of studies on television news channels in the Arab World, this study should be the first of its nature and contribute to the knowledge about the use of news as brands by television news channels in the Arab World.

Keywords

Branding, news branding, news programmes, television news channels, frame theory, brand image, brand identity, Arab World, Arab Spring, content analysis.

Chapter 1 Introduction

1.1 Overview

This research explores how four selected television news channels use their news programmes, in order to enhance their own branding image in their audience's mind. This introductory chapter begins by outlining the background, focusing on some of the key concepts. After establishing the scope of the study, along with the aims and objectives, the research questions are presented in a further section. Moreover, a rationale for the choice of this research's topic is then provided, and the significance of the study is discussed. Finally, the introductory chapter concludes with an overview of future perspectives that maps out the structure of the research.

1.2 Background of Research

Satellite television remains a major force in the ever-evolving Arab media landscape. Prior to the introduction of satellite television in the early 90's, Arab media was restricted mostly to government monopoly (The Arab State Broadcasting Union, 2013). In practice, this meant that twenty years ago, viewers in Saudi Arabia, for instance, were able to watch only two government-owned television channels, whereas currently, they have access to hundreds of channels. In the broader context of the Arab world countries, Hamdy (2013) noted that, in 2009, 696 satellite television channels were available to Arabic-speaking viewers. This number increased to 733 by 2010 and 1,150 by 2013, covering both general and special interest channels. It is predicted that this number will double by 2020, due to the political and social changes as well as the media developments in the Arab region.

As a result of this spectacular growth and the tough competition among these channels in the Arab World, specialist channels providing specific content such as news, sports, entertainment, documentaries, etc., have emerged, targeting specific audiences. Back in 2001, Sakr's research noted that since the 1990s, the Middle East has witnessed a massive explosion in satellite television news channels (Sakr, 2001). An argument by Sakr's (2001) that the type of broadcasting (focusing principally on news and current affairs) is under more pressure than other television channels, because their output must meet the expectations of target audiences, advertisers, and at times, supporting governments, on a daily basis. Likewise, the competition

for audience numbers and advertising income has become even tougher, due to the massive use of the internet in the region.

This suggests that the combination of political orientation, strong competition, and a weak advertising market has proved to be a catalyst for television news channels in the Arab World. Consequently, it is imperative to employ innovative strategies to cope with the marketing challenges that have become essential for survival. Competing television news channels have realised that they need to differentiate themselves through branding and sustaining close connection with their target audiences. There is a tough competition among television news channels concerning “what is to be taken as the correct, appropriate, or preferred representation of news” (Wenden, 2005, p. 89). The need for differentiation and communication of brand vision has been exacerbated by the increasingly saturated media landscape in the Arab World. From the observation of the Researcher, there is an instability in the region along with the massive growth in the use of technology. In particular, the latter, as Goldstein (2004) notes, proliferated production of a variety of content to targeted audiences in various forms across a large number of channels and platforms.

In short, the competitive media landscape in the Arab World, and the need for trustworthy coverage and reporting on events taking place in an unstable region, have encouraged television news channels, in particular, to use news programmes for the purposes of differentiating themselves as a brand, and in return, attract greater audiences, thus, beating the competition.

Essentially, this research argues that news can play a crucial role in attracting bigger audiences and market share, as well as aiding a channel to achieve its target. It also emphasises that news in the Arab World plays a vital role in capturing a share of a highly competitive market in some of the Arab World countries. For instance, some channels have attempted to brand themselves, by making television news more accessible, yet, reflecting a professional standard. In addition, the events of the Arab Spring that was happening throughout several Arabian countries which was a confrontation between governments and its people in Tunisia in 17-12-2010, Egypt in 25-1-2011, Libya in 17-2-2011 and Yemen in 27-11-2011, as observed by the researcher, proved to be a major catalyst in some parts of the Arab World countries for broadcasting; henceforth, channels began earnestly to compete with each other to reach a wider audience. Their strategic goals appear to focus on differentiating themselves through their news coverage of events from competing channels in the region and, more explicitly value and manage these

differences (Al-Abdallah, 2012). This was reflected, for example, in the different coverage of the Arab Spring by Al-Jazeera and Al-Arabiya television news channels. Audience noticed that Al-Jazeera was more with people of the street while Al-Arabiya was more with officials and governments.

This process of differentiation, as argued by the researcher, often entails paying more attention to media production, and improving the relationship between the audience, and their favourite television news channel.

1.3 Definitions and Concepts

There are various definitions of brand and branding. In 2010, the American Marketing Association provided an inclusive definition, stating that, a brand is “a name, term, sign, design, or a unifying combination of them intended to identify and distinguish the product or service from its competitors”. Prior to that, Kotler and Pfoertsch (2006, p. 5) had described a brand as “the totality of perceptions – everything you see, hear, read, know, feel, think, etc. – about a product, service, or business”. A brand can be also considered from the customer perspective as a “short-cut of attributes, benefits, beliefs, and values that differentiate, reduce complexity, and simplify the decision-making process” (Kotler and Pfoertsch, 2006, p. 5). This definition is more appropriate for this study, since it can be applied to the multiple aspects related to building and enhancing the brand of a television news channel.

Branding tends to be used to emphasise the process of establishing a brand. Thus, Johnson (2012, p. 167) stated that “Branding is a form of mediated and dynamic communication that constantly frames and reframes the relationships between producer, products and consumers”. Alhaqeel (2013, p. 1) referred to branding as "nothing, but the process of values selectivity, and relating these values to the product/service name to capture the customers' minds".

Within the context of this research, it is argued that a television news channel is responsible for creating a distinctive product with unique characteristics, and it focuses on how particular news channels seek to brand themselves by affirming their identity. Thus, for the purpose of this research, branding can be defined as all of the efforts made by a television news channel to differentiate itself; for instance, its logo, name, tagline, signature tune, trademark colours and product (news). In turn, the product (news) consists of the i) information presented about events

(news stories), ii) the personnel presenting the information (anchors and correspondents), and iii) the methods and techniques used for its presentation (production).

This competition among television news channels forces them to “brand themselves as producers of quality news in a marketplace” (Kasmani, 2013, p. 586). For example, television news channels can frame news coverage of an event in such a way, as to provide valuable, and accurate details about the issue being reported. They can also emphasise indicators of the channel’s branding elements, specifically drawing attention to the exclusivity of the data presented through the employment of techniques, such as indicating the channel’s strength in correctly predicting and flagging up the outcome of events, and/or repeating the name and the presence of the logo of the channel, etc.

Branding news programmes is an important factor in building viewers’ perception of a television news channel. Relatively little is known about how Arab television news channels use news as a means of branding their channels. Indeed, it can be argued that major Arab television news channels consider news programmes to be a competitive product, and it is clear that, they are doing their best to appear different from the rest of channels within their region. People depend on mass media for news and information about what is happening around them and elsewhere (DeFleur and Ball-Rokeach, 1989).

In summary, brand is the sum of the perceptions that are held about a company or a product, and these might include perceptions of both external and internal audiences and stakeholders, whereas branding is the set of activities that affect those perceptions. Building an effective positive brand perception means that both internal and external engagement are aligned to deliver a consistent impression of what the brand represents. Therefore, branding television news channels can act as a vital tool to differentiate, distinguish, identify and manage the relationship between channels and audiences. It can function as a strategy to communicate shared values between the television news channel, its product and the target audience.

1.4 Aims and Objectives of the Study

The main aims of this research is to investigate how the four selected television news channels use their news programmes, specifically their news content, presenters and production, to create or enhance their own branding image in their audience’s mind and to develop a theoretical model based on the results of the analysis of the selected television news channels.

The objectives for this study can be summarised as follows:

1. To define the concept of media branding and explain the dimensionality of this concept;
2. To determine the differences among the four selected television news channels based on their use of the elements of media branding;
3. To assess the current brand strategy in the selected four television news channels and the role that news programmes play in its creation; and
4. To make practical recommendations regarding how television news channels could use their news programmes (news bulletin) to brand themselves.

1.5 Research Questions

The research questions in this study focus on determining the elements of differentiation that occur in the news coverage of the four selected television news channels (Al-Arabiya, Al-Ekhbariya, Aljazeera and Nile News), in order to explore whether channels use these elements to differentiate themselves from competitors as a reinforcement of the brand identity.

More specifically, this study seeks to address the following research questions:

1. What are the most important elements of differentiation (branding) that have been used by the four selected television news channels (Aljazeera, Al-Arabiya, the Nile and Al Ekhbariya) via their news programmes?
2. To what extent do the four television news channels differ in using the elements of differentiation (branding) via their news coverage?
3. To what extent does each channel's news coverage reflect the promise of its slogan?
4. What is the practical model that can be drawn from the results of this study?

1.6 Rationale for the Study

The rationale for choosing this study begins with the personal interest and curiosity of the role of television news channels in the Arab World, and the perception of Arab audiences about these news channels, especially during and after the recent political and economic unrest in the Middle East. People in the Arab World are shifting to specific television news channels for news and information about what is happening around them. By listening to arguments and discussions regarding what is happening in the region in particular; the Researcher noticed that some viewers rely more on and adopt what he or she consumed from a television news channel or another. Some viewers, for instance, adopt what Al-Jazeera broadcasted, others adopt what

Al-Arabiya broadcasted and so on. This encouraged the Researcher to investigate the reasons why different viewers prefer certain news channels. The Researcher is also interested in media branding, in this regard, published a book about public relations and image building in 2013. In addition, the Researcher has published an academic article about public relations efforts in shaping images about Saudi private sectors. Also, the Researcher is a lecturer in public relations and branding at King Saud University in Saudi Arabia for undergraduate and postgraduate mass communications students and is interested in the hidden agenda of media, which is used as a strategy to get the attention of audience.

Academically, branding is a very important and well-recognised concept in marketing research and practice. Bendisch and associates (2007) described academic literature and empirical research on product brands as rich and extensive, and indicated that very little rigorous academic research have been conducted within this field so far. Branding media is a new field of research, and theoretical and practical perspectives are far from being neither clear nor concrete. As stated by Ots (2008) “Not in any way does it mean that this new field is even close to fully explored” (Ots, 2008, p. 1). Bellamy and Traudt (2014) argued that “despite the increasing emphasis on branding in television and marketing in general, academic studies of television branding are scarce in both media and marketing literature” (Bellamy and Traudt, 2014, p. 131). Previous studies on media branding have focused on the perception of either media professionals or audiences and branding personality dimensions. However, there are no clear explanations on how media resources help to develop brand image (Ots, 2008). Furthermore, to the Researcher’s knowledge, there is no research on how television news channels use news, their main product, to brand themselves. As Siegert (2008) mentioned “media firms are able to integrate the brand message into the editorial content quiet easily” (Siegert, 2008, p. 14). This study proposes to contribute in filling the gap of knowledge in this important subject by examining the use of news by television news channels in the Arab World, as a means of branding and as a tool of winning in this competitive era of Arab media landscape.

Due to the high number of television news channels in the region, and due to the audience’s need for news and information about what is happening around them; it is observed by the Researcher and others who are in the media in the Arab region that television news channels in the Arab world are in real need to using their news, as their main product, to differentiate

themselves from other competitors in the field, and to build / enhance their brands to face the strong competition with other news media in the region. Therefore, this study is aiming to introduce and /or enhance the adaptation of branding concept and use it as a managerial philosophy in managing television stations. Branding perspective is needed in the Arab world because it means moving the attention of television news channels to concentrate more on audiences' perceptions, and consequently boost up the levels of their quality and value. In this regard, the Researcher hopes that this work on branding television news channels in the Arab World through newscast will gain more interest among other researchers to tackle unsolved questions that will be raised by this study in specific, or in media and branding in general. The Researcher, therefore, aims that this study will be pioneer and will contribute to knowledge in the Arab World.

The final rationale is the outcomes of this study that might help television news channels management in the Arab World, in particular, to manage highly competitive media environment by introducing a paradigm on how media can use their newscast to differentiate themselves from other competitors, brand themselves, attract the attention of audiences and gain audience loyalty.

1.7 Significance of the Study

This section will highlight the relevance of the study as to the body of knowledge, in terms of theory and practice. Therefore, this study will contribute to the body of knowledge about news branding in the Arab world in terms of both theory and practice.

Despite the recognition of differentiation that occurs in the news coverage, it appears that studies dealing directly with this topic are scarce in the Arab context. The researcher experienced difficulties in finding researches of this nature. Therefore, this study contributes to the efforts that have already been made in promoting and improving the use of branding, specifically in the Arab region and adds something of significance to the existing literature. In addition, this study contributes to research in the mass media field and aims for having a potentially beneficial impact on creating media branding in the Arab world.

Apart from contributing to the existing literature about news media, this study increases the knowledge about the television media from the Arabic-speaking world. Also, this research contributes to media branding practice, hence, it can serve as a means to measure the degree of

distinctiveness of a channel's brand identity in a number of key areas of its news coverage. Additionally, the research can be relevant for supporting television news channels in their analysis of competitors' coverage and helping towards channel profiles creation in their identification of the similarities and differences between television news brands; all of which shall prompt competitive advantage. Consequently, the study can act as a guide for media branding practice in developing a channel's mission statement, and its core values. And lastly, the study contributes as a knowledge differentiation element that can assist television news channels to improve their branding strategies.

In addition, the development of the research theoretical model aimed to be use by academics and practitioners alike and contribute to the development and better understanding of media branding.

1.8 Methodology

This study adopted the mixed method research techniques, in order to analyse how news content, presenters and production can increase branding. Both quantitative and qualitative data (mixed methods) were selected as analytical techniques' input, to help provide a comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon under investigation. In terms of research strategy, this study adopted the sequential design for data collection. In the first phase, literature was reviewed to identify the key contributors (qualitative). Secondly, after conceptually reflecting on the key elements of differentiation, a content analysis (quantitative) of the news bulletin of the four selected television news channels was made, for the purpose of differentiating between television news channels. Thirdly, a qualitative data collection was undertaken by semi-structured interviews (with senior managers) to collect empirical data, and identify an inner perspective.

Relying on the mixed method for analysis, the analysis of quantitative data was made through statistical methods to reduce data complexity, and to highlight content patterns from each of the four news channels. Quantitative data were analysed with SPSS computer application software.

1.9 Research Structure

This section provides an overview of research sections totalling ten chapters. In addition to the introductory Chapter One, the following describes the further Chapters that follow:

Chapter One introduced the background of the study and defined some of the key concepts it draws upon. It, then, sets out the primary research aims, objectives, and research questions that are to be answered. After providing a rationale for the choice of topic for this research, the significance of the study was discussed.

Chapter Two outlines the historical development of television in the Arab world, with specific reference to the development of this medium as a means of disseminating news, throughout the Arabic-speaking countries of the Middle East and North Africa. It describes the shift from state-run terrestrial television news channels, to the emergence of private transnational satellite channels, and the evolution of a competitive market in which, differentiation has become a crucially important strategy for broadcasters and newsmakers to attract audiences. Chapter Two concludes with an outline of the four television news channels that have been chosen for comparison, namely Al Jazeera, Al Arabiya, Al-Ekhbariya and Nile News.

Chapter Three explores how satellite news television channels create a uniquely recognisable, and saleable brand for the purpose of differentiating their product, and in order to survive in today's extremely competitive media market. The Chapter begins by establishing the reasons for the increasing emphasis of branding within the television industry, and then, examines how differentiation works specifically in the case of television news channels creating brand loyalty. The focus, then, shifts into considering the components of brand identity, and how these represent the design and concept values that give a brand its uniqueness. The concluding sections of the Chapter reflect on the identified qualities that are valued by news channels' audience, both in the Western and the Arab context. Throughout, reference is made to illustrative examples from UK, US or Arab television.

Chapter Four involves analysing news through the perspective of a product (Lipschultz and Hilt, 2014). Shaped by a range of factors including market forces, audience needs, preferences, and the newsroom philosophy and routines (Busa, 2013; Uscinski, 2014), the "product" seems to be influenced by the techniques, the style, the language used in the news, the anchors who present this, and the studio setting and how it looks are of crucial importance. In conclusion, this Chapter discusses what makes news a product, and what factors determine news'

production, the extent to which news and media in general endeavour meet the public needs, and how news are presented to capture and maintain audience attention.

Chapter Five examines the concept of framing and considers it the reason for judging it to be a useful analytical tool for exploring media texts, in particular the news. After briefly considering the various ways in which frames and framing have been defined, this Chapter traces the development of this concept, and how this has influenced researchers' approaches. It focuses more specifically on the emphasis framing approach (Druckman, 2002), and on some of the key studies in this field. It concludes by considering some of the critiques of the framing theory.

Chapter Six focuses on the methodology used in this research, and how this contributes to addressing the objectives of this study and the research questions. It begins by discussing the research paradigm, together with the conceptual approach and strategy adopted. Following this, it explains the research design, the mixed method approach which includes both quantitative and qualitative data collection methods. The research process, including the data collection methods and data analysis procedures, is then described in detail. The Chapter ends by addressing the reliability and validity of the methods used, and the ethical issues relevant to this study.

Chapter Seven addresses the first three research questions, exploring the extent to which the differences across Al-Arabiya, Al-Ekhbariya, Al-Jazeera and Nile News differentiate them from their competitors, and establish a distinctive brand identity. In considering the research questions, this Chapter presents the results of the statistical analysis of the data sample of news coverage gathered from Al Jazeera, Al Arabiya, Al-Ekhbariya and Nile News. In order to address Research Question Number One, which centres on the elements of branding used for differentiation, some 27 possible elements of this news coverage are analysed. News content (14 elements) focuses on the information provided about the event being reported by the television news channel. News production (7 elements) examines how the event was covered while presenters (6 elements) looks at the anchors, and correspondents who present the news stories. The analysis focuses on the frequency and duration of time devoted to each of these elements in the sample, across the four news channels. The elements tested were grouped into three categories: content, production and presenters. This information was then reconsidered in light of each channel's slogan. This involved looking at the most significant elements of the data for each channel in order to determine which elements of differentiation (branding) were used to meet its promise, and how well they succeeded.

Chapter Eight focuses on results and findings from the qualitative research that are generated from the interviews which were conducted with representatives of the four-selected television news channels, to gain valuable insights about how do they look at branding and what do they think of news as a way of enhancing / branding their television news channels.

Chapter Nine presents a synthesis of the results of the quantitative and qualitative analysis and considers the extent to which official discourse on the channel's perceived brand strengths as stated by the representatives of the respective television news channels matches the reality of the channel profile that emerged from the content analysis.

Within Chapter Ten, the aims, objectives and research questions are appraised to demonstrate the research contribution. While the first part explores the achievement of research goals, the further sections contain contribution of the study, recommendation, limitations and further research direction.

Chapter 2 Television News Channels in the Arab World

2.1 Introduction

In his study of the Arab mass media, Rugh (2004) argues that media systems reflect, and respond to their environment, and are affected not only by political factors but also by cultural, social and economic influence. However, for reasons that will be explored here, it is the first of these factors, namely, the political influence, that not only shapes, and continues to shape to a very significant degree, the development of media and of television news in the Arab World, but has also greatly influenced the approaches that media analysts have taken to the study of this subject. Before beginning any detailed analysis of the nature of contemporary television news channels in the Arab World, it is important to understand more fully how television has developed as a medium in this context. This involves identifying the extent to which political, sociocultural, economic and technological factors have not only helped to condition the changing role played by this medium, but also how these factors have served to influence the attitudes of Arab audiences towards it.

This Chapter will begin by outlining the historical development of television in the Arab World, with specific reference to the development of the medium as a means of disseminating news throughout the Arabic-speaking countries of the Middle East and North Africa (MENA). This will provide the context for the later discussion regarding the shift from state-run terrestrial television news channels, to emerging private transnational satellite channels. This has led to the evolution of a competitive market in which differentiation has become a crucial strategy by which broadcasters and newsmakers attract audiences. The Chapter concludes by presenting the four television news channels that have been chosen for detailed comparative analysis in this study: Al Jazeera, Al Arabiya, Al Ekhbariya, and Nile News. The first two channels have been chosen, because they are currently considered the two most prominent satellite television news channels in the Arab World and, as this Chapter will show, are noted for having adopted approaches that have transformed news coverage in the region. Al Ekhbariya and Nile News have been chosen because both of these government-controlled channels have been credited with making major efforts to re-brand themselves, although the extent to which this represents a genuine shift in values and policy, or is a largely cosmetic exercise, has been questioned (Al-

Asfar, 2002). These four news channels also represent different regions and are considered to be the most professional in the Arab World (Sharief, 2009).

2.2 The Emergence of Television in the Arab World

Television made its appearance in the Arab World in the 1950s, an era when there was a growing consciousness of the Arab identity and increasing challenges to the political status quo: this was a time when many MENA countries were still subject to a greater or lesser extent to the colonial powers of Britain or France (Lahlali, 2011). During the colonial phase, media technologies were developed in order to spread the message of the European colonisers, but in the post-colonial phase, these same media were still used as tools, first to achieve independence by mobilising the masses and later, to help with the construction of new national identities (Elarishi, 2014). When television emerged in the Arab World, its main function was expected to be the same as that of the existing nationally-based media (radio and the press) and “to assist the government in disseminating its information and controlling the incoming news from foreign sources” (Mellor, 2005, p. 38). Most Arab governments imposed strict controls and censorship on the media, and various justifications have been offered for this tight grip, including the desire to preserve Arab cultural heritage from what was viewed as the growing threat of Westernisation, and the need to protect national unity or, in other words, to maintain political stability (Elouardaoui, 2013).

When the first television services were launched in Kuwait, Morocco, Egypt and Saudi Arabia in the mid-1950s (Yassine, 2013), all were state-owned, and for the most part, this became the pattern throughout the Arab World, as governments attempted to shape public opinion by doing everything in their power to limit the spread of information, and to control political discourse in this new medium (Yassine, 2013). Economic conditions at that time meant that media outlets were unable to operate independently without government support (Kalliny, 2010). Until the 1990s, there were a few exceptions to this rule, and even in those countries where there was some experimentation with private terrestrial television, namely Iraq, Morocco, and most prominently Lebanon, the stations were considered a form of partnership between the state and the private sector (with the state often major shareholders in the companies) (Kraidy, 2002). The 1974–2000 war in Lebanon shifted the power of the central government and opened the door to private broadcasting. LBC was launched in 1985 as an international broadcaster and

gained popularity as a commercial television entertainment channel with a liberal agenda (Elouardaoui, 2013).

For a number of reasons, high rates of illiteracy persisted in many parts of the Arabic-speaking world during the early decades of the post-colonial period (Miles, 2010). This meant that large numbers of the population were unable to access printed media, and for them, first, the radio and then, the television became key sources of information and particularly news (Fandy, 2008).

Originally, “all Arab television channels were government owned” (Rugh, 2006, p. 15). As such, Neack (2008) notes that until the 1990s the media landscape of the Arab World was characterised by the proliferation of these state-sponsored and -funded outlets. Since all were established to reflect governmental policies and interests, they were censored to a greater or lesser degree. In practice, this meant that there was an absence of television programmes revolving around discussions or debates, because viewpoints alternative to those of the government were not presented. Programmes were intended only to offer the opinions that adopted, supported, and reinforced the attitudes and stances of the state government, which funded and controlled the television station (Howard and Hussain, 2013).

2.3 Television News and News Agencies

Television, like any other media, served to help the existing regime maintain authority, and ensure that voices of any organised political movement that could possibly threaten governmental power inside the country or limited policy options abroad were effectively excluded. Strict censorship also, meant that certain social issues judged by those in authority to be a social taboo, including sexual matters, gender inequality, and human rights, were not allowed to be aired. The programming content of television across the Arabic-speaking world varied little over the course of three decades:

“A melee of government-controlled news [was] mostly localised to their country of origin, and covering official inaugurations, ceremonial events and reporting on the whereabouts of heads of state. This strict diet was diluted by an array of non-controversial entertainment programmes, Arab films and locally produced soaps, as well as shows imported from abroad, broadcast in their post-censorship variations and largely adapted to local laws, customs, and traditions” (Wide Angle, 2007)

As this description makes it clear, differences among the various national terrestrial television channels with regard to broadcast news were minimal, and the news coverage was monotonous,

focusing on reports of largely local events with no analysis of issues. The presentational format for news during this period did not vary, and always consisted of an anchor reading out the news bulletin, produced by the national news agency, item by item from a script. There was no commentary by specialists or invited guests, no live coverage of events, and no on-the-spot reporting from correspondents to give the news more credibility (Abdulati, 2006).

Although Arab news agencies had existed since the mid-1950s, for many years, their role was limited by technological, financial and professional weaknesses, and they were unable to compete with their Western counterparts. Initially the lack of training and professional skills of the journalists who were employed in these agencies, posed a particular problem. According to Mellor (2005), the first of these news agencies, known as the Middle East News Agency, was launched in Egypt in 1956 with the intention of serving the Arabic-speaking countries in the region. A further three news agencies followed in 1959: the Iraqi News Agency, the Maghrib Arab Press Service, and the Lebanese National News Agency. The Algerian Press Service started in 1961 and was followed by the establishment of agencies in Tunisia, Jordan, Libya and Syria in the period between 1964 and 1965. The opening of the Sudan News Agency in 1970 was followed by agencies in Saudi Arabia (1971), Qatar (1975), Kuwait (1976) and the United Arab Emirates (1977) (Ezzat, 1983).

Training centres and university courses focusing on media and journalism were later launched in various Arabic-speaking countries, to address this need (Lahlali, 2011), but, as the news agencies were state-controlled, all employees were expected to represent governmental views and attitudes in their performance and products; for example, correspondents of the Syrian news agency were treated as diplomats, which means they were treated as a VIP people (Mellor, 2005). In other words, they were given a special attention as an important person. Heavily censored content, together with an often exclusively local focus, meant that Arab audiences soon lost interest in the news provided by these agencies (Rinnawi, 2006).

In the 1960s, an Arabic version of the news bulletins produced by European agencies was introduced. Since the focus of the Arab agencies remained on local news, there was a heavy reliance on foreign agencies for other content (Mellor, 2005). Some audience perceived this step as a welcome sign of openness to the Western world while others distrusted the process (Lerbinger, 2013). The dominance of British and French news agencies (the former colonial powers in the region), and, to a lesser extent, the competition from Americans, drove Arab

scholars and elites to warn against the growing influence of Western culture (MacKinnon and Fiala, 2015). This led to imposing controls on the flow of Western broadcasting, along with careful scrutiny of what was deemed suitable for the culture, and the context of the Arab World (Zayani, 2005). Meller (2005) reported that there was a plan to establish a joint Arab news agency to reduce the dominance of foreign news agencies. However, this never came to fruition, because agreement could not be reached on issues such as the leadership of the agency, finance, or the presentation of opposing views on some political issues.

2.4 Satellite and the Rise of Transnational Television

According to Mellor (2007, p. 50), the First Gulf War (August 1990–February 1991) was the “catalyst needed to initiate media reforms in the Arab region”, and played an essential role in the emergence of private transnational television channels. The Egyptian government had already launched a satellite channel in December 1990 (Cushion, 2010), before the Gulf War, in the hope of hastening Egypt’s return to the Arab World, after a period of isolation, and following the country’s peace treaty with Israel. Its second satellite service, Nile TV International, began experimental broadcasting in October 1993, which aimed at attracting tourism to Egypt (Dajani, 2008). During the Gulf War, the American channel Cable News Network (CNN) became a global news provider, and for the first time, thanks to satellite technology, Arab audiences were able to watch coverage of a conflict in their region as it unfolded. This uncensored reporting of the events of the war meant that CNN became popular among large sections of its Arab audiences, a development that gave serious cause for concern to Arab governments.

Viewing events during the Gulf War on CNN, exposed Arab audiences to the novelty of a presentational style of journalism that was very different from that on their national terrestrial channels. For the first-time, Arab audiences saw panel discussions, interactive talk shows, and interviews with political figures, in which the guest was subjected to hard critical questioning by the interviewer; features that were all absent from their government-controlled television (Cushion, 2010).

It was clear that there was an appetite among Arab audiences for a different form of television, and in the wake of the First Gulf War, there was “an explosion in the number of satellite television channels” (Sakr, 2001, p. 50). According to Hamdy’s (2013) figures, this growth

shows no signs of slowing. In 2009, about 696 satellite television channels were available to Arab viewers; in 2010, the number increased to 733, and in 2013, to 1,150. Hamdy (2013) predicts that this number is likely to double by 2020, in response to the dramatic political changes that took place following the 2010 Arab Spring, including regime changes and shifts in power in a number of Arab states, together with more general social, media and technological developments in the region. In particular, access to the internet, the popularity of social media, and the rise of mobile technology have all contributed to the development and proliferation of Arab satellite news television channels. According to Bruce (2015, p. 76), “Nowhere is the interaction of new digital communication technologies and their impact on society currently more interesting than in the Arab world”.

Elouardaoui (2013) suggests many factors that helped to trigger the emergence of such large number of private, transnational satellite television channels in the 1990s. First, there was an abundance of capital, with private investors eager to back media projects. Second, the growth of conservative religious trends in the MENA countries, sparked by a major Islamic revival, created a demand for programming that was more geared to traditional Islamic values. Third, the ongoing large-scale economic migration from MENA countries, and the increasing numbers of the second generation of immigrant communities living in Western countries, revealed that there was a growing demand for satellite television channels that could keep them in contact with events in their home countries. Lahlali (2011) argues that these channels have helped to create virtual on-air communities and forums for debate, that crossed regional boundaries, and supported a sense of unity, “strengthening the language and cultural ties between the Arab countries”; and, since state-run television still only offers the government perspective on issues, they also provide “a platform for the opposition to air their voices” (Lahlali, 2011, p. 33).

In the wake of the Gulf War, two of the Gulf States, Qatar and UAE, decided to launch satellite television and telecommunication networks, in an attempt to offer different Arab perspectives on the news (Sreberny and Paterson, 2004). The Middle East Broadcasting Centre (MBC) launched a new television channel broadcasting from London in 1991, as the first privately owned, independent Arabic language satellite television station, and in 1996, a new television news channel, known as Al Jazeera, was launched in Qatar. This was followed by Egypt’s Nile Channel in 1998, then Al-Arabiya was launched in 2003 broadcasting from Dubai and owned by the Middle East Broadcasting Centre (MBC) which moved from London to Dubai; the

Riyadh-based Saudi television news channel, Al-Ekhbariya, was launched in 2004. A more detailed discussion of each of these channels follows later in this Chapter.

Although many Arab satellite channels originally saw their role as “replacing terrestrial channels with a general format, mixing news and entertainment” (Donsbach, 2015, p. 30), many transnational channels, as Sinclair and Turner (2004) indicated focused increasingly on news and current affairs, competing to attract the 200 million viewers in the Arab World. A large proportion of these viewers wanted to watch news channels, unlike the traditional Arab state-controlled channels; channels that would allow them to watch something in Arabic, similar to what they could see on CNN and BBC World. The high numbers of people wanting news coverage that actually reflected what was happening around them, intensified competition among the television news channels in the Arab World. As a result, channels like Al Jazeera and Al Arabiya increasingly attempted to emulate CNN’s approach to news coverage, employing live studio debates and discussions in an attempt to attract ever larger audiences (Powers, 2012).

Donsbach (2015, p. 30) argues that when the Arab satellite news channels emerged in the 1990s, there was a move away from state-sanctioned national broadcasting and “a process of national media integration” began to take place. Media integration can be defined as “an ownership pattern in which the subsidiary companies or branches within a corporation are strategically interrelated” (Ott and Mack, 2013, p. 32). There are two types of media integration: vertical and horizontal. Vertical integration identifies a corporation that owns and controls different aspects of production and distribution, within a single media industry. Horizontal integration describes an ownership pattern, where the corporation dominates one stage of the production process (Ott and Mack, 2013). This was followed in the next decade by a shift towards increasing specialisation, a response to the tough competition among channels in the Arab World, and the growth of channels catered for niche markets such as news, sports, entertainment, or documentaries (Donsbach, 2015). According to Gunter (2010), the most noticeable changes in Arab media since 2000 were in the area of television news, where a major shift took place from coverage that consisted largely of presenting news bulletins, to using a greater diversity of techniques, including live reporting, interviews and analysis. The development of technology helped to support these changes and make this different approach possible (Gunter, Campbell, Touri, and Gibson, 2009). Moreover, new technology guaranteed rapid distribution of media

information throughout the Arab World and, in some cases, contributed to circumventing the strict control of the flow of information and news exercised by Arab governments (cited in Lahlali, 2011).

The growing availability of small, cheap satellite dishes made channels accessible to ever greater parts of the Arab World (Powers, 2012), greatly increasing potential audience figures. Broadband internet and mobile technology further opened up the ways by which news could enter the Arab World. In return, this greatly expanded the potential for audience interactivity, an increasingly important element in attracting television audiences in the Arab World.

2.5 The Impact of Independent Television

Once satellite channels had become the main carriers of Arab news and entertainment output across the region, the governments of Arab states found it increasingly difficult to control information flows in their countries through the media. They initially responded by adopting transnational mechanisms instead of country-specific laws in order to secure their “national interests” (Anas, 2012). “Transnational” meant going beyond the nation-state paradigm. With the emergence of the internet and social media, Arab governments realised that they would need to respond more proactively and, according to Ayish (as cited in Anas, 2012), they took a number of steps intended to ensure they did not completely give up control over media in this new environment. The first approach involved restructuring state broadcasting and allowing more independent structures to replace the tightly controlled media. At the same time, worried by falling audiences, state-controlled television channels attempted to follow the practices employed by private broadcasters, especially in the field of entertainment. In addition, alternative “state affiliated” broadcasting services were created and intended to operate alongside government-run services, while “non-state affiliated” services were permitted to perform as purely commercial ventures. However, the non-state affiliated broadcasting services in the Arab World were still subject to the censorship and monitoring of governments (Ayish, 2001).

While there is general agreement that the Arab media landscape has changed beyond all recognition since the 1990s, opinions vary as to the extent that developments in Arab media have specifically influenced the political structure of Arab society. From the mid-1990s, there was optimism that the launching of Arab satellite channels would bring about democratic

reforms; believing that the adoption by these channels of talk shows and on-line phone-ins granted ordinary people the opportunity to make their voices heard. However, Figenschou (2013) maintains the idea that the impact of these channels on political and social changes remains limited and argues that the foreign and domestic policies of Arab governments have not changed, and that these channels have not supported any concrete actions by civilians. In the opinion of Figenschou (2013), some Arab governments have succeeded in absorbing the first shock of the pressure that was exercised on them via the new channels; in some cases, their authoritarianism has re-emerged. Arab channels, in general, remain government-controlled in the sense that their content and news are monitored by the funding government, and many media researchers have therefore shifted their focus from discussing the direct implications of these satellite channels in promoting political change, to exploring the more general role and contribution they make to establish a new public Arab sphere.

Much research on Arab media in the last decade has concentrated on the impact of the emergence of new media, specifically the social media, and much attention has been paid to the role that it has played in bringing about the mass protests, and dramatic political changes witnessed during the Arab Spring, particularly in the case of Egypt. Lynch (2011), for example, has identified key ways in which the new media have succeeded in promoting collective action and challenging Arab governments. Lynch (2011) noted that social media, SMS and the internet not only enabled opposing voices to be heard across the globe, influencing the world's view of the protests and international support for authoritarian Arab regimes, but also enabled protesters in the different countries involved in the uprisings to learn from each other about effective forms of action. Lynch (2011) argues that while individuals may be concerned about voicing opposition to the political climate in a country by conventional means, the informational cascade created by social media serves to break down the wall of fear and encourages individuals to express their views openly, thus, affecting the overall control of the public sphere. Lynch (2011) also points out that while protesters are able to employ new media to make their voice heard, informing the world about violations of human rights, for instance, Arab governments can use the same media as a form of repression by employing techniques that limit access to the internet, and interfere with the flow of online communication. The Researcher, therefore, argues that the recent use of social media affects the news broadcast by the satellite news channels examined in this study. The new technology, such as the use of social media,

affects audience rates and, therefore, makes the competition between traditional media such as newspapers, radio and television very strong.

Miladi (2006) argues that perhaps the most far-reaching impact of media developments in the MENA countries due to satellite technology is its effect on Arab audiences, who in his opinion, have become active participants, rather than remaining “passive dupes”. Using alternative sources of information and being able to analyse and compare political messages, undermine the widely-held notion of media’s “priming” and “agenda-setting” powers” (Miladi, 2006, p. 659). However, more recent research by Alwan (2011) on audiences in the Arab World, illustrates the extent to which Arab audiences are still influenced by the traditional media. Investigating Iraqi preferences for television news channels, Alwan (2011) found that first comes Al Jazeera, then Al Arabiya, and last Al Ekhbariya. After analysing audience live debate about events in the region, Alwan (2011) concluded that, some of the views expressed by participants, clearly reflected views that derived from their favourite television news channel and reflected its specific perspective. Al-Jaber and Gunter’s (2013) study of the preferences of Arab audiences in terms of news type, content, and presentational style revealed that they favoured a high standard of news content and high-effects news. They also preferred a style based on presenters asking searching questions about government policies and performance, together with an in-depth analysis of events. All of these elements were absent in the traditional government-controlled local channels.

2.6 Arab Television News Channels

Having examined the general developments in television in the Arab World since this medium first emerged in the 1950s, the following section focuses on the four television news channels that will be analysed in this research.

2.6.1 Al Jazeera

In its literal sense, the Arabic word Al Jazeera literally means ‘the island’, but it is also commonly used to refer to the Arabian Peninsula. As previously noted, Al Jazeera was launched in 1996 as a satellite news channel broadcasting in Arabic. Although it has, since, expanded into providing other news channels, including one in English, this study will focus only on its Arabic output, since it is the main satellite news channel for Arabs, who prefer their broadcasts

to be in the Arabic language, so they can easily understand what is going on. Not all audiences can be expected to understand English news or broadcasting in English.

According to Khater (2005), the time was ripe for the emergence of a channel like Al Jazeera, launched at the moment when the Arab World was in the process of casting off the burdens of its post-colonial inheritance, and entering the new era of globalisation. This shift was marked by a decline in the nationalist liberation movements that had emerged, when the countries in the region, first, sought and then, achieved, independence. The movements that had previously served to rally groups and individuals around a common cause, began to break down into “an array of religious, ethnic and sectarian factions united only by their hostility to the outsider—and the American outsider above all” (Khater, 2005, p. 365). As the first professional independent news channel was established in the Arab World, managed, funded, and directed solely by Arabs, it may be said that Al Jazeera benefited from this anti-Western sentiment (Abdemoula, 2015).

More importantly, the channel has been credited with raising the standards of Arab news journalism, and with reinvigorating the culture of news broadcasting in Arab television, as it “shook up old media practices in the region and spurred changes that in the not-so-distant past were unthinkable in a tightly controlled media environment” (Cushion, 2010, p. 185). The popularity that Al Jazeera enjoyed, led to the emergence of more news channels, and thus, contributed to developing a more competitive media environment, redefining the parameters of broadcast journalism in a region where the airwaves have traditionally been used for what might be called “dynastic propaganda” (Thussu, 2004, p. 49). Al Jazeera has found a special place in the Arabian heart and consciousness (Al-Abdallah, 2012; Alwan, 2013), and its groundbreaking status can also be judged by the enormous amount of academic interest it has attracted, both within the Arab World and beyond.

Briefly, Al Jazeera aimed to differentiate itself in various ways from the existing news coverage that was offered by other Arabic language channels. Al Jazeera insisted on being free from the state censorship and restrictions typical of the region, claiming that it aimed to provide “the opinion and the other opinion”, a by-line that reflected its intent to broadcast diverse and sometimes diametrically opposed points of view. According to Mellor, Rinnawi, Dajani, and Ayish (2013), this “pluralistic journalism” contributed to the building of a civic political consciousness and was a characteristic that sharply differentiated its offerings as a channel. It

has been argued by Cushion (2010) that this event compelled competing channels to respond through changing the nature of the news service they offered, and of their media culture, in an attempt to avoid losing their audiences.

It has been also claimed that the news disseminated by Al Jazeera has unique characteristics. Its coverage has been described as “de-territorialised and cosmopolitan” (Figenschou, 2013, p. 2), and it has been praised for creating a pan-Arab public sphere. The channel has an instinct for breaking news (Lahlali, 2011). Its unprecedented news coverage of major events such as the events of 9/11, the subsequent war in Afghanistan (Lahlali, 2011), and the Arab Spring, has helped making it the most influential of all Arab news channels (Figenschou, 2013), offering “an alternative perspective to mainstream global media such as BBC, CNN, Fox News, and MSNBC” (Nasr, 2014, p. 1). The channel’s reputation for sustained coverage is also unequalled, due to its constant coverage from “costly and logistically difficult locations” (Baker, 2004, p. 64). Its dynamic production practices, the quality of its programmes, and the individual freedom of its journalists have all made Al Jazeera a unique news channel (Figenschou, 2013). Al Jazeera is noted for tackling controversial issues in the Arab World (Miladi, 2006), and for its decisions concerning what viewers are allowed to see; for example, during the conflict in Iraq, it adopted a controversial policy of showing coverage that included graphic images of casualties and fatalities; other channels opted not to do so (Sreberny and Paterson, 2004). Al Jazeera is credited for introducing the talk show format to the Middle East. Its programme, *The Opposite Direction*, was based on CNN’s *Crossfire*. Audiences who had been watching government-controlled television for decades were used to receiving only one version of reality, one way of thinking and one opinion; *The Opposite Direction* is based on a frank exchange of ideas between people with diverse opinions. It adopted “no-holds-barred political debates” (Sakr, 2009) featuring both pro- and anti-regime participants. Badaracco (2005) argues that in the context of the Arab World, the show’s decision to include rebels, and those in opposition to regional governments in its line-ups, amounts to a show of dissent against the governments in power.

A crucial element of the talk show format is its interactivity: audiences are encouraged to engage in the studio discussion via phone calls or social media (Hatchen and Scotten, 2015). Thanks to digital technology, even those in remote locations are now able to participate in live programmes, putting questions directly to ministers and government representatives. In this respect, some commentators have claimed that Al Jazeera has contributed to the

democratisation of television news. Incorporating live phone-ins into their talk shows has proved to be a successful format for all Arab satellite channels, because audiences enjoy the novel opportunity to discuss their political and social problems, in a relatively open, and free manner via these television news channels (Muckenheim, 2007).

Al Jazeera has also framed itself as a news channel that speaks for the public, addressing the daily concerns of ordinary people. It introduces itself as a channel that raises issues of public interest, using its “aggressive investigative reporting style” (Badaracco, 2005, p. 64) to question those in power, regardless of their position in the political hierarchy. It was willing to cross the lines set explicitly or implicitly by Arab governments, especially airing issues which have long been considered taboo subjects such as human rights in the Arab World. Abdemoula (2015) argues that Al Jazeera has, thus, succeeded in filling a political void, acting as the people’s representative, when Arab parliaments have often failed to do so. Some observers go further, claiming that the impact of the so-called “Al Jazeera effect” (Badaracco, 2005, p. 65) both on Arab audiences, and on other media in the MENA countries, has forced Arab governments not only to attempt to modernise their presentational styles, but also, to adjust their strictly censored media in response to the uncensored coverage that Al Jazeera broadcasts.

2.6.2 Al Arabiya

Inevitably, given its success, a number of satellite television news channels have followed Al Jazeera’s footsteps in newsgathering and production (Badaracco, 2005); and the launch of Al Arabiya, a private television news channel funded by Saudi businessmen in 2003, was considered by some media critics and scholars to represent a challenge to Al Jazeera. It was intended to reassert Saudi Arabia’s role in the Arab media, particularly since the Qatar-based channel had been accused of being overly critical of the Saudi royal family, and of the internal affairs of the Kingdom (Badaracco, 2005). Sakr (2007, p. 158) notes that Al Arabiya was launched with the promise that it would provide credible and timely news for Arab World audiences, offering a “wise balance alternative to Al Jazeera”. According to Alhammouri (2013), the ex-director of Al Arabiya, AbdulRahman AlRashed, has stated in the *New York Times* interview that the channel had been established to cure Arab television of its penchant for violence and radical politics, presenting the world with moderate Arab views and perspectives. Although AlRashed did not name Al Jazeera, the implied criticism of the rival channel was clearly understood.

Based in Dubai Media City, Al Arabiya broadcasts 24-hour news in Arabic to audiences across the globe, and its network of correspondents and news bureaux in 40 cities, contribute to it being considered one of the leading news channels in the Arab World. Unlike Al Jazeera's emphasis on political affairs, Al Arabiya deals with a broader range of issues such as economics, sports and culture (Alhammouri, 2013), and, in addition to hiring highly qualified journalists, it also showcases work by young documentary makers (Dupret, 2011).

Alhammouri (2013) highlights the importance of two of Al Arabiya's programmes. The first is *Special Mission*, a nightly investigative journalism show based on the format of BBC's *Panorama*, and reports on critical matters in different areas of the Arab World. The second is an arts and culture show, *Spotlight*, which showcases talent from the Gulf region, and from Saudi Arabia in particular. In terms of differentiation, Al Arabiya presents talk shows that is described as controversial. The best known of these, *el Dou* (Under the light), *Bilarabi* (In Arabic), and *Nuqtat Nizam* (Point of order), offer frank and open discussion of controversial topics with high-profile guests, representing opposing viewpoints (Timberg and Erler, 2010). Against Al Jazeera's best known hard-hitting political talk show *The Opposite Direction*, Al Arabiya introduced a talk show known as *Eight O'clock* featuring more general issues (Sakr, 2007).

Al Arabiya does share a number of similarities with Al Jazeera. Most importantly, both channels claim to be independent voices within the authoritarian media environment, which for the most part persists within the Arab World (Hammond, 2007). Both channels have been described as forces for democratisation within the region (Mellor *et al.*, 2013). Seib (2008) identifies other similarities shared by Al Jazeera, and Al Arabiya that contribute to their joint success as news channels. The first is their commitment to hiring professional journalists, both Arab and non-Arab, with local knowledge of the region, and a Western-style approach to journalism. Given that both channels aim to broadcast news free from local state censorship and restrictions, they appeal to journalists who want to work without government interference and who, in return, attract audiences with a desire to watch news that is not mere regime propaganda (Powers, 2012).

Both channels have been able to benefit from the fact that a new generation of television journalists has emerged in the Arab World. Graduates of Western European and American universities have seen the potential role of Arab World television, in the age of information and

globalisation, and have acquired the professional skills and experience required for the new form of television journalism that involves the ability to chair panel discussions, host talk shows, and conduct probing interviews, all being key elements of the output of private Arab transnational television news channels (Ayish 2001). At the same time, by adopting this contemporary presentational style, this new generation of journalists has succeeded in putting pressure on government media outlets to modify the contents and production techniques of their own news output (Mellor, 2007).

Adding to that, both Al Jazeera and Al Arabiya, have demonstrated their ability to access international communication networks, by forging partnerships with well-known Western television news channels such as the BBC (Dupret, 2011). Moreover, in their own ways, each has endeavoured to bridge the cultural gap between East and West, by capturing Arab viewers in the United States, and by educating Arab audiences about this Western nation through broadcasting weekly talk shows such as Al Jazeera's *Min Washington* (From Washington) and Al Arabiya's *Aber al Muhit* (Across the Ocean) (Seib, 2008).

While Al Arabiya clearly shares a number of similarities with Al Jazeera, it also has distinctive features which differentiate it. While it has been claimed that Al Jazeera acts as the mouthpiece for Arab and Islamic radicalism, Al Arabiya has adopted a more moderate media discourse, and consequently, appears to have opted for a lower profile when dealing with political issues (Mellor *et al.*, 2013). As previously noted, this characteristic is most noticeable, in the fact that its talk shows tend to focus on social, rather than political issues, discussing subjects that have traditionally been considered taboo (Sakr, 2009). While Al Jazeera broadcasts news from a transnational Islamic and Pan-Arab nationalist perspective, and indeed has been criticised for not discussing issues related to the local communities of specific Arab countries (Sreberny and Paterson, 2004), Al Arabiya is keen to promote state interests. For this reason, De Mooij (2013) notes that Al Arabiya's audience tends to have a more state-centric nationalist identity.

2.6.3 Al Ekhbariya

Al Ekhbariya is a Saudi state-controlled and state-owned television news channel (Sakr, 2007), launched in 2004 as a part of a media reform plan that was intended to revamp existing channels in Saudi Arabia (Mansell and Raboy, 2011). The former director, Mohammed Barayan, claimed that the channel's aim is to tell the world about Saudi Arabia, presenting a new image of the

country, and correcting misconceptions concerning a range of issues, especially gender inequality and Saudi women's role in life and society (Sakr, 2007). This is clearly reflected in the channel's policy of appointing women as staff members and newsreaders, and its promise to discuss women's issues. The channel also has a more general policy of encouraging young Saudis (male and female) to work in the Kingdom's media; many of the channel's anchors and correspondents are young Saudi nationals. Although Al Ekhbariya was intended to emulate Al Jazeera, in providing an alternative to the monotonous diet of state-controlled media in the region (Mandaville, 2014), the channel has faced criticism for the "controlled manner and dry tone" of its news coverage (Nattat, 2013, p. 10).

2.6.4 Nile News

Government-run and owned Nile News was originally launched in 1998 as part of the digital bouquet of Nile Thematic Channels. Although it was originally hoped that it would be considered a separate media entity, free from having to comply with the restrictions imposed by the Egyptian Radio and Television Union (ERTU), this was not allowed (Sakr, 2005). ERTU restrictions include a ban on criticising any member of the armed forces, or of official figures, (Sakr, 2005). Although Nile News has established its own newsgathering network, rather than relying on the official ERTU sources, it is still, clearly, heavily influenced by the Egyptian state. In the words of a Nile News journalist, "ours is still official news. We have to weigh things very carefully and not go for sensationalism" (Sakr, 2005, p. 72). After comparing the coverage of two big news stories by Nile News and Al Jazeera—the terrorist bombing of a tourist coach in Taba (Egypt) in 2004, and the sinking of the Egyptian ferry *Al-Salam Boccaccio* in the Red Sea in 2006, by Nile News and Al Jazeera, Sakr (2007) concluded that Nile News could not compete with the transnational news channel, which had not only covered the original stories, but also, offered detailed analysis in follow-up programmes.

Wasfi (2015) mentioned that the credibility of Nile News channel was weakened after the uprising in Egypt when, following the exclusion of the Islamic Brotherhood regime by the Egyptian army, there were complaints that the news channel was employing the same strategies that it had done before the uprising; broadcasters complained of favouritism among managers. Management had believed that bringing back previous employees would help to maintain the strength and relevance of the channel but overlooked the fact that the content of the news coverage needed to be different after the uprising.

2.7 Brand differentiation in Arab Television News Channels

The competitive media landscape in the Arab World, and the need for news about what is happening in the region have encouraged the branding and differentiation of television news channels. To survive in an incredibly competitive market, and maintain high audience figures, channels must create unique strategies to address people, and influence their opinions. Creating a positive brand image in the mind of the audiences helps the news channels to differentiate themselves from their competitors in the media marketplace, namely the quality of their news and presentation (Kasmani, 2013). Johnson (2012) argues that “differentiation” entails a shift of emphasis towards designing and marketing products based on research about the audience. In practice, this means that “the style and the design of the product become as important as its functionality, in the sense that they communicate the value and identity of the product to the audience” (Johnson, 2012, p. 3).

To date, little research has been carried out on how Arab television news channels brand themselves and use news programmes as a competitive product to create a media brand personality and encourage brand loyalty through the quality of its content, and its degree of credibility. DeFleur and Ball-Rokeach (1989) argue that channels work hard to differentiate themselves from their competitors. This is especially at times of conflict or social upheaval, as at such times, people depend on mass media for news about what is happening. It is perhaps not surprising, then, that of the few studies that conducted, few numbers focused on how the radical changes ushered in by the Arab Spring, put pressure on Arab television news channels to differentiate their coverage of events from that of competing regional channels. According to Al-Abdullah (2012), during the Arab Spring, Al Jazeera and Al Arabiya competed fiercely to grab the attention of Arab audiences, adopting different strategies and, explicitly, emphasising and managing their differences. Al-Abdullah (2012) claims that Al Jazeera’s strategy was to become the “street channel”, capturing the expressions and feelings of those involved in the protests and relaying their demands, while Al Arabiya’s coverage was more reliant on official spokespeople, meaning it was judged by some to be taking the government side rather than that of the protesters.

Although Al Habib (2013) agrees that the two channels were keen to produce distinctive coverage of the events, he views the situation differently. Al Habib (2013) argues that Al Jazeera’s position changed during the course of the uprisings. It is argued that the news channel

had initially adopted a neutral stance, but later, took the side of the protesters. Al Arabiya, on the other hand, retained a consistent stance throughout the period, and in Al Habib's (2013) opinion, this helped to maintain its audience figures. Although Al Jazeera tried to make major changes in its content in the wake of the Arab Spring, in order to emphasise its difference and attract bigger audience numbers, the fact that Qatar had intervened during the uprisings, had a significance negative influence on Arab audiences, especially those in the countries concerned, damaging the channel's credibility (Ulrichsen, 2014).

Television channels can frame the coverage of an event in such a way that it appears to be offering information about an issue that is more valuable, more credible and more accurate than that of its competitors (Nasr, 2014). This can involve a number of strategies, including emphasising the exclusivity of the data presented, mentioning that the channel had successfully predicted the outcome of events, making repeated references to the channel's name, and/or ensuring that the channel logo is visible during broadcasting. Nasr's (2014) study of Al Jazeera's coverage of the Arab Spring examined how this channel used self-references and visual materials in its newscasts, thus, positioning it as "beacon of truth" and advocate of human rights. Nasr (2014) argues that Al Jazeera firmly adopted the rebels' position during the uprisings, drawing on eye-witness accounts by protesters and citizens, to produce coverage that challenged the way other channels dealt with events, and representing this approach as a victory of freedom over oppression. With its use of confronting visual imagery, its distinctive presentational style, and passionate anchors, a distinct pattern of discourse emerged, and Al Jazeera succeeded in differentiating its coverage from that of other channels.

2.8 Conclusion

The Arab news media landscape changed dramatically in the late twentieth and the early twenty-first centuries, with news channels responding to the audience's thirst for credible, and professional news, in a region that witnessed a series of dramatic political and economic changes (Amara, 2011). Television plays a crucial role in the lives of ordinary people in the Arab World and is still considered the main and the most important source of local, regional and international news (Tucker, 2010; Gunter and Dickinson, 2013).

This chapter has reviewed the Arab media landscape, respectively, the satellite television news channels and the factors, which in turn has led to their rise and development. Political factors

have been given emphasis, as they played a crucial role in the emergence of these channels. This Chapter has also introduced the four channels that will be analysed through this research, revealing similarities as well as the factors that differentiate them from each other, along with the importance of each with regards to building a strong identity for each.

By reviewing literature on Arab media, it is clear that there is a knowledge gap in regard to studies that explore how television news channels in the Arab world use their news as a means of differentiation which leads to branding themselves or enhance their brands. The researcher argues that more studies are needed on the newsroom strategies of television news channels in the Arab world.

Chapter 3 Branding and Differentiation in News Television Channels

3.1 Introduction

In addition to the previous Chapter that focused on Arab news media landscape, the emphasis in this Chapter questions how news television channels (specifically satellite news television channels) use a range of techniques to create uniquely recognisable, and saleable brands in order to differentiate their product within a competitive media market. The first Section of the Chapter pertains to the rationale of increased emphasis on branding within the television industry. Later on, it questions the differentiation as a core tenet for competitive advantage, and how this can yield brand loyalty. An analysis is made regarding the components of brand identity, and how the values embedded in design and concept render brand uniqueness. Finally, the concluding section of the Chapter reflects on the qualities valued by audiences of news channels, both in the Western and the Arab context (for comparison purposes, examples from British, American or Arab television were selected).

3.2 The Rise of Branding in Television Industry

As previously discussed in Chapter Two, over the last three decades, the television industry has registered an uprising evolution. Specifically, the industry's transformation has been an inevitable outcome of technological innovation. This initially led to the introduction of multichannel cable, and satellite services that influenced a growth in interactive, and digital television, and leveraged a variety of platform choices for audience to improve their viewing experience. In addition to technological innovations, transformations in media industry were also influenced by the changes in regulatory policy, economic landscape and globalization, and the rise of multinational multimedia corporations and globalisation (Bellamy and Traudt, 2014). While technological, regulatory and economic transformations have impacted the media industry since mid-1990s, an exponential rise in the importance of branding and brand management (Bakshi and Mishra, 2014) has turned attention to the way the audience *consumes* content (i.e. new Internet technologies, mobile devices) (Krebs, 2015). In terms of competition and audience options, branding is now viewed as a vital survival strategy in the contemporary multichannel globalised television market (Doyle, 2013).

On one hand, the increasing emphasis on branding can be viewed as part of a broader late-twentieth century phenomenon. A brand became a key element in marketing, and companies shifted their focus from competing largely on the basis of price, functional features of their products or services to highlighting the distinctive qualities for building customer loyalty. This shift is reflected in Kotler's (2006) quoted observation that "the art of marketing is largely brand building. If not a brand, it will be viewed as a commodity" (as cited in Malmelin and Moisander, 2014, p. 9).

On the other hand, Bellamy and Traudt (2014, p. 137) argue that branding has assumed great importance, particularly in the television industry because it is "more ephemeral and non-tangible than most other products and services ... awareness and image are essentially all television has to 'sell' to the viewing audience that it must create" (Bellamy and Traudt, 2014, p. 137).

Branding continues to be of interest for industry executives, because television marketplaces are growing, and thus, becoming more cluttered and crowded, with a bewildering array of channels and media outlets available for audiences (Bellamy and Traudt, 2014). Therefore, there is a stringent need to create and maintain a long-term brand identity that not only attracts viewers, but also maintains their loyalty. A simple illustration of the impact that this proliferation of channels can have on audiences, can be seen in the British case of Independent TV (ITV). It was reported that in 1983, the ITV's only competitors were the terrestrial public service channels British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) respectively BBC1 and BBC2, and then, the recently launched, Channel Four (C4). By 2003, that share had been more than halved (from initial audience share of 48%) shrinking to 22% due to introduction of new digital competitors such as Sky, UK Gold, Discovery Channel, among others (Singh, 2004). Likewise, the rise in the number and the type of television channels was even more dramatic for Arab news channels.

The avenue of increased competition amongst news channels helps explain why television companies turn to brand-building activities, to achieve product differentiation, protection, and market share growth assurance (Bakshi and Mishra, 2014). However, some authors such as Chan-Olmsted (2006) argue that branding simply makes the process of decision-making easier for consumers. The remarkable growth in the television offer means that branding is now viewed in the television industry as "perhaps the only means of gaining a place in a television

viewer's/user's channel repertoire" (Bellamy and Traudt, 2014, p. 156). The main issue regarding both, market growth perspective and differentiation, is that within these diverse visions, brand identity is seen as crucial for market expansion. To achieve brand identity, one time-honoured way of establishing instant market credibility for a new product or service is to link it to a well-established, recognisable brand. As Doyle (2015, p.55) explains, in the case of television content, "perfecting, and then, adhering to a winning formula provides a good basis for expansion into additional territories". This technique (usually referred to as "brand extension") (Bellamy and Traudt, 2014) is commonly used by major national, and multinational television providers that propose to appeal to new audiences around the globe. For instance, Al Jazeera was able to exert a pull on its brand identity (thus, indicating innovativeness), when it expanded outside the Middle East, and launched two news channels, the first in English-language in 2006 (Al Jazeera International), and the second in many languages in 2011 (in 2006), and later on, in 2011, launched Al Jazeera Balkans.

Apart from technology advancement, and economic factors, competition news television branding has also gained importance, because of the traditional model of commercial television, being supported by advertising revenues. However, the technology advancement endangered the advertising revenues gained by news channels, due to the widespread of online opportunities, thus, reducing the marketing prospective (Bellamy and Traudt, 2014). Advertising revenues decreased, whilst some state-aided public service stations also faced significant funding cuts due to budget reformation (Johnson, 2013). Regardless of being private or state-funded, television providers and broadcasters, both strived to tap into new revenue streams; and while the markets they wished to enter were often related to their current business (e.g. establishing news websites or offering boxed sets of DVDs of popular series), they attempted to enter totally separate markets (e.g. selling programme- or character-related off-air merchandise). For example, Johnson (2012) noted that, as early as 1998, BBC Worldwide (the commercial arm of the BBC), in Annual Report, referred to a long-term strategy, centred on developing, managing and exploiting its brands "across the widest possible range of media—television, magazines, books, videos, spoken word, music CDs and tapes, CDROMs, online, toys and other merchandise" (Johnson, 2012, p. 314).

Nonetheless, "any media brand which successfully gains consumer loyalty can be translated across formats to create a raft of interrelated products which then work in aggregate to drive

further consumer awareness of the media brand” (Murray, 2005, p. 417). Consequently, the growth in digital telecommunication technologies, and the rise of social media have greatly assisted the process of distributing news content across multiple platforms, to different audiences (Vizeu, Lordêlo and Medeiros, 2012), in return, giving rise to robust brand identity and loyalty growth.

3.3 The Four Dimensions of Branding

Although Gad’s (2016, p. 50) work does not specifically relate to the media, his model of what he refers to as “brand mind space”, provides a useful framework for mapping, and exploring various ways in which branding, and differentiation are understood, by practitioners in the marketing industry, and by researchers with a more academic interest (see Figure 3-1). It also serves to identify some of the key differences in these views.

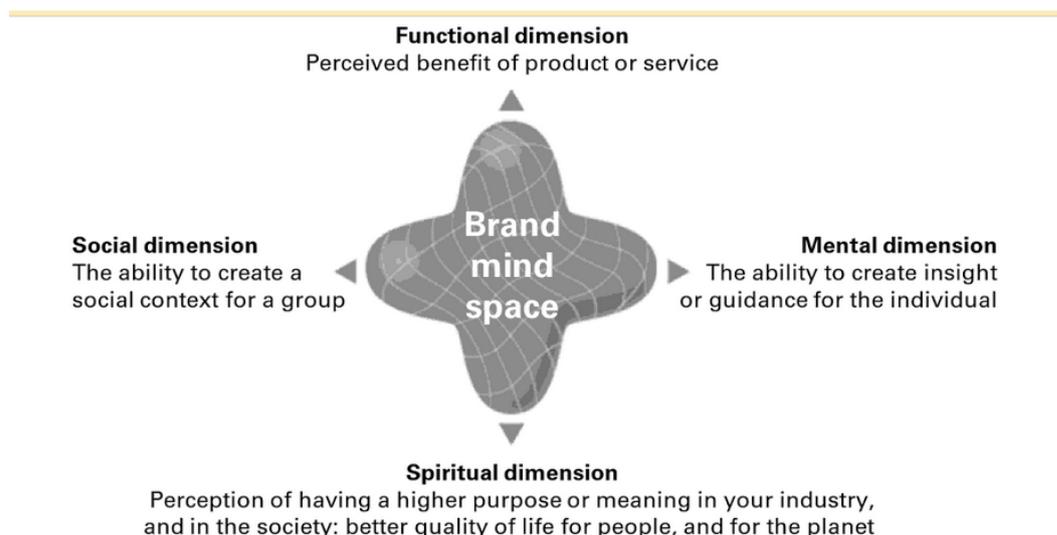


Figure 3-1 The four dimensions of branding

Source: Adapted from Gad (2016)

Gad (2016) argues that, at present, it is possible to identify four distinct, yet, interconnected dimensions of branding, and that the complex relationships among these dimensions are said to produce the concept of brand mind space; a concept that attracts consumers. Gad (2016) calls these four dimensions: functional, social, mental and spiritual, and argues that each represents a somewhat different understanding of the meaning, and purpose of branding. This in turn as Pearl (2011) indicated, implies that each dimension has a particular relationship with consumers of the brand. Additionally, the relationship serves to shape the strategy initially needed to attract

consumers, and then, to encourage them to become attached to the product, thus, creating brand loyalty. As this Chapter will make it clear, in today's highly competitive environment for news journalism, all of these elements are crucial for television news channels. It is not enough to succeed in grabbing the attention of an audience facing permanent distraction; more importantly, they must be persuaded to remain engaged (Chan-Olmsted and Shay, 2015). Even the most successful brands will eventually begin to lose their lustre in the constantly roving eyes of their consumers. In this case, either new branding strategies are required, or existing brand strategies need to be updated (Mohr, Sengupta, and Slater, 2009).

According to Knowles *et al.* (2004, p. 1), branding is “a mechanism for achieving competitive advantages for firms, through differentiation”. Although different definitions of branding may draw upon a diverse range of terms and expressions, all ultimately emphasise the notion of differentiation. For example, Ha and Chan-Olmsted (2001, p. 202) refer to branding as “giving value to the name of a product to distinguish itself from competitors”, while Schneider (2008) considers the need for branding as “to make itself stand out from the rest in the market to become the consumer choice” (p. 8). Differentiation, therefore, can be viewed as a strategy that is intended to identify, and emphasise a specific set of features, attributes and values of a company, or a product that will lead customers to perceive it as different from competitors (Schultz, 2005). Branding, like differentiation, is principally about establishing uniqueness (Laidler-Kylander and Stenzel, 2013).

Gad (2016) explores the various forms that this uniqueness may take and the ways in which marketing strategies, and the discourse they employ, constitute the four dimensions of the brand mind space. The first of these, the functional dimension, acknowledges that one core aspect of branding, is to create demand in the market for a product or service, by using discourse intended to persuade consumers of the perceived unique benefits that they will receive from it. However, the functional attributes that were once identified as the unique selling point of some products, such as the superiority of technical specifications or the quality of materials, are rarely enough to convince today's consumers to pay a premium price for a well-known brand (Pearl, 2011). As Hammond (2008, p. 8) notes, “benefits alone, in the way traditional marketing has understood them, are no longer sufficient to make something ... stand out from the crowd”. What a company makes is a product—but what the customer buys is a brand, which they believe will best satisfy their desires and aspirations. The most recognisable brands arouse an emotional

response, creating what Bakshi and Mishra (2014) refer to as “affect”, a positive emotional appeal that touches a chord in an individual, and persuades him or her (along with millions more consumers) to purchase that product or service. Brand differentiation is no longer about uniqueness based solely on the features or tangible benefits of a product or service, but is now also intrinsically linked to its perceived emotional benefits.

For Gad (2016), branding also has a social dimension. Part of the appeal of a brand for individual consumers may be that by selecting it, they feel they have become part of a community, united by attitudes, perspectives and interests (Hatch and Schultz, 2008). The brand provides them with a sense of belonging that simultaneously sets them apart, distinguishing “us” (as brand consumers) from “them” (the rest): another form of differentiation. Here, too, emotion plays a key role.

Gad (2016) considers what he refers to as the mental dimension of branding to be the antithesis of the social dimension, in that branding strategies of this kind are designed to highlight the relationship that an individual has with a particular brand. As societies shift towards individualisation, this dimension of branding is gaining importance, based on the belief that branded products are not perceived in the same way by discrete individuals.

The final dimension of branding as covered in Gad’s (2016) model, is the spiritual one, which could be said to reflect growing consumer concerns about corporate social responsibility that ranges from employee welfare to environmental sustainability. Hammond (2008) notes that customers expect their favourite brands to play a role in building a better society, and to contribute to improving the quality of life for everyone. Moreover, today’s highly connected consumers not only want to feel good about the products that they purchase, but also want to share their feelings on social media. Baladi (2011) argues that the most effective form of differentiation is that which separates one brand from the others, at the core level of an organisation’s identity, consolidated over time. This uniqueness is often implicit in the company’s mission, and the values in which it believes (Laidler-Kylander and Stenzel, 2013). Alhaqeel (2014, p. 1) maintains that branding may be defined as “the process of values selectivity and relating these values to the product/service name to capture the customers’ minds”.

Gad's (2016) model with its four dimensions will be referred to later, when comparing and contrasting the brand mind space occupied by the Arab television news channels that are analysed in this research. It will be used to identify the branding strategies which each use, and to provide insights in the relative effectiveness of each.

3.4 Brand Affect, Trust and Loyalty

Bakshi and Mishra (2014) attempt to identify the factors of key importance, when audiences choose between different television news channels. They draw on Wright's (1975) "affect referral hypothesis", which proposes that two key elements are involved in the creation of brand loyalty: affect and trust (see Figure 3-2).

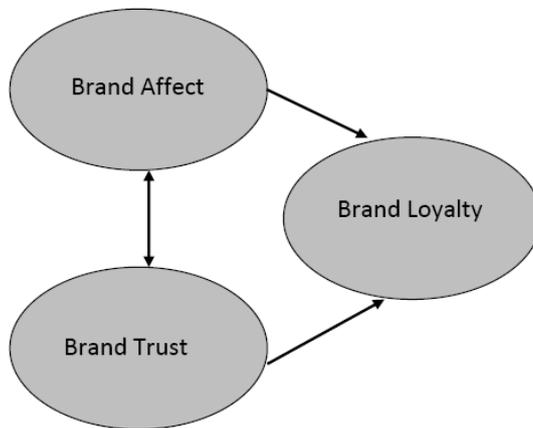


Figure 3-2 The relationship between brand affect, brand trust and brand loyalty

Source: Adapted from Bakshi and Mishra (2014)

With regard to the first of these elements, Brand Affect, Wright (1975) suggests that when consumers are choosing a brand, they frequently do not base their choice on information that relates to the specific attributes of a product, but instead, choose the brand that elicits a positive emotional response from them. Wright's (1975) "affect" designates this emotional response to a product; an emotional response that is concerned with the additional benefits offered, rather than featured or tangible benefits related to its functional purpose. In other words, brand affect is associated with consumers' emotions, and with their perception of what is favourable/unfavourable, according to their personal tastes. Cognitive evaluation plays no role in brand affect: if a news channel appeals emotionally to an audience, they will be likely to watch it repeatedly. This demonstrates brand loyalty. Bakshi and Mishra (2014) hypothesise that brand affect helps to create this loyalty.

Following Wright's (1975) hypothesis, Bakshi and Mishra (2014) also maintain that brand affect is not the only factor that creates brand loyalty, particularly in the case of a product like television news. They are aware that consumers must also trust the brand. Chaudhuri and Holbrook (2001) define trust as the consumer's willingness to rely on the ability of a brand to perform its stated function (Bakshi and Mishra, 2014). The authors contend that, when consumers are involved in making judgements about their preferred choice of a news channel on the basis of brand trust, they employ their cognitive faculties, since qualities such as accuracy and objectivity and, ultimately, reliability or trustworthiness are assessed on the basis of reason, rather than emotion. Thus, they hypothesise brand trust as an important element in creating brand loyalty in the case of television news channels. Their model suggests that audience may be attracted to a channel brand on the basis of both affect and trust, and that viewers' hearts and heads are both involved in their decision to choose one brand over another and to remain loyal to it.

Bakshi and Mishra's article (2014) raises two interesting points that relate to broader issues about brand differentiation television news channels. The first is based on the authors' use of trust as defined by Chaudhuri and Holbrook's (2001); the authors stress the consumer's willingness to rely on the ability of a brand to perform its stated function. However, it may be argued that, in the case of a television news channel, this definition poses real problems, since it is difficult to interpret exactly what constitutes its "stated function". In a company mission statements or in its strapline, it may be possible to find overt statements related to a channel's function but in reality, the function of a television news channel is underpinned by conventions that are rarely explicitly expressed, but are tacitly understood. In broad terms, it may be argued that in terms of brand trust, viewers expect news programmes to offer factual information that is accurate and objective. However, beyond this, there may be many other elements that form part of conventional expectations about news coverage. These elements may contribute to creating brand trust and are likely to vary from culture to culture. They may also vary over the course of time, particularly given the impact of technological innovation on television news coverage. Thus, any media company intending to create brand loyalty by differentiating their product on the basis of brand trust, needs to have a good grasp of the qualities viewers expect from them. Similarly, for the Researcher, this suggests that caution must be exercised when attempting to define brand trust, with specific reference to Arab television news channels, since cultural differences may play a significant role in how audiences evaluate this concept. The

concept of the qualities that audiences value in television news brands will be discussed in greater detail, later in this Chapter.

3.5 Engaging the Viewers

The second interesting point that emerges from Bakshi and Mishra's article (2014) is the role of affect hypothesised to play in audience's brand loyalty to television news channels. As a media genre, television news is popularly perceived as attracting viewers on the basis of a rational appeal to intellect, rather than on emotional engagement. However, it is worth considering here the work of Chan-Olmsted and Shay (2015), who identify three changes that have led to the emergence of what they refer to as "media branding 3.0", a phrase clearly alluding to the growing importance of the third generation of digital media within the industry. Although the authors do not focus exclusively on news, many of the points that they make are illustrated by examples that relate to this genre, and there are interesting links to be made between their arguments, and the concept of brand affect in relation to television news channels.

The first major shift that they point to, is the creation of the new value chain in the media industries. While, traditionally, this consisted of multiple separate components (acquiring, creating, selecting, organising, packaging and processing content, and then using marketing, advertising and promotion to distribute the service), in the new value chain content production, packaging and distribution have been transformed. This means that content can now be delivered straight to the audience, and these end users can decide for themselves when, and how, to use that direct access. They can now behave very differently in the way they access media content, and have the choice of doing so, through multiple touch points. Originally, broadcast news' audiences were bound to the television schedule of bulletins, and were expected to stay with news programmes until the end (McManus, cited in Kasmani, 2013). This is no longer the case. Contemporary patterns of media consumption have shifted, and can now be described as modular, non-linear and mobile, not depending on one device. Chan-Olmsted and Shay (2015) even suggested that some consumers may not pay attention to content that is only available on a single device, and argue that media companies need to ensure that their brand messages are accessible from any device that can be used for distributing media content. In addition, they claim that for a growing number of media consumers, it is the experience of consumption itself that ultimately determines their brand loyalty, rather than any brand trust based on the content of the broadcast.

This links directly to the second change that Chan-Olmsted and Shay (2015) identified as being of direct relevance to branding in media and news channels. The experience of consumption is now of central importance for news' audiences, which points to the overwhelming power of engagement for attracting brand loyalty, and to the absolute necessity of engaging end users as a differentiation strategy.

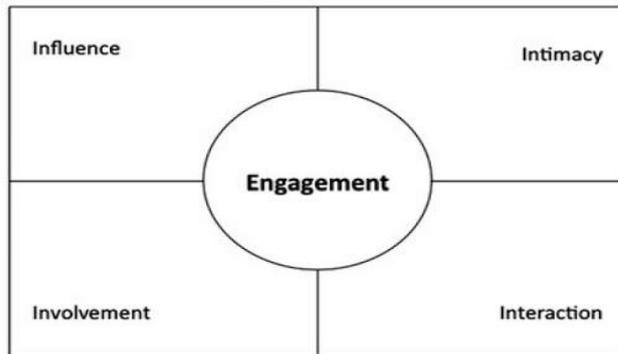


Figure 3-3 The four components of consumer engagement

Source: Chan-Olmsted and Shay (2015)

Drawing on the framework (see Figure 3-3) originally established by Epps (2009), Chan-Olmsted and Shay (2015) argue that engagement consists of four distinct but interrelated dimensions: involvement, influence, interaction and intimacy; and that brand managers who are seeking to adopt a holistic approach to customer engagement should take all of these into consideration. Involvement refers to the consumer's presence at the touch point of the brand; that is, before, during or after he/she consumes the product in any online or offline channel. Influence is about the likelihood of a person advocating on behalf of the brand. Tracking metrics can provide useful information for brand managers, about how consumers access news content (involvement), and whether they choose to share it with others (influence); yet, the third dimension, interaction, is of more immediate interest in these contexts. Interaction is concerned with the action that someone chooses to take at the brand touch point; in other words, how they actually engage with the media content. This interactivity can be seen as a key element of both consumer engagement and brand differentiation in the context of television news channels.

For many decades, news media was considered a one-direction channel (Thussu, 2006), in the sense that viewers were treated as passive recipients who were expected to receive and accept

information (McEnery and Baker, 2015). Traditional media, according to Weeks and Holbert (2013, p. 214), was “one way, top-down, sender-driven”. However, the rise of citizen journalism, and the popularity of social media have had a major impact on the nature of the relationship between the professional news media and their audiences, “blurring traditional boundaries not only between news production and consumption but also between professionals and amateurs, elites and non-elites” (Jensen and Mortensen, 2016, p. 1). This is particularly true in the Arab World. Television news channels like Al Jazeera have promoted their levels of interactivity with their audiences, and their accessibility via phone-ins and social media, as a highly effective means of differentiating their brand from the state-run channels that refuse to engage openly with members of the public. For Johnson (2012, p. 314), interactivity forms a crucial element of branding itself, reflected in author’s definition of the term as “a form of mediated and dynamic communication that constantly frames and reframes the relationships between producer, products and consumers”. The relationship between the brand and the consumer is interactive, inducing both parties to develop attitudes and behaviours towards each other.

The final dimension of engagement, which (following Epps, 2009), Chan-Olmsted and Shay (2015) labelled, somewhat confusing, as “intimacy”, is used in this context to describe the affection that a person has towards a brand. In this sense, it can be likened to Wright’s (1975) concept of brand affect, and once again, points to the importance of emotion as a key component in end-user engagement with news brands. Peters (2011) argues that the concept of emotion has been under-theorized in relation to news journalism, and has acquired largely negative connotations, being linked to tabloid excesses, sensationalism and bias. He concludes that news has always been emotional, but in recent decades, there has been a marked change in the diversity of emotional styles used, in the acceptability of journalistic involvement on events they are reporting, and in the explicitness of attempts to involve the audience. Again, given that emotion appears to have important links to brand loyalty, all these areas merit closer attention, since they potentially represent significant areas of differentiation among television news channel brands.

The third of the major changes that Chan-Olmsted and Shay (2015) highlighted, is the shift towards an integrated content that is distributed across multiple media channels in a coherent, seamless fashion. However, they caution that the success of integrated content depends on

maintaining consumer relevance. As Davis (2010) notes, creating a differentiated position, and telling consumers why a particular offering is unique is not sufficient; customers must be convinced that the product or service is relevant to them, and to their particular needs.

3.6 Brand Identity and Values

As the discussion of branding illustrates, it is clear that, in the context of media, branding can mean very different things for different people. The varying understanding of branding will also inevitably condition what is meant by differentiation and will shape ideas on how it can be achieved for television news networks. At this stage, it is important to clarify the approach that will be taken in this research to explore the topic of differentiation, and to analyse the means by which it is achieved by Arab satellite television news channels.

Kotler and Pfoertsch (2006, p. 5) argue that that a brand should be thought of as “the totality of perceptions—everything you see, hear, read, know, feel, think, etc.—about a product, service, or business”. While on one level, this observation is helpful since it emphasises the all-encompassing nature of this topic, attempting to consider all these aspects would be an impossible task for even the most dedicated researcher with no time or resource constraints. It is necessary for the rest of researchers to identify those dimensions of branding and differentiation which merit investigation. The Methodology Chapter will establish how investigation will be carried out.

Although Hand and Middleditch (2014) focus primarily on the practical aspects of design for media, when discussing the concept of branding, they make a useful distinction between what is called design values and concept values, and how these link to brand identity (see Figure 3-4). Their idea has been adapted for use here, as a means of approaching the notion of brand identity, and for clarifying the emphasis of this research.

When consumers are asked to think about a brand, they are likely to think first of its visual identity, since this is, after all, what makes it instantly recognisable and memorable; a brand needs to be striking, in order to make a permanent impression on the customer, defining it and differentiating it from its competitors (Borchers, 2012). Depending on the brand, these visual features includes elements such as logos (the Nike swoosh or McDonald’s golden arches), the distinctive typography of a slogan, or the trademark colours of its product packaging. These are

also the elements that are usually most closely associated with what is popularly thought of as corporate identity, an in-house design that is applied to all aspects of the visual style of a brand or a product.

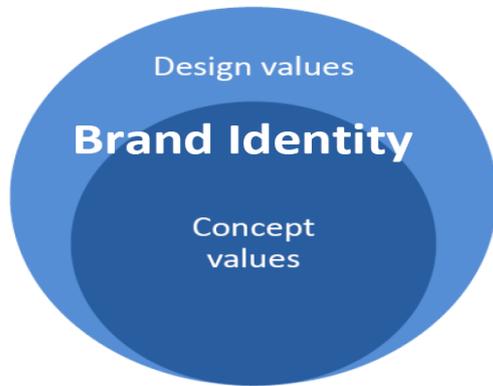


Figure 3-4 Brand identity

Source: Hand and Middleditch (2014)

Interestingly, these same types of components are frequently cited by media researchers as embodying a television brand. For example, when discussing branding and differentiation in television, Bellamy and Traudt (2014, p. 128) observe that

“The brand can be represented by call letters or an acronym, logo, company wordmark (name), theme, jingle, sound, or some mixture of these, often in combination with individual program promotion, designed to differentiate one station/channel/program from another.”

In other words, they highlight the audio-visual elements, suggesting that these in some way represent the essence of the television brand in question.

In parallel, as designers, Hand and Middleditch (2014) highlighted the vital role of visual style in the creation of brand identity. More importantly, they emphasise on the notion that the design values of a brand, reflected in its external appearance, are underpinned by concept values. These are the intrinsic qualities which lie at the core of a brand identity. Many of these qualities will be explicitly stated in written documents, which are available in the public domain, such as corporate profiles (see, for example mission statements published online). Others will be found in brand strategies, circulated in-house, and formulated primarily to communicate with the

company's directors and employees, regarding what the brand vision consists of exactly and the nature of its personality and positioning (Temporal, 2014).

The brand vision typically takes the form of a long-term, high-level statement that is composed of a set of words, and phrases that sum up what the brand wants to represent in the consumers' minds; this idea is usually couched in emotional terms. It may be also encapsulated by marketers into slogans or straplines. CNN, for example, uses the strapline "Be the first to know", appealing to people's thirst for the most up-to-date news (Gains, 2013).

Once you have a brand vision, according to Freeman (1999), "you need to differentiate yourself from the other 200 channels of programming by creating a distinct personality" (as cited in Bellamy and Traudt, 2014, p. 132). Brand personality refers to a group of well-defined values that can be framed as a set of characteristic traits that make it stand out from competitors, and differentiate itself. The values represented by the brand personality will reflect the brand vision, and so are often expressed in similar words with emotional associations (Förster and Kleinen-von Königslöw, 2013).

Finally, brand positioning also involves producing written statements that serve to delineate the brand's competitive function, and clearly convey why it is different from other brands in the market, and what is unique about it (Temporal, 2014). The concept of brand positioning, and its link with both, brand vision and brand personality, is well illustrated in an example provided by Chernin (1999) when interviewed, a top executive from Fox, described their company as "a cutting-edge, irreverent broadcast network that gave teens and young adults a rebellious voice they'd never had before" (Bellamy and Traudt, 2014, p. 129). This offers an interesting comparison with the Al Jazeera English channel's claim to give a "voice to the voiceless".

Although many brand values are made explicit, many intrinsic qualities and values remain implicit. They may be embedded, for example, in the organisational culture, the company's policies, and practices. Zelizer (2004) notes that some of those ethical principles and norms that implicitly underpin, and influence professional values of journalists, have been codified. These may take the form of national regulatory guidelines, codes of ethics produced by organisations, or editorial statements on values produced by a particular company.

In the case of a television news brand, seeking to differentiate itself from competitors, these values will inevitably be reflected in its news philosophy; that is, “its general approach to the news product” (Becker *et al.*, 2004, p. 1), which will produce a particular news mix. The greater the level of competition a television news brand faces, the more it will attempt to distinguish itself from its media rivals, and to articulate and promote those differences in content, which will render it both distinctive, and appealing, to potential and actual audiences (Norbäck, 2012).

This study will consider both values, the design and the concept, when exploring the ways in which, four Arab television news channels attempt to differentiate themselves from their competitors, since both these elements can be said to form a part of brand identity. However, Becker *et al.* (2004) report that studies of differentiation as a strategic response to competition between television brands, have found the difference to lie principally at the level of content. The emphasis in this research, therefore, will primarily be on establishing how these channels differentiate themselves in terms of content: the information presented about events (news stories), who presents this content (the anchors and the correspondents), and the techniques used to present this information (production). According to Bellamy and Traudt (2014, p. 131), “despite the increasing emphasis on branding in television and marketing in general, academic studies of television branding are scarce in both media and marketing literature”. Previous studies on media branding have largely been qualitative studies, concerning attitudes of media professionals or television audiences regarding media branding, or dimensions of branding personality. Consequently, this research will offer a departure from this focus, since relatively, little is known about how Arab television news channels use news as a means of branding their channels. While it is relatively easy to compare and contrast design values, it is more challenging to determine some of the underlying concept values upon which a news philosophy is based. Siegert (2008, p. 14) claims that “media firms are able to integrate the brand message into the editorial content quite easily” as part of the process of what Entman (1993) refers to as framing.

3.7 Creating Brand Loyalty

Price (2015) argues that consumers are willing to invest in their preferred news organisations (i.e. remain loyal to them), as long as they trust and believe in the brand. This Section will consider some of the values that have been identified to be of key importance in attracting audiences, specifically to television news channels or programmes, and in helping to establish

brand loyalty. Since relatively little work has been done to date on concept values in Arab news media, most of this discussion is based on analyses of western media; one of the contributions that this research hopes to make is to provide insights into the kinds of concept values, the four Arab channels under study employ to differentiate themselves as brands.

3.7.1 Immediacy and Liveness

The element of live coverage, bringing news to viewers as it unfolds, has long been acknowledged as one of the greatest strengths of television as a medium (Piazza *et al.*, 2015). Given that “immediacy, actuality and speed” have been identified as “inherent in the concept of news” (Deuze, 2008, p. 16), television news channels have tended to promote these qualities as a guarantee of the excellence of their coverage (Barnas, 2013). However, Fowler-Watt and Allan (2013, p.10) argue that live coverage has become such “an increasingly dominant value in television news operations today”. Moreover, they argue that, to a greater extent than ever, branding is driving the need to be first at the scene, or to have the most up-to-date information, since news management views the ability to provide live coverage a vital means of differentiation from rivals. This view is also held by a number of other researchers, such as Caple (2013) and Pentina and Tarafdar (2014). Fowler-Watt and Allan (2013) point out that channels invest heavily in technology, such as microwave and satellite trucks that allow sound, and video transmission from locations that previously were inaccessible, ensuring channel presence. Cellular-based video uplink backpacks for video transmission from the field, are also used to ensure that news reporters can go live from anywhere with cellular service, increasing their chances of being on air first, when news breaks.

Audiences certainly value immediacy and presence, but if they perceive there is an emphasis on technological advances at the expense of content, an adverse effect on their attitudes to a television news provider may be caused (Carlson, 2014). Journalist Ted Koppel believes that focusing on events because they are “live” rather than important can affect news judgement of the receiver (Iggers, 1999). Likewise, Micó *et al.* (2013) found that audiences are concerned that pressure to be first at the scene, may compromise the accuracy of a news story or the television news anchor’s reporting it. Newman *et al.*’s (2015) study reveals that the urgency of breaking news can mean that reporters do not have the time to confirm sources or verify information and are thrown into situations where they have to act as experts (see also Lewis and Cushion, 2009). In such cases, they were likely to add commentaries that reflected their own

“personal values, attitudes, and beliefs”, rather than conforming to the typical seemingly objective discourse of a news report (Newman *et al.*, 2015, p. 22). The news anchor, it is claimed (*ibid*), establishes the personality of the news brand, and any loss of the credibility of this figure can lead to a significantly negative impact on audience trust. Broersma and Graham (2012) report opinions that live coverage often adds no value to the reporting of a story, and that the intrusive presence of reporters, and television crews interferes with the work of police or fire-fighters at the scene.

3.7.2 Role of News Anchor

According to Buchman (2014), viewers’ perceptions of the personalities of the news anchor or newscaster is one of the most commonly researched areas in television news, reflecting the importance that this figure holds for viewers, and for the vital role they play in brand differentiation. Krebs (2015) argues that for news channels, differentiation and competitive advantage must come from programme content and from charismatic personalities at the centre of the programmes. These form the axis around which, the public perception of a news media brand is established.

As Wahl-Jorgensen (2014) notes, a television news anchor’s traditional goal was to deliver a clear, accurate and balanced story, objectively, drawing on interviews with reliable sources. Anchors were expected to be attractive, poised, and professional performers, personalities in their own right, delivering the news in a calm and comforting voice. Now, in addition to handling these reporting duties, they must also be skilled at connecting with, and engaging their audience (Allan, 2015; Allan and Peters, 2015). People enjoy watching news anchors they like and feel comfortable with, and whether they are reporting from the field or the studio, their presence gives viewers a chance to experience the story through their eyes (Micó *et al.*, 2013). Generally perceived as being trustworthy, consistent, and reliable, news presenters can provide audiences with a “familiar face” in the middle of “ever-changing flows of new information” (Hernandez Serrano *et al.*, 2015, p. 100). Station managers are aware that for viewers, the news anchors literally embody the characteristics of the brand personality of the channel; they can thus, contribute significantly to higher ratings (Suntai and Vakkai, 2014).

De la Gándara (2013) argues that traditional news media now face a major challenge to keep young audiences engaged, and that news anchors need to work harder to earn the respect, and

loyalty of this younger generation of viewers. In the Researcher's opinion, this has two main causes: first, the amount of competition from rival television stations, and other media channels offering news, and second, the rise in popularity of citizen journalism. Citizen journalism is also known as "grassroots journalism" (Barnes, 2012, p. 18), "citizen media journalism" (Barnes, 2012, p. 18), "alternative journalism" (Meadows, 2012, p. 49) and "community journalism" (Meadows, 2012, p. 49). It is, therefore, worth considering the nature of the relationship between citizen journalism, and traditional mainstream news reporting, particularly given that in the Arab World, citizen journalism has a particular appeal. This will shed light on how it may have influenced views of the role of news anchors.

Citizen journalism started to become popular in the late 1990s as people around the globe connected to the internet, and realised its potential to act as a platform or channel that increased the speed and breadth at which, information could be disseminated to a mass audience (Barnes, 2012). Individuals "without professional or formal training" (Barnes, 2012, p. 16) began writing about issues on internet-based blogs and forums, increasingly supplementing the words by using mobile devices to capture original, and unfiltered coverage of events in the form of photos and videos (Barnes, 2012). These were broadcast via social networking sites such as Facebook or Twitter (Meadows, 2012).

One of the driving forces in citizen journalism has been the interest in reporting events as they happen. This sometimes offers more immediacy, and liveness than traditional television news reporting, with its flawed technical presentation adding to the sense of authenticity of the coverage (Mortensen *et al.*, 2015). Researchers have highlighted numerous examples of major events, where mainstream media news crews could not report from the scene, or capture video images as they were not able to arrive in a timely matter, had limited access to the location, or were not able to cover all the aspects of a breaking story. For example, when a devastating tsunami hit Southeast Asia in 2004, killing thousands of people, networks were initially wholly reliant on photos and videos taken on mobile phones by survivors (Mortensen *et al.*, 2015). During the 7/7 London bombings in 2005, major networks asked individuals to contribute to the newsgathering experience by sharing their images (Barnes, 2012). Twitter, later, played a crucial role in providing much-needed information and images, when Haiti was devastated by a force 7 earthquake in 2010 (Barnes, 2012).

It is observed by the Researcher, and can be considered as a fact that while the exact political role played by social media in the Arab Spring in 2011 has been debated, there is no dispute that for large numbers of those living in the Middle East and North Africa, citizen journalism is now intrinsically linked to the idea of ordinary individuals, being able to tell their own stories using images captured on their mobile phones, and released via social media. Posting such content serves as a means of contesting the news discourse of government-run media, while at the same time, it allows citizens to collaborate with professional journalists from other mainstream media, to ensure their concerns are represented.

There is evidence that young people who have been exposed to citizen journalism have a broader view of the role that they expect of news anchors. A study by Tandoc (2014), examining student views on news anchor roles, found that participants identified four distinct functions: the first two correspond to the traditional understanding of the anchor as a disseminator of facts, who is neutral and impartially passive, analysing events for viewers (Tandoc, 2014). The two other functions, however, seem to be influenced by the style adopted by citizen news reporters, who are often political activists, and likely to speak from their “personal observations and experiences” (Hernandez Serrano *et al.*, 2015, p. 326). The students also expected news anchors to be adversarial, openly expressing criticism of multinational corporations, and political officials, and to act as mobilisers of opinion by providing “a voice to ordinary people” (Tandoc, 2014, p. 266). It is possible, then, that channels aiming to capture a younger audience segment may decide to employ news anchors, who are happy to fulfil these less traditional roles.

3.7.3 Interactivity

Both journalists and researchers have expressed a number of concerns about the negative aspects of citizen journalism, on the grounds that many of its practitioners fail to respect some of the most fundamental, and long-established tenets of the profession, including the importance of recognising confidential information, the need to use reliable sources, and the understanding of what is meant by “balance, fairness, and objectivity” (Barnes, 2012, p. 19). However, as mainstream media newsrooms accept the importance of engaging with their audience, and being “more open to the public” (Westlund, 2013, p. 26) if they wish to create brand loyalty, they strive to become more interactive by accepting input in the form of photographs, comments, and feedback.

Adornato (2014) found that reporters used Facebook and Twitter to build relationships with their audience, and stay relevant to them in a rapidly changing news environment. However, Vivo's (2013) study found that reporters still act as gatekeepers, when deciding which audience content is worthy of a tweet, re-tweet, or 'favourite'. Gearhart and Kang (2015) conclude that, when news anchors ask audiences for a reaction on an issue or story, the interactivity benefits both sides: viewer comments and opinion create content for broadcasters, while the audience values the chance to participate in the news process.

Costera-Meijer's (2012) study examining what primarily attracts audiences to television news coverage, offers a succinct overview of the elements that channels can use to differentiate their product, and is summarised as "participation, representation, and presentation" (Costera-Meijer, 2012, p. 757). Of the first of these, Costera-Meijer (2012) found that news users want to feel part of the news process, and need to feel that their concerns and viewpoints count. In his discussion of viewers' loyalty to a news organisation, Price (2015, p. 10) argued too that consumers want to be part of the news experience, describing this as a desire to have "a seat at the table". According to Costera-Meijer (2012), news users also want to see what they perceive to be fair representation of differing perspectives. This is found to be especially so in the case of members of minorities, who are more likely to trust news coverage in which stories are told from more than just one angle. Finally, Costera-Meijer (2012, p. 757) discovered that news users think that the third key element in defining quality news coverage is "captivating presentation" that combines a strong narrative with compelling video.

3.8 Arab News Channels: Branding and Differentiation

In the Arab World too, satellite news channels have realised that branding is essential to create audience acceptance of, and affection for them (Khatib, 2009). As elsewhere, news executives who want to win the news-seeking audience's attention must differentiate their news products from those of their competitors. According to Al-Abdallah (2012), news coverage of events plays a vital role in differentiating each channel from its competitors in the region, and these differences are highly valued and carefully explicitly managed.

Many attempts to create brand loyalty by differentiation appear to draw on similar strategies to those witnessed in western news channels: extrinsic design values in logos, calligraphic styles, channel identities, trademark colours or music, help create an instantly recognisable

presentational style, and distinctive brand identity that makes the news channel look, and sound different from its competitors. Drinkwater and Uncles (2007) note that many television networks now place their logo as a constant on-screen watermark (also known as a digital on-screen graphic or bug), where it serves as a form of permanent visual channel identity that reinforces the brand. Channels can use even something as seemingly insignificant as logo placement, to differentiate themselves from competitors. Arab television logos are typically placed in the top right-hand or left-hand areas of the screen, but Al Jazeera and the Nile News choose to place their watermarks in the bottom right-hand corner, while Al Arabiya and Al Ekhbariya still occupy the top right-hand corner. According to Abunajela and Mellor (2016), employing a distinguished anchor is a means of differentiation in the strongly competitive media market of Arab satellite news channels, with presenters such as Yasser Al-Amro and Salah Algedan gaining a high profile and loyal track for their current affairs talk shows in Al Ekhbariya. In some cases, however, a channel's distinctiveness relies on a presenter who becomes noted for breaking the rules. Dawood Alsherayyan, for instance, has become notorious for his controversial presentational style on his current affairs programme *Al-Thaminah* (At eight p.m. airing on MBC, a sister channel of Al Arabiya). He hosts Saudi officials, representatives of governmental agencies, public figures and even ordinary citizens with connections to current affairs, or social issues considered relevant to Saudi society. He has gained a reputation for what is known as "accountability interviewing" (Ekström, 2011), where guests are challenged and criticised about the performance of the government institutions they work for, often putting them in uncomfortable situations (Alfahad, 2016). When it was launched in 2012, *Al-Thaminah* became a hit with Saudis, and media ratings showed that some editions of the show brought in bigger viewing numbers than the mass audiences for *Arabs Got Talent* and *Arab Idol* which used to be aired by MBC (Al-Yusi, 2012).

Alsherayyan uses a type of language rarely heard previously in the context of Saudi talk shows and has publicly stated, "I want to talk naturally; when I talk on the programme I want to forget that I'm on the TV. When I talk, I want to talk like I'm at home with my family, friends and my work colleagues" (as cited in Alfahad, 2016, p. 104). This is reflected not only in his frequent use of Saudi variants rather than Modern Standard Arabic, but also in his frequent employment of what many would deem bad language. His distinctive linguistic style matches his aggressive, adversarial approach as an interviewer, and has been accused of "violating traditional media ethics" (Alfahad, 2016, p. 110) by adopting an overtly racist stance towards certain guests, and

making defamatory remarks on air about high-profile Saudis. Alfahad (2016) notes that Alsherayyan's style of "journalist as advocate or inquisitor" (Alfahad, 2016, p. 101) is not unique, and points to evidence of similar presentational styles used in American, Greek and Indian television news shows. He also points out that authors, such as Thussu (2006) have linked this development directly to business interests and corporate policy: in other words, to the need for brand differentiation. *Al-Thaminah* may certainly be viewed as a deliberate challenge to the reputation that Al Jazeera has established for "critical scrutiny of political elites" (McNair, 2006, p. 60). Moreover, in the light of Tandoc's (2014) findings about how younger audiences view the role of television interviewers, it is interesting to speculate if, given the age profile of Saudi Arabia's population, MBC's choice of Alsherayyan is intended to capture the younger audience segment, who are likely to be attracted by television journalists playing less than traditional roles. According to Index Mundi, in 2016 nearly a fifth of the Saudi population (18.85%) were aged 15–24 years.

As previously noted, the technological developments that created media convergence, meant that interactivity with audiences came to play an important role in the success of Arab television news channels (Khatib, 2009). Platforms, such as Twitter and Facebook in particular, have transformed a previously one-directional flow of information to passive recipients (McEnery and Baker, 2015), allowing audiences to make comments on content, and to share and exchange information and views instantaneously (Ayish and Mellor, 2015). At least one author, Darwish (2010), argues that Al Jazeera uses interactivity not merely to add entertainment value, or to solicit viewer feedback, but because it allows the station to demonstrate that it can play a crucial role as consensus builder by attempting to synthesise often "deeply divisive and polarizing" political opinions from across the pan-Arab World and Arabic-speaking diaspora (Darwish, 2010, p. 277). Besides, El-Nawawy and Powers (2008) have written at length about the conciliatory role of Al Jazeera English Channel, as a mediator between the West and the Arab World. This particular use of interactivity not only helps to differentiate Al Jazeera from other channels, but also reflects the concept values of its brand identity, summarised in its well-known slogan, "the opinion ... and the other opinion".

Jamil Azar, the Jordanian journalist credited as the originator of this slogan, claims that it was never intended to be "a rhetorical or aesthetic concoction", but was simply "a summary of ideas discussed in meetings of the founding board of management" (Azar, 2006) before the channel

was even launched. The slogan certainly served originally to differentiate the new independent channel from the dogmatic, government-ruled Arab media, and since then, has appealed to Arab citizens aspiring to freedom from the constraints of dictatorial regimes that controlled every aspect of life, in a region of emerging and transitional democracies (El-Nawawy and Iskander, 2013; Howards and Hussain, 2013). As Kraidy (2010) notes, other channels have responded to this slogan in an attempt to differentiate themselves: most striking is Al Arabiya, which launched a promotional campaign for the station in 2007 using the slogan ‘Closer to the Truth’. Kraidy (2010) reports an interview with Abdelrahman al-Rashed, the channel’s general manager, at which he inquired about its intended meaning:

I asked ... if [the slogan] reflected recognition that the truth always eluded media institutions—whose aim therefore should be to come as close as possible to the truth—or whether [it] meant that al-Arabiya was closer to the truth than al-Jazeera. He smiled, seemingly acknowledging that it was a bit of both. (Kraidy, 2010, p. 30).

He notes that, in 2007, the channel ran another publicity campaign, this time using “So you know more”. The slogan was once again “a clear attempt to distinguish [the] channel from Al-Jazeera” since, according to Al Arabiya’s marketing and public relations director, Mazen Hayek, the campaign was designed to show that the channel “caters to the viewer’s mind, not to his instincts” (Kraidy, 2010, p. 30). This also illustrates the extent to which, brief statements of this kind serve to encapsulate the concept values of a channel, reflecting its goals and aims, and its brand personality and acting, therefore, as a means of brand differentiation.

Arab television news channels have used a diverse range of differentiation strategies to create their brand identities that attract audiences, and attempt to turn them into loyal viewers. These include their choice of studio guests and recruitment of talented reporters (Khatib, 2009), critical analysis of previously taboo issues (Khatib, 2009), promoting themselves as an alternative news provider to distinguish themselves from the mainstream (Iskandar, 2006), and offering coverage of events in locations from which their competitors are absent (Kasmani, 2013). While some argue that these attempts at differentiation have merely served to transform politics into a commodity, and citizens into consumers (Khatib, 2009), others claim that this differentiation has had a positive impact overall on Arab media.

Following Al Jazeera’s use of its “visible display of freedom and independence” (McNair, 2006, p. 61) as a marketing tool, other Arab news organisations have grasped the importance of

demonstrating “reliability, objectivity, authority, independence and diversity regardless of [their] place on the political or ideological spectrum” (Kasmani, 2013, p. 585). They have realised that they can reflect different sides to a story while retaining their audience (Fisk, 2014). Ayish (2008) (quoted in Anas, 2012) maintains that satellite television news channels have effectively created a new form of “communication discourse”, through their news presentations (p. 122). This more open style adopted by many Arab satellite news channels has enhanced the level of political discourse within the region and, beyond that, has also encouraged other channels elsewhere in the world to change their style, in order to survive in the competitive media market (Oxford Business Group, 2008).

3.9 Conclusion

In conclusion, the media industry evolved due to various factors (technological developments, economic changes, competition). The change brought by the advent of digital technology has not only enabled a development, but also compensated the shortcomings in patterns of television news consumption. In particular, the introduction of the internet and the emergence of social media have smoothed the rise of citizen journalism.

In response, television news channels have been forced to reconsider what makes them unique and distinct from competitors, coercing to create brand identity and designing strategies to support in differentiation, engagement with audiences, and loyalty conservation. Realising the design values and reflecting on presentation (production) has helped to understand main concept values, reflected in the news stories as well as in the correspondent’s approaches and anchors chosen to present the news.

This chapter has provided an analysis of brand identities, and the values that underpin in terms of content, production and presenters of a news story used by the television news channels to differentiate themselves from their competitors, through emphasising branding strategies such as the quality and professionalism of their news coverage, correspondents and anchors. The chapter revealed the fact that differentiation is branding and indicated that branding is differentiation.

Chapter 4 News as a Significant Factor of Differentiation

4.1 Introduction

The transformations that have taken place in media, in general, had ripple effects on news production, in particular, influencing the way news is produced, and delivered to the audience. How news is defined has also changed. The news became a product (Lipschultz and Hilt, 2014) that is affected by different factors (e.g. market forces, audience needs, preferences, newsroom philosophy and routines) (Busa, 2013; Uscinski, 2014). Therefore, in the current context, the news production is driven by business principles.

Considering the above, the aim of this Chapter is to discuss what makes news a product, and what factors determine news production. In addition, this Chapter will reflect how far news media endeavour to meet public needs, and how news channels capture the attention of the audience. Also, elements of differentiation (for example, techniques, style, language used in the news, anchors production techniques) are reviewed.

4.2 Definition of News

News impacts all aspects of human beings' life at some extent (Egleder, 2013), from influencing behaviour (i.e. type of clothes after watching the weather forecast) up to decisions based on a broader understanding of both micro, and macro environment communicated by news channels (i.e. updates in terms of global events and effects). Moreover, the news influences people's sense of security or well-being (Caviglione *et al.*, 2013). A possible explanation is that human beings recognise that what happens in some distant part of the world may affect them either socially, politically or economically (Morgan, 2011). Through having access to news, the audience has a global perspective (perceived as a small village), where each part interrelates with the other in one way or another (Hansky, 2016). For example, a news that presents a report about the fluctuation in oil prices, and how this influences economies everywhere (Jackson, 2013), influence individual behaviour and decisions. Moreover, details about a civil war in one country can influence many neighbouring and non-neighbouring countries, whether in terms of migration, financial decisions or humanitarian aspects (Derouen, 2014). Thus, the news shall be considered as a newsworthy report. Depending on its quality and target, the public is the one to judge the value of information transmitted. Thus, a key attribute for news is the degree of its

newsworthy, which determines what news to broadcast. From a media industry perspective, news acceptance is called gatekeeping. *Gatekeeping* is a word used to name the process by which information is deemed worthy of entering the public sphere (Rössler, 2017). The metaphor of the gate reflects the struggle of the media to select items that will attract more audience.

Accordingly, the newsworthiness, or the suitability of a news event, may be substantive, productive, or competitive (Atkinson, 2011). Substantive suitability refers to elements like story content, importance or interest. Product suitability points to the relationship between the story, and the form through which a channel or medium reports it. Competitive suitability points to a channel's desire to provide to the public what other channels do not, in order to survive in the market (Gans, 1980). In fact, there is no definitive description of what news is, although a number of definitions have been suggested. Back in 1973, Desmond defines news as the civilisation of material, the wealth of the present, the product of the past, and the imagination of the future. Likewise, Martin and Chaudhary (1983) link news with arousing curiosity, arguing that news satisfies the important human need to know. Izard *et al.* (1973) define news based on the human attention span as a criterion of how newsworthy it is—everything that attracts the attention of the public with regard to their personal affairs and relation to society. In other words, the newsworthiness of information depends on the extent to which it captures the audience's attention.

Prior research suggests that the definition of news in developing countries differs from Western concepts. For example, Martin and Chaudhary (1983) argue that the Western definition of news is based on proximity, novelty, interest, timelessness, importance and size. Also, Martin and Chaudhary (1983) add that, in this system, the needs and desires of the audience are of paramount importance, hence, the audience can choose the news channels that suit them, forcing the channels to meet their needs to earn their attention. The audience, in other words, is a determining force in news production and broadcasting in the Western countries, although the situation is different in developing countries, because of sensible recognition of cultural perceptions implications. Most often, news intent in developing countries is to create a state of awareness and interest in diverse events, grounded on cultural factors (Avraham and Ketter, 2016). News in the developing countries is seen by UNESCO (1980) as an important resource for the process of development.

Briefly, the difference between the Western world and the developing countries in defining news, is that, in the developing countries, news providers fell behind in considering the audience's needs and interests, adhering instead to governmental educational and developmental goals and plans... Deemed as a national informational resource, and an element of political education typically, news in the developing countries tends to have a socio-political relevance to the social development of the country (Hafez, 2007). In this line, Chouliaraki (2006) believes that news in totalitarian regimes lacks the criteria of newsworthiness (e.g. relevance and proximity), hence, is designed to serve the state's goals and plans, reinforcing the ideology of a government or country's elite. Instead, definitions of news shall be based on the public's or customers' needs.

While news has been described above through the lenses of the Western world and developing countries, Bordenave (1976) offers a description through Latin America lenses. From Bordenave (1976) viewpoint, news providers can be "manipulative", "influence makers" and "agents", hence, the way a news is communicated influence the receivers. Unethical misuse can manipulate, and change, if news is presented in a particular way.

Instead, proper news offers unexpected stories, cleverly concise, dynamic and colourful, impressive and attention-attracting (Ginneken, 1998). Specifically, a news story should contain a beginning, a structure and a conflict, a denouement, a rising and falling actions, a middle and an end. In other words, it should be constructed like a novel. Most often, news is characterised by hard, soft, and spot (or breaking) attributes (Briggs and Cobley, 1998). The difference between hard news and soft news is measured by the importance and interest of the events, in the sense that an event which is judged as important and interesting, is more likely to be considered hard news, than an event which is merely interesting. In other words, hard news refers to the coverage of breaking events that involve leaders, or significant issues that disrupt the daily routine of life (e.g. disasters, significant financial events) (Heith, 2015). For example, the personal relationships of celebrity figures may be considered hard news (newsworthy), if dramatic elements are part of it (i.e. court appearances, severe accidents). On the opposite, soft news refers to information that is deemed relatively unimportant, and whose availability is not determined by time. Some authors, as Heith (2015), describe soft news as a more sensational, more personality-centric, as well practical and incident-based (Heith, 2015).

Lastly, the third category, the spot news (breaking news) refers to the presentation of events that occur unexpectedly, and unplanned (Davis and Davis, 2012). It is generally hard news, dealing with death, disaster and crime. It deals with events that are incomplete, and whose profiles are difficult to summarise in an authoritative manner. Its most important feature is that it deals with events that are of such great importance, and interest that it is included as a cautious report in a bulletin (Davis and Davis, 2012), before the news channel has had the opportunity to shape it.

For the purpose of this research, the data collected included both, hard and soft news. Both types are analysed to explore how the selected television news channels contrast. The various techniques used in producing each type will also be studied to establish insight into how news is produced in an Arabian context of news-making and production.

4.3 Between Objectivity and Duty

Objectivity is considered an ethical requirement of news (Wolfermann, 2010). Defining objectivity can be done through two strands:

- The first strand understands that the journalist, in every form of media, is responsible for presenting the news without bias. This responsibility emanates from professional, and ethical considerations underpinned in both, production and presentation, so that it leaves the freedom to audience to decide on their own viewpoints (Wolfermann, 2010); and
- The second strand assumes that journalists or channels cannot gain public confidence, until they present the events as they really are without any bias, or being influenced with the newsmaker's views or attitudes (Siebert and Schramm, 1956).

Implementing these two elements is rather difficult, because news presentation and content are shaped by the personal views of the commentators, editors and agenda of the media channel. The agenda can be a tool for following an ideological or commercial marketing strategy. According to Naphthine *et al.* (2011), news cannot be free from bias, whose type and degree may be affected by various factors. First, news stories are slanted to different types of audience, with different education, interests, attitudes and prejudices. Second, as news editors prepare the news agenda every day, it is affected by their points of view, their professional judgement and

experience, by competing news channels, internal pressure, or even political preference of the news channel; these inevitably create bias.

Moreover, the objectivity can be defined through the theory of social responsibility. The background of this theory is that media have an enormous impact on the public, and therefore, should be treated as a public service that helps the audience to achieve public goals. Accordingly, its aim should be to educate people politically and socially, and to offer allegiance to the line of thought, where the news comes without censorship (control). The roots of the social responsibility theory go back to the sixteenth century, when the feudal system prevailed, and feudal aristocracies exercised power over the lives of people and conventional written press. A number of social and political movements arose, demanding more freedom for people to express ideas. The libertarian demand was proposed in opposition to the authoritarian approach, hence, places all communication under the control of the elite and authorities (Baran and Davis, 2008). However, the authoritarian theorists justified the value of theory as the only way to keep social order (i.e. censorship of all forms of communication).

Clearly, the tenet of social responsibility theory is that if individuals are free from the limits and controls of authority, they will naturally follow what their conscience dictates, and based on truth, they establish a better life for themselves and for others (Baran and Davis, 2008). The social responsibility theory compound three main concepts in relation to media's: *differentiation* between good and bad; assurance of *free press*; and *challenges* and tests, or they will become dogma (Baran and Davis, 2008). In summary, it is evident that the theory of social responsibility is based on the assumption that humans can distinguish between good and bad, and postulates that by having access to free press, everyone can recognise the truth by following their conscience. It is observed that television news channels in the Arab world try their best to show that they are telling the truth and that they report event as it is and to show that they are different than their competitors. This is considered to be a way of differentiation that leads to branding.

4.4 News Values

News values constitute criteria that makes events newsworthy (newsworthiness) (Bednarek and Caple, 2017). According to Galtung and Ruge (1965) (as cited in Bednarek and Caple, 2017), twelve factors determine how events convert into the news. These factors are based on common-sense perception psychology and are outlined in Table 4-1 below.

Table 4-1 News values criteria

News value criteria	Definition or explanation
Frequency	In order to become news, events should have a similar frequency to the frequency of the news medium.
Threshold	The more violent an event is, the bigger the headline it will make. Before being recorded, the event should pass a threshold.
Unambiguity	Events that are not ambiguous are more likely to be noted. There is always a preference for the event that offers clear interpretation and little uncertainty.
Meaningfulness	The event should have cultural proximity to the audience in order to become news. It should also be relevant to audiences and explainable in terms of their cultural framework.
Consonance	To become newsworthy, an event should be consonant with the mental image of what the audience expects; expects here means both predicts and wants.
Unexpectedness	Unexpected here means rare; unusual.
Continuity	When an event is defined and accepted as newsworthy, it will continue to be considered news for some time.
Composition	This refers to the desire to present a balanced programme by offering a variety of items.
Reference to elite nation	Events that concern elite nations are more likely to become news.
Reference to elite people	Events that concern elite people are more likely to become news.
Reference to persons	When an event can be seen in personal terms or to relate to specific individuals' actions, it is more likely to be newsworthy
Reference to something negative	The more negative the consequences of an event are, the more likely it is to become news.

Source: Bednarek and Caple (2017)

A total of 12 news criteria were connected with newsworthy as shown in Table 4-1, respectively with the condition in place (Bednarek and Caple, 2017). Exploration of the newsworthy's criteria reveals that news can be a cultural product, as well as an institutional product (outcome of institutional meanings and definitions) (news values), which lead to producing news that reflects the informal ideology (Campbell, 1995).

According to Cotter (2010), the proximity, prominence and timelessness are the top key values of news. Proximity means whether the story occurs locally or not, and how location is relevant to the audience. Timelessness means whether the news is relevant to the calendar. Besides, news values govern all the stages of the editing and reporting process, by creating selective criteria which offer decision-making parameters, justifications for decisions, and a hierarchy of importance concerning the story outcomes. Typically, once internalised, it is more likely to become a framework of the daily routine of the newsroom rarely challenged by newsroom figures. However, despite an agreed framework (Mencher, cited in Cotter, 2010) under critical

situation/deadline, news team (editors, reporters and producers) might disagree on news story content, and some unwritten rules/value can apply. All were linked to the marketing strategy of the mass media institution. Thus, the news values function is built by the decision-makers of an institution, and is applied at all stages of production and delivery.

Bednarek and Caple (2017) consider negativity a basic news value, and that scholars use the slogan of “if it bleeds, it leads” to reinforce their argument that the top news values are deviance, conflict, negativity and violence. Negativity is chosen as the encompassing term, because it is general and embraces all four values. News is said to have the value of negativity, when it contains descriptions of environmental disasters, crime, terrorism, accidents, diseases and death, injury, and other human painful experiences.

Referring to the negativity value, Bednarek and Caple (2017) have identified different dimensions as social, cognitive and material (Bednarek and Caple, 2017). By the social dimension, the authors mean the news values that are applied and used in journalism social practices. The cognitive dimension refers to the news values existent in journalists’ minds. And lastly, the material dimension of news values means applying the concept of news values to material reality. Simultaneously, news value analysis uses content analysis, in order to explore the property that an event has to validate the potential to become news.

Furthermore, based on Bell’s (1991) research (as cited in Bednarek, 2006), news values can be categorised into three different classes: values in news actors and events, values in the news process, and values in the news text. The next Section discusses in more details each class of these values.

4.4.1 Values in News Actors and Events

This category contains most of the news values emphasised in Table 4-1. The prominent values in news actors and events are recency (news stories are recent events), proximity, superlatives (news stories use superlative forms to increase intensity of the news), relevance, attribution, and facticity (the extent to which news stories offer facts and figures to support their objectivity) (Meissner, 2015).

4.4.2 Values in the News Process

The values class of news process includes six main factors:

- Continuity: refers to events and stories told in the news tend to stay there; that is, news breeds news;
- Competition: refers to news organisations that compete with each other, and so do journalists, by presenting “exclusives” reports;
- Co-option: represents the case of stories that are not particularly newsworthy, yet, can be presented with relation to a highly newsworthy story, and thus, becoming newsworthy by association;
- Composition intent: refers to creating a variation of a story, edited in the sense to an overseas story, an aspect of a relevant domestic story is added to make it newsworthy;
- Predictability: refers to a predictable preference for news following a schedule which fits the news-making process; and
- Prefabrication: makes reference to the use of ready-made texts by journalists, to increase chances of that event to be broadcasted.

4.4.3 Values in the News Text

The values class for the news text includes three factors:

- Clarity for news: stories should be clear, explicit and concrete;
- Brevity of news: stories should be brief, expressing the news concisely, yet, words should be scarce, and longer than their content requires (Whitaker *et al.*, 2013); and
- Colour characteristic contribute to news stories that are emotionally relevant.

Such news values represent what makes events, and information as news that attracts the attention of the audience and makes it loyal to a particular news channel (DeWerth-Pallmeyer, 2013). This study argues that television news channels in the Arab World are applying these values in order for them to compete. The competition is with their rival channels, as well as international television news channels that broadcast in Arabic.

4.5 News as a Product

One of the distinguishing aspects perceiving news as a product defines “anything that a firm produces to meet the needs or satisfy the wants of customers” (Doyle, 1994, p. 33). On the other hand, Kotler (1998, p. 344) looks at it as “anything which can be offered to a market for different purposes such as attention, acquisition, use or consumption that might satisfy a want or need”. Whilst distinct, both definitions agree that a product intent is to meet, and satisfy the customer’s needs. Kotler’s definition distinguishes between two types of product: a core product, and an augmented one (Kotler, 1998). The core product is described by Kotler (1998), as the minimum benefits possible to satisfy the customers’ basic needs. This means that the qualities of the core product are taken for granted, and presents the potential for unlawful reproduction. On the other hand, the augmented product includes services that the core product fails to provide (e.g. customer service, a guarantee, a credit and purchase items), and thus, distinguishes what a company produces from its competitors (Haarla, 2003).

Regarding the news as a product, other elements of distinction exist. For instance, Levitt (1986), and Charnatony and McDonald (1992) state that the concept of product consists of four levels. The first is the generic level, which contains the minimum that is needed to meet the basic needs of customers. This level is easy to copy by competitors, and shows hardly any sign of differentiation. The second level is the expected level, which aims to satisfy the minimum purchase benefits such as the availability and the various functional abilities. The third level is the augmented level, which works on satisfying a customer’s emotional, and rational needs. It also provides additional purchase values such as the delivery information. And the fourth level offers factors that more emotional than rational, because branding a product is often at an intangible level.

Fowler (2013) argues that news is not a natural phenomenon that springs directly from reality; it is more of a product—an assessment. Drawing upon Lipschultz and Hilt (2014) perspective, it is argued that the industry and its bureaucratic structure, economic structure, the relations between the media and other industries, and the relations between media and government or other political organisations actually play an important role. Virtually, media organisations work within commercial systems, and through these systems, they create an identity for news product and brand. Once established, each media organisation develops what is called a news philosophy. This approach deals with what news the organisation takes or leaves, and what type

of news it prefers: serious or entertaining. Decisions like these, are usually market-driven, and are used as a base to differentiate the organisation's news product from all others (Wahl-Jorgensen and Hanitzsch, 2009).

News as a product "is valuable as long as it is recent" (Bücher, cited in Rantanen, 2009, p. 48). There are a number of factors that make news a product, including the series of choices and procedures taken to make an event worthy of reportage (Uscinski, 2014), the efforts of newsmakers to appeal to their audiences' needs and to the media market, the approach to making news in all its stages as a business whose creators expect profits' shares and incentives in return (DeWerth-Pallmeyer, 2013), and the way news production is affected by technology (Busa, 2013). According to Monahan (as cited in Uscinski, 2014, p. 140), the first factor that makes news a product is the fact that news is not "a mirror-image reflection of reality" but the product of a series of purposeful choices. Brian (as cited in Uscinski, 2014) believes that news is a social construct that manifests a set of decisions made by editors, producers, anchors, and other media figures. These people determine which events and individuals will be given attention to, which plotlines will be followed, what resources will be allocated in the coverage of events, and what events will become the focal point of the story. From a constructionist point of view, all news is the collection of events, figures, images and the like. Information, images and events become part of the news, not because they are more important than others or reflect reality more objectively, but because they are identified as newsworthy by those specialist media people, whose task is to find the potential of an event to become news that would fulfil the needs of both, the brand and the audience (Uscinski, 2014). Events, in other words, are not newsworthy until they are made so; and that is why news is a product of purposeful choices. Not all events can become news; they need to pass through the gate into the public sphere, and this passage depends on the gatekeeper's decisions and choices.

News can also be defined as a product in the sense that it is subject to market demands, and to the pressure of suppliers. A recent study has shown that in large, for the medium and small media markets there has been an increase in competition, and a decrease in ratings since 1987, despite the many strengths of local network affiliates (Lipschultz and Hilt, 2014). The conclusion is that the number of broadcast television news competitors has increased by a range of one to four, while market shares have decreased by 20 to 16. To meet these ratings of decline, broadcasters create a presence through the day, by producing news in both morning and

afternoon, with news personalities and talk shows, similar to those produced on radio. This procedure, called product differentiation behaviour, is taken to increase ratings, and attract viewers (Lipschultz and Hilt, 2014), as a direct response to the pressure exercised over channels to improve performance, and survive in a competitive market. The news is a product in this sense too. Like any commercial brand, it is subject to competition, differentiation and branding. According to Jackson (2007, p. 3), “news effectively [becomes] a commodity enterprise run by market-oriented managers ... audiences are now seen as consumers first and foremost, not citizens”.

The third factor that supports the definition of news as a product is that the people in charge of news production expect a financial return, when they produce interesting and attractive news. In a study where DeWerth-Pallmeyer (2013) interviewed a number of newsroom senior editors and news producers, the interviewees showed that news-making was a business, from which they expected a profit. One interviewee stated that the common goal of producing news is knowing or informing the audience, “but it has to be in the context of increasing ratings and making money with some of this stuff” (DeWerth-Pallmeyer, 2013, p. 94). The interviewee emphasised the commercial side of news-making: “We don’t stay on the air 12 noon and 9 o’clock if we’re losing a few million bucks a year pumping the product out ... we know it’s our job ultimately to make money for the company” (DeWerth-Pallmeyer, 2013, p. 94). Another interviewee pointed out that “we’re far more market-driven today” (DeWerth-Pallmeyer, 2013, p. 94). This understanding by newsroom figures shapes their perspective of their product and of their audience as just numbers—but numbers that implicitly judge the news that can be produced (DeWerth-Pallmeyer, 2013). News-making is a for-profit profession, where news organisations compete to earn the highest returns.

The fourth factor that makes news a product is the extent to which it is appealing to the audience’s needs and expectations. Despite different opinions about whether news production must appeal to the audience in order to succeed, the overall impression is that the audience, and its preferences play an important role in how and what news is produced as well as its quality. For example, the interviewees in DeWerth-Pallmeyer’s (2013) study believed that customer-based studies of the ratings of some news channel were not reliable: “our demographics show that a large part of our audience is older. One of our younger people came in, who lives in the uptown area, and he was saying ... if he’s walking down where he lives, every bar, every place

where you go by, they're turned to our news" (DeWerth-Pallmeyer, 2013, p. 93). Another interviewee, a general assignment reporter, said he did not trust the results of surveys that seek audience preferences: "I just don't believe them because in one of the studies, people said they don't want to see more news about celebrities, I mean, come on. This is just a case of someone telling an interviewer what he or she thinks they want to hear. So, I tend to disbelieve a lot of that stuff" (DeWerth-Pallmeyer, 2013, p. 89). These comments show that, to some newsroom figures, the attitudes and demands of the audience have a minor role in determining news production.

Despite this, many scholars tend to consider the audience essential to the news-as-product. Nadler (2016) points out that newsroom figures should be making a product that fits well with popular tastes and preferences, in the sense that the product should prioritise what news to cover, and how to present it to satisfy such preferences. According to Bateman *et al.* (2013), in the study of news as a product, and in fact in any study about media, the audience should be included as a major factor that determines the performance and behaviour of media in general, and the news in particular. The study of audience implies exploring how the audience receives and responds to media products. This includes consideration of how technology has created different ways in which a customer may consume and affect media products. Changes in the media environment have been accompanied by cultural changes in the audience. One such cultural change is the rise of a consumer culture based on consumption and individuality. News audiences have started to behave like consumers in the media market, with greater choices, and have responded by relinquishing loyalty to a specific news brand, and obtaining news from a wider variety of sources instead (Jackson, 2007). During 1990, Jackson states, media and news production, and broadcasting shifted from a citizen-centered model to a market-oriented model.

While news production has been affected by technological advances, it is also affected by the political, economic, and social context in which it is produced. The audience has been considered the centre of journalistic activities, and the need to attract an audience overrules journalistic values (Benson *et al.*, 2016). Editorial analytics, in a recent development, is defined by Apfelbaum and Cezzar (2014) as a tool that measures the user's interaction with programmed environments. It is used to improve products by seeing what users prefer to watch, and then modifying the products accordingly. It helps programmed environments to determine if they are meeting their business goals. This is a systematic analysis of quantitative data collected on

different aspects of audience behaviour, which aims at both: increasing audience engagement and improving the workflows of newsrooms (Cherubini and Nielsen, 2016). The need for such analytics has been created by the degree of competition news organisations face, in what is a constantly changing media environment. In such an environment, the audience cannot be taken for granted, and even the battle for attention is a challenge for journalism, because the public role of journalism is based on connecting with the audience (Cherubini and Nielsen, 2016). Organisations like the BBC have adopted editorial analytics, which were used in the past only for commercial goals, and applied them to editorial purposes.

Busa (2013) argues that technology has strongly affected the way news is produced at the operational level. Traditionally, news starts at the news desk, and ends in the broadcast room: a linear process. Now, text–image processing technologies are making news editing and composing, easier, faster, and less one-directional. For example, the use of collaborative software enables people to work simultaneously on news composition, editing from their on-site or off-site desks. Automatic updating is now possible for all users, and the services on BBC World, Sky News and CNN are available around the clock, and around the globe. News can be gathered by one organisation, packaged by a second, and transmitted by a third organisation to the market audience watching at home (Di Duca, 2010). Widlanski (2012) argues that by 1980, global news was no longer a hierarchal mediated structure: a position endorsed by the CNN’s symbol of a global village (Lerbinger, 2012).

The advancement of technology has had an impact on the Arab World’s news production too. The new technology has enabled media of the region to reach not only local Arab audiences, but also audiences in Europe and America. Additionally, Arabian ownership of satellite channels, and pan-Arab newspapers has increased the cultural and economic power of the country (Mellor, 2005), as technological development has transformed the dynamics of news collecting and news production in the region. One important impact of technological development has been the development of a sector devoted to business news (Khalil and Kraidy, 2009). This research will consider how Arab news production is affected by new technology, and the services that this technology offers, in order to enable changes in the style of news production of selected television news channels.

4.6 Television News Production

4.6.1 Content

Media content means the “complete range of visual and verbal information carried in what was once called mass media, and increasingly by smaller more interactive and targeted channels” (Shoemaker and Reese, 2013). The discussion of media content is dominated by the question of how objectively media reflect reality. Studies have shown that media portray people, events and ideas in ways differing from how they are in reality. Media content is, basically, a social construction that has no analogue in real life.

According to Shoemaker and Reese (2013), many factors influence media or news content:

- Media workers’ attitudes and socialisation;
- Media’s organisations and routines;
- Social institutions and forces. This means that content can be shaped by the political, economic, social and cultural circumstances of society. Audience also plays an important role, summarised in the common phrase, “give the public what it wants”; and
- Ideological positions and sometimes, by the status quo. This means that media content is shaped by the ideology of the elite of a society and is aimed to protect the interests of those in power.

Elliot and Golding (as cited in Rantanen, 2009) argue that the concept of news as a commodity is based on two elements of the production process: speed and originality. The type of commodity produced depends heavily on how rapid gathering, processing, and distributing news is. Originality also has an advantage for a news organisation, providing the audience with a story that is not offered by rival organisations. Traditionally, originality is linked with content. According to Paus-Hasebrink *et al.* (2005, p. 236), for television news channels, news content is “an essential characteristic element that helps the audience orient itself”. For a channel’s audience, delivered news plays a vital function serving to “support credibility, mirror competence, and radiate positively” (Heinrich, 1999, p. 506) in relation to the whole channel. Hughes (1992, p. 42) claims that this relationship is also a two-way, synergistic one, since the brand image of a television news channel also “becomes its content”.

It is difficult to generalise gatekeeping across the news organisations, but there are some common principles. From a business perspective, all news organisations require quality content to capture the audience's attention. From the point of view of functional performance, all news agencies must select and frame the messages they will broadcast: so, gatekeeping is about accepting or refusing stories, decisions based on factors such as how the journalists perceive a news event, the daily working norms, the rules of the television or the news organisations, and the political, social and cultural pressures (Fortunato, 2006). The acceptance, the rejection or the selection of an event depends on the organisation's perception of what good content is. The source of this philosophical mandate is the owner, or the highest executive level of the organisation (Fortunato, 2006).

After a story has been selected by the higher-ranking decision-makers, reporters are assigned to cover the story. Certain stories are organised into beats, where news emerges, so the reporters know the area or group with whom they have to establish a connection. The reporter and photojournalists go to the location and collect the content specific to the selected story (Fortunato, 2006); an evaluation of this material is undertaken when the reporters and photojournalists return.

While the message delivered by the news firm is that news springs from journalists' independent judgement, there are, in fact, a number of forces that drive news content. One of these is the economics and the market pressure (Uscinski, 2014). Public demand also drives news content to the extent that audience studies have increased significantly. News firms select stories that meet the demands of their public, even if the members of their public hold disparate views of reality, and there is no common content and knowledge baseline offering guidance (Uscinski, 2014). This affects Arab audiences negatively, in the sense that selecting stories and particular techniques by which to convey, enables newsmakers to control how the audience understands an issue, or drives the audience to focus on one piece of news more than another (Eadie, 2009). This research will examine these techniques, and how they are used by the channels in their news coverage, to differentiate and, therefore, brand themselves.

4.6.2 Style of Television News

Writing news should start with the most important opening piece, the lead. If the news cannot capture the audience's attention from the start, it will be difficult to hold their attention for the

rest of the bulletin (Benson and Whitaker, 2014). The lead function, therefore, is to attract attention to a story (Wieckowska and Lorek-Jezińska, 2013). There are many forms and configurations of news lead, generally structured to answer one or more of the questions *how, why, when, where, what*.

The language used in a news bulletin needs to be easily understood by all factions of the audience, and is chosen to be simple, clear, direct, realistic and fast. Larger elements such as narrative functions and structures are designed to capture the audience's attention in what's called the encoding and decoding process (Wieckowska and Lorek-Jezińska, 2013). With the selection of an appropriate narrative structure, the news story becomes more attractive to the audience.

There are two basic narrative structures: the inverted pyramid of lead and body, and the linear narrative (Wieckowska and Lorek-Jezińska, 2013). The linear narrative makes a story open, because it enables the audience to follow a gradually unfolding story, stage by stage. Factual elements are placed in visual, rather than spoken mode, and sound effects enhance the drama of the narrative; spoken words tend to be conversational, using direct speech from various parties, a narrative in present tense, reporters or presenters addressing the audience directly, with simple, direct and clear vocabulary (Wieckowska and Lorek-Jezińska, 2013). Such well understood features of narratives allow the audience to take part in the creation of meaning.

According to Barakat and Muawad (1996), editing or writing news stories can take three forms. The first form is "climax style" which depends on presenting the most important news to the audience first and giving them facts quickly. The second form is "time arrangement style", in which the most exciting news is presented first to attract attention in a brief and simple lead, followed by the full story, and a quick conclusion. The third form of news editing is called the "interpretation style". This differs from the previous two in that the lead includes the most important information and less important information follows. All the types of information are presented with the same importance attached to them.

There are a number of points that should be taken into account when editing news:

- The news material should be understood by the audience. This can be achieved when the text follows and agrees with the video images;
- The news story should be direct, clear and simple, and as close to fact as possible;

- There should be freedom to expose different viewpoints of a news event. There should also be an avoidance of prejudice or judging news from a personal point of view; and
- Local voices from the source of news should be heard and paid more attention, because they make a story more realistic and support its validity (Barakat and Muawad, 1996).

In fact, technological advancement has made it common for audiences to listen to a diversity of comments on a single story, even from different perspectives, which can, in fact, attract larger audiences.

This research will explore how technology impacts the way through which channels produce news, and edit it. It will consider how technology has transformed the methods of newsgathering, news production and dissemination, and the emerging importance of the concepts of an active or even interactive audience as well as a social audience. These issues have changed the relationship of media channels with their audiences, who for the first time can actively participate in what the media reveals, and even personalise the content of a broadcast (Tellería, 2017).

4.6.3 Presenters of News: Anchors and Correspondents

Although many people are engaged in the formation of news bulletin, from presenters, editors, to reporters, to production teams, for the audience, the most important character is the anchor, the newscaster whose personality is associated with the news that the audience wants to hear (Chantler and Stewart, 2009). The role of the news presenter is no less important than that of the editors or producers. They need to enjoy traits such as authority and friendly approachability, and the ability to deliver serious as well as silly stories, hard news and sports. Yet, the role of the news presenter is not exclusively to read the news: journalism precedes broadcasting. A presenter is expected to arrange the order of bulletin running, commission stories from colleagues, and conduct interviews. The reputation of a news channel falls or stands with its on-air news presentation (Chantler and Stewart, 2009).

The presentation of TV news that provides realistic images from distant areas has shifted audience experience from “there” to “here”. TV has tamed location by bringing images of distant places into home, opening a window on the world outside; in other words, distant places have become local (Barnhurst, 2016). A number of changes have followed the transformation

of location and impinge on the way presenters work. Since the 1960s, cameras have moved closer to the anchor's face, to collapse the distance between audience and anchor (Barnhurst, 2016). The images of the anchors have become more imposing, and their appearance on screen has become longer—up to fifteen seconds—and more frequent (Barnhurst, 2016).

A second change relates to the background against which the newscaster is filmed. In the 1960s, plain backdrops were used, giving a sense of being cool neutrality as well as distance. In the 1970s, two changes took place: backgrounds started to include images of technology and equipment, fostering a perception of close connection between the anchor and the event (Barnhurst, 2016), and more importantly, newscaster celebrities were promoted. Audiences who watched a newscaster regularly developed a kind of rapport with the presenter (Berkowitz, 2010), and in some cases, this sense of a personal bond developed into eagerness, even obsession, to watch the news bulletin, and to see their favourite presenter, regardless of the news events being delivered (Potter, 2008).

News presenters were, thus, used to secure brand loyalty from the audience (Mills *et al.*, 2004). The issue of audience loyalty drives many audience members to change to another channel, if their favourite presenter moves there, even if they know nothing about its services or policies. (Friedrichsen and Kamalipour, 2017). This research will examine how the selected four television news channels depend on their presenters as a means of differentiating and branding themselves.

4.6.4 Audience Needs and Channel Promises

The term audience has been used as a collective name of the receivers of mass communication (Webster and Phalen, 2013). For the last few decades, most audiences have been able to choose between channels, which made them the centre of competition between news providers. Channels now look after their audiences' needs, to win their acceptance, and to keep them watching. Audience needs are manifold: they expect TV and media, in general, to provide entertainment, education, information, relaxation, individual delight and inspiration. They also expect from channels to extend their knowledge, educate them, and extend their knowledge of art, society and the world (Pannu and Tomar, 2010).

Studies of news audiences often focus on audience preferences, and the factors that affect their selection of one channel over another. People use news for a diversity of purposes, including self-aggrandisement, and corporate self-aggrandisement (Uscinski, 2014). They use news to reinforce their sense of security, and to enjoy tales of the downtrodden. They may fantasise about political leaders, who turned into a form of entertainment. A fundamental task of any news channel is to integrate the audience into a world beyond their real experience.

“Audience activity” is a term defined by Levy and Windahl (1984) (as cited in Bostrom, 2012). There are a number of meanings associated with the term, including utility, selectivity, intentionality and imperviousness to influence. Another element is the process of constructing meaning from selected messages (Bostrom, 2012). Levy and Windahl (1984) consider audience activity to hold two dimensions: audience *orientation*, which has a qualitative nature and consists of three levels: selectivity, involvement and use; and a subdivision of audience activity into its appearance before, during, or after exposure to a media product or news item. There are in addition three types of audience activity: *preactivity*, which refers to the audience’s conscious planning to watch news, *duractivity*, which refers to audience engagement in distracting behaviour while watching, and *postactivity*, which refers to the audience thinking about the news and discussing it with others (Bostrom, 2012).

The idea of audience activity suggests that media use is motivated by goals and needs peculiar to the audience, and that the active participation of the audience in the process of communication may limit or facilitate the gratification associated with being exposed to the communication process (Baran and Davis, 2014). Schramm (cited in Reinemann, 2014) argues that news consumption is driven by reality motives, the delayed rewards that are expected to come from watching the news; or by pleasure motives, direct and immediate rewards. Rubin (1983) makes a similar distinction, pointing out that some people watch news to gain information and to learn (reality motives), while others watch news to relieve boredom (pleasure motives).

A study conducted by Wicks (1989) to determine audience preferences when watching news, found five points considered as important by participants:

- Sport: one participant preferred news because news keep the audience updated on sport;
- Credibility: one participant made the point that professionalism is mostly preferred in a local newscast;

- Social news: there was an agreement by all participants preferring interest stories, society-related events, family-related stories and tales about their community;
- Production considerations: one participant stated that live news made television the best; and
- Weather forecast: all participants said that weather information was very important, because it inform the people on how to plan the day and the week ahead.

A news bulletin presents stories from different places, and the content decides whether the audience will watch it or not (Hamilton, 2011). The lead, or first, story transcends the other stories in importance. It is usually longer than the others. Galician (1986) conducted a study into perceptions of the good and the bad news, examining the balance between them. Over a third (36%) of the participants identified good news with a happy ending. Another 29% considered good news to be those that contained human interest stories. For 18%, good news related to news that is informative. All participants identified bad news as depressing. According to Bohle (1986), negative news plays a more significant role in the news selection process, because it has more information and value, is less ambiguous and more vivid. According to Shoemaker and Reese (2013), humans are innately interested in the unusual, including conflicts and threats, because they have a biological imperative to attend to deviance.

Covering bad news can be more useful to an audience, than covering only cheerful news. In Western countries, negative news can be of greater significance and interest than positive news, but in developing countries, it may be avoided if it threatens a fragile political system. Channels under totalitarian regimes tend to broadcast good news only; their programmes are meant and designed to meet the state's needs, not the audience's (Shoemaker and Reese, 2013). Content usually focuses on local events and is based on regional and cultural considerations. This news is monitored, reshaped and revised by the government.

Different ways of presenting news have different impacts on the audience. The Glasgow University Media Group has found a hierarchy of information, and different types of news items in news bulletins; for example, stories about the royal family take priority over the foreign news; and human-interest stories can be serious or non-serious. The focus of the non-serious stories in news bulletin is on common sense and daily experiences (Gauntlett and Hill, 1999).

A 1983 study by Al-Musri (quoted in Al-Bad, 1989, pp. 8-26) of the news content on Egyptian television found that priority was given to local events, then Arab World events, and finally international events. The study found that political news was attention-attractive, and most of the participants in the study preferred it; and that the local coverage included only official state news. International news in developing countries is usually derived from international news agencies. Al-Qalini's (1986) study of the effect of the use of satellites on Egyptian television international news, found that the political content that was sourced from Eurovision Network was priority watching for Egyptians.

It is not possible for editors to meet an audience's needs and expectations all the time, especially if there is control over media, as is the situation in many developing countries. Malcolm (1968), who interviewed a number of editors, producers, presenters, and others in charge of news making, found great differences among the interviewees in terms of how news production should meet the wishes of the audience. There was a common feeling among the interviewees that media did not need to gratify all the demands of the public, particularly when there were many other factors determining the content of news, including the editors' wishes and the political circumstances of the country.

4.7 Conclusion

The previous sections of chapter 4, have shown that news is not merely a sequence of events presented to an audience. The events must be newsworthy in order for them to be presented in a news bulletin. What determines their newsworthiness is a set of values that these events must meet, in order for them to enter the public sphere. News values make up the framework within which all newsroom figures follow the *principles of newsworthy* as a guide, and despite potential biases, all decisions and compromises are based on the framework. As a result, the concept of news has shifted from being a media routine to a product subject to the market competition and more business-centric. Therefore, the concept of the audience has also altered, and shifted from citizens to consumers— from news production citizen-centered to a consumer-oriented business model. In addition, to a certain degree, technology has influenced the way news are produced, hence, the audiences' needs, preferences and channels of broadcasting have changed. Nevertheless, technology has supported the engagement of the audience of these channels through the internet and social media platforms.

Additionally, news production has been affected by political and economic factors. Given these factors, news production and the selection of news stories differ in Western countries from those in developing countries. While in the Western countries the goal of news production and presentation is to entertain, educate, inform, and address audiences' needs, news in the developing countries is often part of the political programme of the government, and is mainly used to support its ideology, and increase its authority.

Another avenue identified in the literature were two points discussed in this Chapter. The first relates to the extent to which news reflects reality and one group of scholars believe that news is manipulated to look real, with the journalists being the manipulators. Another group believes that news mirrors reality, reflecting audiences' needs and expectations. With this in mind, the first group believes that news channels do not pay much attention to the audiences' preferences, and do not trust audience's studies. The ongoing discussion indicates that reporting news (which involves news selection and processing) is the television news channel's main concern. Much of the findings suggest that news reporting is shaped by a set of strategic objectives that are derived from newsroom philosophy.

In conclusion, each of the four selected television news channels included in the study relies on their product, the news. To attract the targeted audience, channels use their special product, and news coverage, to differentiate themselves from their competitors.

Chapter 5 Framing Theory

5.1 Introduction

While Chapter Four delved into exploring branding differentiation (particularly focusing on what factors determine news production differentiation), this Chapter examines the concept of framing theory to further understand the research problem. The framing approach of news bulletin (news framing) is an analytical tool used for exploring media texts, and in particular, the news. Thus, this Chapter traces the development of the framing theory, and how frames and framing correlate with current research. Consequently, the next Sections will explore the methods of framing that differentiated the news channels being studied.

5.2 Frames and Framing

Framing theory was originally developed by cognitive psychologists, and in the research fields of mass communication, media studies and journalism. The core concepts of framing theory explore topics such as content production, the construction of meaning, and media effects (Ardèvol-Abreu, 2015). In considering the different approaches that researchers have taken, Druckman (2002) identifies the framing approach as a growing discipline. Through the lenses of Framing theory, this research explores how the four selected television news channels use techniques to create/enhance brand identity via their news bulletin, using news framing as a technique (Deen, 2016; Wodak and Meyer, 2001). Similarly, framing can be used as a method for differentiating each channel from its competitors, and creating a specific brand identity (Ang *et al.*, 2008).

Although both “frame” and “framing” have been defined in so many ways, the two concepts have general meaning for cognitive psychologists (Bateson, 1955, 1972). For cognitive psychologists, the word “frame” is used to refer to “organizing principles that are socially shared and persistent”, and these principles allow us as human beings to “meaningfully structure the social world” (Reese, 2001, p. 11).

As Ardèvol-Abreu (2015) notes, the vision of Bateson (1955) originally used two analogies to explain the concept. First, he likened the frame to a picture frame that “tries to organise people’s perception, by urging people to attend to what is within it and to ignore what is outside of it”

(Ardèvol-Abreu, 2015, p. 428). Second, Bateson (1955) compared it to a Venn diagram (used in mathematical set theory), that has “a double function: to include elements within its borders, and exclude those that are outside it” (Ardèvol-Abreu, 2015, p. 428). Bateson’s (1955) analogies indicate that framing involves not only inclusion and exclusion but also salience, an element of central importance in the emphasis of framing approach, adopted later on by researchers like Entman (1993). With reference to the theory roots, researchers with an interest in mass communication, media studies and journalism have defined the terms “frame” and “framing in various ways to reflect their various theoretical approaches. One of the earliest definitions comes from Gitlin (1980), who refers to media frames as “persistent patterns of cognition, interpretation and presentation, of selection, emphasis and exclusion by which symbol handlers routinely organise discourse” (p. 7). Gitlin (1980) argues that journalists use these frames to organise reality, when they write reports, hence, the public relies on frames to interpret the reports. The existence of a double set of frames—those produced by the media, and those produced by the audience—is a central feature of research about frames in media.

In news journalism, “frame” has acquired a quite specific sense, referring to “a central organizing idea or story line that provides meaning to an unfolding strip of events, weaving a connection among them” (Gamson and Modigliani, 1987, p. 143). It is through framing that the media interpret realities, and construct them (McQuail, 2005). Journalists create meaning by using frames, to ensure the audience comprehends the news (McQuail, 2005).

Any communicative text, whatever is its type (for example, informative in the case of news), needs to have a narrative structure to organise its discourse. News in print or audio-visual media is based on a particular set of narrative conventions that convey to the audience what has happened, to whom and why; news items or reports are typically ordered in accordance with these to produce a recognisable format. Media frames are also established on the basis of the resources offered by a specific medium, such as written or spoken words, static or moving images, and all the other audio/visual elements at the disposal of journalists or reporters. It has been argued that “at the macro-level, frame building is concerned with message producers’ organising structures, which are used to present complex events and issues, and, in the process give their stories meaning” (Bruce, 2015, p. 4). News frames are employed to reduce the complexity of issues in order to adapt them to cope with the constraints imposed by particular media, in terms of time (the minutes allotted a news item) or space (the available column

inches), for example. It also needs to conform to the interpretive schemata that media audiences have become accustomed to, those individual psychological processes that are also influenced by sociological factors such as culture (Ardèvol-Abreu, 2015).

5.3 Early Framing Theory

Goffman (1974) paved the way for the development of a specifically media-oriented theory of framing by expanding the concept from the individual mental schema (allows users to organise experiences to the collective social framework), shifting it from the psychological to the sociological realm. Goffman (1974) sees framing as the method that people use, when applying interpretive schemata, in order to make sense of the information they face in the real, everyday world. For Goffman (1974), frames are institutionalised in different ways, forming a central part of a society's culture, along with the set of values, norms, and beliefs that are shared in the collective memory of a group of people. As Van Gorp (2007) notice, Goffman (1974) argues that these shared values and beliefs cannot be changed by members of a group, but people such as journalists can make use of the cultural components, and present them to the audience using frames (Van Gorp, 2007). Goffman (1974) was the first to apply framing to communication studies, operating within a sociological perspective, and viewing the media as part of the system creation and transmission of cultural values, norms and beliefs. He maintains that media have the ability to generate, disseminate and modify social frameworks of interpretation, because of their intervention in the construction of shared social discourse. This expanded the conceptualisation of framing potential as a theoretical approach to media messages.

Tuchman (1978) was one of the first writers to directly link framing theory to news media, and in his work, he returned to one of Bateson's original analogies between a window frame and a cognitive frame. In his book-length study *Making News*, Tuchman (1978) suggests that news is like a window surrounded by a frame, that serves to limit how the audience perceives reality, by restricting their viewpoint, and focusing on some carefully selected elements of that reality at the expense of others. Tuchman (1978) argues that multiple frames are involved. Frames already exist in the minds of journalists when they put together a news report; they also structure the report itself. These frames are, then, decoded by the audience when they attempt to understand both, the report itself, and the reality to which the item of news refers. This argument draws attention to the effects that the media can have on the audience when one frame is selected in preference to another (Cacciatore *et al.*, 2016).

Like the many researchers who followed frames principles, Gamson and Modigliani (1989) attempted to account why some frames seem to be stronger than others, in terms of their persuasive powers over individuals or the public. They concluded that the strength of a frame is dependent on a set of factors that include frequency (or repetition), accessibility and relevance. The first of these, frequency, is related to the number of times that a frame is repeated, and to the number of media organisations that choose to repeat it. The more frequently a frame appears, the stronger it becomes. The strength of a frame is also increased when it is easily accessible, and clearly understood by individuals who have already been exposed to the ideas it contains. The more frequently a topic is repeated in the media, the greater salience it will have in the receiver's mind, and the more accessible it will be. These frames often draw on deeply rooted cultural values, since cultural context is an essential element in the effective operation of frames. Last but not least, the strength of a frame is also intensified when the audience perceives it to relate to matters that are of direct relevance to their interests (i.e. a frame that focuses on issues considered peripheral by an audience will fail to have the same impact) (Gamson and Modigliani, 1989).

Gamson and Modigliani (1989) also note that certain framing devices, such as metaphors, exemplars, catch-phrases, depictions and visual images, are capable of condensing information, and appear to be highly effective at strengthening the impact of frames. Tankard (2001), later, produced an extensive list of framing devices that can be used to identify, and analyse news frames (headlines, subheads, photographs, captions, leads, source selection, quotes selection, pull quotes, logos, statistics and charts, and concluding statements and paragraphs).

5.4 Entman's Framing Model

Since Entman (1993) was one of the first scholars to attempt to develop a model for framing (based on early perspective of Bateson's original analogies), he impacted the field of media studies significantly. His explanation of the concept has become one of the most frequently quoted definitions of framing:

“Framing essentially involves selection and salience. To frame is to select some aspects of a perceived reality and make them more salient in a communicating text, in such a way as to promote a particular problem definition, causal interpretation, moral evaluation and/or treatment recommendation for the item described. Typically frames diagnose, evaluate and prescribe” (Entman, 1993, p. 53).

Entman (1993) here describes the process by which the journalist puts together a news story, arguing that journalists need to tell understandable and appealing stories, even if constrained by news-making routines and limitations (time and space). Thus, Entman (1993) explains that journalists organise the information to be presented by making decisions that are based on omission and inclusion criteria. Entman (1993) argues that these decisions are guided by the already existing frames that form journalists' own belief systems. In this process, the journalist, then, decides how the issue will be approached, how the cause will be identified, and presented, along with allocating blame and proposing solutions. The process is also framed by the workplace routines and professional conventions, principles and norms, together with regulations.

Framing involves content selection, ensuring that certain elements appear more prominent (or more salient than others, to employ Entman's (1993) term) using the techniques previously listed. By selecting some information, and highlighting it to the exclusion of other information, framing can shape the audience's interpretation of issues and events. The salient elements are, then, used to organise the narrated story, in such a way that they define the problems to be discussed, and diagnose their causes; interpret the causes of these problems; make moral judgements; and finally recommend solutions to the perceived problems (Entman, 1993, pp. 52–53).

Entman (1993) argues that frames can be encountered in at least four different parts of the communication process, and that these involve the communicator of the message (the journalists who organise the information), the media text, the receiver (audience), and the culture in which the frame has been generated:

“Communicators make conscious or unconscious framing judgments in deciding what to say, guided by frames (often called schemata) that organize their belief systems. The text contains frames, which are manifested by the presence or absence of certain keywords, stock phrases, stereotyped images, sources of information, and sentences that provide thematically reinforcing clusters of facts or judgments. The frames that guide the receiver's thinking and conclusion may or may not reflect the frames in the text and the framing intention of the communicator ... culture might be defined as the empirically demonstrable set of common frames exhibited in the discourse and thinking of most people in a social grouping” (Entman, 1993, pp. 52–53).

Entman (1993) emphasises that not all of these decisions concerning news content and language use will be conscious. Many will be the result of, either learned journalistic working practices

or personal ideology. The mental representations that are created as a conclusion of exposure to a news frame stimulate the audience's understanding and interpretation of the information presented in these frames, although the audience is encouraged to form an understanding of events by the journalist's use of metaphors, symbols, images and keywords. Since receivers also bring their own distinct frames to the news text, which may or may not correspond with those of the journalist, the audience may or may not draw the conclusions that the journalist intended. This points to the fact that the audience is an integral part of the process of interpreting the frame, and is comprehending it.

Finally, Entman (1993) points out to culture as another important frame, relevant to both, the communicators and the receivers. The framing of local, regional and national cultures may often give a particular slant to news stories, and can be reflected in certain linguistic elements within the discourse. However, as McNair (2006, p. 111) notes the advent of news coverage such as that offered by Al Jazeera, which has a "transnational reach and global influence" poses challenges, for both, journalists and analysts, in terms of identifying common frames (see Section 4.7, Chapter Four).

5.5 Episodic vs. Thematic Framing of Issues

Another influential work is Iyengar's (1991) study of how different types of news framing, which he described as episodic and thematic, can influence the way in which individuals ascribe responsibility for issues. In episodic framing, news items about social issues focus on individual, and specific instances that serve as illustrative exemplars. Iyengar (1991, p. 16) contrasts this with thematic framing, in which news items feature "in-depth, interpretive analysis", and issues are appropriately contextualised in a broader and more abstract manner. In a series of experiments that looked at media coverage of political issues, Iyengar (1991) found evidence that news reports that were categorised as episodic, tended to "elicit individualistic rather than societal attributions of responsibility" (Iyengar, 1991, p. 15). In contrast, those that featured thematic framing had the opposite effect. Iyengar (1991) claims that, since television news is predominantly framed in an episodic fashion, this leads to complex societal problems being framed in terms of individual failure, rather than political action. Ultimately, this type of framing contributed to "the trivialization of public discourse and to the erosion of electoral accountability" (Matthes, 2008, p. 5).

From a theoretical point of view, Iyengar (1991) argues that the effects found may be explained by “accessibility bias” (Iyengar, 1991). What the author means by this, is that individuals base their judgements on the information that has been made accessible to them, in the media coverage they are exposed to, and so, they do not draw conclusions based on other information that they may have previously received. According to Iyengar (1991), “information that can be more easily retrieved from memory tends to dominate judgments, opinions, and decisions” (Iyengar, 1991, pp. 130–131).

5.6 Frame-Building vs. Frame-Setting

Since the late 1980s, framing research in the fields of mass communication, media studies and journalism have placed increasing emphasis on the role played by audiences, particularly the extent to which media is capable of setting frames in the minds of audience members, along with any arising consequences (Ardèvol-Abreu, 2015; Cacciatore *et al.*, 2016). Audiences are no longer seen as passive recipients of information produced by the media within carefully designed journalistic frames. Instead, they are viewed as active participants in the interpretation, or decoding of the news story, in analyses that focus on the interaction between the audience’s prior knowledge, and media frames that are seen as activating these pre-existing knowledge structures (Dunwoody and Peters, 1992).

Framing has increasingly become understood by researchers as involving both, media frames and audience, or individual frames (Scheufele, 1999), and as referring to a dynamic communicative process, an interplay between media frame-building and audience frame-setting (de Vreese, 2005). According to de Vreese (2005), framing should be perceived as a two-stage process, in which frame-building occurs first, and is followed by frame-setting. Consequently, both processes merit attention. De Vreese (2005) argues that the first of these processes, frame-building, involves the various factors that influence the construction and qualities of a news frame. These factors can be classified as internal, when they relate to the practices of individual journalists, and news organisations in framing news issues. They begin the frame-building process by deciding which aspects of reality will become news and select which aspects of these news events are most salient. Another set of external factors are affected principally by the interaction between journalists, social elites and political movements. Trampota (2006, as cited in Kalvas *et al.*, 2010) emphasises that during the frame-building process, any of these participants can try to force their own perspective on the issue “so that it resonates with their

needs” (Kalvas *et al.*, 2010, p. 123). Some will be more successful than others in imposing their preferred frame regarding how the problem will be defined and assessed, what its causes are judged to be, and what potential solutions will be proposed. De Vreese (2005) maintains that “the outcomes of the frame-building process are the frames manifest in the text” (De Vreese, 2005, p. 52).

The second process, corresponding to frame-setting, relates to the role played by the audience, and “refers to the interaction between media frames and individuals’ prior knowledge and predispositions” (de Vreese, 2005, p. 52). This decoding process is also conditioned by multiple factors. Framing devices found in media texts can function as triggers to activate individual cognitive or cultural frames or schemata. The news story can promote a particular definition of the problem, a suggestion of its causes and a proposed solution. However, every member of the audience of that news story has a unique set of experiences, informing their personal understanding, and these stored interpretations of reality form a schema which may be used in the future to decode new information. When media frames are transferred to the minds of the audience, they become micro-constructs that allow individuals to create personal images, and impressions of the world based on the information they have received (Ardèvol-Abreu, 2015). Thus, the way in which each individual perceives and interprets an image, or a description may differ markedly.

Although the underlying frames produced in frame-building can be seen as shared schemata, in the frame-setting process individuals may attribute a range of different meanings to what they hear, read or see. Researchers have explored the factors that promote individual acceptance of agreement with media frames or “frame alignment” (Snow *et al.*, 1986; Dardis, 2007), and the extent to which the concepts connected in a media message tend to connect with each other in the audience’s mind, influencing attitudes and behaviours (Zhou and Moy, 2007).

5.7 The Importance of Culture

Along with the emphasis on audiences, and their role in the framing process, researchers have pointed to the importance of culture in shaping how individuals and audiences respond to media frames. These approaches to framing have been influenced by constructivism or social constructivism, a philosophical theory which posits that the creation and institutionalisation of reality is based on social interaction (Van Gorp, 2007). With specific reference to media

framing, this approach emphasises “the role of an active, interpreting, meaning-constructing audience” (Van Gorp, 2007, p. 62). As discussed above, an individual’s prior knowledge and experience perform a vital role in shaping how that individual recognises and interprets a media frame. For social constructivists, culture is deemed to play an essential part in constituting the individual’s knowledge and understanding of the world. Therefore, the shared repertoire of frames that exists in a culture provides an all-important link between news production (or frame-building), and news comprehension (or frame-setting) (Van Gorp, 2007). Framing can be thought of as a bridging concept between culture (including mass media) and individual cognition; and it focuses on the interaction between the frames employed by journalists when encoding a message, and those used by the audience when decoding it (Van Gorp, 2007). Framing enables journalists and audiences to see the same event but, from different angles, depending on which frame has been applied.

In this conceptualisation of framing, the frames applied by journalists come from a greater pre-existing cultural stock of frames that have previously been used in social, political and historical contexts, and are accessible to identification by analysis. Since these frames are a central part of culture, rather than being specifically produced by the media, the actual frame is not included in the media content. The text is produced by the journalist, and then, the frame is established for the reading or decoding process that the audience makes a connection between the media content and other cultural frames. Individuals are able to make sense of a new story by connecting it with cultural phenomenon that they already know about. This process of frame connection is perceived as natural to media audiences hence, the underlying process of social construction remains invisible, and the impact of these media frames goes.

This social constructivist approach suggests how these cultural macrostructures can be accessed during the media frame-building process by journalists and activated later in the frame-setting process by the audience. Importantly, this means that audience members do not solely interpret news depending on individual internal factors, but draw on their individual reserves of culture, and deep-seated cultural beliefs and values. These cultural frames change gradually over the course of time, but media frames are dynamic meaning structures that change constantly, according to the situation and the context in which they are applied. Consequently, social interaction is the essence of the framing process. As Ardèvol-Abreu (2015, p. 436) notes:

“Culture plays a central role in the processes of framing, acting as a ‘reservoir’ of frames, and simultaneously setting limits on what is socially acceptable or not: if the frames collide head-on with widely accepted cultural principles, it is unlikely that they will have major effects.”

Guo *et al.* (2012) raise a number of interesting questions about the difficulties of analysing framing in the context of globalised television, when cultural frames may not be shared among different national audiences. Authors note that Gamson (1992) argues that frames result from negotiating shared meanings among audiences, who build “discursive communities”, in which “frames define the boundaries of the discourse concerning an issue and categorise the relevant actors based on some established scheme of social taxonomy” (Pan and Kosicki, 2001, p. 41). Typically, the impact of a frame has been heavily dependent on “its resonance with the target audience’s underlying cultural experiences” (Guo *et al.*, 2012, p. 1920), which are usually reflected by journalists in the narratives and metaphors they choose to employ. Guo *et al.* (2012) point to the need for new transnational comparative studies that identify “whether news media of different countries stick to their national points of view or contribute to the global discursive community” (Guo *et al.*, 2012, p. 1932). As well, content analysis of the channels in this research may provide an insight into whether global/transnational generic frames are emerging in satellite television news, as opposed to purely national frames, and whether this framing is used as a differentiation strategy by competing channels.

5.8 Differences Between Framing Approaches

Ardèvol-Abreu (2015) distinguishes between inductive and deductive approaches in studying frames in media. An inductive approach depends on the immersion in the selected sample to detect a frame. There are some arguments for using an inductive approach. Considering only the idea of the text being delivered, does not give a clue about the frames used, but some devices, which are called reasoning devices or framing devices, offer support in detecting the frames used in a news story (e.g. terms, metaphors, and arguments). The other approach is deductive. Ardèvol-Abreu (2015) introduces content analysis, which is conducted through the deductive approach and usually is more easily done; it can be applied to a large sample as well, as it is easily replicable. Deductive studies have adopted a strategy based on previous selections of frames, considering frames that have been successfully used by other researchers, and are applicable to the topic under study. Deductive approaches have been used to investigate news

frames that have already been operationalised and defined. Scholars who adopt this approach call for a concise operationalisation of frames in content analysis.

Researchers shifted from considering frames as devices by which to shed light on particular parts of a news story, through the study of its linguistic devices. One way by which media influences public opinion is by framing events and issues in the news. Framing involves presenting a communication source, and defining the issue. The notion of framing has enabled researchers to investigate media content, and to study the relationship between media and the public opinion. The majority of studies which have investigated framing have focused only on content; that is, on news frames or framing effects. There is still a need to study framing in terms of production, content and media use (Ardèvol-Abreu, 2015). Framing can be understood in terms of a communicative process. Hence, communication is a dynamic process, involving frame building and frame setting, and involves the interplay between media frames and audience predispositions.

In order to respond to the research problem, this research focuses on both linguistic approaches to framing and news content. For the purpose of this research, framing is considered for both ideological reasons and commercial objectives.

5.9 Advantages and Disadvantages of Framing Theory

According to Wolfsfeld (2011), framing can make a difference in how people make choices. It can also influence people's political thinking. This can be done by presenting the news, through either episodic or thematic frames. For example, if there is a piece of news about a man who has killed his wife, in an episodic frame the details of the story will be given: who did it? Why? Where? When? But, in a thematic frame, the story might instead be presented as the twentieth case of a man killing his wife. In the first frame, audience anger is created towards the husband; but in the second frame, anger is directed towards police and local authorities (Wolfsfeld, 2011). Framing can also have an impact on crystallising public opinion, which can shift in one direction or another, if one type of frame receives more emphasis in news coverage (Durach, 2016).

However, framing has also disadvantages. Prospect theory, a brand of framing theory, advances the idea of freedom of choices, where people prefer options that are not compatible with the most rational choice. In other words, channels can propagate messages that invite risky

decision-making, and present issues in two frames: either the disadvantages related to non-engagement in the behaviour, or the advantages related to the behaviour. In processing these framed options, the receiver evaluates the received messages, and assesses whether they will improve or impede the current situation. It is worth mentioning that this subjective evaluation and assessment is at odds with the objective likelihood of experiencing an outcome (Dill, 2013).

5.10 Critiques of Framing Theory

Back in 1993, Entman (1993) himself argued that framing was a fragmented paradigm, with framing theory lying on the borderline of a number of other paradigms. He noted that there is no agreement on any theory that explains how frames are constructed, how they are manifest in media texts, and how these texts actually influence the audience. As a result, there is also no agreement on which methodological approach to take. Likewise, Weaver (2007) made a similar point a decade later, highlighting the lack of clarity in pinpointing what is actually meant by the concept “frame”, which is used in different ways by multiple disciplines drawing on a range of theoretical models and paradigms. McCombs (2004) also noted that the definitions of “frame” are diverse and sometimes contradictory.

However, many others view this diversity in approaches as a positive weight to framing (Ardèvol-Abreu, 2015). Baran and Davis (2014) note that framing theory has generated significant argument concerning its scope, ambiguity and inconsistency. Some scholars believe that the various framing theories should be clearly differentiated, while others argue that all of them should be integrated into a single theory. Baran and Davis identify two major camps (critical and cultural theorists) and claim that the elite domination of framing has been neglected by post-positivist scholars, in terms of what they use are too abstract and cannot be examined systematically.

At the root of this controversy, lie two contrasting views of framing itself. For post-positivists, framing represents a new and useful means of understanding media effects, and framing theory is seen as related to theories about media cognition and information processing. Post-positivists are interested in finding out if certain types of frame affect the way information is processed, and whether exposure to framed content has measurable effects. They are not concerned about the origins of frames, or why and how journalists select them. They prefer quantitative methods such as surveys and experiments, intended for systematic empirical investigation.

Critical and cultural theory researchers reject the focus on frame effects, considering it too narrow. They prefer a macroscopic conceptualisation of framing: they examine the efforts of social elites to control framing, the process of framing performed by journalists, and the extent to which framing shapes the way the public understand the world. They study these issues by using qualitative methods such as interviews and focus groups, and by relying on content analysis, both of which require a reflective engagement with the data produced.

To date, the majority of studies which have investigated framing have focused only on content; that is, news frames or media framing effects. The literature shows confirmatory evidence that there is still a need to study framing in terms of production, content and media use perspectives (Ardèvol-Abreu, 2015). This study is trying to fulfil this research gap by addressing how television news channels frame their news coverage in a way that it provides information about events being reported and, at the same time, framing it in a way that it shows the strength of the channel and grabs the attention of the audience to its powerful style and ways of gathering the news, producing it, analysing it and predicting the future about it.

5.11 Conclusion

At its most basic, a frame is “an invitation ... to read a story in a certain way” (Ardèvol-Abreu, 2015, p. 430). This Chapter has focused on understanding how framing invites the audience to comprehend, perceive and evaluate the issues presented to them by the media. It has shown that the concept of framing can have different meanings, and that a range of theories of framing have enabled researchers to investigate the consequences of framing at both levels, individual and societal. On the individual level, the framing of a news item may help to change someone’s attitude towards an issue. At the societal level, framing may play a key role in shaping social processes such as social action, decision-making and political socialisation

This chapter has also established the idea that frames feed on culture, and reveal themselves in all types of social discourse, including those of the media. Framing research has made it clear that although the media provides the public with a great deal of information, and may attempt to shape individual and group opinion, ultimately their effects are limited.

Entman (1993) describes the process of framing theory in media as involving the process of selecting news and making it salient. This research argues that television news channels in the

Arab World use framing in their news reporting for the Arab World, by selecting news stories that serve their brand promise commercially. By reporting news that matches their brands' promises, these channels compete for targeted audiences in the Arab World. Making a news topic salient is also another marketing strategy that these television news channels use, in order to compete and grab the attention of the proposed audience.

Drawing conclusion on findings identified, this Chapter explored the framing theory to understand how televisions news channels in the Arab World are able to frame their news coverage, differentiate themselves through branding, and succeed in encouraging audience loyalty.

The researcher argues that there is a need for more research on the use of framing theory by television news channels for purposes other than ideology. One of these purposes can be marketing and branding.

Chapter 6 Research Methodology

6.1 Introduction

The previous Chapters have provided a contextual background to the study of the Arab television news channels and established the theoretical foundations for this research. This Chapter focuses on the methodology used in this research, and how it contributes to addressing the objectives of this study, and the research questions presented earlier in Chapter one.

Selecting an appropriate methodology is crucial to ensure it fulfils the requirements of the research, addresses its objectives, and produces valid answers to the research questions (Yin, 2009). Methodology needs to be guided by the extent of the existing knowledge within a field, which can be established by reviewing the literature (Quinlan, 2011). A methodology explains the type of data to be gathered, the methods for data collection, and the analysis that follows, and provides a rationale for these choices. It also identifies and addresses any ethical issues that may arise throughout the process (Saunders *et al.*, 2012).

This Chapter begins by discussing the research paradigm; that is, the philosophical underpinnings of the selected methodology, together with the conceptual approach and strategy adopted. Following this, the Chapter explains the research design, which is the mixed method approach that includes both, quantitative and qualitative data collection methods. The research process, including the data collection methods and the data analysis procedures, is then described in detail. Subsequent Sections discuss the reliability and validity of the methods used, and the ethical issues relevant to the research. Finally, the Chapter ends with a summary.

6.2 Research Process

Saunders *et al.* (2012) suggest a useful means for visualising how the research philosophy and approach link to the chosen method, strategy, time horizon, and techniques and procedures, referring to this multi-layered representation as the research process “Onion” (Saunders *et al.*, 2012) (see below Figure 6-1). This representation provides a helpful framework that guides researchers in choosing appropriately, from the various methodological options available. For the figure below, A represents Philosophy; B Approach; C Methodological choice; D Strategies; E Time horizon; F Techniques and procedures.

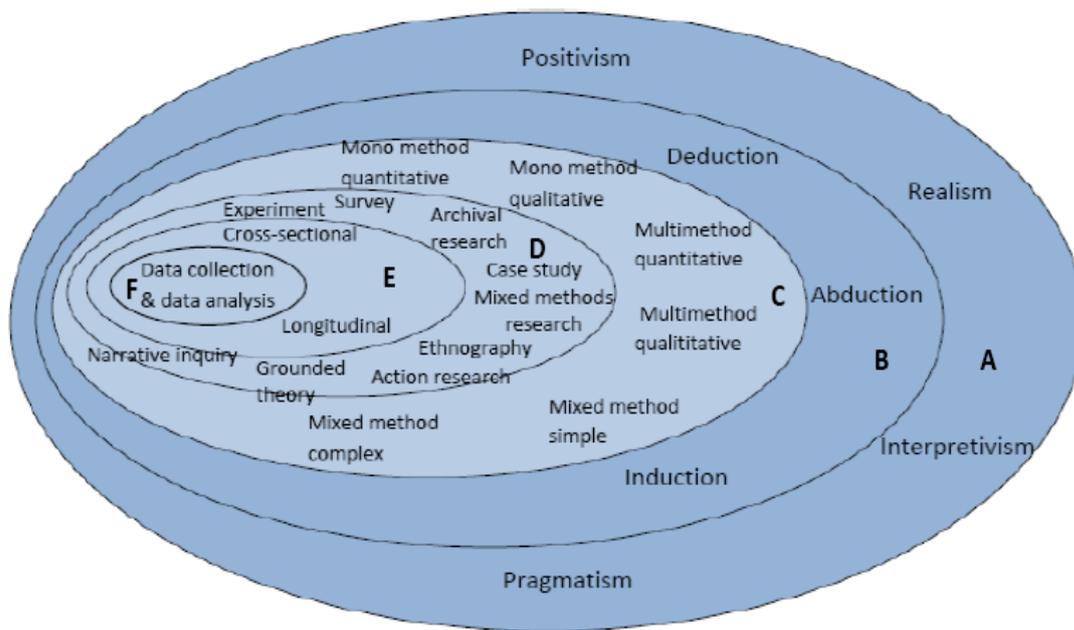


Figure 6-1 The research process ‘onion’

Source: Saunders et al. (2012, p. 83)

6.2.1 Research Philosophy

The outer layer (A) of the research process onion relates to the assumptions that researchers make, regarding the nature of reality or ontology (Saunders *et al.*, 2012). It is important to make explicitly the philosophical assumptions that underpin the research, because they shape how a study is carried out, and how the results are evaluated (Quinlan, 2011, p. 177).

As Figure 6-1 shows, Saunders *et al.* (2012) represents four distinct research philosophies: positivism, interpretivism, realism, and pragmatism. The first two represents the principal opposing research philosophies that are traditionally recognised, while the other two are more recent additions that combine characteristics of the first two.

Researchers who adopt a positivist philosophy consider themselves to be objective analysts, who focus on the external realities of the social world, interpreting the data they collect in a value-free way. For them, “the true nature of reality can be obtained by testing theories about actual objects, processes or structures in the real world” (Kelemen and Rumens, 2008, p. 26). These properties are measured using objective methods “rather than being inferred subjectively through sensation, reflection or intuition” (Easterby-Smith *et al.*, 2012, p. 22).

Researchers favouring an interpretivist philosophy are interested in how the social world is produced by human action and interaction, and they view the social reality as being “local, specific and constructed” (Kelemen and Rumens, 2008, p. 26). They believe that, in investigating social phenomenon or human behaviour, it is important to consider subjective experiences in depth, and explore how individuals use their own frames of reference to make sense of the reality of specific situations, in order to understand what lies behind it (Easterby-Smith *et al.*, 2012).

Interpretivism and realism (also known as critical realism) share some common fundamental ideas, since the latter believes that all individuals perceive reality, and represent it by means of specific language, while being shaped by their worldviews and cultural upbringing and experiences (Saunders *et al.*, 2012). However, critical realism is particularly interested in examining, and understanding social conditions and exposing oppressive power arrangements (Myers and Avison, 2002; Oates, 2006).

Pragmatism has been seen as a useful alternative to the traditional interpretivist and positivist dichotomy (Creswell, 2013). For researchers adopting this philosophy, the “what” and the “how” of the research problem are seen as centrally important, and they make use of all relevant research techniques and procedures, as an attempt to understand a specific issue. This approach may provide important research insights without requiring a rigid adherence to either an interpretivist or a positivist philosophy (Creswell, 2013).

Given the focus of this study on **What** constitutes branding in the Arab television news channels, the main object of the study, and **How** news programmes contribute to the branding and differentiation of these channels to enhance audience loyalty, a pragmatic research philosophy has been adopted. This will allow greater flexibility in making use of the wide range of research techniques and procedures, in order to understand an issue from the Arab context, one that has not yet been studied in depth. As mentioned in the previous Chapters, studies on Arab media are scarce and focused on areas other than differentiation or branding.

6.2.2 Research Approach

In Saunders *et al.*'s (2012) research process model, layer B relates to the research approach, and is concerned of the appropriate means of enquiring into the nature of the world or epistemology.

This, together with the research ontology, forms a research paradigm. The traditional principal approaches to research are inductive and deductive, to which, Saunders *et al.* (2012), add a further one, referred to as the abductive approach. One of the key differences between the deductive and the inductive approaches, is how existing concepts and theory are used to guide research. An inductive approach entails generating concepts and theory from raw qualitative data, while deductive approach is guided by existing concepts and theoretical ideas in its collection of empirical quantitative data (Becker and Bryman, 2009).

The deductive approach involves moving from a general concept or a given rule to an explanation of a result that is more specific; and it formulates conclusions by applying rules or principles, which must be based on the evidence that has been collected and has been already available (Kangai, 2003). The abductive approach involves collecting data in order to explore a phenomenon, or to identify themes and explain existing patterns, with the aim of generating a new theory or modifying an existing one, and then testing it.

When dealing with qualitative data, the inductive approach is used to:

- Condense extensive and varied raw text data into a brief summary format;
- Establish clear links between the research objectives and the summary findings derived from the raw data; and
- Develop a model or theory about the underlying structures of the experiences or processes, which are evident in the raw data (Thomas, 2003, p. 1).

6.2.3 Combining Deductive with Inductive Reasoning

The deductive and inductive research approaches seem to be conflicting in nature, both achieving an important purpose in the research process. However, research usually involves both approaches at some stage (Trochim, 2000).

The argument that theory is established inductively, ultimately recommends that research can use both types of reasoning and commence at any point. By formulating a final theory, some further inductive activities might need to be performed to improve the existing theoretical assumptions. Hence, Wallace (1993) (as cited by Blaikie, 1993) includes the integral part of

“testing” in his model (see Figure 6-2), which allows anew emerging themes to be integrated into the unique theory.

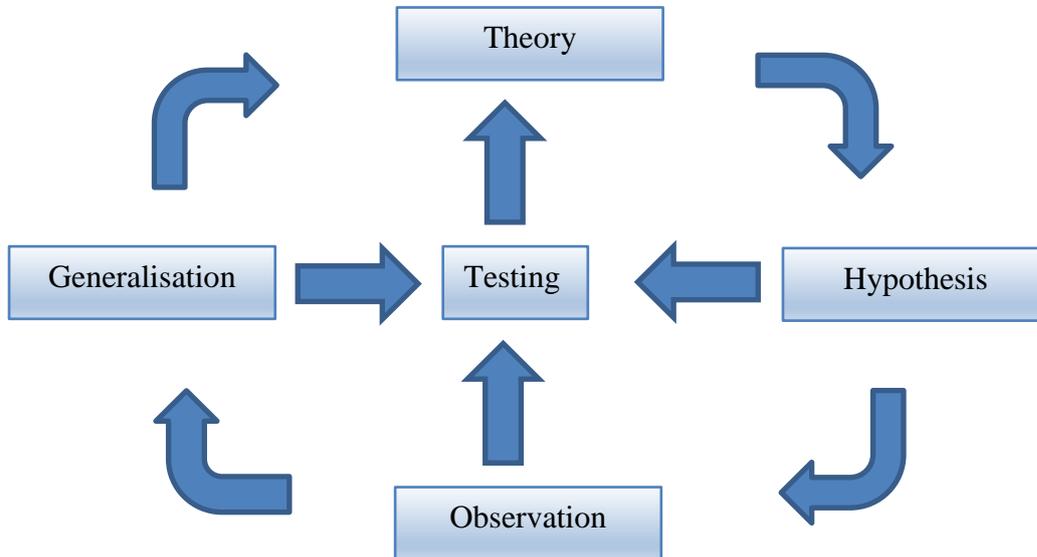


Figure 6-2 Mixing the deductive and inductive approaches

Source: Wallace (1993), as cited by Blaikie (1993)

Rationalists believe that data is amplified and contextualized by the power of the human mind, which can locate a specific piece of data with several other pieces of data, as well as request various different kinds of inductive and deductive reasoning to it. As substantiated by studies, the methodological methods that draw from both epistemological schools can co-exist with other approaches in the same methodology, as this combination affords valuable and counterbalancing incremental sets of data bearing on the same study environment, a combination of research techniques leading to additional satisfactory conclusions (Cohen and Crabtree, 2006).

Conclusively, Thomas (2003) believed that one of the key strengths of the inductive approach is that it allows research findings to emerge from the frequent, dominant or significant themes inherent in raw data, eliminating the constraints imposed by structured methodologies. Since this research uses the mixed method strategy, an inductive approach is adopted with the qualitative data, while the quantitative data is approached deductively.

6.2.4 Methodological Choice

Researchers, traditionally, faced the choice between quantitative and qualitative methods. Usually, those who hold the positivistic research philosophy adopt the quantitative methods, used to measure a certain problem via the generation of numerical data. These data can also be employed to test a theory, or to make one, or seek to justify, a generalisation about the nature of a given population (Easterby-Smith *et al.*, 2012). Quantitative methods produce results that tend to be extremely detailed and structured and can easily be collated and presented statistically (Creswell, 2013).

Researchers who adopt an interpretivistic research philosophy, employ qualitative methods to analyse processes and meanings that cannot be measured in terms of quantity or frequency (Easterby-Smith *et al.*, 2012). Qualitative research generally involves examining the less tangible aspects of a subject, including attitudes, opinions and perceptions. Although it is often considered more difficult to present and interpret findings obtained by these methods, qualitative data collection has the potential to generate a richer, and deeper understanding of the social phenomenon being investigated, and to discover underlying meanings and relationships (Saunders *et al.*, 2012). A less structured, more flexible format can also be employed to gather data using qualitative methods and can be applied successfully to a relatively small number of respondents (Bellenger *et al.*, 1989; De Ruyter and Scholl, 1998).

However, as Saunders *et al.*'s (2012) "Onion" shows, it is possible to choose a method that combines both, quantitative and qualitative methods. Others have noted that the mixed method approach has both advantages and disadvantages (Onwuegbuzie *et al.*, 2007; Pansiri *et al.*, 2012). Using more than one method to study a phenomenon can strengthen the validity of the results, as they provide the researcher with improved instruments for data collection, and an enhanced understanding of the findings that may be obtained (Cronholm and Hjalmarsson, 2011). Bryman and Bell (2007, p. 644) argue that combining qualitative and quantitative methods is "*feasible and desirable*", since it "gives a greater prominence to the strengths of the data collection and data analysis techniques with which qualitative and quantitative research are each associated and sees these of capable of being fused". Saunders *et al.* (2012, p. 160) also believe that the mixed method approach can "provide better opportunities to answer a research question and to evaluate the extent to which findings may be trusted and inferences made".

On the negative side, the mixed method approach may increase the probability of errors, because the researcher must be proficient in the application of both methods (Bryman, 2006, p. 2007). Moreover, it is simpler to focus on a single method; and from the practical perspective, the mixed method research requires more resources, in terms of both time and cost (Cronholm and Hjalmarsson, 2011).

Conclusively, both, the advantages and disadvantages of qualitative and quantitative approaches, as indicated by several researchers in many studies, such as Guba and Lincoln (1994), Kaplan and Duchon (1988), Amaratunga and Baldry (2002), Creswell (2009), and Denzin and Lincoln (2005), Blumberg, Cooper and Schindler, (2005), are summarised in Table 6-1 below:

Table 6-1 Advantages and disadvantages of quantitative and qualitative research

<p>Advantages of Quantitative Research</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Large sample of population • Used more in IS studies • Statistical analysis • Generalisations are possible • Can be fast and economical • Methods allow accurate measurement of variables • Methods are structured, standard • Provides wide coverage of the range of situations 	<p>Disadvantages of Quantitative Research</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assumption of an objective truth • Generation of incomplete understandings • Inapplicable to some immeasurable phenomena • Not very helpful in generating theories • Use of inflexible methods • Deterministic character • Disregards some important factors • Misses subjective aspects of human existence
<p>Advantages of Qualitative Research</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exclusion of meaning and purpose • Flexible methods • Value placed on participants' views and empowering participants • Inductive data analysis 	<p>Disadvantages of Qualitative Research</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Generalisation is limited to similar contexts and conditions • Analysis and interpretation of data may be more difficult • Policymakers may give low credibility to results from qualitative approach

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Subjective dimensions are explored • Methods enhance description • Theory development <p>Describes theories and experience</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allows deep understanding and insight. • Holistic and humanistic 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No hard data or clear measuring • Subjective, “non-scientific” • Deep involvement of researchers increases risk of bias • Small samples
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Source: The Researcher

Despite these drawbacks, the mixed method approach is thought to be the most appropriate for this research, as it will provide a comprehensive understanding of the matter under investigation. Most importantly, this approach will best support the aims and objectives of the research, and best enable the Researcher to address the research questions.

6.3 Research Strategy

This Section will elaborate on the research strategy employed by the research, for the purpose of investigating the four Arabic Television News Channels. It is composed of two Subsections, starting with defining what is a case study, then, explaining the rationale for choosing cases for the purpose of study.

6.3.1 Case Study

The first phase is to define the “case” that the Researcher needs to study. Reaching this phase, at even a tentative definition, helps enormously in organizing the case study. Generally, the researcher should stick with the original definition, because the researcher should have reviewed literature, and developed research questions specific to definition. However, the main advantage of the case study method is the ability to redefine the “case” after early data collection (Yin, 2012, p.6). In addition, any research method can be used for one of three purposes: exploratory, descriptive or explanatory (Yin, 2009). Therefore, the current research is explanatory, and uses the mix method case study techniques.

Although there is no specific standard definition of a case study, several researchers including Benbasat, Goldstein, and Mead, (1987), and Yin (2009, p. 18) have given definitions to case study as “an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context, especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and the context are not clearly evident”. While, Benbasat, Goldstein, and Mead (1987) define a case study as one, which “examines a phenomenon in its natural setting, employing multiple methods of data collection to gather information from one or a few entities (people, groups, or organizations”, Gerring (2004), exemplifies a simpler definition, stating that a case study is “an intensive study of single unit for the purpose of understanding a larger class of similar units”.

6.3.2 Rationale for the Cases

Based on that, the Researcher decided to conduct the multiple case study, referring on three main reasons for choosing these particular cases: first, the chosen Arab television news channels are the largest and the most popular television news channels in the Arab countries, and mainly, most of the Arab countries’ nationals rely on these channels to stay updated about the world. Second, given the dispersed region of the Arab World from Middle East to North Africa, the Researcher aimed into covering the region as much as possible, as the chosen channels actually belong to four different countries, each with a different culture, and different regime. Furthermore, the chosen channels, other than being very popularly in use in the Arab World, bring the ownership mix needed for the study (state-owned and private). And third, for the purpose of ensuring the most possible collection of data, the Researcher referred to these channels, as she has strong connections and networks with the management and executives of some of these channels. Therefore, even though not smoothly, the data collection process was accomplished as expected; a fact which could be extremely difficult, if other channels were chosen, and no connections with management was found.

6.4 Time Horizon

The data from which, the representative material for content analysis was selected, was gathered over the course of six months (from the 1st of October 2015, to 31st of March 2016), as is the case for the longitudinal research. However, the actual material that formed the focus of the content analysis was effectively a cross-section of that mass of data, allowing a comparative

quantitative analysis of the content of news programmes from the four television news channels to be carried out.

6.5 Data Collection and Analysis

Two key data collection methods were used in this study: content analysis (quantitative) and interviews (qualitative). Content analysis was used to examine a large amount of television news content, using statistical methods to reduce the complexity of this data, and highlight content patterns from each of the four news channels. Interviews were used to gather opinions about television branding, via news coverage from representatives of each channel, to provide a final level of validation. The data collection and analysis for each of these methods is described below. In each case, the strengths and weaknesses of each method are presented, together with a rationale for the use of the method in this study. The following Section will present a detailed description of the content analysis procedures, followed by the method through which data were collected, and then, analysed.

6.6 Content Analysis

Content analysis have employed by different scholars in different fields as a research technique to different ends and purposes. In order to achieve the goal of this study, a quantitative content analysis was implemented. Content analysis is a “research technique for the objective, systematic, and quantitative description of the manifest content of communication” (Stemple & Westley, 1981, p. 120). It is a technique through which the meanings of certain messages, which are in this study the television news stories, are examined to extract accurate and generalisable inferences (Neuendorf, 2002). As a method, content analysis may be defined as a research process that involves a rigorous procedure of investigation in order to arrive at a conclusion that is both systematic and empirical. Content analysis uses certain categories and coding procedures that are informed by understanding of the topic or concepts that are under investigation. The researcher who employs a content analysis technique must observe in a systematic way, what the content of any communication symbolises (Janowitz, 1969; Kulbe & Burnett, 1991). As a social sciences research technique, content analysis became popular in the early 1950s and its application increased as a result of the work of Berelson (Mitchell, 1967). Other studies have shown that earlier forms of content analysis have been employed in research since as early as 1914.

Under this section, the Researcher will present: the strengths and weaknesses of relying on content analysis; the chosen sampling method; the implemented measurement tool; the details of the conducted pilot study; and the analysis tools used by the Researcher.

6.6.1 Strengths and Weaknesses

Content analysis is designed to identify specific characteristics from the contents of human communications, and can be used to explore verbal, visual and behavioural patterns, themes, or biases (Leedy and Ormrod, 2010; Williams, 2007). As the relevant literature review shows, it has been widely used to analyse media products, such as television news. Holloway (2009) identified five ways in which quantitative content analysis has typically been used by researchers:

- Describing patterns or trends in media portrayals;
- Testing hypotheses about the policies or aims of media procedures;
- Comparing media content with the real world;
- Assessing the representation of particular groups in society; and
- Drawing inferences about media effects (p. 156).

As a quantitative research tool, content analysis has a number of advantages. Most importantly for this research, content analysis can be used to analyse large quantities of data, and facilitate the systematic study of media content, including verifying similarities and differences between the outputs of competitors. Once a coding system has been devised, it is relatively easy to use this technique to obtain data that can be quantified (Arthur, 2000). However, despite the claims that it is a systematic and replicable method, content analysis has been critiqued on the grounds that it is not wholly objective and value-free, since ultimately there is an element of subjectivity in the choices that are made in respect of what content is to be analysed. Moreover, Jensen (2002) believed that content analysis is not itself a theory, but simply a method for analysing content in a quantitative or a qualitative way. It provides no pointers to what aspects of a text should be examined, or how its dimensions should be interpreted. These must be provided by an external theoretical framework (Ralph, 2006).

Sándorová (2014) observes that content analysis can also pose challenges in terms of achieving validity, if close attention is not paid to the procedure of coding and classification and suggests

several ways in which these limitations can be addressed by the researcher. One method that can be used for checking validity and guarding against researcher bias involves peer coding; that is, the use of different researchers to code the same texts and compare their results. Another common method is to use a coding book which functions as an external criterion, when analysing texts. Sándorová (2014) also recommends doing a pilot study with the coding book, using it to categorise small units of text, before beginning the main analysis so that any necessary changes can be made.

Despite its limitations, the Researcher argues that content analysis provides the most appropriate and useful technique for comparing and contrasting the content of the television news in the four television news channels, since it allows certain elements in the content of the television news in each channel to be extracted and quantified.

Content analysis requires the implementation of a rigorous coding procedure and identifiable categories. The Researcher must decide on the units to be analysed, and the content categories employed, and on the systematic procedure that will allow for generalisation. In this research, three elements are chosen for analysis: news content, news presenters, and news production techniques. This is to discover their relation to the creation of branding, in order to answer the primary research question.

6.6.2 Choosing the Samples

The four television news channels to be analysed, as stated earlier, are: *Al Jazeera*, which is based in Doha, Qatar; *Al Arabiya*, which is based in Dubai, United Arab Emirates, representing the Pan-Arab television news channels; *Nile News*, which is based in Cairo, Egypt, and *Al-Ekhbariya* which is based in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, representing government-supported channels. The Researcher chose the main primary news bulletin broadcasted by the selected TV news channels following these steps:

1) The first reason behind the decision was which news bulletin should be identified as the main one of each channel, and these are shown below in Table 6-2. The main news bulletin was chosen, because it broadcasts at the peak viewing time, and offers the best coverage by each channel of the main events of the day. This made it a good point of comparison across all four channels.

Table 6-2 Time of the main news bulletin for every television news channel

Channel	News start time GM	News start time locally
Al Jazeera	6:00 pm	9:00 pm
Al Arabiya	6:00 pm	9:00 pm
Nile News	6:00 pm	8:00 pm
Al-Ekhbariya	6:00 pm	9:00 pm

Source: The Researcher

2) As the pilot study conducted revealed, sometimes a news channel had no more than five news stories, the Researcher decided that the content analysis would focus only on the first five news stories of every news bulletin of every television news channel.

3) The prime-time news bulletin for each of the channels was recorded every day of the sample for a six-month period (from the 1st October 2015, to the 31st March 2016). This period was chosen to include two quarters of the media plan of two years (2015–2016), on the assumption that a six-month period is adequate time, to identify regular and stable patterns that justify generalisation.

4) The sample of 20% of the total number of broadcasts (days) per channel (n=183) was randomly selected using Stat Trek software (n=37). Numbers were assigned to each day of the period of the study, and the random number generator made a list of 37 that were then, targeted for content. Saunders *et al.* (2012), supported the random numbers, as they “allow you to select your sample without bias. The sample selected, therefore, can be said to be representative of the whole population” (p. 273). This decision was made after consultation with supervisors and colleagues to determine the target data for the content analysis. The chosen dates are listed in Appendix A, Table 1.

5) The first five news stories in each of the 37 news bulletins per channel, provided 185 news stories in total for each channel totalling of 740 news stories to be analysed (see table 6-3).

Table 6-3 Sample of news stories used for content analysis

Channel	Number of Days (six months period)	No. of Days (sample 20% of total)	Total no. news items analysed per channel (5 news stories per day x 37 days)
Al Jazeera	183	37	185
Al Arabiya			185
Nile News			185
Al Ekhbariya			185
Total			740

Source: The Researcher

6.6.3 Coding

The unit of analysis is each news story is considered as an independent news unit; that is, “any topic introduced by the anchor coupled with any report or reports by other correspondents on the same topic and any concluding remarks by the anchor” (Fowler and Showalter, 1974, p. 317). Each news story that deals with a specific and an independent event, completely separated from the previous story by an obvious break, such as a change in subject or presenter is considered by this study as a news story by itself. For the purpose of this research, the news story is understood to be a combination of three main elements: the information being presented about an event (content); the presenter(s) of the information (the anchor / the correspondent); and the way it is presented (production techniques). Every story in the sample was digitally recorded and analysed, including its audio-visual components.

To compare the news agendas of the four selected television news channels, a measurement tool was built, based on previous studies in this field that used content analysis, to examine the dimensions of branding personality (for example, Hohlfeld and Gehrke, 1995; Aaker, 1997; Bae, 1999; Chan-Olmsted and Cha, 2007; Gerth *et al.*, 2012; Kim. Baek and Martin, 2010; Nasr, 2014). Feedback from supervisors, and the Researcher’s own observations based on the findings from the pilot study, were also incorporated into it.

The coding book for the content analysis is divided into three main categories: news contents, presenters, and production techniques; each is subdivided into a number of elements (see Table 6-4). The code is intended to enable comparison of the extent to which news content, presenters,

and production techniques are used as ways of differentiating news coverage by the four channels, and eventually, contribute to branding. A rationale for the inclusion of each of these elements, together with definitions where necessary, is provided in the coding book.

Table 6-4 Framework of coding book for content analysis

News Content	
Topic: 1- Abnormal News (Hard News)	Unrest and dissent War and conflict Disaster, accident and crime
Topic: 2- Normal News (Soft News)	Foreign relations Domestic politics and government Social and development news Science and technology Cultural and religious news Economic news Sports, human interest and entertainment
Topic: 3- Other News	International Organisations Others
Geographical area —where the news story occurred	Local News (news about home country of the channel) Arab Countries Islamic Non-Arab Countries Others
Framing style	Thematic Episodic
Sources of the news story	The channel itself Exclusive to the channel Public source Other
Inclusion of editorial comment	Yes No
News balance (Direction)	News story reflects one side News story reflects two sides News story reflects more than two sides News story describes the event only Not clear
Self-nomination	Number of times a channel mentions its name during coverage Not mentioned
Exclusivity of news story	Mention of exclusivity No mention of exclusivity
Reference to channel prediction	Number of references to channel prediction about event Not mentioned

News focus	Officials Individuals Both None
Interviewees	Channel correspondent only People involved Officials Experts Correspondents & people involved Correspondents & officials Experts & officials Officials & people involved Experts & people involved Others Correspondents, officials & people involved No interviewees
News Presenters	
Time allocated to correspondents	More than half of the time allocated to news item Less than half of the time allocated to news item No correspondents
Language variant (anchor)	modern standard Arabic local variant of Arabic
Language variant (correspondent)	modern standard Arabic local variant of Arabic
Correspondent location	At the site of the event Near the site of the event In a location unrelated to the event Other Unknown location Not applicable
Anchor's physical appearance	Appropriate for the event being reported (clothes, etc.) Inappropriate for the event being reported
Correspondent's physical appearance	Appropriate appearance for the event being reported (clothes, etc.) Inappropriate appearance for the event being reported No applicable
News Production techniques	
Time of the event being reported	Yesterday Today Now (live) Development (follow-up) Not mentioned
Use of video	Video makes up more than half the story Video is less than half the story No video
Visual material accompanying the news story (Visual Illustration)	Charts/maps Still pictures/camera shots Infographics

	More than one of these No visual material
Coverage style	Live from event location Correspondent with recorded camera shots/video recording Anchor with recorded report Anchor only Anchor with graphics Anchor with still photos/camera shots Interview via satellite Anchor with video recording/camera shots Anchor interviewing officials, experts or people involved Correspondent interviewing officials or people involved
Type of interview	Over the phone Via satellite Cameraman More than one No interviews
Logo presence	Present all the time Present with anchor & correspondent
Time allocated to the story	In minutes

Source: The Researcher

6.6.4 Pilot Study 1

In order to increase the validity of the data obtained from both, the content analysis and the interview, a pilot study was an essential step to conduct. Lancaster (2010) defines a pilot study as a “small study for helping to design a further confirmatory study”. Pilot studies play an extremely significant role in the design of data collection (content analysis and interview). Creswell (2009) believes that pilot studies can indicate the effectiveness of the research instruments prior to the conduction of actual fieldwork, enabling the researcher to make modifications and revisions, before going further when investigating on a larger scale. Therefore, Teijlingen and Hundley (2001) state that pilot studies in social science research, normally have one of two functions: feasibility studies (“small scale versions, or trial runs, done in preparation for the major study”), or pre-testing of a particular research instrument.

Furthermore, the pilot study indicates potential challenges or difficulties that researchers may face during data collection, as well as determining whether the collection method is appropriate for addressing the research questions. Conducting a pilot study using the coding book was a useful means of determining if any sections needed refining, thus, to make the book a more

rigorous instrument for content analysis. On the 10th of September 2015, a pilot study was conducted to test the coding procedures, and to validate the coding book that had been designed for this study. One week's worth of news bulletins from the selected news channels were digitally recorded, and the first five news stories of each day (35 from every channel totalling of 140 news stories) were analysed, using the coding book. The results were then compared and the feedback helped identify necessary modifications to the book. Changes were discussed with both Saudi and British supervisors.

6.6.5 Pilot Study 2

Carrying out a pilot interview is important, not only because it helps the researcher to assess the suitability of the interview schedule timing, but also because it checks the tenor and phrasing of the interview questions. This second pilot study tested the wording of the questions that will be used in the interviews. Questions were discussed with the Researcher's co-supervisor at King Saud University in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, who is an Arabic native speaker, and feedback was obtained on wording, comprehensibility and suitability. This consultation took place during a field trip to Saudi Arabia in November 2015.

6.6.6 Analysis

Processing the data collected from the quantitative content analysis, was carried out using SPSS version 23 software. Full details of the statistical analysis are provided in Chapter 7 and 8, devoted to present and discuss the findings of the study.

6.7 Interview

The qualitative phase of this research employed interviews as the main data collection tool since when interview findings are coupled with quantitative forms of data collection as a complementary method in a mixed methodology, they serve to enhance the results from the first phase of the research, providing a more comprehensive understanding of the quantitative data gathered. In addition, they enable researchers to obtain in-depth information from a relatively small number of participants based on their professional expertise and experience in the field and for this reason they are frequently used when conducting media-related research (Yin, 2009). Berg (2004, p.101) defined an interview as a "conversation with a purpose" and in this

case, the purpose was to gain valuable insights into selected aspects of the differentiation (branding) strategy implemented by the four television news channels which form the focus of this study.

6.7.1 Interview Types

Interviews can be conducted in various ways, such as via telephone/Skype or e-mail or face-to-face. They can also be relatively short or in-depth. Most qualitative studies use face-to-face interviews, although they can also be conducted via the other methods. Three types of interview can be used for data collection: unstructured, structured, or semi-structured. Each type of interview has advantages and disadvantages, depending upon the nature of the research.

In the case of the unstructured interviews, the researcher may have only a single open-ended question and a few prompts, or even no predetermined questions, allowing the interviewee to respond freely and give opinions on the chosen topic; the researcher usually intervenes minimally in the conversation (Bryman and Bell, 2007). This type of interview deliberately does not limit the inquiry process by enforcing any prior categorisations, so it is arguably not the most efficient way of researching specific questions because interviews may produce a large quantity of data without answering the research questions.

Structured interviews are more formal and are useful for clarifying details or obtaining very specific factual information. They are based on a carefully prepared set of pre-established, usually closed, questions that are typically piloted and refined by the researcher to gather information on very specific issues. This can then be coded and allocated to pre-established categories for later comparative analysis. Since structured interviews tend to limit participant responses they are less useful when an in-depth understanding of a topic is required (Easterby-Smith *et al.*, 2012).

Semi-structured interviews provide a general framework for the interviewer and have features of both structured and unstructured interviews, combining an element of predetermined order with flexibility. They usually begin with closed questions prepared in advance to elicit some factual data, followed by supplementary questions that may occur to the researcher, on the basis of the interviewee's response, plus more probing follow-up questions, with the interviewer guiding and specifying the topics upon which information is to be sought. This allows

participants to “respond to a certain set of questions”, while also having “the freedom to talk about what is of interest or importance to them” (Hesse-Biber and Leavy, 2010, p. 102). The interviewer usually has an interview guide which, is a list of areas and subjects to be covered in the interview, relating to the framework of the research questions; thus, if interesting issues emerge from responses to specific questions, it is possible to probe further to obtain greater insights (Bryman and Bell, 2007).

6.7.2 Strengths and Weaknesses of Interviewing as a Data Collection Method

The one-to-one in-depth interview has advantages in that it allows a topic to be explored in detail, providing information about the respondent’s personal feelings, perceptions and opinions. Information can also be obtained directly from interviewees with relevant knowledge, and the interviewer can ask supplementary questions to clarify any ambiguities, or elicit further details, if answers are judged to be incomplete; this is not possible with other methods such as questionnaires (Alshenqeeti, 2014). Information gathered from interviews can serve to deepen the researcher’s understanding of quantitative data, and shed light on statistical results (Longhurst, 2009).

Although interviews are an extremely useful tool for gathering rich qualitative data, they have some disadvantages. First, they can produce large amounts of data, and the researcher must endeavour to ensure this is relevant to the focus of the study, by using skilful questioning and probing, and remaining focused on the research questions and the information that is sought, rather than moving into other areas. Second, interviews can be costly and time-consuming, when compared with other research tools such as the questionnaire, particularly if these are to be conducted face-to-face *in situ* (Myers and Newman, 2007). Thirdly, interviewees may provide factually inaccurate information due to their failure to understand the question posed or poor recall (Easterby-Smith *et al.* 2008).

In addition, interviewing poses many demands on the researcher. Interviewers must not impose their own ideas or lead the interviewee into saying what is required. This requires high-level effective communication skills including listening, question framing, encouraging and directing discourse. Effective interpersonal skills are also important, including the ability to put interviewees at ease, to build rapport, and create trust in the respondent (Fielding and Thomas, 2008), all of which increase the chances of obtaining useful information from them.

According to Yin (2011), interviewers should possess five main skills. Firstly, they must be good listeners who engage effectively with the interviewee and contribute successfully to what should be a focused conversation. In addition, they need to be able to show interest in what is being said and understand this in order to ensure that they correctly interpret responses, asking further questions where necessary to avoid any misinterpretation. Good interviewers are also required to demonstrate adaptability since a degree of flexibility is needed when dealing with unexpected responses. This may entail adjusting the planned interview strategy to maintain participants' interest. The best interviewers should also be skilled at asking questions in a 'two-way conversation' style and should aim to be unbiased so that they do not incorrectly interpret any responses given.

In-depth semi-structured interviews were selected in this case to collect data, as this technique was thought to offer the most appropriate degree of flexibility. It was also considered to be the most appropriate for interviewing senior management, such as heads of strategy or policymakers in television news channels. However, since these individuals often have limited time, a number of key questions were prepared beforehand after carefully considering the research questions and aims, as well as the literature. This was made available to interviewees by email prior to the interview to ensure that the maximum information was gained (Doyle, 2004). However, the semi-structured format meant that if potentially interesting issues emerged from interviewee responses to these specific questions they could be probed to obtain further insights (Bryman and Bell, 2003).

6.7.3 Sampling

Researchers select samples since it is never possible to study whole populations, and a choice must be made in any research project about which respondents to interview. The sampling technique used to obtain a representative subset of the population under study is an important consideration in establishing the soundness of the study and depends on the nature of the research method (Teddlie and Yu, 2007). It is possible to identify three principal types of sampling and the type of sampling used in qualitative research differs from that used in quantitative research since the sample does not need to be statistically representative. The first type is probability sampling, a technique frequently used in quantitative research. The second type is purposive or judgmental sampling, primarily used in qualitative studies, and involves matching the sample with the research objectives. The third type is convenience sampling,

which involves identifying participants who are both easily accessible and willing to participate.

Purposive sampling was adopted for choosing the interview participants in this research. Interviewees were selected based on a judgement about who would be the most appropriate, and relevant for the study. This type of sampling is primarily used, when there are limited numbers of relevant, informed individuals, who are able to answer the research interview questions and meet the study's objectives (Saunders *et al.*, 2012). In this research, potential participants were all in high-ranking executive positions in Al-Arabiya, Al-Ekhbariya, Aljazeera and Nile News respectively, since this research focuses on determining the elements of differentiation that occur in the news coverage of these television news channels, in order to explore whether channels use these to differentiate their offerings from that of competitors, to reinforce a brand identity.

Thus, the Researcher began by identifying potentially useful interviewees at the television news channels. The participants targeted for interview were carefully selected on the basis of their professional role within the company, their length of experience, knowledge and expertise in relation to branding strategies, and differentiation of news channels. In addition, they needed to be available and willing to participate in the study. Selected television news channel representatives were contacted by the Researcher and supplied with details of his credentials and a briefing document providing details of the study but initially, it was difficult to persuade them to be interviewed. They also expressed concerns that any information they provided might be used by competitors. Therefore, the Researcher also had to use personal contacts with professional links to the television industry to approach potential interviewees and help convince them that any information would be used for academic reasons only, and not commercial purposes. This proved to be a time-consuming process (see Appendix B).

6.7.4 Procedure

Ethical consent for the interviews was obtained as detailed below, and all relevant guidelines were followed relating to informed consent. Initial interview questions were discussed with supervisors to gauge their suitability. Then, a finalised interview guide with questions in Arabic (the mother tongue of the target participants) was produced and checked for comprehensibility and linguistic accuracy with an academic who has Arabic as mother tongue. This resulted in some items being reworded for the purposes of clarity. The questions were designed to focus

on four themes:

- The channel's differentiation (branding) strategy in general and via news coverage, specifically;
- The channel's marketing strategy;
- Level of knowledge about/perceptions concerning competitors' differentiation (branding) strategies; and
- The extent to which cooperation exists between newsroom, public relations and marketing departments for channel branding and image building and how this is facilitated.

As previously noted, given the time constraints for the interviewees, key questions were emailed to them prior to the interview, together with an e-mail or telephone call briefing them about the purpose of the study.

Each interview was used to gain an insight into the strategies used by the channels to differentiate, and therefore, brand themselves, using their main product, namely, news. Interviews were also designed to obtain a general impression of the interviewees' opinions, and their perceptions of branding. Three of the four interviews were conducted in person face-to-face in the interviewee's office at the relevant television channel headquarters. This meant that the Researcher had to travel to Saudi Arabia, Qatar, the United Arab Emirates and Egypt during late 2016 and early 2017 either to carry out interviews or any preparatory talks or follow-ups that were required. Conducting face-to-face interviews gave the Researcher the opportunity to clarify any information that was unclear, misunderstood or misinterpreted. However, the interview with the Aljazeera representative took place via email and telephone at his request. One of the fundamental disadvantages of using email interviews is that the lack of direct contact via the lack of social cues can sometimes make interpretation difficult. However, this was the most convenient way to gather the data in this particular case and most points could be clarified by telephone (a sample of the television news channel's response to the Researcher's letter is in Appendix C).

Interviews were conducted in a range of settings as appropriate. Sometimes this was a meeting room or the interviewee's office if this environment was appropriate for such a one-to-one interaction but always in the buildings of the television news channel. Since all of the

interviewees were senior executives they were interrupted many times during the interview to take important mobile or telephone calls. Delays of this type had been anticipated before conducting the interviews. This meant that the shortest interview took 120 minutes, and the longest was three hours, mainly due to interruptions, rather than the amount that the interviewee actually had to say (see Appendix D).

The interviews commenced with a brief personal introduction, and interviewees were reminded of the overall purpose and objectives of the study. The Researcher also stressed that their participation was voluntary and ensured that all participants were aware that all information they provided was confidential and only to be used for the purposes of this study. All interviewees signed the appropriate written consent forms (see Appendix E).

All aspects of the interview were conducted in Arabic (see Appendix F), because both interviewees and interviewer are native speakers of this language, and this ensured that interviewees would be clear about the objectives of the work; it was also intended to make them feel at ease as recommended by Fontana and Frey (1994).

All interviewees were also asked to give their consent for the interview to be recorded. However, some refused on the grounds of the potential commercial sensitivity of their answers, so notes were taken during the course of the interview and written up immediately afterwards. This draft of all responses was emailed to participants at a later point for approval and some added further clarifications or made amendments to this text. This final draft in Arabic was used as the basis later for any quotes that needed to be translated into English.

6.7.5 Data Analysis

According to Bogdan and Biklen (1998), in general the process of qualitative data analysis entails “Working with data, organising it, breaking it into manageable units, searching for patterns, discovering what is important and what is to be learned and deciding what you will tell others”. This also involves identifying patterns or themes from which deductions can ultimately be generated (Patton, 1987). Essentially, it can be said that analysis of the data obtained involves three principal phases, namely preparation, arranging and reporting, and presentation of findings and results.

The first of these phases, preparation, involves transcribing word-for-word those interviews that have been electronically recorded and also writing up the notes from any interviews where permission was not given for recording. This must take place as soon as possible after the interview itself. As part of this process, any references to named individuals were also replaced with a pseudonym to ensure anonymity. As previously noted, these transcripts were then sent to interviewees for approval and amendment if necessary. At this stage, it was also necessary to ask interviewees for clarification on any points that were not understood.

Since the interviews were carried out in Arabic, after transcribing and translating the interviews, the texts were read, annotated, collated and used throughout this research, according to their relevance to the literature review (Chapters 2, 3, 4 and 5), and the findings of the study (Chapters 7 and 8).

Transcripts are usually produced so that no important information is omitted and by reading and re-reading this the Researcher is able to familiarise herself with the data. This constitutes an important phase of data analysis in qualitative research and helps to enhance the accuracy of the findings (Cohen et al., 2013). However, given the length of the interviews, it would be time-consuming and unnecessary to produce an English translation of the whole interview, so it is useful to begin by reading through the whole Arabic transcript and identifying those elements that are judged to be of direct relevance to the research topic. These sections can be highlighted and paraphrased/ summarised in English to make it easier to compare across transcripts at the next stage.

Researchers often try to find electronic tools that can facilitate analysis of the data from interviews and speed up the production of results. However, Yin (2013) notes that employing tools such as NVivo does not guarantee successful analysis since in the case of verbal data from interviews careful consideration and interpretation by the researcher is still necessary. Moreover, since software such as NVivo is still unable to cope with Arabic, using this programme would have meant having to be involved in large amounts of translation into the medium of English. For these reasons, the decision was made to analyse interview results manually in the second phase.

Phase two involves arranging the data and reporting the results. This begins by analysing each individual interview and identifying data that is relevant to the research questions to be

addressed generally and to those responses for specific questions. This is known as ‘within case’ analysis. It ensures that any specific aspects of a particular television news channel are highlighted first before any general patterns or trends are identified by comparing across channels. This is followed by ‘cross-case analysis’ which refers to comparing data across all four television news channels. In this thesis, this was facilitated by transferring the responses to the grids produced for comparative purposes. The objective of this second type of analysis is to find any shared features (similarities) and, more importantly in this specific case, any differences since these may represent differentiating factors that reflect brand uniqueness. At this stage, also any relevant quotes from the Arabic transcripts chosen for inclusion in the main text were translated into English by the Researcher herself. The results of this analysis are presented in Chapter Eight.

In phase three, findings and results are presented. The results of this phase are further compared with factors and themes identified in existing literature, thus creating the basis for conceptualization of a model. The results of this analysis are presented in Chapter Nine.

6.8 Quality of Data Measurement

In a mixed method research, the employment of both quantitative and qualitative strands requires that the quality of the data from each strand should be assessed separately (Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2009).

6.8.1 Validity and Reliability

In quantitative research, validity relates to the extent to which the data represent the constructs assumed to capture, and whether the data gathered actually does reflect the reality of what it is meant to be measuring (Saunders *et al.*, 2012). Reliability is important as it concerns “whether the data consistently and accurately represent the constructs under examination” (Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2009, p. 209). Cohen *et al.* (2007) argue that, since no quantitative study can achieve absolute validity, researchers should see validity as “a matter of degree” and make all possible attempts to improve it by “careful sampling, appropriate instrumentation and appropriate statistical treatment of the data” (Cohen *et al.*, 2007, p. 133). As the description of the sampling process and the production of the coding book show, great attention was paid to ensuring that the former was representative, and the latter addressed all aspects of the issue

under investigation, comprehensively and systematically, by piloting the coding book and adapting it in response to the feedback received.

6.8.2 Credibility and Dependability

Qualitative research depends upon credibility and dependability. The former focuses on how much the participants' perceptions of the realities being investigated match the researcher's account, and is credible to them (Creswell and Miller, 2000), while the latter is concerned with "the extent to which variation in a phenomenon can be tracked or explained consistently using the "human instrument" across different contexts" (Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2009, p. 209).

Relying exclusively on interviews as a research method has the potential to produce bias, since interviewees may say what they think a researcher wishes to hear, on the grounds of social acceptability, for example, or may respond in different ways depending on the interviewer's identity (Miller and Glassner, 1997). One strategy that can be used to maximise credibility is to collect data from a range of sources (Creswell, 2013). In this case, interviews were used to supplement the quantitative data and, where available, secondary data such as documentary materials were used to corroborate data gathered from primary sources (Yin, 2009). In addition, as previously noted, careful attention was paid to the wording of the interview questions, and a pilot interview was carried out. The Researcher carried out all the interviews to eliminate what Bryman (2012) refers to as "interviewer variability error". To ensure dependability, close attention was paid to ensuring the transparency of the research by providing a detailed description of all aspects of the methodology used.

6.9 Ethical Considerations

This research complies with the ethical research procedures laid down in the ethics guidelines, as provided by the university (Salford University). The ethical approval form was approved by the university.

Ethical research requires the informed consent of all participants in a study, who must be told how any information gathered will be utilised, to avoid misrepresentation and exploitation (Saunders *et al.*, 2012). All potential interviewees were informed, in advance and in writing, of the purpose of the research, as were the television news channels they worked for, because using

covert research strategies represents a serious breach of ethical conduct. It was also made clear at the outset that participation was voluntary, and that they were free to withdraw whenever they wished. Participation in the interview was dependent upon interviewees' signing letters from their channels prior to interview, as was recording the interview. The time and venue for the interview were arranged for a mutually convenient time.

The anonymity and confidentiality of interviewees' personal data was guaranteed in advance. Interview data was recorded in writing. Data from the interviews were downloaded, and stored securely in accordance with university guidelines, as were transcripts and translations of these data.

6.10 Research Design

By applying the mixed method of qualitative and quantitative paradigm, this research examined how the four selected television news channels use their news programmes, specifically their news content, presenters and production, to create or enhance their own branding image in their audience's mind, through comprehensive and well-organized literature review.

The Researcher, therefore, perceives reality as something developed, through a comparison between different channels in the context. Since the focus of this study is on **What** constitutes branding in the Arab television news channels, and to examine **How** news programmes contribute to the branding and differentiation of these channels to enhance audience loyalty, a pragmatic research philosophy has been chosen to understand the qualitative and quantitative data, rather than relying on one method. The main area of the research is to highlight the important role of presenting the four television news channels that have been chosen for detailed comparative analysis in this research, namely Al Jazeera, Al Arabiya, Al-Ekhbariya and Nile News.

Components and main dimensions of the research strategy are encapsulated in Figure 6-3.

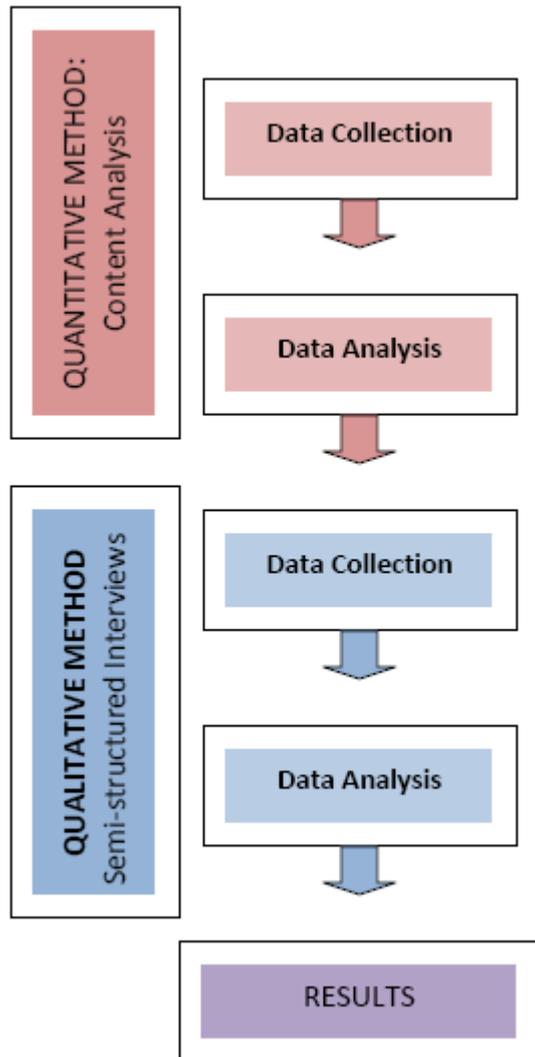


Figure 6-3 The components and dimensions of research strategy

Source: The Researcher

6.11 Research Process

This research is divided into three general sections and /or steps as shown in Figure 6-3, starting with the main structuring of the idea, and developing the “*what*” question about the research, after examining the literature review. The second phase was the data collection stage, and the “*how*” part of the study, and finally comes the interpretation, explanation and analysis of the collected data, or the “*why*” part of the phenomenon. The centre area of the research is to emphasize the important role of presenting the four television news channels that have been

chosen for detailed comparative analysis in this research, namely Al Jazeera, Al Arabiya, Al-Ekhbariya and Nile News. The Researcher decided to study this phenomenon by comparing the result between the four channels.

Consequently, the data collection strategy based on both qualitative and quantitative paradigm was developed, founded on the objective of the research, which is focused on understanding and analysing the phenomenon. The data collection strategy was divided into a pilot exploratory phase, and the main fieldwork (content analysis and interview). Data analysis and interpretation were conducted in the final phase, through applying well-structured strategies.

6.12 Summary

A detailed research methodology is fundamental to the transparency of any academic investigation and helps to guarantee the quality of data that has been gathered and analysed as part of a study. This chapter begins by outlining the methodological conceptualisation underpinning this research, by justifying the decisions taken regarding the design of the study, and the choice of a mixed method approach intended to support the aims and objectives of the research and enable the Researcher to find appropriate responses to the research questions. Both, quantitative and qualitative data collection instruments, and analysis techniques were selected to help provide a comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon under investigation. The chapter described the procedures followed to enhance the quality of the data and its measurement (namely, validity and reliability for the quantitative strand, and credibility and dependability for the qualitative strand). Finally, it described how ethical concerns were addressed. Through this chapter, the researcher concludes the theoretical part of this study, which has been based largely on a desk-based research. The focus in the following chapters now shifts to the data collection and analysis phase of the study, beginning with the content analysis of the sample of programmes from the four television channels investigated in this research.

Chapter 7 Results and Findings from the Content Analysis (Quantitative Data)

7.1 Introduction

This Chapter contextualises the differentiation criteria elements among television news channels, to determine the elements of branding differentiation that occur in the news coverage of the four selected television news channels: Al Arabiya, Al Ekhbariya, Al Jazeera and Nile News. Furthermore, it explores the extent to which the differences highlighted by the analysis across the four selected television news channels (Al Arabiya, Al Ekhbariya, Al Jazeera and Nile News), are used for the purposes of differentiation from competitors, and for establishing a distinctive brand identity, as related to Research Question 2. If so, how does each of the television news channels under study meet the promise encapsulated in their slogans, in order to distinguish themselves from others. On the other hand, the third research question considers the (differentiation) branding of each news channel by focusing on the relationship between slogan (promise) and news coverage. Therefore, this Chapter is constructed on the account of the following questions:

- RQ1: What are the most important elements of differentiation (branding) that have been used by the four selected television news channels in their news programmes?
- RQ2: To what extent did the four selected television news channels differ in utilising the elements of differentiation (branding) via their news programming?
- RQ3: To what extent does the channel's news coverage reflect its promise (slogan)?

Following the designation of research question 1, the Chapter is divided into an introductory Section to reiterate brand identity differently, followed by three Sections that represent an emphasis on news content, news production and news presenters as instruments on analysing the elements of differentiation. Along with the analysis of various elements, this Chapter constructs the baseline in exploring the robustness of each news channels, in terms of branding as a competitive advantage.

In order for the Researcher to answer the other two questions, the investigation looks at two levels of analysis, regarding the data from the sample of news coverage. It then, goes on exploring the overview of the slogan (promise) of news channels, to identify and outline the

derivation components of the slogan and objectives of each channel, to determine the elements of differentiation (branding) adopted. To delve into how the four selected television news channels meet the promise of slogans, 27 elements of differentiation specifically concerning news content, news production and news presenters were considered. All of which are correlated with previous theoretical findings to emphasise the results. Consequently, the remainder of this Chapter is separated into two distinct sections accordingly, as the first Section explores the elements of differentiation for the four news channels, whereas the second Section reflects on the news coverage extent. And lastly, the Chapter ends with an analysis of both sections in connection with the research questions.

7.2 News Channel Elements of Differentiation (Branding)

This Section looks at post hoc analyses that are concerned with finding differences between the data observed, and the expected values of each channel. Sometimes a television news channel gives more attention to a specific topic or geographical region, offering more news items about them or spending a longer time on them. The frequency of occurrence, as well as the length of time for which they feature, are analysed in this research. Seeking to explore the elements of differentiation in the news channels two statistical tests were used to analyse the data: the frequency and the chi-square, to explore significant differences among the channels, and then, for the time devoted to news stories and residual, mean ranks and the Kruskal-Wallis H test. Post-hoc tests following these statistical tests were applied when needed.

In order to investigate the forms that this differentiation takes, this study examined 27 possible elements of news coverage, extracted from previous studies, Researcher's observation, feedback from supervisors at the University of Salford, United Kingdom, and King Saud University of Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, and from the pilot study for this research. Moreover, in reviewing the literature, elements of brand differentiation were identified in Chapter 3, Section 3.6; however, they were not thematically grouped or statistically tested. In this regard, this Chapter is based on quantitative analysis and groups findings into three main categories: **News content** (fourteen elements), which focuses on the information provided about the event being reported by the television news channel; **News production** (seven elements), which examines how the coverage of an event was presented by the television news channel; and **News presenters** (six elements), which looks at the individuals who presented the stories. These categories and elements are mentioned in the methodology Chapter.

Data analysis results for these 27 elements are presented below, beginning with those in the news content category. The analysis focused on the frequency (quantity) and length of time devoted to each element. The chi-square test was applied to detect significant differences in frequency of occurrence for each element across all four channels. The study is interested in the news diet offered by every Channel, rather than comparing unit-level quality of news. Descriptive statistics consisting of mean, median, and standard deviation (SD) were calculated for categories focusing on the length of the news item (in minutes). The Kruskal-Wallis H test (one-way ANOVA on ranks) was used to compare the length of time devoted to each element in the sample of news stories across the channels. Statistical analysis was carried out using IBM SPSS Statistics 23.0.

7.3 News Content

As discussed in Section 4.6.1 and 4.6.3, Chapter Four, news content can be driven by various forces like media workers' attitudes, socialisation, routines or social and ideological position of news channels. In its broad definition, news content represents a range of visual and verbal information created for an audience.

Compared with the initial findings from the literature review, the findings of quantitative analysis outline that news content are defined by fourteen elements: topic, running order, geographical area, framing style, news processing, scope of coverage, sources, inclusion, news direction, self-nomination, exclusivity, reference to channel prediction, news focus and interviewees.

7.3.1 Topic

An essential feature of the news topic element is that it refers to an event or activity (Park *et al.*, 2009). The type of news content is most often in hard and soft format (Tewksbury and Rittenberg, 2012). Likewise, according to the research findings the topic element of news content was identified into same topic areas plus an additional type (see Figure 7-1):

- Abnormal (hard) news (40%), which includes unrest and dissent; war, conflict, and disaster; crime and accidents;
- Normal (soft) news (53%), which includes foreign relations, domestic politics and government; social affairs and development news; science and technology; cultural and religious issues; economic affairs and sports; human interest and entertainment;

- Other news (7%), which includes items about international organisations and any other coverage that cannot be classified as hard or soft news.

Having established the type of topic areas, Figure 7-1 outlines the values of each.

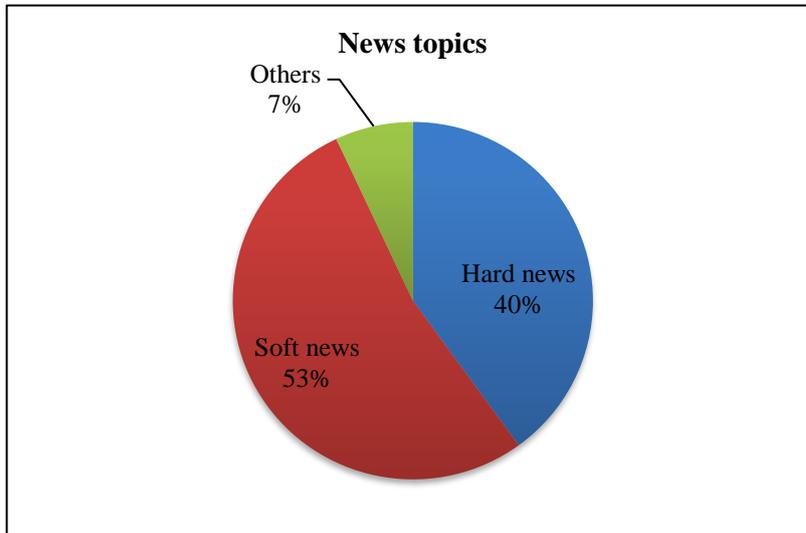


Figure 7-1 Topics of news reported by the television news channel
Source: The Researcher

Results indicated that **normal (soft) news** was the most frequently occurring category (53%), as shown in Table 7-1. Respectively, the normal (soft) news was more frequent on Nile News (40.6%) than on Al Arabiya (18.3%) and Al Jazeera (14.7%). Nile News (median=3.46 mins) and Al Arabiya (median=3.43 mins) spent more time on normal (soft) news, than either Al Jazeera (1.97 mins) or Al Ekhbariya (median=1.75 mins), a difference that is statistically significant (p -value=.002).

Subsequently, **abnormal (hard) news** (40%) were featured more frequently on Al Jazeera (39.5%), than on Al Arabiya (31.8%) or the other two channels. The chi-square test showed a significant statistical difference (p -value<.001) between the four television news channels in this regard. Al Arabiya's coverage of abnormal (hard) news was the longest (median=3.67 mins), followed by Al Jazeera (median=2.32 mins), Al Ekhbariya (1.97 mins) and Nile News (1.90 mins). The Kruskal-Wallis' test indicated a highly significant difference (p -value=.005) in length of time devoted to abnormal (hard) News by the news channels.

Table 7-1 News topics specifics per channels

Topics specific	News channel	Frequency	Per cent	Chi-square (p-value)	Residual	Mean	Median	Min	Max	SD	Kruskall-Wallis (p-value)
Abnormal (hard) News	Al Jazeera	118	39.5	68.184 (<.001)	43.3	3.47	2.32	.15	14.0	3.01	12.663 (.005)
	Al Arabiya	95	31.8		20.3	4.75	3.67	.33	14.3	3.59	
	Al Ekhbariya	63	21.1		-11.8	2.96	1.97	.37	10.1	2.71	
	Nile News	23	7.7		-51.8	4.83	1.90	.48	23.3	5.63	
	Total	299	100.0			3.87	3.37	.15	23.3	3.47	
Normal (soft) News	Al Jazeera	57	14.7	62.033 (<.001)	-40.3	3.39	1.97	.13	12.2	3.07	15.27 (.002)
	Al Arabiya	71	18.3		-26.3	4.51	3.43	.25	23.4	4.39	
	Al Ekhbariya	103	26.5		5.8	3.75	1.75	.13	85.2	8.87	
	Nile News	158	40.6		60.8	6.25	3.46	.22	90.7	10.89	
	Total	389	100.0			4.85	2.38	.13	90.7	8.66	
Other News	Al Jazeera	10	19.2	12.462 (.006)	-3.0	3.29	.64	.10	11.6	4.41	1.401 (.705)
	Al Arabiya	19	36.5		6.0	4.71	2.50	.17	18.5	5.10	
	Al Ekhbariya	19	36.5		6.0	2.88	2.47	.10	8.37	2.20	
	Nile News	4	7.7		-9.0	4.00	4.18	.70	7.12	3.21	
	Total	52	100.0			3.71	2.50	.10	18.5	3.96	

Source: The Researcher

Significance of pairwise test: Abnormal (hard) news: Al Ekhbariya / Al Arabiya = 47.397 (.004), Normal (soft) news: Al Ekhbariya / Al Arabiya = 51.878 (.017), Al Ekhbariya / Nile News = -52.063 (.002)

As outlined in Table 7-1, in the case of **other news**, Al Arabiya (36.5%) and Al Ekhbariya (36.5%) had the highest frequency of coverage; it was much lower on Nile News (7.7%), giving a statistically significant difference (p -value=.006). In fact, Al Arabiya assigned more time (median=4.71 mins) to other news in comparison to Nile News (median=4.00 mins) or Al Jazeera (median=3.29 mins), but these differences were not found to be statistically significant (p -value=.705).

In the case of the topics covered in the data sample, the analysis identified some highly significant differences between the channels. As shown in Table 7-1 above, standard deviation indicated that major differences were visible between the proportions of abnormal (hard) and normal (soft) news stories found on each channel. The pairwise comparison test revealed a strong difference between Al Arabiya and Al Ekhbariya in regard to hard news coverage (47.397) at (.004). Another aspect of equal importance is that there were strong differences between the three news channels regarding normal (soft) news (Al Ekhbariya / Al Arabiya 51.878 (.017) and Al Ekhbariya /Nile News -52.063 (.002) as can be observed further in the data.

It can be observed that Al Arabiya aims to attract audiences throughout the Arab World by providing them with the news they are looking for, while Al Ekhbariya focuses on the official news, which can be classified as normal (soft) news.

On the other hand, the data highlights that Nile News focused on normal (soft) news, as it devoted a large amount of time on its main news bulletin to extensive live coverage of the national election that took place during the time period analysed. Little attention was given to other topics.

Nevertheless, the data explore the degree to which, the analysis of frequency, length of time and mean ranking of abnormal (hard) and normal (soft) news items, indicate how the news channels can use their balance of abnormal (hard) / normal (soft) news to differentiate themselves from competitors. Statistically, significant differences were found between the television news channels with regard to the “topic” element of the news coverage sampled. This indicates that this element is an element of differentiation (branding) across all four channels.

7.3.2 Framing Style

As mentioned in the Framing Theory Chapter (see Section 5.3, 5.3, 5.4 and 5.5), framing style delve into a pattern/style of reporting news content. Defined either as a tool, technique, process or method, it can influence the way news are narrated (episodic or thematic) or how the reality is presented, either as a broader or isolated news story (Glynn, 2018; Denton, 2017).

The current research found that the framing element was sub-divided into thematic (75.8%) and episodic (24.2%), with the results indicating that the former was the most frequent framing style in the sample. Table 7-2 shows the frequency distribution for framing style, the length of time devoted to the two styles, and statistical test results.

Table 7-2 Results for framing style in the news items sampled

Framing Style	News channels	Quantity				Length of time					
		Frequency	Per cent	Chi-square (p-value)	Residual	Mean	Median	Min	Max	SD	Kruskal-Wallis (p-value)
Thematic Style	Al Jazeera	114	20.3	10.016 (.018)	-26.3	2.74	1.74	.10	12.28	2.72	26.463 (.000)
	Al Arabiya	131	23.4		-9.3	4.40	3.33	.17	23.45	4.27	
	Al Ekhbariya	158	28.2		17.8	3.22	1.72	.10	85.20	7.30	
	Nile News	158	28.2		17.8	5.04	3.33	.22	42.12	6.59	
	TOTAL	561	100.0			3.91	2.12	.10	85.20	5.80	
Episodic Style	Al Jazeera	71	39.7	31.391 (.000)	26.3	4.54	3.92	.52	14.07	3.35	1.121 (.772)
	Al Arabiya	54	30.2		9.3	5.27	3.90	.47	14.35	3.44	
	Al Ekhbariya	27	15.1		-17.8	4.36	3.88	.55	11.82	2.81	
	Nile News	27	15.1		-17.8	11.88	3.78	.48	90.75	21.07	
	TOTAL	179	100.0			5.84	3.90	.47	90.75	8.98	

Source: The Researcher

Significance of pairwise test: Thematic: Al Ekhbariya / Nile News -75.875 (.000), Al Ekhbariya / Al Arabiya 76.097 (.000), Al Jazeera / Nile News -60.627 (.014), Al Jazeera / Al Arabiya -60.850 (.020).

Table 7-2 shows that both Al Ekhbariya (28.2%) and Nile News (28.2%) used thematic framing style more frequently than Al Arabiya (23.4%) or Al Jazeera (20.3%). A statistically significant difference (p -value=.018) was noted between the four news channels, with respect to the frequency of use of framing style. This was the longest for Nile News and Al Arabiya (median=3.33 mins), and a highly significant difference (p -value<.001) was found for length of time using this framing style in the sample.

It is interesting to note that through comparison, the episodic framing style was more frequently used by Al Jazeera (39.7%) than Al Arabiya (30.2%). This framing style featured for a similar length of time in news coverage across all four channels (median=3.78-3.92 mins), and no statistically significant differences were noted (p -value=.772).

Analysis of the mean ranking of the thematic framing style used for news items indicates strong significant differences across the channels, respectively between Al Jazeera and Nile News, Al Jazeera and Al Arabiya, Al Ekhbariya and Nile News and Al Arabiya and Al Ekhbariya.

The data emphasises that episodic framing style was frequently used by Al Jazeera (71 news items), followed by Al Arabiya (54 news items). When looking at the mean ranking, Al Arabiya was the highest (5.27), while the other three channels were similar in applying the episodic framing style. The strongest differentiation was between Al Ekhbariya and Al Arabiya, Al Jazeera and Nile News and between Al Jazeera and Al Arabiya. The results obtained imply statistically significant results, demonstrating that the television news channels employed framing style as a means of brand differentiation. Based on the results, it can be concluded that framing style of the Pan-Arab television news channels (Al Jazeera and Al Arabiya) relied on thematic framing style as well as their state-supported counterparts, Nile News (Egypt) and Al Ekhbariya (Saudi Arabia), both of which preferred also the same framing style for their coverage.

7.3.3 News Processing

News processing was subdivided into descriptive (66.89%), analytical (2.97%) and other (30.1%); the first being the most frequently used type of news processing found in the sample. Frequency distribution and length of time for news processing types and statistical test results can be found in Table 7-3.

Table 7-3 Results for news processing type in the news items sampled

News processing type	News channel	Quantity				Length of time					
		Frequency	Per cent	Chi-square (p-value)	Residual	Mean	Median	Min	Max	SD	Kruskal-Wallis (p-value)
Descriptive	Al Jazeera	113	22.8	8.459 (.037)	-10.8	2.61	1.70	.10	11.68	2.73	10.624 (.014)
	Al Arabiya	105	21.2		-18.8	3.63	2.33	.17	18.57	3.58	
	Al Ekhbariya	147	29.7		23.3	2.60	1.68	.10	20.58	3.12	
	Nile News	129	26.3		6.3	3.67	1.98	.22	42.12	5.12	
	Total	495	100.0			3.10	1.78	.10	42.12	3.79	
Analytical	Al Jazeera	10	45.5	7.455 (.059)	4.5	3.47	3.18	.60	8.33	2.70	(5.488) .139
	Al Arabiya	7	31.8		1.5	4.20	3.43	.58	8.48	2.64	
	Al Ekhbariya	2	9.1		-3.5	2.28	2.28	.82	3.75	2.07	
	Nile News	3	13.6		-2.5	45.06	39.33	5.08	90.75	43.12	
	Total	22	100.0			9.27	3.87	.58	90.75	19.86	
Other	Al Jazeera	62	27.8	13.287 (.004)	6.3	4.94	4.14	.43	14.07	3.26	8.910 (.031)
	Al Arabiya	73	32.7		17.3	6.16	4.03	.50	23.45	4.37	
	Al Ekhbariya	36	16.1		-19.8	6.67	3.95	.47	85.20	13.82	
	Nile News	52	23.3		-3.8	9.68	6.90	.48	63.43	11.14	
	Total	223	100.0			6.72	5.02	.43	85.20	8.41	

Source: The Researcher

Significance of pairwise test: Descriptive = Al Ekhbariya / Al Arabiya 51.516 (.028).

In Table 7-3, the descriptive news processing was used more frequently on Al Ekhbariya (29.7%), than the other three news channels, and was found to be statistically significant (p -value=.037). Length of time for coverage using descriptive news processing was greatest for Al Arabiya (median=2.33 mins), followed by Nile News (median=1.98 mins) and Al Jazeera (median=1.70 mins); again, this difference proved to be statistically significant (p -value=.014).

Moreover, Al Jazeera (45.5%) made most frequent use of analytical news processing in its coverage, followed by Al Arabiya (31.8%), and Nile News (13.6%). However, only 22 instances occurred in total, and a significant difference was found for this element in regard to number of news stories in this category, while there was no significant difference between the channels when looking at length of news stories falling under this category. Although Nile News recorded a much higher average length of time (39.33 mins) for analytical news processing, this difference happened due to the channel coverage of the Egyptian national election that took place during the time of conducting this study.

Also, Al Arabiya (32.7%) used a type of news processing that was neither descriptive nor analytical, (but Other) more frequently than Al Jazeera (27.8%) or Nile News (23.3%), and a highly significant statistical difference (p -value=.004) was found across the four channels in this subcategory. On average, the type of news processing categorised as **Other** was employed by Nile News for a longer period of time (median=6.90 mins) than its competitors (Table 7-3), and results show a statistically significant difference (p -value=.031) in this subcategory.

The news processing element indicates the depth of reporting of the event. The data findings indicate that this element was used by all four channels differently. The data shows an overview of revealed differentiation regarding the application of descriptive news processing between Al Ekhbariya and Al Arabiya, with moderate pair-wise differences between the other channels. Coverage on AlJazeera and Al-Arabiya, featured the highest number of analytical news stories. This strategy can be linked to their brand identity and generates a more loyal audience, who trust their analysis and in-depth coverage. The data also indicated that 77.3% of news stories processed by the analytical style were on Al Jazeera (45.5%), followed by Al Arabiya (31.8%), providing its audience with deeper coverage and offering perhaps controversial opinions and ideas about the issue under report. These findings demonstrate that news coverage on the Pan-Arab channels focused on analysing events, rather than simply describing them as they unfold. This type of news processing helps these channels to situate themselves as knowledgeable information providers due to greater information about, and analysis of, an event than simple reportage. Overall, the analysis of news processing types indicates that differences are statistically significant, thus, confirming that news processing elements could be used for brand differentiation.

7.3.4 Scope of Coverage

The scope and content of media coverage vary and can reflect an exclusive focus on an event, or a sequence of interrelated news with the first event; or latter case where the content is focused on the rationale of the event(s). A central argument is that given the pressure of competitive media market and business-centric mindset, the scope of media content coverage can be range or can be influenced (media bias) due to channel preferences, market incentives, the constrictions of the political and economic setting, as well as the day-by-day relating of events (Garcia-Pires *et al.*, 2017).

Analysis of scope of coverage categories found that news that **focuses on the event(s) only** (71.89%) was ranked highest, followed by **links event(s) with previous event(s)** category (15.54%), and focuses on **reasons for event(s)** category (12.56%).

Al Ekhbariya (28.8%) and Nile News (27.3%) items focused on the events themselves more than the other two channels. Al Arabiya and Nile News recorded higher averages in terms of length of time (median=2.51 and 2.19 mins, respectively). To illustrate key point discussed above, Table 7-4 follows.

Table 7-4 Results for scope of coverage in news items sampled

Scope of coverage	News channel	Quantity				Length of time					
		Frequency	Per cent	Chi-square (p-value)	Residual	Mean	Median	Min	Max	SD	Kruskal-Wallis
Focuses on event(s) only (what is happening)	Al Jazeera	116	21.8	7.955 (.047)	-17.0	2.71	1.68	.10	12.28	2.94	15.28 (.002)
	Al Arabiya	118	22.2		-15.0	3.48	2.51	.17	12.17	3.10	
	Al Ekhbariya	153	28.8		20.0	2.60	1.68	.10	20.58	3.10	
	Nile News	145	27.3		12.0	4.68	2.19	.22	63.43	7.66	
	Total	532	100.0			3.39	1.85	.10	63.43	4.83	
Links event(s) with previous event(s)	Al Jazeera	36	31.3	11.922 (.008)	7.3	4.80	4.67	.40	11.68	2.80	4.80 (.148)
	Al Arabiya	39	33.9		10.3	5.78	3.95	.50	18.38	4.10	
	Al Ekhbariya	16	13.9		-12.8	9.36	3.55	.55	85.20	20.61	
	Nile News	24	20.9		-4.8	13.48	5.89	.63	90.75	19.69	
	Total	115	100.0			7.58	4.18	.40	90.75	12.39	
Focuses on reasons for event(s)	Al Jazeera	33	35.5	9.581 (.022)	9.8	4.49	3.48	.43	14.07	3.24	9.70 (.021)
	Al Arabiya	28	30.1		4.8	8.00	8.12	1.75	23.45	5.24	
	Al Ekhbariya	16	17.2		-7.3	4.94	4.67	1.85	10.25	2.06	
	Nile News	16	17.2		-7.3	7.11	5.60	.72	23.38	5.53	
	Total	93	100.0			6.08	5.03	.43	23.45	4.45	

Source: The Researcher

Significance of pairwise test: coverage of what is happening Al Ekhbariya / Al Arabiya 58.604 (.011), Al Ekhbariya/Nile News -58.637 (.006), focusing on reasons -20.626 (.018).

All of the above evidence, as presented in Table 7-4, points out that in terms of scope of coverage, Al Jazeera (31.3%) and Al Arabiya (33.9%) linked the event(s) being reported with previous events, more than their two rivals did. This is considered as statistically significant differences when looking at the frequency of news stories falling in this category. On the other

hand, the highest average length of time in this subcategory was in Nile News (median=5.89 mins), while the lowest is in Al Ekhbariya (median=3.55 mins) (Table 7-4). No statistically significant difference was found across the four channels in regard to time devoted to news stories falling in this category.

In the subcategory of focusing on reasons for events, Al Jazeera (35.5%) and Al Arabiya (30.1%) used this more than the other television news channels. Regarding time, the highest and lowest averages in this subcategory were recorded by Al Arabiya (median=8.12 mins), and Al Jazeera (median=3.48 mins), respectively (Table 7-4). A statistically significant difference (p -value=.021) was found across the four channels. The most significant difference in this category was between Al Jazeera and Al Arabiya.

Results showed that the four news channels differ significantly in the scope of their coverage. The main differences identified, as indicated in the data, were in regard to the coverage of what is happening, between Al Arabiya and Al Ekhbariya; Al Ekhbariya and Nile News.

The data also outlines that significant differences exist between channels coverage scope. The strongest difference found was between Al Jazeera and Al Arabiya. Both of the Pan-Arab channels, Al Jazeera and Al Arabiya, offer the type of news coverage that provides the audience with in-depth, contextual information on events being reported. Al Jazeera offered 33 news items, and Al Arabiya provided 28 news items, while both Al Ekhbariya and Nile News had just 16 news stories in this category. Both, also, link current events with what happened previously, pointing to potential root causes. This is another element of differentiation between the channels in regard to their scope of coverage. Some 65.2% of news stories that were processed, linking events to what happened before, were reported by Al Jazeera (31.3%) and Al Arabiya (33.9%). Combining this process of linking events with what is happening prior, indicates that the Pan-Arab news channels are the leader in this respect. Data indicates that Al Jazeera most frequently provides news reporting that is in-depth, contextualised and analytical.

Referring to their own prediction and assessment of actions can be considered to be one of the tools used by television news channels to differentiate themselves from other competitors. By making reference to their own predictions and analysis concerning news stories during bulletins, television channels can remind the audience about the expertise and accuracy underpinning its coverage. This element was set by this study, and news stories were examined on how many

times the input of the channel was included during the news coverage. The data presented in this study revealed that Al Jazeera was the highest channel in insisting on its analysis and vision of the events, with the highest frequency of more than two times during the coverage of a single news story, followed by Nile News. A prominent observation that emerged from data comparison was that Al Ekhbariya usage of this element of branding is very low, which indicates that it has low vision of what is happening due either, to limited number of analysts, or scarce awareness of staff regarding brand relevance. Altogether, these results indicate **that the scope of coverage** may be used by television news channels to differentiate themselves from rival broadcasters' coverage, as part of their branding strategy. It is also clear that in their news items, both the Pan-Arab channels (Al Jazeera and Al Arabiya) tend to focus on offering an in-depth investigation of events, while the state-funded Saudi channel, Al Ekhbariya, and its Egyptian counterpart, Nile News, rely more on accounts of the current event/phenomenon occurring.

7.3.5 Sources of the News Story

Sources of news story are used to report an event or a issue (Henshall *et al.* 1991). Other than the journalist itself or other journalists (channel resources), a news story can make use of a exclusive source or public resource. Most often relationship between news sources and journalists relies on trust and on an exchange of information that accurately shall illustrate true facts (Pires *et al.*, 2012). By exclusive source means that the channel has access to a primary source, written source, leaked documents or a secondary source (Henshall *et al.* 1991).

Consequently, four possible sources of news stories were identified in this study: the channel itself (43.51%), a source exclusive to the channel (8.65%), a public source (29.7%), and other sources referring to any source not falling into the previous categories (18.1%). As follows, Table 7-5 implies further results.

Table 7-5 Results for sources of the news story in news items sampled

Sources of the news story		Quantity			Length of time						
		Frequency	Percent	Chi-square (p-value)	Residual	Mean	Median	Min	Max	SD	Kruskal-Wallis (p-value)
Channel itself	Al Jazeera	59	18.3	7.689 (.053)	-21.5	2.67	1.82	.13	8.85	2.39	15.358 (.002)
	Al Arabiya	87	27.0		6.5	3.98	3.37	.25	13.45	3.53	
	Al Ekhbariya	89	27.6		8.5	3.44	.90	.10	85.20	9.40	
	Nile News	87	27.0		6.5	4.35	1.98	.22	39.33	5.78	
	Total	322	100.0			3.69	1.92	.10	85.20	6.16	
Source exclusive to channel	Al Jazeera	29	45.3	17.125 (.001)	13.0	4.06	1.98	.40	14.07	3.92	6.821 (.078)
	Al Arabiya	14	21.9		-2.0	5.48	4.14	.35	18.38	4.80	
	Al Ekhbariya	6	9.4		-10.0	3.84	3.95	.75	6.72	1.91	
	Nile News	15	23.4		-1.0	13.94	5.63	1.80	90.75	22.68	
	Total	64	100.0			6.66	4.07	.35	90.75	11.96	
Public source	Al Jazeera	50	22.7	9.345 (.025)	-5.0	2.67	1.73	.10	12.28	2.75	7.588 (.055)
	Al Arabiya	39	17.7		-16.0	5.04	3.43	.17	23.45	5.18	
	Al Ekhbariya	63	28.6		8.0	2.97	2.25	.30	13.68	2.87	
	Nile News	68	30.9		13.0	4.71	2.45	.48	41.78	6.69	
	Total	220	100.0			3.80	2.23	.10	41.78	4.83	
Other	Al Jazeera	47	35.1	20.866 (.000)	13.5	4.83	4.15	.62	11.73	3.19	8.586 (.035)
	Al Arabiya	45	33.6		11.5	5.36	3.85	.33	12.58	3.55	
	Al Ekhbariya	27	20.1		-6.5	4.12	3.90	.38	11.82	3.21	
	Nile News	15	11.2		-18.5	13.87	7.17	.30	63.43	17.19	
	Total	134	100.0			5.88	4.00	.30	63.43	7.01	

Source: The Researcher

Significance of pairwise test: the channel itself = Al Ekhbariya / Nile News -43.145 (.013), Al Ekhbariya / Al Arabiya 49.921 (.002), others = Al Ekhbariya / Nile News -35.559 (.027).

Based on the results outlined above, it is clear that AL Jazeera was least likely to cite itself as the source of news items (18.3%), while levels for its three competitors were similar (approximately, 27% each). Statistically, no significant difference (p -value=.053) was observed across the four channels in this subcategory. With regard to the average length of coverage, Al Ekhbariya scored lowest (median=0.90 mins), whereas Al Arabiya the highest (median=3.37 mins). The Kruskal-Wallis H test identified a highly significant time difference (p -value=.002) across the four channels.

Al Jazeera's news items were most frequently identified as exclusive (45.3%), followed by those of Nile News (23.4%); and analysis showed a statistically significant difference in the frequency of usage of exclusive sources (p -value=.001) across the channels. In the case of

duration of items reported from exclusive sources, Nile News ranked highest (median=5.63 mins), and Al Jazeera lowest (median=1.98 mins). No statistically significant difference emerged in this subcategory (p -value=.078)

Nile News (30.9%) was found to be the most frequent user of public sources for news items, followed by Al Ekhbariya (28.6%); the difference in **frequency** in this subcategory was confirmed to be statistically significant (p -value=.025). On average, Al Jazeera dedicated the least time to news from public sources (median=1.73 mins), and Al Arabiya the most (median=3.43 mins), but differences were not found to be statistically significant.

Analysis of Table 7-5 reveals that the sources cited for broadcast news items may serve as an element of differentiation across the television news channels studied, helping to form partly a distinctive brand identity.

Concerning the source of the news story, there were strong significant differences between Al Ekhbariya and Nile News regarding to the channel itself as a source of the news story, and between Al Arabiya and Al Ekhbariya, too.

7.3.6 Inclusion of Editorial Comments

As Figure 7-2 captures, for the most part, editorial comments were not included in news broadcasts (71.3%) with only 28.6% of the sample coverage explicitly containing comments of this kind.

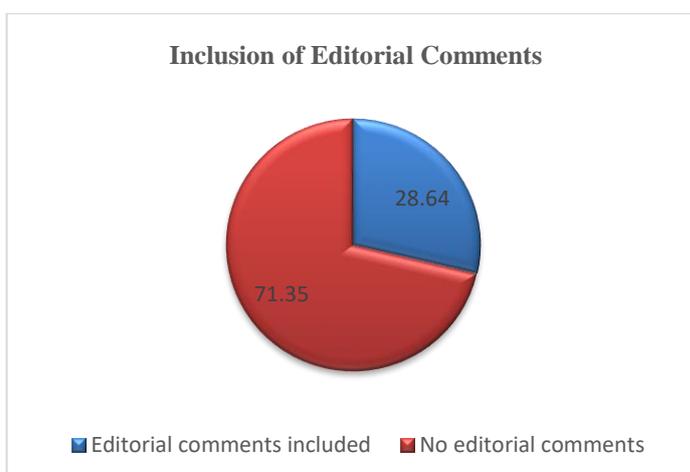


Figure 7-2 Inclusion of editorial comments

Figure 7-2 demonstrates introductions of the general percentage in terms of inclusion of editorial comments. All data collected, points to the fact that Al Arabiya had the highest frequency (36.3%) of including editorial comments, followed by Al Jazeera (31.6%), while Al Ekhbariya had the lowest (10.8%). Analysis of the coverage across the four channels showed a significant difference ($p < .001$) in the frequency of inclusion of editorial comments. Al Arabiya devoted the least time on average to editorial comments (median=3.80 mins), with Al Jazeera scoring marginally higher (median=4.07 mins), while Nile News recorded the highest total time (median=5.87 mins). However, these differences did not prove to be statistically significant (p -value=.085) and Table 7-6 that follows shows further details.

Table 7-6 Results for editorial comments in news items sampled

EDITORIAL COMMENTS		QUANTITY				LENGTH OF TIME					
		Frequency	Per cent	Chi-square (p-value)	Residual	Mean	Median	Min	Max	SD	Kruskal- Wallis (p- value)
Editorial Comments Included	Al Jazeera	67	31.6	32.755 (.000)	14	4.79	4.07	.43	14.07	3.10	6.756 (.080)
	Al Arabiya	77	36.3		24	5.33	3.80	.57	14.35	3.36	
	Al Ekhbariya	23	10.8		-30	5.42	4.30	1.75	15.83	2.98	
	Nile News	45	21.2		-8	10.85	5.78	.30	90.75	15.47	
	Total	212	100.0			6.34	4.10	.30	90.75	7.97	
No Editorial Comments	Al Jazeera	118	22.3	13.152 (.004)	-14	2.67	1.67	.10	11.68	2.83	14.407 (.002)
	Al Arabiya	108	20.5		-24	4.16	2.37	.17	23.45	4.44	
	Al Ekhbariya	162	30.7		30	3.10	1.68	.10	85.20	7.18	
	Nile News	140	26.5		8	4.48	2.12	.22	63.43	7.36	
	Total	528	100.0			3.59	1.80	.10	85.20	6.02	

Source: The Researcher

Significance of pairwise test: No editorial comments = Al Ekhbariya / Nile News -54.154 (.013), Al Ekhbariya / Al Arabiya 60.971 (.008).

As illustrated in Table 7-6, Al Arabiya registered the lowest frequency (20.5%) for No Editorial Comments, with Al Jazeera (22.3%) scoring slightly higher. The differences across the four channels for this subcategory were found to be statistically significant (p -value=.004). Al Jazeera devoted the shortest length of coverage to items not featuring editorial comments (median=1.67 mins) by a narrow margin, with Al Ekhbariya having a slightly higher median of 1.68 mins, while Al Arabiya recorded the longest average time (median=2.37 mins). However, no statistically significant differences were observed in these data (p -value=.002).

Results demonstrate that television news channels use the inclusion of editorial comments in news items as a means of differentiating their brand, with the Pan-Arab news channels (Al Jazeera and Al Arabiya) using editorial comments to indicate their knowledge, and expertise about the events being covered.

Both, Al Jazeera and Al Arabiya, made more frequent use of editorial comment in news coverage. Al Jazeera and Al Arabiya were leaders in including their editorial comments, via their news coverage, while neither Al Ekhbariya nor Nile News provided the audience with their opinions about what is happening. Of the news stories reported by Al Arabiya, 77 included the channel's opinion about events; 67 news stories reported by Al Jazeera were accompanied by editorial comments compared with 45 news stories by Nile News and 23 by Al Ekhbariya. This result (as presented in Table 7-6) indicated that 67.9% of the news stories that included editorial comments were reported by Al Jazeera and Al Arabiya. It is argued that the inclusion of editorial comments increases audience loyalty, and gives the news channel further branding, with people usually tending to rely on them more, and having the "mouth talk" about their news coverage as well as their editorial comments. This can be seen as serving the channel ideology, but also serves as the channel's branding and marketing strategy.

7.3.7 News Direction

The analysis of data revealed that Al Jazeera reported the news stories by reflecting a single side more than the rest of the channels. For instance, fifteen such stories appeared in the news programmes under study, more than double the number that reflected two sides. Al Jazeera and Al Arabiya offered a similar number of stories reflecting two sides (Al Jazeera 6; Al Arabiya 7). However, Al Arabiya had more news (4) reflecting more than two opinions, than Al Jazeera had (2). Consequently, these facts diminish the trustworthiness of Al Jazeera's slogan that

claims: “the opinion and the other opinion”. Thus, it seems that using a statement that contradicts with practice supports the notion that Al Jazeera would be more appropriate to be described as “the street channel”, presenting the opinions of “people in the street”, in contrast to the official or educated views. Table 7-7 below illustrates the frequency and perspective of stories.

Table 7-7 Results for news direction in news items sampled

NEWS DIRECTION	News channel	QUANTITY				LENGTH OF TIME					Kruskal-Wallis (p-value)
		Frequency	Per cent	Chi-square (p-value)	Residual	Mean	Median	Min	Max	SD	
Item reflects one side	Al Jazeera	15	51.7	5.24 (.073)	5.3	3.58	3.38	.57	10.03	2.83	.408 (.815)
	Al Arabiya	9	31.0		-7.8	4.08	2.33	.50	10.52	4.13	
	Al Ekhbariya	5	17.2		-4.7	4.11	4.00	.82	7.18	2.84	
	Nile News	0	0								
	Total	29	100				3.83	3.38	.50	10.52	
Item reflects two sides	Al Jazeera	6	42.9	.076 (.782)	1.3	5.31	4.44	.62	14.07	4.68	.082 (.775)
	Al Arabiya	7	50.0		2.3	4.62	4.00	.87	12.27	3.69	
	Al Ekhbariya	0									
	Nile News	1	7.1		-3.7	10.38	10.38	10.38	10.38	4.11	
	Total	14	100				5.33	4.08	.62	14.07	
Item reflects more than two sides	Al Jazeera	2	33.3		-1.0	3.67	3.67	.67	6.67	4.24	
	Al Arabiya	4	66.7		1.0	9.66	5.87	3.43	23.45	9.41	
	Al Ekhbariya	0									
	Nile News	0									
	Total	6	100				7.66	5.27	.67	23.45	
Item describes event only	Al Jazeera	160	23.3	2.419 (.490)	-12.0	3.28	1.97	.10	12.28	3.00	25.436 (.000)
	Al Arabiya	164	23.8		-8.0	4.54	3.49	.17	18.57	3.86	
	Al Ekhbariya	180	26.2		8.0	3.37	1.87	.10	85.20	6.92	

NEWS DIRECTION	News channel	QUANTITY				LENGTH OF TIME					Kruskal-Wallis (p-value)
		Frequency	Per cent	Chi-square (p-value)	Residual	Mean	Median	Min	Max	SD	
	Nile News	184	26.7		12.0	6.02	3.33	.22	90.75	10.32	
	Total	688	100.0			4.33	2.45	.10	90.75	6.90	
Direction Unclear	Al Jazeera	2	66.7		.5	8.72	8.72	5.70	11.73	4.27	
	Al Arabiya	1	33.3		-.5	8.35	8.35	8.35	8.35		
	Al Ekhbariya	0									
	Nile News	0									
	Total	3	100			8.59	8.35	8.35	5.70	11.73	

Source: The Researcher

Significance of pairwise test: item describe the event only = Al Ekhbariya / Nile News -81.989 (.000), Al Ekhbariya/ Al Arabiya 95.689 (.000), Al Jazeera / Al Arabiya -59.190 (.044).

As indicated in Table 7-7 above, the news processing is a way of providing several opinions and points of view to the audience, so that they have more ways of interpreting an event. The news direction of the coverage is an important factor, reflecting differentiation between the news channels. Of all the news items in the sample that included more than two sides connected to the event, 66.7% were reported by Al Arabiya, and 33.3% by Al Jazeera. 50% of news with two sides was reported by Al Arabiya, and 42.9% was reported by Al Jazeera. Strong differences exist between the channels, regarding the news direction used when reporting events. Al Ekhbariya differed strongly from Nile News, and Al Arabiya differed from Al Jazeera, while also finding a strong difference with Al Arabiya and Nile News. Like most of the previous findings of this study, these differences showed that the Pan-Arab news channels tend to use their news coverage for differentiation, intended to grab the attention of their audience. This can be a sign of professionalism used by the Pan-Arab television news channels to differentiate themselves from their competitors. This kind of differentiation helps them in positioning their brands in the Arab media landscape. The local government-supported television news channels did not give this aspect much attention, due to the fact that they do not have much competition, and to the fact that they pay more attention to serving their government's official requirements.

In this study, five categories of news direction were established, relating to how the news item was reported: Reflecting One Side (3.9%), Reflecting Two Sides (1.8%), Reflecting More Than Two Sides (.81%), Describing the Event Only (92.97%) and Direction Unclear (.04%).

Results of the comparative analysis of the coverage (Table 7-7) revealed that show items on Al Jazeera more frequently reflected one side of an issue (51.7%), than coverage by its competitors, but no statistically significant differences were observed across the channels (p -value=.073). On average, Al Ekhbariya's one-sided coverage was longest (median=4.00 mins), but showed no statistically significant difference (p -value=.815).

Additionally, Table 7-7 reports that Al Arabiya's (50%) news items most frequently reflected two sides of an issue than the other channels, and this type of coverage did not feature at all in the Al Ekhbariya sample. When statistical tests were run, no significant differences were revealed (p -value=.0782). Nile News spent the most time on this type of news stories (median=10.00 mins). This may be because this study's data was collected while national elections were being held in Egypt.

In terms of coverage that focused on describing events, frequency findings were fairly similar for all four channels (23.3%-26.7%), with no statistically significant differences becoming apparent (p -value=.490). Al Arabiya and Nile News were observed to have higher average lengths of coverage (median=3.49 and 3.33 mins, respectively) than their counterparts, and differences proved to be statistically significant ($p < .001$).

In summary, the analysis shows slight, but statistically significant differences in news direction across the four channels, suggesting that this may represent an element of differentiation for the purposes of branding.

7.3.8 Exclusivity

Referring to the exclusivity of news coverage through the lenses of competitive advantage, the data revealed that Al Jazeera made the most frequent mention of its exclusive coverage of events, representing 39.4% of its news items. Subsequently, is followed by Al Arabiya (28.2 %) and Nile News with an exclusive coverage of (24.6 %). While the first three news channels register a significant exclusivity, Al Ekhbariya records only 7.7 % from its news coverage. Further supporting evidence can be found in Table 7-8 below.

Table 7-8 Mentions of news coverage exclusivity among four television news channels

Exclusivity		Frequency	%	Chi-Square	Residual	Mean Ranks	Kruskal-Wallis Test
Mention	Al Jazeera	56	39.4	0.000	20.5	63.37	7.838 0.049
	Al Arabiya	40	28.2		4.5	67.02	
	Al Ekhbariya	11	7.7		-24.5	84.77	
	Nile News	35	24.6		-.5	85.46	
	Total	142	100.0				
No mention	Al Jazeera	129	21.6	0.000	-20.5	283.91	19.418 0.000
	Al Arabiya	145	24.2		-4.5	340.33	
	Al Ekhbariya	174	29.1		24.5	260.74	
	Nile News	150	25.1		.5	316.53	
	Total	598	100.0				

Source: The Researcher

Significance of pairwise test: mention of exclusivity = Al Ekhbariya / Nile News -55.791 (.023), Al Ekhbariya / Al Arabiya 79.899 (.000), Al Jazeera / Al Arabiya -56.428 (.041).

The pairwise test indicated that there were strong statistical significant differences between Al Ekhbariya and Nile News -55.791 (.023), Al Ekhbariya and Al Arabiya 79.899 (.000) and between Al Jazeera and Al Arabiya -56.428 (.041) in regard to mentioning their exclusivity in their news reporting.

The use of references to exclusivity by a television news channel appears to be another element that can be used to strengthen brand differentiation. Further explanation will be given when addressing the second research question of this study which focuses mainly on the differences among the four television news channels examined here.

7.3.9 News Focus

Analysis found that the news items sampled focused on officials (60.4%), individuals (15.95%), officials and individuals (12.16%) and neither of these (17.16%).

The two state-funded channels featured officials in their coverage most frequently, with Nile News (33.6%), followed by Al-Ekhbariya (28.2%) with the chi-square test giving a highly significant difference ($p < .001$). However, on average, Al-Ekhbariya dedicated least time per news item focusing on officials (median=1.75 mins) and Al-Arabiya the highest (median=3.33

mins). A statistically significant difference across the four channels was observed for length of time ($p < .001$) (see Table 7-9).

Aljazeera ranked first (42.7%), followed by Al-Arabiya (34.7%) for the frequency of news items featuring individuals, and statistical analysis produced a highly significant difference ($p < .001$). When considering time devoted to news stories featuring individuals, Nile News (median=5.03 mins) and Aljazeera (median=3.36 mins) represented the highest and lowest average time. Time-wise, no statistically significant differences were found across the four channels (p -value=.219) for this element of news focus.

In the case of stories featuring both officials and individuals, Al-Arabiya achieved top ranking (33.3%), followed by Aljazeera (31.1%) but no significant statistical differences (p -value=.053) were observed. For length of time of items featuring both officials and individuals, Nile News recorded the highest average (median=7.17%) and Al-Ekhbariya, the lowest (median=4.00 mins). No statistically significant differences emerged for time (p -value=.426) either (see Table 7-9).

In terms of coverage that did not feature either officials or individuals, Aljazeera registered the highest percentage (35.4%), followed by Al-Arabiya (29.1%) and highly significant differences were found ($p < .001$). For length of time, Al-Ekhbariya and Aljazeera recorded the lowest averages (median=1.31 and 1.67 mins, respectively), and Nile News the highest (median=4.20 mins) with no statistically significant differences (p -value=.229) emerging across the four channels (see Table 7-9).

Results showed elements of differentiation regarding news focus across the four channels. In the case of Aljazeera and Al-Arabiya, a greater percentage of news items focused on individuals while Al-Ekhbariya and Nile News concentrated more on officials. This can be explained by the fact that the two state-owned channels are more likely to present government policies and to carry coverage of official representatives rather than ordinary citizens.

Table 7-9 Results for news focus in news items sampled

News focus	News channels	Quantity				Length of time					
		Frequen	Per cent	Chi-square (p-	Residual	Mean	Med	Min	Max	SD	Kruskal-Wallis (p-value)
Officials	Al Jazeera	80	17.9	27.783 (.000)	-31.8	2.89	1.86	.10	12.28	2.70	19.344 (.000)
	Al Arabiya	91	20.4		-20.8	4.73	3.33	.17	23.45	4.61	
	Al Ekhbariya	126	28.2		14.3	2.68	1.75	.10	20.58	3.17	
	Nile News	150	33.6		38.3	4.79	2.28	.22	42.12	6.72	
	Total	447	100.0			3.84	2.00	.10	42.12	4.94	
Individuals	Al Jazeera	32	42.7	23.613 (.000)	13.3	3.97	3.36	.43	11.68	3.35	4.421 (.219)
	Al Arabiya	26	34.7		7.3	3.88	3.44	.33	14.35	3.03	
	Al Ekhbariya	10	13.3		-8.8	4.97	3.73	.63	15.83	4.60	
	Nile News	7	9.3		-11.8	6.75	5.03	2.40	12.72	3.67	
	Total	75	100.0			4.33	3.48	.33	15.83	3.49	
Both	Al Jazeera	28	31.1	7.689 (.053)	5.5	5.69	5.58	.62	14.07	3.53	2.786 (.426)
	Al Arabiya	30	33.3		7.5	6.15	4.52	.58	12.58	3.90	
	Al Ekhbariya	17	18.9		-5.5	9.37	4.00	.53	85.20	19.7	
	Nile News	15	16.7		-7.5	19.07	7.17	.60	90.75	26.1	
	Total	90	100.0			8.77	5.00	.53	90.75	14.4	
Neither	Al Jazeera	45	35.4	17.473 (.001)	13.3	2.62	1.67	.15	11.67	2.62	3.676 (.299)
	Al Arabiya	37	29.1		5.3	3.78	3.45	.35	10.30	3.04	
	Al Ekhbariya	32	25.2		.3	2.51	1.31	.37	8.37	2.38	
	Nile News	13	10.2		-18.8	4.93	4.20	.30	15.08	4.68	
	Total	127	100.0			3.17	2.18	.15	15.08	3.03	

Source: The Researcher

Significance of pairwise test: official = Al Ekhbariya / Nile News -52.315 (.005), Al Ekhbariya / Al Arabiya 70.787 (.000).

Table 7-9 provides elements of differentiation regarding news focus across the four channels. In the case of Al Jazeera and Al Arabiya, a greater percentage of news items focus on individuals, while Al Ekhbariya and Nile News concentrate more on officials. In addition, the results emphasise the fact that the two state-owned channels are more likely to present government policies, and to carry coverage of official representatives rather than of ordinary citizens.

The nature of the results identified reveals that in the case of stories featuring both officials and individuals, Al Arabiya achieved top ranking (33.3%) followed by Al Jazeera (31.1%), but no significant statistical differences (p -value=.053) were observed. For length of time of items featuring both officials and individuals, Nile News recorded the highest average (median=7.17%), and Al Ekhbariya the lowest (median=4.00 mins).

Al Jazeera registered the highest percentage of coverage that did not feature either officials or individuals (35.4%), followed by Al Arabiya (29.1%); and highly significant differences were found ($p < .001$). For the length of time, Al Ekhbariya and Al Jazeera recorded the lowest averages (median=1.31 and 1.67 mins, respectively), and Nile News the highest (median=4.20 mins).

Focusing more on individuals, giving the audience full information and analysis about the event being reported indicate a more neutral approach, while the reliance on officials means that the government's point of view is more likely to be foregrounded in the channel's coverage of events. It is clear that the regional, Pan-Arab, news channels are competing against each other by providing their audience with a variety of opinions, and consequently more reliable and trustworthy news coverage. The Pan-Arab news channels are much less official-focused in their coverage; and when an item does concern an official, a non-governmental element is also more likely to be included. Al Jazeera includes the views of individuals more often than Al Arabiya, supporting to some extent its claim to present the opinion and the other opinion, and reflecting the popular image of it as the street channel in the Arab World.

Pairwise test indicated that there were strong statistical significant differences between Al Ekhbariya and Nile News -52.315 (.005) and between Al Ekhbariya and Al Arabiya 70.787 (.000) in regard to focusing on officials in their news reporting.

7.3.9 Geographical Area

With regard to geographical areas covered in the news items, there is a clear concentration on the Arab World by all four channels. However, there are some significant statistical differences. Both Al Arabiya (40%) and Al Jazeera (37.8%) also place major emphasis on covering events in non-Arab Islamic countries. When omitting what can be classified as “local news” which is news about Egypt, Nile News and Al Ekhbariya became the lowest in covering Arab countries, with high coverage of news about their local countries. Some 84.9% of Nile News coverage focused on Egypt, while just over half (51.4%) of Al Ekhbariya’s news stories concerned Saudi Arabia. The focus of Pan-Arab news channels on Arab countries and non-Arab Islamic countries, can be attributed to the branding strategy of these channels, which emphasises the concentration of news coverage in these countries.

Table 7-10 below shows that Al Arabiya reported more news about Arab Middle East countries (126) and Islamic non-Arab countries than the other three. This channel, along with its competitor, Al Jazeera, ranked second equal after Nile News (13) in reporting on other Arab countries (7), and matched both Al Jazeera and Al Ekhbariya in reporting on other geographical areas. Focusing on Arab and Islamic countries meets this channel promise to its Arabic speaking audience, who look for updated news about these countries, providing them with more news coverage of the Arabic and Islamic regions.

Table 7-10 Geographical areas covered by the four television news channels

Channel name		Geographical Area							Total
		Local	Arab Middle East	Other Arab countries	International	Other	Islamic countries		
Al Jazeera	Frequency	1	123	7	31	9	14	185	
	Percentage	0.5%	66.5%	3.8%	16.8%	4.9%	7.6%	100.0%	
Al Arabiya	Frequency	1	126	7	27	9	15	185	
	Percentage	0.5%	68.1%	3.8%	14.6%	4.9%	8.1%	100.0%	
Al Ekhbariya	Frequency	95	63	1	9	9	8	185	
	Percentage	51.4%	34.1%	0.5%	4.9%	4.9%	4.3%	100.0%	
Nile News	Frequency	157	9	13	5	1	0	185	
	Percentage	84.9%	4.9%	7.0%	2.7%	0.5%	0.0%	100.0%	
Total	Frequency	254	321	28	72	28	37	740	

Channel name		Geographical Area							Total
		Local	Arab Middle East	Other Arab countries	International	Other	Islamic countries		
	Percentage	34.3%	43.4%	3.8%	9.7%	3.8%	5.0%	100.0%	

Source: The Researcher

The data found in Table 7-10 indicates that the Nile News channel devoted the majority of its news bulletin to news about Egypt. A key aspect for the focus is that Egypt was experiencing a national election at the time of the survey. Nevertheless, the number of stories about Egypt, and the time allocated were significant. In the case of Nile News, a number of 157 stories (84.9%) reported by the channel were about Egypt; every item of news about Egypt that appeared on the other three channels was also reported in Nile News. Following the local news (news about Egypt), the Nile News channel focused on news about other Arabian countries, including Arab–African countries. This is understandable as the channel considers its audience as Egypt plus the residents of neighbours’ countries.

Table 7-11 shows that 53 stories (28.6%) reported by Nile News were about domestic and government affairs, and another 52 (28.1%) about economic matters. This means that 56.7% of all stories were about issues important to Egyptian society. Although the forthcoming national election no doubt skewed these results, it is easy to argue that these three topics are the most important in Egyptian society at any time. The economy has long been an issue for Egyptians. Additionally, domestic and government issues are important because the country is experiencing radical changes and transitions. Nile News channel gives priority to local news and other issues related to Egyptians, fulfilling the promise of its slogan, “the nearest to you”, regarding both locality and topic.

Table 7-11 Topics covered by the Nile News

News topic	Number	Per cent
Unrest and dissent	3	1.6
War and conflict	5	2.7
Disaster, crime and accidents	15	8.1
Foreign relations	31	16.7
Domestic and government	53	28.6
Social and development	0	0
Science and technology	10	2.2
International organisations	0	0
Cultural and religious	10	5.4
Economic	52	28.1
Sports, human interest and entertainment	8	4.3
Other	4	2.2
Total	185	100

Source: The Researcher

In support of Egypt-centric news, the preceding Table 7-11 indicates that local stories about Egypt also dominated the news bulletin in regard to news order, indicating the priority placed on local news by the channel: 91.9% of all stories presented first or second in the bulletin were local news (news about home country), as were 81.1% of the third-placed stories. When the geographical area featured in news items was analysed, Arab countries (81.48%) featured most prominently, followed by other countries (13.51%), and non-Arab Islamic countries (5%). Table 7-12 indicated that in particular, the frequency of stories involving Arab countries was somewhat higher on Nile News (29.7%), in comparison to its competitors, with Al Jazeera showing the lowest percentage (21.7%), and a statistically significant difference was observed across the four channels (p -value=.017). For example, for the length of time dedicated to the coverage of Arab countries, Al Arabiya achieved a somewhat higher average (median=3.70 mins), with the lowest time (median=1.97) being that of Al Ekhbariya. Statistically, a very highly significant difference was seen for this element ($p < .001$).

Table 7-12 Results for geographical area in news items sampled

Geographical area		Quantity				Length of time					
		Frequency	Per cent	Chi-square (p-value)	Residual	Mean	Median	Min	Max	SD	Kruskall-Wallis (p-value)
Arab country	Al Jazeera	131	21.7	10.194 (.017)	-19.8	3.55	2.33	.13	14.07	3.17	23.675 (.000)
	Al Arabiya	134	22.2		-16.8	4.89	3.70	.33	18.38	3.84	
	Al Ekhbariya	159	26.4		8.3	3.57	1.97	.13	85.20	7.30	
	Nile News	179	29.7		28.3	5.90	3.33	.22	90.75	10.22	
	Total	603	100.0				4.55	3.33	.13	90.75	
Other countries	Al Jazeera	40	40.0	30.24 (.000)	15.0	3.17	1.77	.10	11.67	3.05	5.531 (.137)
	Al Arabiya	36	36.0		11.0	4.37	2.25	.17	23.45	5.20	
	Al Ekhbariya	18	18.0		-7.0	1.97	.73	.10	6.70	2.04	
	Nile News	6	6.0		-19.0	10.31	6.13	.60	33.33	12.48	
	Total	100	100.0				3.81	1.92	.10	33.33	
Islamic country	Al Jazeera	14	37.8	2.324 (.313)	1.7	3.14	1.78	.53	6.87	2.69	.758 (.676)
	Al Arabiya	15	40.5		2.7	3.16	3.43	.57	7.00	2.33	
	Al Ekhbariya	8	21.6		-4.3	2.97	2.20	.42	7.33	2.79	
	Nile News	0	0			3.11	3.33	.42	7.33	2.50	
	Total	37	100.0								

Source: The Researcher

Significance of pairwise test: Arab country = Al Ekhbariya / Nile News -62.494 (.006), Al Ekhbariya / Al Arabiya 94.562 (.000), Al Jazeera / Al Arabiya -59.627 (.032).

The frequency for the coverage of other countries' news was highest on Al Jazeera (40%), followed fairly closely by Al Arabiya (36%). Statistically, high significant difference was observed across the four channels ($p < .001$). On average, Nile News tended to spend the most time on this type of coverage (median=6.13 mins), and Al Ekhbariya the least (median=.73 mins). However, statistical analysis did not reveal any significant differences.

Al Arabiya (40.5%), followed by Al Jazeera (37.8%) were most likely to feature news items about Islamic countries outside the Arab World. Statistically, no significant differences were observed across the four channels (p -value=313). Regarding the length of time spent on this

coverage, averages were much higher for Al Arabiya and Nile News (median=3.43 and 3.33 mins, respectively) but differences proved not to be not significant.

Differences emerged with respect to the geographical areas that featured most prominently in the sample of news items. Statistically, significant differences were found regarding coverage of Arab countries, the region from which all these television news channels seek their principal audience. Pairwise test indicated that there were strong significant statistical differences between Al Ekhbariya and Nile News -62.494 (.006) and between Al Ekhbariya and Al Arabiya 94.562 (.000) and between Al Jazeera and Al Arabiya -59.627 (.032) regarding to the coverage of Arab countries. Geographical areas covered can, therefore, be considered an important element, used strategically by the channels for branding differentiation. In the case of Nile News, the analysis showed that it focuses more on Arab countries, than its three competitors. One explanation for this is that this Egyptian channel, which claims to be “The nearest to you” as its slogan, carries many items of local interest news, catering for its audience in Egypt. Al Ekhbariya also focuses more on local news. In this study, local news was classified as news coverage of Arab countries. However, both Al Jazeera and Al Arabiya report only regional news. Consequently, the data, then, may be skewed when tested statistically, so the Researcher decided to include local news in the category of Arab news.

7.3.10 Running Order and Geographical Area

When the running order for the news bulletins of the four channels was analysed in relation to the geographical area featured in each news item, the study found that they all gave more attention to the coverage of Arab countries (see Table 7-13). Nonetheless, Al Ekhbariya and Nile News prioritised these more than Al Jazeera and Al Arabiya. It is expected from the two state-supported channels to choose to focus on events happening in their own countries, and in general, all four channels prioritised news about their own region. Thus, this element should not be considered an important element of differentiation used by television news channels, to distinguish themselves from their competitors.

Table 7-13 Results for running order by geographical area in news items sampled

Geographical area			Running order					Total
			1	2	3	4	5	
Arab countries	Al Jazeera	Count	27	24	31	24	25	131
		% within running order	20.9	20.2	26.7	20.3	20.7	21.7
	Al Arabiya	Count	30	24	24	28	28	134
		% within running order	23.3	20.2	20.7	23.7	23.1	22.2
	Al Ekhbariya	Count	35	34	28	30	32	159
		% within running order	27.1	28.6	24.1	25.4	26.4	26.4
Nile News	Count	37	37	33	36	36	179	
	% within running order	28.7	31.1	28.4	30.5	29.8	29.7	
Other countries	Al Jazeera	Count	8	8	5	10	9	40
		% within running order	57.1	40.0	22.7	43.5	42.9	40.0
	Al Arabiya	Count	4	10	8	6	8	36
		% within running order	28.6	50.0	36.4	26.1	38.1	36.0
	Al Ekhbariya	Count	2	2	5	6	3	18
		% within running order	14.3	10.0	22.7	26.1	14.3	18.0
Nile News	Count	0	0	4	1	1	6	
	% within running order	0.0	0.0	18.2	4.3	4.8	6.0	
Islamic countries	Al Jazeera	Count	2	5	1	3	3	14
		% within running order	40.0	55.6	10.0	42.9	50.0	37.8
	Al Arabiya	Count	3	3	5	3	1	15
		% within running order	60.0	33.3	50.0	42.9	16.7	40.5
	Al Ekhbariya	Count	0	1	4	1	2	8
		% within running order	0.0	11.1	40.0	14.3	33.3	21.6

Source: The Researcher

7.3.11 Running Order and Topic

Analysis of the running order of the topics covered by each channel in the news items sampled, showed that while Al Jazeera and Al Arabiya tended to lead with abnormal (hard) news, Al Ekhbariya and Nile News prioritised normal (soft) news in their bulletins. This confirms the claim that topic is an important element of differentiation used for branding by the four television channels, as can be observed below in Table 7-14.

Table 7-14 Results in running order by topic in news items sampled

Running order		Type of news			Total
		Abnormal (hard)	Normal (soft)	Other	
Al Jazeera	1	28	8	1	37
	2	22	13	2	37
	3	27	9	1	37
	4	18	15	4	37
	5	23	12	2	37
Total		118	57	10	185
Al Arabiya	1	20	16	1	37
	2	14	20	3	37
	3	18	13	6	37
	4	24	10	3	37
	5	19	12	6	37
Total		95	71	19	185
Al Ekhbariya	1	8	28	1	37
	2	5	25	7	37
	3	14	19	4	37
	4	16	17	4	37
	5	20	14	3	37
Total		63	103	19	185
Nile News	1	2	35	0	37
	2	2	34	1	37
	3	4	32	1	37
	4	6	30	1	37
	5	9	27	1	37
Total		23	158	4	185
Total					740

Source: The Researcher

7.3.12 References to Channel Predictions

The inclusion of references to predictions made by the channel can serve to convince the audience that they are knowledgeable about the event being reported. Reference to their own prediction and assessment of what is happening, can be considered to be one of the tools used by television news channels to differentiate themselves from other competitors. Table 7-15 illustrates the channels prediction and the differences among them.

Table 7-15 Channel prediction by the four television news channels

Prediction		Frequency	%	Chi-square	Residual	Mean ranks	Kruskal-Wallis test
None	Al Jazeera	152	23.2	1.934 0.586	-11.8	305.28	22.224 0.000
	Al Arabiya	164	25.0		.3	373.2	
	Al Ekhbariya	177	27.0		13.3	285.72	
	Nile News	162	24.7		-1.8	347.86	
	Total	655	100.0				
One	Al Jazeera	25	35.2	8.493 0.037	7.3	3.25	0.214 0.643
	Al Arabiya	19	26.8		1.3	0	
	Al Ekhbariya	8	11.3		-9.8	0	
	Nile News	19	26.8		1.3	4	
	Total	71	100.0				
Two	Al Jazeera	3	60.0	1.6 0.449	1.3	32.26	2.529 0.47
	Al Arabiya	1	20.0		-.7	34.84	
	Nile News	1	20.0		-.7	36	
	Total	5	100.0			42.08	
Three or more	Al Jazeera	4	66.7	0.667 0.414	1.0	3.25	0.214 0.643
	Nile News	2	33.3		-1.0	4	
	Total	6	100.0				

Source: The Researcher

Significance of pairwise test: none = Al Ekhbariya / Nile News -62.140 (.015), Al Ekhbariya / Al Arabiya 87.484 (.000), Al Jazeera / Al Arabiya -67.918 (.008).

As Table 7-15 shows, there is a significant difference between the frequency values. By making reference to their own predictions and analysis concerning news stories during bulletins, television channels can remind the audience about the expertise and accuracy underpinning its coverage. This element was set by this study as significant for differentiation, and news stories were examined on how many times the input of the channel was included in the news coverage.

References made to channel predictions within the items sampled ranged from none (88.5%) to five or more times (0.13%). Within the sample of news items, some contained no references to predictions made by the channel (ranging from 23.2% to 27%). Al Jazeera coverage contained a higher percentage of references to channel prediction: once (35.2%), twice (60%) and three times (66.7%). Al Ekhbariya, on the other hand, made the fewest references to its own predictions (only eight times in 185 stories).

Pairwise test indicated that there were strong differences between Al Ekhbariya and Nile News -62.140 (.015), Al Ekhbariya and Al Arabiya 87.484 (.000) and Al Jazeera and Al Arabiya - 67.918 (.008) in regard to reference made to their prediction.

7.3.13 Interviewees

Conducting interviews with, either officials or members of the public, during the coverage of news stories represents a strategic technique used by news channels to ensure in-depth reporting of events. The analysis indicated that there are strong differences among the channels, in terms of interviewing strategies. In general, channels adopt distinctive approaches in selecting the interviewees. Individuals participating in interviews during the news items were analysed using eleven categories (see Table 7-16). A further category covered all those items in which no individuals were interviewed. Al Jazeera carried a higher number of interviews, featuring just its own channel correspondents (53.7%), compared to its competitors. Besides, Al Jazeera also featured a higher percentage of interviews with people involved in the news being reported (65.2%), and interviews between correspondents and officials (50%). Al Arabiya, however, tended to interview experts (43.8%), and in the case where the interview comprises both experts and individuals involved recorded 50%, while Nile News registered the highest number of interviews featuring officials and individuals involved (75%).

The interviewees are statistically significant as the Chi-Square value was 1715.373, and the degree of freedom (df) was 6 with significance at .000. This indicates that the type of interviewees used in the news items may reflect an attempt by the television news channels to differentiate themselves from rivals, and that this may form part of a branding strategy that embraces particular values and is designed to help them appeal to a particular audience. Pairwise test indicated that there was a strong significant statistical difference between Al Ekhbariya and Al Arabiya in regard to interviewing officials. Table 7-16 below provides an overview of interviewees' types considered by the news channels.

Table 7-16 Type of interviewees by the four television news channels

Interviewee	News channel	Frequency	%	Chi-Square	Residual	Mean Ranks	Kruskal-Wallis Test
Interview with channel correspondents only	Al Jazeera	22	53.7	19.00 0.000	11.8	18.86	1.789 0.617
	Al Arabiya	5	12.2		-5.3	22.7	
	Al Ekhbariya	5	12.2		-5.3	21.6	
	Nile News	9	22.0		-1.3	22.94	
	Total	41	100.0				
People involves	Al Jazeera	15	65.2	11.565 0.003	7.3	12	0.527 0.768
	Al Arabiya	6	26.1		-1.7	73	
	Al Ekhbariya	2	8.7		-5.7	10.83	
	Total	23	100.0			10	
Officials	Al Jazeera	10	13.9	6.556 0.087	-8.0	32.05	9.677 0.022
	Al Arabiya	17	23.6		-1.0	49.74	
	Al Ekhbariya	20	27.8		2.0	29.42	
	Nile News	25	34.7		7.0	43.94	
	Total	72	100.0				
Experts	Al Jazeera	5	7.8	23.625 0.000	-11.0	21.8	3.525 0.318
	Al Arabiya	28	43.8		12.0	32.84	
	Al Ekhbariya	8	12.5		-8.0	26.56	
	Nile News	23	35.9		7.0	36.48	
	Total	64	100.0				
Correspondents and others	Al Jazeera	7	23.3	4.4 0.221	-.5	14.43	0.427 0.935
	Al Arabiya	7	23.3		-.5	14.57	
	Al Ekhbariya	4	13.3		-3.5	15.25	
	Nile News	12	40.0		4.5	16.75	
	Total	30	100.0				
Experts and officials	Al Jazeera	1	7.7	2.692 0.442	-2.3	9.5	1.081 0.782
	Al Arabiya	4	30.8		.8	6.38	
	Al Ekhbariya	5	38.5		1.8	6.2	
	Nile News	3	23.1		-.3	8.33	
	Total	13	100.0				
No interviewees	Al Jazeera	125	25.2	3.596 0.309	.8	243.34	11.618 0.009
	Al Arabiya	118	23.7		-6.3	283.66	
	Al Ekhbariya	141	28.4		16.8	223.32	
	Nile News	113	22.7		-11.3	248.92	
	Total	497	100.0				

Source: The Researcher

Significance of pairwise test: interviewing officials = Al Ekhbariya / Al Arabiya 20.310 (020).

The results, as shown in Table 7-16 indicate that, in its news coverage, Al Jazeera concentrated on interviewing its own correspondents (11.9%), followed by people involved in events (6.1%), and then officials (5.4%). On the other hand, Al Arabiya, concentrated on interviewing officials (9.2%), followed by people involved (3.2%), and then, its own correspondents (2.7%); whereas, Al Ekhbariya and Nile News both concentrated on interviewing officials. With regards to findings, the nature of these channels, and their ownership type shows that the Pan-Arab news

channels tend to rely more on their own sources and correspondents. Henceforth, Al Jazeera tends to concentrate more on people involved in the events; in contrast, Al Arabiya relies more on officials, validating itself as a representative of government agendas.

7.4 News Production

News production is one of the main groups of elements that were significantly used by the news channels, in order to differentiate themselves while gaining more Arab audience. In discussion of what drives or constrain news production, Chapter Four, Section 4.1, emphasises that currently the news channels are centred on business principles and profit-oriented strategies, and thus commercial focused. On the other hand, the external factors (e.g., political, economic, social) contend to challenge news production in the operational phase (see Section 4.5, Chapter Five) and post-production (Busa, 2013). Likewise, censorship in terms of religion belief imposed strict rules on visual content (Elouardaoui, 2013). When it comes to the topic of news production, it is generally agreed that also technology and online communication has been changing the way news are delivered (Steensen and Ahva, 2018) becoming an additional factor of differentiation. While internal and external factors pose challenges on how news are produced, other elements of differentiation have been identified. Accordingly, next sections specifically focus on the following elements: logo appearance, use of video, the currency of event, type of visuals used, interview type, coverage style, coverage type, and time allocated to the news story to better understand interdependencies.

7.4.1 Logo Appearance

It is well known that logo appearance is used as a tool that cultivates news channel identity in viewers perception (Zeineddine, 2017). Logos draw a distinction within a competitive market, and as many other components of news production, a brand logo implies a brand strategy that considers aspects like visibility and uniqueness (seeking to distinguish), by way of gaining loyalty regarding media consumption (Peng, 2017). Understandable, the visual image represents channels' views, yet how is perceived by viewers in terms of ethical view, credibility, the accuracy of the information it is a separate aspect. Used appropriately, logo appearance can become a significant competitive advantage, whilst in an opposite case can be detrimental factor (Zeineddine, 2017). Whilst some other authors like Zeineddine believe that a brand is distinctive only if it offers a story behind the product it delivers, Peterson (2006) acknowledges that a brand

identity bond together various values, that make the brand distinctive through an “emotional branding” (p. 744). Besides, the positive effects of brand logo are applicable to both news channels and businesses, in general. It mainly represents an identity expression of an entity, designed to express a self-identity, respectively expressivity through visual aesthetic (Park *et al.*, 2013). Therefore, in view of Park *et al.* (2013), a logo is a visual element that not only represents a differentiation but also an identity that consolidates brand reputation, performance and customer-brand relationship.

These views are consistent with the research finding which verifies the validity of logo appearance regarding differentiation of news channels brand identity. The analysis made use of a digital on-screen graphic (DOG, a constant on-screen presence of logo) (with a rate of 99.59%) or logo accompanying anchor and correspondent (rate of 0.041%) during the channels’ coverage of news. The number of appearances was equally distributed among all four channels.

Table 7-17 Logo presence in news items sampled

Channel		Logo Presence		Total
		DOG	with anchor and correspondent	
 ALJAZEERA	Count	184	1	185
	% within logo presence	25.0	33.3	25.0
 Al Arabiya News Channel	Count	185	0	185
	% within logo presence	25.1	0.0	25.0
 الإخبارية	Count	185	0	185
	% within logo presence	25.1	0.0	25.0
 النيد	Count	183	2	185
	% within logo presence	24.8	66.7	25.0
Total	Count	737	3	740
	% within logo presence	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: The Researcher

As highlighted in Table 7-17, there are a number of similarities between channels and conversely, the logo appearance element was disregarded for the purposes of brand identity differentiation, because all of the selected television channels used it in a similar way.

7.4.2 Use of Video

The use of video in news items was categorised as over 50% of the item, under 50%, or no video in the item (Table 7-18). Al Arabiya showed the highest frequency of video, making up over half the story (31.8%); and Nile News showed the lowest (18.8%), with a statistically significant difference found among the channels in this category (p -value=.029). Nile News featured the longest videos (median=5.40 mins), with other channels averaging fairly similar times (3.85–3.95 mins). There was a statistically significant difference in length of time for video use among the news channels (p -value=.019).

In the cases where video made up less than 50% of the news item, the highest frequency ranking went to Nile News (29.1%), then Al Jazeera (26.55) (Table 7-18). However, the difference among the channels was not statistically significant (p -value=.174). Al Arabiya recorded the highest average length of video (median=3.50 mins), and Al Ekhbariya the lowest (median=1 mins). This gave a highly significant difference in statistical terms ($p < .001$) as can be observed in Table 7-18.

Table 7-18 Results for use of video in news items sampled

Use of video		Quantity				Length of time					
		Frequency	Per cent	Chi-square (p-value)	Residual	Mean	Median	Min	Max	SD	Chi-square (p-value)
Over 50% of news item	Al Jazeera	56	22.9	9.05 (.029)	-5.3	4.38	3.95	.52	11.68	2.72	9.79 (.019)
	Al Arabiya	78	31.8		16.8	5.47	3.82	.33	23.45	3.99	
	Al Ekhbariya	65	26.5		3.8	5.86	3.88	.13	85.20	10.75	
	Nile News	46	18.8		-15.3	9.92	5.40	.52	63.43	12.09	
	Total	245	100.0			6.16	3.95	.13	85.20	8.22	
Under 50% of news item	Al Jazeera	95	26.5	4.97 (.174)	5.5	3.24	1.77	.10	14.07	3.29	18.08 (.000)
	Al Arabiya	81	22.6		-8.5	4.25	3.50	.17	13.45	3.59	
	Al Ekhbariya	78	21.8		-11.5	2.29	.96	.10	10.25	2.30	
	Nile News	104	29.1		14.5	5.36	3.39	.30	90.75	10.11	
	Total	358	100.0			3.88	2.12	.10	90.75	6.14	
None	Al Jazeera	34	24.8	3.759 (.289)	-.3	2.43	.83	.13	11.67	2.77	
	Al Arabiya	26	19.0		-8.3	3.46	.90	.25	18.57	5.15	
	Al Ekhbariya	42	30.7		7.8	1.62	.73	.18	7.33	1.99	
	Nile News	35	25.5		.8	2.87	.81	.22	33.33	6.04	
	Total	137	100.0			2.49	.80	.13	33.33	4.17	

Source: The Researcher

Significance of pairwise test: videos making more than 50% of news story = Al Ekhbariya / Nile News -39.501 (.023) and Al Jazeera / Nile News -37.587 (.045). For videos making less than 50% of news story = Al Ekhbariya / Nile News -56.010 (.002) and Al Ekhbariya / Al Arabiya 61.333 (.001).

As shown above in Table 7-18, Al Ekhbariya frequently included videos that make up more than half of the news story (78 news items), followed by Al Ekhbariya (65), Al Jazeera (56) and, then, Nile News as the least, in including videos that make up more than half of the news story it covers. For videos that make less than 50% of the news story, Nile News was the highest (104), followed by Al Jazeera (95), and Al Arabiya (81), and then Al Ekhbariya (78), being the least in using this strategy. Pairwise test indicated that there were strong statistical significant differences in regard to videos making more than 50% of news story between Al Ekhbariya and Nile News -39.501 (.023) and Al Jazeera and Nile News -37.587 (.045). For videos making less than 50% of news story, the test indicated that there were strong significant statistical differences between Al Ekhbariya and Nile News -56.010 (.002) and Al Ekhbariya and Al Arabiya 61.333 (001). Making use of video technology became a modern way of news reporting nowadays. Moreover, it brands a channel's objectivity in the eyes of the audience, based on visuals rather than verbal communications, through the anchors of correspondents transmitting live events, by the voices and pictures of others telling the story. With reference to the use of video technology, the results indicated that the channels compete in using this element of differentiation, during their news reporting. However, the use of live video transmission is challenging. It requires advanced technology and a high budget to handle it. At a closer look, it is clear that Al Jazeera was the highest in terms of employing the video technology through its news coverage.

The statistically significant results show that using video forms an element of differentiation between the news channels that could be used to reinforce branding identity.

7.4.3 Currency of Event Being Reported

The timeline in which an event is being reported is most often defined through the perspective of immediacy and liveness (Barnas, 2013). Since the advent of satellite transmission, the way events were communicated was changed giving more capabilities to news channels to transmit live from various geographical locations (Marshall, 2016). As explained in Section 3.7.1, Chapter 3, video transmission of live events is perceived as a proof of excellence and competitive advantage.

With this regard, it has been found that there were differences between the selected news channels with respect to the time of the event being reported. The time that the event was

reported, in relation to when it occurred was classified as yesterday, today, now, or developing news. In some cases, it was unknown.

It was identified that Al Ekhbariya (33.1%) had the most frequent coverage of events that had occurred on the previous day, and Nile News (19.8%) the least (Table 7-19). No significant statistical difference was observed (p -value=.073). Al Arabiya seemed to spend the longest time (median=2.62 mins) on coverage in this category, resulting in a statistically significant difference (p -value=.027).

Although Nile News (28.6%) ranked highest for coverage of the day's events, the three other channels were fairly similar in frequency (23%–24%), with no statistically significant difference among them (p -value=.384). However, on average, Al Arabiya's items lasted longer (median=3.93 mins) than those of its competitors, producing a highly significant difference for the length of time (p < .001). With respect to items covering events occurring as the bulletin was broadcasted, Nile News (34.8%) ranked highest for frequency and Al Arabiya lowest (8.7%). Statistically, a significant difference was noted (p -value=.004). Al Arabiya spent longer time (median=9.44 mins) than other channels on this coverage.

Al Arabiya most frequently (38.9%) included items without indicating when the events being reported had occurred. Coverage of this kind was found least on Nile News (16.7%). Statistically, a significant difference was observed (p -value=.046), but on average, items of this type lasted longest on Nile News (median=4.57 mins). Results in this subcategory were not statistically significant for time length (p -value=.749).

The results indicated that the currency of events being reported constitutes a statistically significant element of differentiation among the four channels, which may reflect that a particular branding strategy is being employed.

Table 7-19 Results for currency of event being reported in news items sampled

Currency		Quantity				Length of time					
		Frequency	Per cent	Chi-square (p-value)	Residual	Mean	Median	Min	Max	SD	Chi-square (p-value)
Yesterday	Al Jazeera	38	22.1	7.03 (.073)	-5.0	2.59	1.77	.15	10.37	2.47	9.178 (.027)
	Al Arabiya	43	25.0		0.0	3.70	2.63	.32	12.17	3.42	
	Al Ekhbariya	57	33.1		14.0	1.93	.90	.13	10.12	2.01	
	Nile News	34	19.8		-9.0	3.20	1.92	.30	20.77	3.92	
	Total	172	100.0			2.77	1.79	.13	20.77	3.00	
Today	Al Jazeera	102	24.7		-1.3	3.33	1.97	.10	14.07	3.33	20.721 (.000)
	Al Arabiya	95	23.0		-8.3	5.39	3.93	.17	23.45	4.41	
	Al Ekhbariya	98	23.7		-5.3	4.05	2.07	.10	85.20	8.97	
	Nile News	118	28.6		14.8	5.30	3.45	.37	63.43	7.96	
	Total	413	100.0			4.54	3.33	.10	85.20	6.69	
Now (Live)	Al Jazeera	19	41.3	13.304 (.004)	7.5	5.59	5.70	.13	11.67	2.69	3.59 (.333)
	Al Arabiya	4	8.7		-7.5	8.62	9.44	3.33	12.27	3.80	
	Al Ekhbariya	7	15.2		-4.7	6.37	5.23	.42	15.83	5.08	
	Nile News	16	34.8		4.5	18.24	6.64	.48	90.75	23.58	
	Total	46	100.0			10.37	5.84	.13	90.75	15.07	
Developing (Follow-up)	Al Jazeera	10	27.0	6.153 (.105)	.8	3.70	3.65	.77	7.35	2.23	.106 (.991)
	Al Arabiya	15	40.5		5.8	4.34	3.67	.57	14.35	3.24	
	Al Ekhbariya	7	18.9		-2.3	4.90	3.90	.37	11.82	4.26	
	Nile News	5	13.5		-4.3	6.46	2.57	.40	20.28	8.13	
	Total	37	100.0			4.56	3.67	.37	20.28	4.06	
Unknown	Al Jazeera	16	22.2	8.00 (.046)	-2.0	3.38	3.42	.30	8.85	2.94	1.215 .749
	Al Arabiya	28	38.9		10.0	3.19	2.13	.25	13.45	3.35	
	Al Ekhbariya	16	22.2		-2.0	2.61	2.83	.42	5.22	1.90	
	Nile News	12	16.7		-6.0	4.84	4.57	.22	11.67	4.19	
	Total	72	100.0			3.38	2.47	.22	13.45	3.18	

Source: The Researcher

Significance of pairwise test: reporting yesterday events = Al Ekhbariya / Al Arabiya 29.024 (023). Reporting today events = Al Ekhbariya / Al Arabiya 69.558 (.000), Al Jazeera / Al Arabiya -62.251 (.001).

It can be observed from Table 7-19 that Al Jazeera was most likely to report news as it happened now (19) or today (102). Al Arabiya most frequently reported developments in news following up previously reported stories (15), while Al Ekhbariya topped the rankings for reporting news that happened the day before (57). This result may shed light on the channel's newsroom strategy and on the strengths of each of the competitors.

Looking at the length of news stories, pairwise test indicated that in reporting yesterday events, there was a strong significant statistical difference between Al Ekhbariya and Al Arabiya 29.024 (023). For reporting today events, the test showed that there were strong significant statistical differences between Al Ekhbariya and Al Arabiya 69.558 (.000) and between Al Jazeera and Al Arabiya -62.251 (.001). These results confirm that this element is considered as an important element of differentiation (branding) used by the television news channels.

7.4.4 Types of Visual

The Pan-Arab news channels compete with each other in grabbing the attention of their audience by providing them with more visuals, while the government-supported channels did not give this element much attention. This study argues that using visuals is a technique used by mass media to provide its audience with content in a more reliable presentation. This study supposes that in traditional media, radio and television, this technique is more required.

Al Jazeera (42.9%) was the most frequent user of charts and maps, Al Ekhbariya the least (4.8%). Nonetheless, no statistically significant differences were observed (p -value=.072). Nile News used this type of visual for much longer (median=21.65 mins) than other channels, with Al Arabiya was spending less than a minute (median=.87 min). However, this did not result in significant difference in time (p -value=.382).

The highest number of still pictures/camera shots was used by Al Ekhbariya and Nile News (28.5% and 27.8% respectively), the lowest by Al Jazeera and Al Arabiya (20.9% and 22.9% respectively). A statistically significant difference was found (p -value=.382). Al Arabiya spent longer time featuring this type of visuals (median=3.53 mins) than its rival channels did, leading to a highly significant difference between the channels ($p < .001$).

Al Arabiya (31%) used infographics the most frequently, with Nile News being the least (13.8%). Nile News spent longer on this type of visual (median=5.02 mins) than other channels,

but no significant difference for length of time was noted among the channels (p -value=.232). In terms of news items broadcasted without any additional visuals, Al Jazeera (33.1%) ranked highest, with frequency for other channels being similar (21.8%–23.9%). Statistically, an insignificant difference was found for “Items without additional visuals”, with this category being longer on Al Jazeera and Al Arabiya (median=1.92 and 1.85 mins respectively), but generally there were no statistically significant differences among the channels (p -value=.056). Statistically, significant differences were found in the use of visuals accompanying news items, indicating that this may be used by the channels as a means of differentiation and of establishing a visual brand identity.

Table 7-20 shows below visuals employed by the news channels, categorised as charts and maps, still pictures/camera shots, infographics, and multiple. When none of these types of visuals were used, this was also recorded.

Table 7-20 Types of visual used in news items

Types of visual		Quantity				Length of time					
		Frequency	Per cent	Chi-square (p-value)	Residual	Mean	Median	Min	Max	SD	Kruskal-Wallis (p-value)
Charts and maps	Al Jazeera	9	42.9	7.00 (.072)	3.8	4.58	1.67	.52	14.07	5.03	3.065 (.382)
	Al Arabiya	7	33.3		1.8	3.23	.87	.35	10.30	3.88	
	Al Ekhbariya	1	4.8		-4.3	2.47	2.47	2.47	2.47	.	
	Nile News	4	19.0		-1.3	21.53	21.65	.70	42.12	22.23	
	Total	21	100.0			7.26	2.47	.35	42.12	11.81	
Still pictures/ camera shots	Al Jazeera	85	20.9	6.749 (.080)	-16.8	2.89	1.85	.15	11.73	2.66	24.253 (.000)
	Al Arabiya	93	22.9		-8.8	4.82	3.53	.17	18.57	4.08	
	Al Ekhbariya	116	28.5		14.3	2.68	1.75	.10	15.83	2.83	
	Nile News	113	27.8		11.3	4.98	2.51	.37	63.43	7.80	
	Total	407	100.0			3.85	2.39	.10	63.43	5.04	
Infographics	Al Jazeera	15	25.9	4.207 (.240)	.5	2.87	2.25	.40	8.85	2.51	4.284 (.232)
	Al Arabiya	18	31.0		3.5	3.83	2.92	.68	10.53	3.13	
	Al Ekhbariya	17	29.3		2.5	3.13	1.93	.47	13.33	3.43	
	Nile News	8	13.8		-6.5	5.21	5.02	.72	10.27	3.34	
	Total	58	100.0			3.57	2.39	.40	13.33	3.12	
Multiple	Al Jazeera	29	25.9	4.214 (.239)	1.0	4.91	4.15	.60	11.68	3.12	6.169 (.104)
	Al Arabiya	36	32.1		8.0	6.01	5.00	.57	14.35	3.46	
	Al Ekhbariya	21	18.8		-7.0	9.93	5.17	2.12	85.20	17.75	
	Nile News	26	23.2		-2.0	11.93	6.92	.63	90.75	17.39	
	Total	112	100.0			7.83	5.28	.57	90.75	11.80	
No visuals	Al Jazeera	47	33.1	5.211 (.056)	11.5	3.48	1.92	.10	12.28	3.30	7.560 (.056)
	Al Arabiya	31	21.8		-4.5	3.37	1.85	.25	23.45	4.74	
	Al Ekhbariya	30	21.1		-5.5	1.74	.76	.13	8.77	2.22	
	Nile News	34	23.9		-1.5	3.39	.92	.22	33.33	6.23	
	Total	142	100.0			3.07	1.70	.10	33.33	4.35	

Source: The Researcher

Significance of pairwise test: Still pictures / camera shots = Al Ekhbariya / Nile News -52.161 (005), Al Ekhbariya / Al Arabiya 73.649 (.000), Al Jazeera / Al Arabiya -53.992 (.013).

As shown in Table 7-20, the highest user of figures and maps among the channels is Al Jazeera (9), followed by Al Arabiya (7), Nile News (4) and Al Ekhbariya. In particular, Al Arabiya ranked highest for using more than one visual (36), followed by Al Jazeera (29), Nile News channel (26) and Al Ekhbariya (21) being the least in this regard (1). Moreover, Al Ekhbariya (116) and Nile News (113) were the highest channels in terms of using still pictures and camera shots in their news coverage, followed by Al Arabiya (93) and then, Al Jazeera (85). Likewise, Al Arabiya was the highest in using infographics in its news coverage (18), followed by Al Ekhbariya (17), Al Jazeera (15) and then, Nile News (8) being the last.

The data showed that a significance of pairwise test was in regard to using still pictures or camera shots during the news reporting between Al Ekhbariya and Nile News -52.161 (005), Al Ekhbariya and Al Arabiya 73.649 (.000), and between Al Jazeera and Al Arabiya -53.992 (.013).

The result indicated that this element is considered as an important element of differentiation (branding) applied by the television news channels.

7.4.5 Types of Interviews

Interviews featured in news items were categorised into four types: via phone, via satellite, via cameraman, and multiple types. It was also noted when no interview was included. Table 7-21 below summarises the interview types employed and their frequencies.

Table 7-21 Results for types of interview in news items sampled

Type of interview	News channels	Quantity			Length of time						
		Frequency	Per cent	Chi-square (p-value)	Residual	Mean	Median	Min	Max	SD	Kruskal-Wallis (p-value)
Via phone	Al Jazeera	4	6.5	62.258 (.000)	-11.5	5.02	4.52	3.48	7.58	1.89	3.531 (.317)
	Al Arabiya	5	8.1		-10.5	7.69	7.88	4.18	10.30	2.34	
	Al Ekhbariya	11	17.7		-4.5	7.95	6.92	5.03	15.83	2.98	
	Nile News	42	67.7		26.5	9.02	7.38	.67	23.38	5.53	
	Total	62	100.0				8.47	7.17	.67	23.38	
Via satellite	Al Jazeera	25	29.8	47.238 (.000)	4.0	7.00	6.87	3.45	12.28	2.32	13.584 (.004)
	Al Arabiya	45	53.6		24.0	9.39	9.07	3.33	23.45	3.11	
	Al Ekhbariya	5	6.0		-16.0	6.78	5.23	4.30	13.33	3.71	
	Nile News	9	10.7		-12.0	15.49	5.60	1.73	42.12	17.27	
	Total	84	100.0				9.18	8.13	1.73	42.12	
No interviews	Al Jazeera	128	25.3	5.020 (.170)	1.5	2.22	1.32	.10	14.07	2.46	10.292 (.016)
	Al Arabiya	120	23.7		-6.5	2.59	2.32	.17	18.57	2.50	
	Al Ekhbariya	146	28.9		19.5	1.95	.92	.10	13.68	2.06	
	Nile News	112	22.1		-14.5	2.30	.97	.22	15.67	2.59	
	Total	506	100.0				2.25	1.67	.10	18.57	
Cameraman	Al Jazeera	24	33.3	4.000 (.261)	6.0	5.61	5.16	1.77	11.68	2.82	3.636 (.304)
	Al Arabiya	12	16.7		-6.0	5.26	3.98	1.75	18.38	4.52	
	Al Ekhbariya	18	25.0		.0	4.95	4.50	.75	11.82	2.66	
	Nile News	18	25.0		.0	10.44	5.38	1.72	63.43	14.20	
	Total	72	100.0				6.59	5.06	.75	63.43	
Multiple types	Al Jazeera	4	25.0	.500 (.919)	.0	5.43	6.22	.92	8.35	3.19	5.179 (.159)
	Al Arabiya	3	18.8		-1.0	8.33	8.67	7.27	9.07	.95	
	Al Ekhbariya	5	31.3		1.0	26.31	10.25	5.33	85.20	33.39	
	Nile News	4	25.0		.0	37.56	27.25	5.00	90.75	38.83	
	Total	16	100.0				20.53	8.87	.92	90.75	

Source: The Researcher

Significance of pairwise test: Interview via satellite = Al Jazeera / Al Arabiya -19.316 (.009), no interviews = Al Ekhbariya / Al Arabiya 57.501 (.008)

As Table 7-21 illustrates, interviews carried out via phone were more frequent on Nile News (67.7%) than the other channels, with Al Jazeera and Al Arabiya making very infrequent use of them (6.5% and 8.1%). Statistically, a highly significant difference was noted ($p < .001$) across the four channels. Al Jazeera (median=4.52 mins) spent considerably less time on phone interviews than its competitors (median=6.92-7.88 mins), but the differences were not statistically significant ($p\text{-value}=.317$).

With regard to types of interviews held during news coverage, Al Arabiya most frequently included interviews via satellite (45), followed by Al Jazeera (25), Nile News (9) and then, Al Ekhbariya (5). In terms of using a cameraman during the interviews, Al Jazeera was the highest (24), while Nile News featured most phone interviews (42). In regard to using more than one technique, Al Jazeera was the highest, followed by Al Arabiya. These findings support the Researcher's claim that the Pan-Arab news channels have better technologies to use in their news coverage.

While in the case of interviews by phone Nile News was highest, in the case of Satellite interviews, they were most frequently employed by Al Arabiya (53.6%), while Al Jazeera ranked second (29.8%). In this case, differences among the channels proved to be highly significant statistically ($p < .001$). Al Arabiya (median=9.07 mins) also spent the longest time on average for satellite interviews, with Al Jazeera next (6.87 mins). Statistical analysis revealed significant differences ($p\text{-value}=.004$) in time spent on satellite interviews across the four channels.

Looking at the length of news stories in this element, pairwise test indicated that there were strong significant statistical differences between the channels in regard to applying interview via satellite. Mainly between Al Jazeera and Al Arabiya -19.316 (.009) and with no interviews between Al Ekhbariya and Al Arabiya 57.501 (.008).

Similarly, to the satellite interviews, the cameraman-based interviews registered different considerations. For instance, Al Jazeera (33.3%) made the most use of interviews conducted by the cameraman, and Al Arabiya had the least usage (16.7%). Statistically, an insignificant difference was found ($p\text{-value}=.261$). All four channels were roughly equivalent regarding the time they spent on this type of interview (median=4–5 mins), and any differences found across the four were shown to be insignificant.

On the above results consideration, the type of interview employed in news coverage may serve as an additional means of differentiation among the channels.

7.4.6 Coverage Style

Coverage style was another element of differentiation used by the channels. The findings, as shown in Table 7-22, support the Researcher's argument that the Pan-Arab news channels are competing against each other in news coverage. Reporting live from the event location is very much in line with spontaneous, reliable and trustworthy reporting, instead of reporting from a place that is not related to the event. In case of hard news, reporting from the event location and interviewing correspondent show how daring and powerful the channel is. In such cases, interviewing people involved gives the news coverage more credibility, and the audience more empathy in comparison to interviewing officials.

Al Jazeera featured the most frequent use of live reporting from the event location (27), having correspondents with recorded camera shots and video recording, as well as in interviewing via satellite (7) and interviewing officials (7), while Al Arabiya was the highest in having anchors with recorded reports (64) along with anchors interviewing officials, experts and people involved (39).

Ten categories were identified in terms of the style of coverage employed in the news. Al Jazeera ranked highest of the four channels in the case of the following coverage styles: live from event location (40.9%), use of correspondent with recorded camera shot/video recording (46.2%), interview via satellite (43.8%), anchor with video recording/video shot (37.1%), and correspondent interviewing officials or people involved (35%). In terms of its coverage style, Al Arabiya recorded the highest use of items featuring an anchor with a recorded report (50%) or interviewing officials, experts or people involved (45.3%). In the three remaining subcategories, Al Ekhbariya ranked highest for items featuring an anchor only (34.7%).

Table 7-22 Results for coverage style in news items

Coverage style		Frequency	%	Chi-Square	Residual	Mean	Median	Kruska l-Wallis
Live from event location	Al Jazeera	27	40.9	19.939 0.000	10.5	6.3164	5.7000	1.459 0.692
	Al Arabiya	3	4.5		-13.5	9.9833	12.2667	
	Al Ekhbariya	14	21.2		-2.5	6.0986	4.6167	
	Nile News	22	33.3		5.5	12.6219	5.3417	
	Total	66	100			8.5387	5.4667	
Correspondent and camera shots/video recording	Al Jazeera	12	46.2	8.769 0.033	5.5	5.4554	4.7750	5.383 0.146
	Al Arabiya	8	30.8		1.5	3.3227	2.5583	
	Al Ekhbariya	3	11.5		-3.5	4.9944	4.1667	
	Nile News	3	11.5		-3.5	8.5778	5.1167	
	Total	26	100			5.1063	4.1583	
Anchor with recorded report	Al Jazeera	24	19.0	47.524 0.000	-7.5	3.7763	3.5167	5.008 0.171
	Al Arabiya	64	50.8		32.5	3.8592	3.5167	
	Al Ekhbariya	13	10.3		-18.5	4.2728	3.8500	
	Nile News	25	19.8		-6.5	6.9144	5.0167	
	Total	126	100			4.4922	3.6583	
Anchor only	Al Jazeera	16	21.3	37.773 0.287	-2.8	2.3208	.8000	4.728 0.193
	Al Arabiya	16	21.3		-2.8	1.2094	.6333	
	Al Ekhbariya	26	34.7		7.3	1.2359	.5417	
	Nile News	17	22.7		-1.8	1.4625	.7000	
	Total	75	100			1.5137	.6583	
Anchor with graphics	Al Jazeera	8	34.8	5.696 0.127	2.3	.9623	.8500	9.304 0.026
	Al Arabiya	6	26.1		.3	1.5944	.8167	
	Al Ekhbariya	8	34.8		2.3	2.9788	2.1000	
	Nile News	1	4.3		-4.8	.7000	.7000	
	Total	23	100			1.8172	.9650	
Anchor with still photos/ camera shots	Al Jazeera	55	22.9	24.433 0.000	-5.0	1.7235	.9167	0.569 0.903
	Al Arabiya	32	13.3		-28.0	2.4249	.9742	
	Al Ekhbariya	84	35.0		24.0	2.0123	.9000	
	Nile News	69	28.8		9.0	2.3745	.8667	
	Total	240	100			2.1053	.9167	
Interview via satellite	Al Jazeera	7	43.8	4.5 0.212	3.0	6.1786	5.3333	6.101 0.107
	Al Arabiya	5	31.3		1.0	10.5697	8.3500	
	Al Ekhbariya	2	12.5		-2.0	4.6667	4.6667	
	Nile News	2	12.5		-2.0	37.5500	37.5500	
	Total	16	100			11.2832	6.7075	
Anchor with video recording/ camera shots	Al Jazeera	23	37.1	8.065 0.045	7.5	2.3608	.9333	4.131 0.248
	Al Arabiya	8	12.9		-7.5	2.1563	1.7667	
	Al Ekhbariya	18	29.0		2.5	2.3220	2.2417	
	Nile News	13	21.0		-2.5	4.0088	2.5167	
	Total	62	100			2.6687	1.8083	

Coverage style		Frequency	%	Chi-Square	Residual	Mean	Median	Kruska I-Wallis
Anchor interviewing officials or experts, or people involved	Al Jazeera	6	7.0	33.907 0.000	-15.5	7.0722	7.2083	4.738 0.192
	Al Arabiya	39	45.3		17.5	9.0054	8.8167	
	Al Ekhbariya	11	12.8		-10.5	15.4483	7.3333	
	Nile News	30	34.9		8.5	9.7877	6.9000	
	Total	86	100			9.9675	8.6000	
Correspondents both interviewing officials and people	Al Jazeera	7	35.0	2.00 0.572	2.0	4.1902	3.9833	0.105 0.991
	Al Arabiya	4	20.0		-1.0	7.2625	4.3167	
	Al Ekhbariya	6	30.0		1.0	4.2164	4.4667	
	Nile News	3	15.0		-2.0	8.7439	4.1817	
	Total	20	100			5.4956	4.0000	

Source: The Researcher

Significance of pairwise test: Anchors with graphics Al Ekhbariya /Al Jazeera = -9.438 (.032).

7.4.7 Time Allocated to News Story

The results (Table 7-23) identified through comparison indicates that there was a significant difference in the time devoted to a news story by the four news channels.

Table 7-23 Results for time allocated to news stories in coverage

Channel	Time allocated to news stories	Mean	Rank	Median	Std. Deviation	Kruskal-Wallis
Al Jazeera	635.58	3.4355	3	2.2333	3.09792	26.067 0.000
Al Arabiya	860.39	4.6508	2	3.5000	4.05522	
Al Ekhbariya	627.27	3.3906	4	1.8983	6.83469	
Nile News	1111.29	6.0397	1	3.3908	10.29263	
Total	3234.53	4.3769		2.5500	6.75150	

Source: The Researcher

Significance of pairwise test: Al Ekhbariya / Nile News = -86.799 (.001), Al Ekhbariya / Al Arabiya 103.624 (.000).

Table 7-23 compares the four news channels, indicating that Nile News ran longer news stories than the rest of the channels (1111.29 with a mean of 6.03) followed by Al Arabiya (860.39 with a mean of 4.65), Al Jazeera (635.58 with a mean of 3.43) and Al Ekhbariya being the lowest (627.27 with a mean of 3.39). Pairwise test indicated that there were significant statistical

differences between Al Ekhbariya and Nile News -86.799 (.001) and between Al Ekhbariya and Al Arabiya 103.624 (.000) in this element. The difference in the time allocated to news stories indicates that this element may be considered an important element of differentiation.

7.5 News Presenters

Analysis of news presenters for each of the channels was classified into time allocated to the correspondent, variant of Arabic used by anchor and by correspondent, correspondent location, and suitability of appearance of anchor and correspondent. As Chapter 3, Section 3.7.2 emphasises, the news anchors play a pivotal role in public perception of a news media brand, that can create a competitive advance if fairly used (Krebs, 2015). Hence clear, accurate and balanced story marry professional performers, respectively anchors altogether (Wahl-Jorgensen, 2014) Three main elements of differentiation (branding) were found to be statistically significant in regard to presenters of news coverage. These elements, as mentioned earlier in this Chapter, are related to correspondent regarding time allocated to the channel correspondent, the language of the correspondent and the location of the correspondent of the channel.

7.5.1 Time Allocated to Correspondent

The time allocated to the correspondent in a news item was categorised by over 50% of the time, under 50%, and no correspondent, as can be observed in Table 7-24.

Table 7-24 Results for time allocated to correspondent in news items sampled

Time allocated to correspondent		Quantity				Length of time					
		Frequency	Per cent	Chi-square (p-value)	Residual	Mean	Median	Min	Max	SD	Kruskal-Wallis (p-value)
Over 50% of time of news item	Al Jazeera	41	53.2	33.701 (.000)	21.8	5.70	5.32	1.78	14.07	2.63	13.196 (.004)
	Al Arabiya	9	11.7		-10.3	5.12	3.52	.87	12.27	3.97	
	Al Ekhbariya	15	19.5		-4.3	5.22	5.00	3.58	10.12	1.80	
	Nile News	12	15.6		-7.3	22.55	9.39	4.00	90.75	27.79	
	Total	77	100.0			8.16	5.30	.87	90.75	12.51	
Under 50% of time of news item	Al Jazeera	18	32.7	16.636 (.000)	4.3	6.38	6.68	.93	11.73	2.85	2.222 (.528)
	Al Arabiya	7	12.7		-6.8	4.90	3.83	1.85	11.73	3.35	
	Al Ekhbariya	6	10.9		-7.8	6.15	5.38	.75	11.82	3.69	
	Nile News	24	43.6		10.3	5.83	5.03	.78	17.20	3.55	

Time allocated to correspondent	Quantity				Length of time						
	Frequency	Per cent	Chi-square (p-value)	Residual	Mean	Median	Min	Max	SD	Kruskall-Wallis (p-value)	
Total	55	100.0			5.93	5.12	.75	17.20	3.26		
No correspondent	Al Jazeera	126	20.7	7.335 (.061)	-	2.28	.96	.10	11.68	2.56	41.518 (.000)
	Al Arabiya	169	27.8		17.0	4.62	3.50	.17	23.45	4.10	
	Al Ekhbariya	164	27.0		12.0	3.12	1.72	.10	85.20	7.17	
	Nile News	149	24.5		-3.0	4.73	1.98	.22	42.12	6.94	
	Total	608	100.0				3.76	1.97	.10	85.20	

Source: The Researcher

Significance of pairwise test: Time allocated to correspondents over than 50% of time of news stories = Al Arabiya / Nile News -30.819 (.011), Al Ekhbariya / Nile News -26.142 (.015), Al Jazeera / Nile News -22.249 (.015). No correspondents = Al Jazeera / Nile News -66.426 (.011), Al Jazeera / Al Arabiya -110.374 (.000), Al Ekhbariya / Nile News -59.676 (.016), Al Ekhbariya / Al Arabiya 103.624 (.000).

Table 7-24 shows that in the first category (Over 50% of the time of news item), Al Jazeera (53.2%) ranked highest for the frequency of news items, in which time allocated to the correspondent took up over 50% of the running time for the story, and Al Arabiya lowest (11.7%). Statistically, a highly significant difference was found ($p < .001$). Items of this type were longer on Nile News (median=9.39 mins) than the other channels, while Al Arabiya spent the shortest average time on such items (median=3.52 mins). Highly significant differences for the length of time in this subcategory were observed (p -value=.004).

A further analysis of a second category of time allocation (under 50% of time of news item) identifies that Al Jazeera (32.7%) most frequently featured items, in which correspondents were allocated less than 50% of the item's length, followed by Al Arabiya (12.7%) and Al Ekhbariya (10.9%). Analysis showed highly significant differences ($p < .001$). Time-wise, averages across the channels for this type of coverage varied somewhat (median=4 to 6 mins). Time allocated to the news story is not an important issue in this case, since this study is interested in assessing how much time the television news channels devoted to the correspondent, from the total time allocated to the news story itself.

Lastly, the third category (no correspondent) emphasises that Al Arabiya and Al Ekhbariya (27.8% and 27%) were most likely to carry news items with no correspondents, while Al Jazeera (20.7%) was the least likely. Statistically, any differences proved to be insignificant (p -value=.061). News items not featuring correspondents were shortest on Al Jazeera (median=.96

mins) and longest on average on Al Arabiya (median=3.50). Statistical tests produced a highly significant difference across channels in this case ($p < .001$).

Looking at the length of news stories in this category, pairwise test indicated that regarding to time allocated to correspondents taking over than 50% of time of news stories, there was a significant statistical difference between Al Arabiya and Nile News -30.819 (.011), Al Ekhbariya and Nile News -26.142 (.015) and Al Jazeera and Nile News -22.249 (.015). For no correspondents, the test indicated that there was a statistically significant difference between Al Jazeera and Nile News -66.426 (.011), Al Jazeera and Al Arabiya -110.374 (.000), Al Ekhbariya and Nile News -59.676 (.016) and Al Ekhbariya and Al Arabiya 103.624 (.000).

These statistically significant differences indicate that the correspondent's presence may be used as a means by which a news channel distinguishes its news coverage from that of competitors, as part of its brand identity.

7.5.2 Use of Arabic by the Anchor

Two forms of Arabic were used by television news anchors in the coverage sampled: Modern Standard Arabic (MSA), and local variants of Arabic (see Table 7-25).

Anchors on all four channels made similar use of MSA (approximately 25%), and no statistically significant differences were found across the channels. Al Arabiya's average for use of MSA by the anchor was longest (median=3.54 mins), followed by Nile News (median=3.33 mins). Statistical tests showed a significant difference ($p < .001$) for the length of time. By looking at the length of news stories using this category, pairwise test indicated that there was a significant statistical difference between Al Ekhbariya and Nile News -79.780 (.002) and between Al Ekhbariya and Al Arabiya 102.562 (.000) and between Al Jazeera and Al Arabiya -59.817 (.032) which allows the Researcher to claim that this element can be considered as an important element of differentiation (branding) by the television news channels.

Use of a local variant of Arabic was much higher on Al Ekhbariya (66.7), than on the other channels, and proved to constitute a highly significant difference ($p < .001$) among them. Nile

News anchors spent the longest speaking in local variants of Arabic (median=5.08 mins), followed by Al Jazeera anchors (median=3.87 mins). No statistically significant difference (p -value=.097) was found across the channels.

Table 7-25 Results for use of Arabic by anchor

Use of Arabic by anchor		Quantity				Length of time					
		Frequency	Per cent	Chi-square (p-value)	Residual	Mean	Median	Min	Max	SD	Kruskall-Wallis (p-value)
Modern Standard Arabic	Al Jazeera	183	25.9	1.475 (.688)	6.3	3.43	2.23	.10	14.07	3.11	24.814 (.000)
	Al Arabiya	179	25.3		2.3	4.71	3.52	.17	23.45	4.07	
	Al Ekhbariya	163	23.1		-13.8	3.51	1.82	.13	85.20	7.25	
	Nile News	182	25.7		5.3	6.02	3.33	.22	90.75	10.37	
	Total	707	100.0			4.44	2.53	.10	90.75	6.88	
Local variant of Arabic	Al Jazeera	2	6.1	31.606 (.000)	-6.3	3.78	3.78	1.67	5.90	2.99	6.310 (.097)
	Al Arabiya	6	18.2		-2.3	2.75	1.43	.35	8.70	3.21	
	Al Ekhbariya	22	66.7		13.8	2.54	2.85	.10	6.83	1.84	
	Nile News	3	9.1		-5.3	7.25	5.08	5.00	11.67	3.83	
	Total	33	100.0			3.08	3.33	.10	11.67	2.63	

Source: The Researcher

Significance of pairwise test: for the use of Modern Standard Arabic Al Ekhbariya / Nile News -79.780 (.002), Al Ekhbariya / Al Arabiya 102.562 (.000), Al Jazeera / Al Arabiya -59.817 (.032).

However, by making reference to Table 7-25 above (the Chi-square and the Kruskal-Wallis tests), the Researcher could not find sufficient conclusive evidence, hence, this element is slightly significant, and therefore, cannot be claimed to be an important element of differentiation.

7.5.3 Use of Arabic by Correspondents

Arabic use by correspondents was classified into MSA, local variant and not applicable. Use of MSA was highest among Al Jazeera correspondents (about 45.6%) and lowest for those on Al Arabiya (10.4%). Statistically, a highly significant difference was noted ($p < .001$) among these channels. The same two channels ranked highest and lowest for average length of MSA use by correspondents (Al Jazeera median=5.53 mins; Al Arabiya median=3.33 mins). In terms of time-wise, once again, a highly significant difference ($p < .001$) was found between the competing channels.

The language used by correspondents appears to be an important element of differentiation used by the channels, to establish a brand identity; further results are shown in Table 7-26:

Table 7-26 Results for use of Arabic by correspondent in news items sampled

CORRESPONDENT LANGUAGE VARIANT		Frequencies	%	Chi-Square	Residual	Mean	Median	Kruskal-Wallis
USES MODERN STANDARD ARABIC	Aljazeera	57	45.6	36.376 (.000)	25.8	5.9902	5.5333	9.572 (.023)
	Al Arabiya	13	10.4		-18.3	4.0486	3.3333	
	Al Ekhbariya	20	16.0		-11.3	5.7231	5.1917	
	The Nile News	35	28.0		3.8	10.6094	5.1167	
	Total	125	100.0			7.0389	5.2167	
USES LOCAL VARIANT OF ARABIC	Aljazeera	2	40.0	0.400 (.819)	.3	3.4325	3.4325	3.600 (.165)
	Al Arabiya	2	40.0		.3	11.1667	11.1667	
	The Nile News	1	20.0		-.7	39.3333	39.3333	
	Total	5	100.0			13.7063	10.0667	
NOT APPLICABLE	Aljazeera	126	20.7	7.718 (.052)	-26.5	2.2799	.9567	42.408 (.000)
	Al Arabiya	170	27.9		17.5	4.6202	3.5000	
	Al Ekhbariya	165	27.0		12.5	3.1079	1.7000	
	The Nile News	149	24.4		-3.5	4.7340	1.9833	
	Total	610	100.0			3.7539	1.9667	

Source: The Researcher

Significance of pairwise test: Use of modern standard Arabic = Al Arabiya / Al Jazeera 30.934 (.033), Al Arabiya / Nile News -35.332 (.016).

In terms of the language used by the correspondent, Table 7-26 shows a significant difference among language variant used by correspondents. Pairwise test indicated that there was a

significant statistical difference between the channels regarding to the use of modern standard Arabic. The differences appeared between Al Arabiya and Al Jazeera 30.934 (.033) and between Al Arabiya and Nile News -35.332 (.016). What stands out in Table 7-26 is that Al Jazeera correspondents most frequently used Modern Standard Arabic (MSA) (57). This is understandable, given that the channel targets Arabic-speaking audiences throughout the Arab World. This suggests that Al Jazeera carefully chooses and professionally trains its correspondents, to report using MSA rather than their own local Arabic variant, which might not be easily understood by other Arabic-speaking audiences. Overall, these results indicate that the language of correspondents is associated with elements of differentiation for news channels.

7.5.4 Suitability of Correspondent's Appearance

Suitability of correspondent's appearance plays an essential role in delivering the news. The way presenters are perceived can create a sense of a personal bond with audience hence gestures, physical interaction, physical look it counts towards brand differentiation. Whilst it can influence, create an intimacy, involvement and interaction with the audience (Bonner, 2016).

Nevertheless, presenter's appearance correlation with the event or issue broadcasted is associated with news delivery performance (Chantler and Stewart, 2009). Likewise, a strong relationship between correspondent's appearance and brand differentiation has been reported in the literature (see Section 4.6.3, Chapter Four).

In this regard, suitability of the correspondent's appearance, two categories were used to analyse the appearance of correspondents in relation to the event being reported. As Table 7-27 shows, the correspondent's appearance was separated into three categories. Appropriate for the event being reported, not appropriate for the event being reported and not applicable where there was no correspondent. Since the not appropriate category had only one item for Al Arabiya, there was no significant test for it.

Table 7-27 has shown that Al Jazeera (50%) were ranked highest for suitability of appearance, while Al Arabiya (7.4%) scored lowest. A highly significant statistical difference was found ($p < .001$). Al Jazeera had the highest average time (median=5.58 mins), and Al Arabiya the

lowest (median=2.97 mins). However, time differences were statistically insignificant (p-value=.081).

Table 7-27 Results for suitability of correspondent's appearance

Correspondent's appearance		Quantity				Length of time					
		Frequency	Per cent	Chi-square (p-value)	Residual	Mean	Median	Min	Max	SD	Kruskal-Wallis
Appropriate for event being reported	Al Jazeera	54	50.0	45.185 (.000)	27.0	5.92	5.58	.80	14.07	2.75	6.735 (.081)
	Al Arabiya	8	7.4		-19.0	4.19	2.97	1.85	11.73	3.29	
	Al Ekhbariya	16	14.8		-11.0	5.32	5.08	3.58	10.12	1.85	
	Nile News	30	27.8		3.0	10.40	5.11	.78	90.75	16.76	
	Total	108	100.0			6.95	5.23	.78	90.75	9.27	
Not applicable	Al Jazeera	131	20.8	7.498 (.058)	-26.8	2.41	1.67	.10	11.68	2.62	39.781 (.000)
	Al Arabiya	176	27.9		18.3	4.63	3.52	.17	23.45	4.06	
	Al Ekhbariya	169	26.8		11.3	3.21	1.75	.10	85.20	7.10	
	Nile News	155	24.6		-2.8	5.19	2.19	.22	63.43	8.31	
	Total	631	100.0			3.92	2.05	.10	85.20	6.12	

Source: The Researcher

7.5.5 Correspondent's Location

Ensuring that correspondents report from the location of events may make the channel audience more loyal, and this can generate a greater audience, as it may be seen as an indication of credibility and power. The location of the correspondent in relation to the event being reported was classified into five categories: at the site; near the site; at a location unrelated to the event; at an unknown location, and not applicable (no correspondent). Therefore, Table 7-28 emphasises the association of correspondent's location with audience perception of the live event.

Table 7-28 Results for correspondent’s location in news items sampled

			Correspondents’ location						Total
			At event	Near event	Unrelated to event	Other	Unknown	N/A	
Channel	Al Jazeera	Count	24	6	10	1	14	130	185
		%	32.9	60.0	83.3	100.0	53.8	21.0	25.0
	Al Arabiya	Count	5	2	0	0	7	171	185
		%	6.8	20.0	0.0	0.0	26.9	27.7	25.0
	Al Ekhbariya	Count	12	1	2	0	2	168	185
		%	16.4	10.0	16.7	0.0	7.7	27.2	25.0
	Nile News	Count	32	1	0	0	3	149	185
		%	43.8	10.0	0.0	0.0	11.5	24.1	25.0
Total		Count	73	10	12	1	26	618	740
		%	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: The Researcher

The importance of correspondent location, as illustrated in Table 7-28, shows marked differences between the channels of Nile News (32) and Al Jazeera (24); hence, both tended to show correspondents reporting from the event being covered. In the case of the former, this was likely to be due to its exclusive coverage of the Egyptian national elections, and this may have skewed the results somewhat. Table 7-28 highlights that for “no applicable location”, the four channels showed slightly different numbers (21%–27.25%). The four television news channels seemed to be different regarding the location of their correspondents, thus, rendering it an element of differentiation that may be used for branding purposes.

7.5.6 Suitability of Anchors’ Appearance

The suitability of the anchor’s appearance was defined as being appropriate (99.59%) or inappropriate for the event being reported (0.041%). As Table 7-29 shows, the number of times the anchor’s appearance was suitable was equally distributed among the four-television news channels and does not appear to be an important element of differentiation.

Table 7-29 Distribution of anchor’s appearance

Channel		Anchor’s appearance		Total
		Appropriate	Inappropriate	
Al Jazeera	Count	183	2	185
	% within anchor’s appearance	24.8	66.7	25.0
Al Arabiya	Count	185	0	185
	% within anchor’s appearance	25.1	0.0	25.0
Al Ekhbariya	Count	184	1	185
	% within anchor’s appearance	25.0	33.3	25.0
Nile News	Count	185	0	185
	% within anchor’s appearance	25.1	0.0	25.0
Total	Count	737	3	740
	% within anchor’s appearance	100.0%	100.0	100.0

Source: The Researcher

The results show that this is not statistically significant as an element of differentiation.

7.6 Extent of Channel’s News Coverage Promise

This Section explores the extent of news coverage by each channel, with attention paid to differentiation driven to verify the promise of news channels’ slogans (as related to Research Question 3).

7.6.1 Al Jazeera: “The Opinion and the Other Opinion”

To delve into how Al Jazeera meets the promise of its slogan in its news coverage, the elements of differentiation as news coverage, news processing, news focus and interviewees are considered. The analysis shows that Al Jazeera reported the most news stories reflecting a single side: fifteen such stories appeared in the news programmes under study, more than double the number that reflected two sides (6). This finding does not support the claim of Al Jazeera slogan “the opinion and the other opinion”. In fact, it supports the notion that Al Jazeera would be better described as “the street channel”, presenting the opinions of “people in the street”, in detriment of presenting the opinion of educated respondents; likewise, official views are scarcely presented.

Moreover, Al Jazeera used the most analytical news processing (45.5%), providing its audience with deeper coverage, and offering perhaps controversial opinions and ideas about the issue under report. As a result, Al Jazeera offered the most news focusing on individuals (42.7%).

As an example, in the case of focus regarding the private people and officials, Al Jazeera interviewed more “ordinary” people that are involved in a news story (65.2%), and the fewest officials (13.9%). This strategy can be considered as transgressing the channel’s claim, which implies giving news space to everyone. Interviewing individuals more than officials and experts may be considered a practice of bias in coverage.

Table 7-30 Focus on private people or officials

Interviewees		Frequency	%	Chi-Square	Residual	Mean Ranks	Kruskal-Wallis Test
People involved	Al Jazeera	15	65.2	11.565	7.3	12	0.527
	Al Arabiya	6	26.1	0.003	-1.7	73	0.768
	Al Ekhbariya	2	8.7		-5.7	10.83	
	Total	23	100.0			10	
Officials	Al Jazeera	10	13.9	6.556	-8.0	32.05	9.677
	Al Arabiya	17	23.6	0.087	-1.0	49.74	0.022
	Al Ekhbariya	20	27.8		2.0	29.42	
	Nile News	25	34.7		7.0	43.94	
	Total	72	100.0				

Source: The Researcher

The data presented in Table 7-30 confirms that Al Jazeera is not meeting its slogan’s promise through its news coverage. The channel focuses on interviewing people involved in events more than officials. The channel comes second in focusing on both individuals and officials. While it made the most use of analytical framing, it did not score the highest with regards to reflecting two sides in its reportage of news.

A striking result is that the Al Jazeera channel is using its news coverage to build an image for itself, branding itself as a channel presenting balanced coverage, and giving the opportunity for dissenting voices to be heard. However, in practice, concentrating on “the people in the street” and avoiding the official position towards an event being reported builds the impression in its audience that it is fighting for the rights of local population of the region, who feel they lack representation, and thus, supporting the belief that media news channel gives their views priority. Taken together, the news broadcasting is being deliberately used as a powerful emotional tool to brand the Al Jazeera channel.

7.6.2 Al Arabiya: “To Know More”

To explore how Al Arabiya meets the promise of its slogan in its news coverage, the elements of differentiation were selected for examination: news processing, framing style, inclusion of editorial comments, news directions, exclusivity, news focus, geographical areas, interviewees, uses of videos, time allocated to news story, and type of visual. Al Arabiya channel ranked second (31.8%) in using analytical news processing. This type of processing generally provides the audience with greater information about, and analysis of, an event than simple reportage. It ranked first in focusing on both individuals and officials (33.3%). This supports its claim to provide its audience with more knowledge about the event being reported and confirms its tendency to provide its audience with broader, more detailed, and neutral news coverage. Al Arabiya reported more news about Arab Middle East countries (126).

Al Arabiya also ranked highest in interviewing experts about events being reported (43.8%). Experts can be considered a valuable tool, offering specialist knowledge to the news audience. Al Arabiya was also highest in using videos to accompany stories, including the presentation of the most videos making up over half of a story (31). Adding videos inclines an audience to rely on a channel’s coverage, as supporting images suggest more accurate reporting. Using visual illustrations is a strategy for disseminating detailed and reliable information about an event. Al Arabiya made the most use of more than one type of visual illustration during its news reporting (32.1%) and was second in the use of infographics (29.3%), following Al Jazeera. It also followed Al Jazeera in the time it allocated to the news: 860.39 minutes were given by Al Arabiya to the first five news stories of its news bulletin (see Table 7-23, Chapter Seven and Table 8-1, Chapter Eight). Devoting more time to stories allows a channel to provide detailed and comprehensive news coverage.

From the elements previously mentioned, it can be said that Al Arabiya has met its promise “to know more” in its news coverage. The data shows that Al Arabiya is strongly dedicated to meeting its promise through its news coverage and may be branded as a more reliable channel than its competitors.

7.6.3 Al Ekhbariya: “Events within a Comprehensive Vision”

To explore how Al Ekhbariya meets the promise of its slogan in its news coverage (i.e. to provide all-inclusive coverage of its selection of news), and for the purpose of fostering a comprehensive knowledge of its subject, the following elements of differentiation were selected for examination: news processing, scope of coverage, news directions, news focus, uses of videos, and type of visual illustration. Of the news stories it reported, Al Ekhbariya gave almost every topic considerable coverage. Table 7-31 indicate that the channel focused more on the soft news. Nonetheless, it also gave a balanced coverage of regional events and topics covered.

Table 7-31 Coverage of news by Al Ekhbariya

Topic	Frequency	Per cent
Hard news	63	34.1
Soft news	103	55.7
Other news	19	10.3
Total	185	100.0
Topics covered	Frequency	Per cent
Unrest and dissent	12	6.5
War and conflict	33	17.8
Disaster, crimes and accidents	18	9.7
Foreign relations	46	24.9
Domestic and government	26	14.1
Social and development news	1	.5
International organisations	3	1.6
Cultural and religious	3	1.6
Economics	15	8.1
Sports, human interest and entertainment	12	6.5

Source: The Researcher

Table 7-31 shows that the news producing style is significantly based on a strategy that focuses on descriptive reporting (79.5%), followed by descriptive and analytical processing (14.6%), and then by a combination of all of three processing styles (descriptive, analytical and predictive). Using a descriptive style and employing a descriptive and analytical news processing meets the claim of the channel to offer a comprehensive vision.

Table 7-32 Al Ekhbariya news processing style, scope and direction of coverage

Scope of coverage	Frequency	Per cent
Coverage of what is happening only	153	82.7
Linking an event with what has gone before	16	8.6
Focusing on reasons for what is happening	16	8.6
News direction	Frequency	Per cent
News story reflects one side	5	2.7
News story describes the event only	180	97.3
Total	185	100.0
News Processing	Frequency	Per cent
Descriptive	147	79.5
Analytical	2	1.1
Predictive	1	.5
Descriptive and Analytical	27	14.6
Descriptive and Predictive	1	.5
All Three	7	3.8
Total	185	100.0

Source: The Researcher

Table 7-32 indicates that the channel did meet its claim with regard to the scope of coverage, 82.7% of which, fell in the category of covering only what was happening, with little to link an event with what had gone before (8.6%) or with reasons for what was happening (8.6%). This suggests that the channel does not provide its audience with a comprehensive vision of what is happening. Table 7-32 confirms this claim that Al Ekhbariya channel fails to meet its promise, revealing that in its coverage, it does not provide its audience with alternative or controversial views of the events being reported; it describes events only. Such an approach by a news channel is the easiest way of reporting, and shows little effort to report a full overview of the event.

In addition, neglecting individuals who are related to an event contradicts the claim that Al Ekhbariya presents in its news bulletin; that it provides a comprehensive vision in its news reports. Table 7-33 illustrates the above statement.

Table 7-33 News focus by Al Ekhbariya

News focus	Frequency	Per cent
Officials	126	68.1
Individuals	10	5.4
Both	17	9.2
None	32	17.3
Total	185	100.0

Source: The Researcher

Henceforth, Table 7-33 outlines the focus on the type of respondents. Furthermore, it indicates that the channel gives considerable priority to videos accompanying its stories. The majority of stories reported by Al Ekhbariya are so accompanied (77.3%), and 35.1% of these stories included videos for more than half the time devoted to each one. Of the other stories, 42.2% included videos for lesser times. This use of video footage does indicate an effort to provide the audience with a comprehensive vision, by showing them real events. The use of visual illustration supports the channel’s claim to give an audience a comprehensive vision of what is happening.

Table 7-34 Use of video and illustrative visuals by Al Ekhbariya

Use of video	Frequency	Per cent
Video makes up more than half the story	65	35.1
Video makes up less than half the story	78	42.2
No video	42	22.7
Total	185	100.0
Use of visual illustrations		
Maps	1	.5
Still pictures/camera shots	116	62.7
Infographics	17	9.2
More than one of these	21	11.4
None of these	30	16.2
Total	185	100.0

Source: The Researcher

Table 7-34 shows that 83.8% of news stories reported by Al Ekhbariya were accompanied with illustrative visuals, making it easier for the audience to gain a reliable overview of the event being reported. Overall, these data support the view that Al Ekhbariya is using its news coverage to brand itself.

This data demonstrates that Al Ekhbariya is using its news coverage to brand itself. The data confirm that the channel is meeting its promise, “events within a comprehensive vision”, through a reporting process that is full of elements providing informative data and illustrations that enrich the audience’s knowledge about the event being reported.

7.6.4 Nile News: “The Nearest to You”

To explore how Nile News meets the promise of its slogan in its news coverage, the following elements of differentiation that could be used by the channel were selected for examination: geographical areas, topics, news order, time allocated to a news story and correspondent’s location.

Table 7-35 indicates that the Nile News channel gives priority to local news and other issues related to Egyptians, fulfilling the promise of its slogan, “the nearest to you”, with regard to both locality and topic.

Table 7-35 Topics covered by the Nile News

News topic	Number	Per cent
Unrest and dissent	3	1.6
War and conflict	5	2.7
Disaster, crime and accidents	15	8.1
Foreign relations	31	16.7
Domestic and government	53	28.6
Social and development	0	0
Science and technology	10	2.2
International organisations	0	0
Cultural and religious	10	5.4
Economic	52	28.1
Sports, human interest and entertainment	8	4.3
Other	4	2.2
Total	185	100

Source: The Researcher

Likewise, Table 7-36 indicates that local stories about Egypt also dominate the news bulletin with regard to news order, indicating the priority placed on local news by the channel: 91.9% of all stories presented first or second in the bulletin were to do with local news, as were 81.1% of the third-placed stories.

Table 7-36 News order by geographical area in Nile News

Topic	Local	%	Arab Middle East	%	Other Arab countries	%	International	%	Other	%
Order										
1st	34	91.9%	0	0.0%	3	8.1%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
2nd	34	91.9%	1	2.7%	2	5.4%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
3rd	30	81.1%	1	2.7%	2	5.4%	4	10.8%	0	0.0%
4th	31	83.8%	3	8.1%	2	5.4%	0	0.0%	1	2.7%
5th	28	75.7%	4	10.8%	4	10.8%	1	2.7%	0	0.0%

Source: The Researcher

Table 7-37 below indicates that Nile News devotes the highest proportion of its news time to local issues: 78.1% of the channel’s main news bulletin is devoted to stories covering Egypt, supporting the claim of the channel that it is nearest to them.

Table 7-37 News order by geographical area in Nile News

Geographical Area	Time	%
Local	32817	78.1%
Arab Middle East	1978	4.7%
Other Arab countries	4929	11.7%
International	1074	2.6%
Other	1200	2.9%
Total	41998	100.0%

Source: The Researcher

Figure 7-3 shows that, when possible, the channel sends correspondents to the event it is covering. This strategy demonstrates the importance that the channel places on its audience. Other than the “not applicable” segment, 17% of all news stories that were reported with a correspondent were in the category of at the event location. This result gives an indication that the channel is trying its best to be the nearest to its audience, via reporting news from the hot spot (the location of the event).

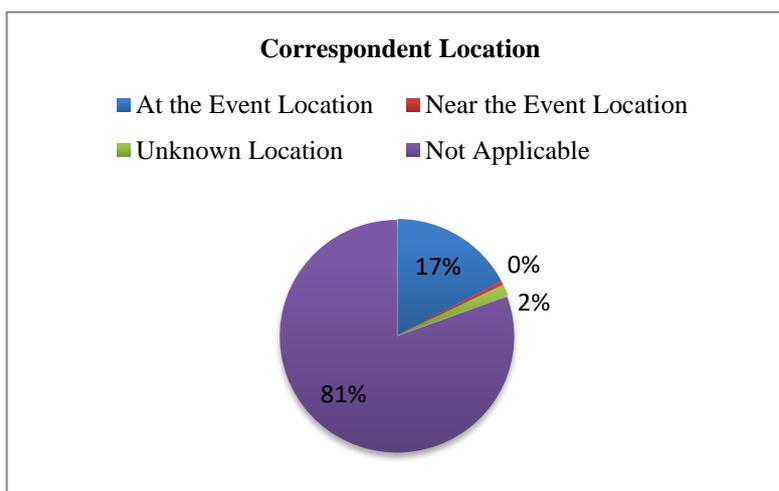


Figure 7-3 Geographical correspondent location

Source: The Researcher

The results indicate that Nile News is meeting its promise to be “the nearest to you”, and is branding itself via its news programmes, as the channel that cares about its Egyptian audience, focusing on issues and geographical areas of most interest to them.

7.7 Conclusion

Analysis of the data sample from the four television news channels indicated that there are twenty-two elements of differentiation (branding) that were used by the selected four television news channels via their news programmes. These elements were as follows:

Regarding **content** of news stories, analysis showed that in the following thirteen elements statistically significant differences were found:

- Topic
- Framing Styles
- News Processing
- Scope of Coverage
- Sources of the News Stories
- Inclusion of Editorial Comments
- News Directions
- Exclusivity
- News Focus
- Geographical Area

- Reference to Channel Prediction
- Interviewees
- Self-nomination

Regarding **production techniques**, analysis indicated that statistically significant differences were found in six elements:

- Uses of Videos
- Time Allocated to News Story
- Type of Visual Illustration
- Type of Interviews
- Coverage Style
- Time of Event being Reported

Regarding **news presenters** (anchors and correspondents), the study found that only three elements of differentiation were used by the four selected television news channels to brand themselves, namely: analysis showed that statistically significant differences were found in three elements:

- Time allocated to Correspondents
- Correspondent Language Variant
- Correspondent Location.

The rest of the proposed elements by the study, one in regard to news content (running order), one in regard to production techniques (logo appearance) and three in regard to presenters of the news stories (anchor language variant, correspondent appearance and anchor appearance) were not statistically significant or slightly significant which does not allow the study to claim that they are important elements of differentiation that can be used for branding television news channels. The result confirms news is being used as a means of differentiation which leads to branding these channels.

Chapter 8 Results and Findings from the Interviews (Qualitative Data)

8.1 Introduction

This chapter focuses on results and findings from the qualitative phase of this mixed method study, presenting the data generated from the interviews that were conducted with representatives of the four selected television news channels to gain valuable insights into how they implement their differentiation (branding) strategy. Data from these interviews can be used to complement the results from the quantitative phase of the research in which content analysis was employed. These findings can also be linked to existing literature in this field to provide further insights into the theoretical significance of the data (see Chapter Nine). Drawing on the expertise and experience of media professionals operating in the field also introduces the necessary industry perspective into this study of differentiation (branding) strategy, allowing current commercial media practice to be compared with theory.

As previously noted in Chapter Six, the process of conducting interviews typically involves five stages: planning, interview preparation, interviewing, transcribing, and analysis of findings (McNamara, 1999). A detailed rationale is provided in that chapter for the choice of interviews to collect the necessary qualitative data and the process of analysis is also described. This chapter presents the results of the data gathered from the interviews but also provides a reflection on the Researcher's experience of conducting interviews with elite participants, exploring some of the problems that were encountered and how these may have impacted on the data collection process.

8.2 A Reflection on the Interview Process

All four of the interviewees can be considered to be 'elites' according to Harvey's (2011) definition of this term since they occupy senior management and Board level positions within the news channels that they work for. In theory, this means that each of them is familiar with the details of marketing and branding strategies of their respective television news channel. Interviewing such individuals, as Harvey (2011) notes, can pose a specific set of difficulties and this did indeed prove to be the case.

Harvey (2011) has noted that interviewers need to gain the trust of their respondents in order to collect high quality data. Gaining trust is perhaps even more important in the Arab world where, for a variety of socio-cultural and historical reasons, access to an elite figure, particularly someone working in a government-run institution, must generally be secured by gaining a personal recommendation from an already trusted intermediary who acts as a gatekeeper.

Hofstede, known for his ground-breaking work on cross-cultural differences in groups and organizations, argued that Arab societies continue to be characterized by collectivism (Hofstede and Peterson, 2000). Typically, relationships between individuals tend to be strong and long-lasting, and there is often an overlap between the professional domain of work and the private domains of family and friendship. This network of connections and relationships is known in Arabic as *wasta*, referred to as “the hidden force in Middle Eastern society” by Cunningham and Sarayrah (1993). Fortunately, the Researcher’s personal contacts in the media industry were able to facilitate initial access into the television channel companies. However, the Researcher then needed to obtain approval from the companies themselves to conduct the interviews which proved to be a lengthy and challenging process.

Another continuing socio-cultural norm in Arab societies is that when dealing with those in positions of authority face-to-face communication and interaction is usually preferred (Hofstede and Peterson, 2000). Therefore, although it involved time and money and might be viewed as an unnecessary use of resources in the non-Arab context, the Researcher made the decision to personally visit the headquarters of all four television news channels to build rapport and trust. (See Appendix for a schedule of visits, follow-ups and interviews). Company representatives initially wanted to know details about the Researcher and the institution where she was studying and whether she was being sponsored by any organization.

They also enquired about the nature of the research, the length of the interview, how the data collected would be used, where the results would be disseminated and whether information provided during the interview would be anonymous or attributed to an individual. Some of the questions that were posed about the significance and relevance of the research were quite challenging but by projecting a positive and confident impression and attempting to explain the aims of the research in non-technical terms the Researcher succeeded in gaining the trust of those with the power to authorise the interview. Following an idea recommended by Yeung (1995), the Researcher also provided a business card when introducing herself to individuals at

all levels of the organisation, including the elite interviewee, to ensure that her contact details were immediately accessible. This also highlighted the importance of being thoroughly prepared before approaching media organizations to arrange elite interviewees.

Once the Researcher's credentials had been established, other company representatives then wanted to vet the Arabic version of the interview questions before the interviews were arranged. Although at this stage no feedback was received from any of the companies regarding these questions, the interviewee representing Aljazeera television news channel later informed the Researcher that he was not willing to answer several of the questions concerning the channel's brand differentiation strategy on the grounds that the company considered this information to be highly sensitive and thus did not wish to reveal any details. However, in its own way, this proved to be valuable information since it effectively highlighted those areas that Aljazeera considers to be most important in terms of its competitive strengths and/or weaknesses within the television news market.

Aberbach and Rockman (2002, p. 674) state that elite interviewees generally prefer open-ended questions as they do not like being put in the straitjacket of close-ended questions. They prefer to articulate their views, explaining why they think what they think. However, given that the time allocated for the interview was likely to be limited and some specific information was required from all interviewees for comparative purposes, a semi-structured approach which combined the same set of closed questions for all representatives with more probing follow-up questions was thought to offer the researcher the best chance of obtaining focused responses within a time-limited frame, while also allowing interviewees a degree of freedom to explore issues that were of particular interest or importance to them (Hesse-Biber and Leavy, 2010).

This approach also meant that interviews could take place by other means if necessary, although as previously noted, in the Arab context face-to-face interaction is often preferred. This flexibility can be an important consideration for ensuring the participation of elite interviewees, particularly when they are located in different locations to the researcher (Stephens, 2007; Holt, 2010). However, the literature suggests that a face-to-face interview tends to produce clearer, more detailed responses. As previously noted in Chapter Six, the Aljazeera representative specifically requested that the interview took place via email at his request, and also refused to respond to a number of the questions, but as Harvey (2011) notes, sometimes the researcher must accept that some data from an elite interviewee is better than no data at all. However, it

was noticeable that, in this case, the lack of direct contact sometimes made it more difficult to interpret what was meant, but since the interviewee agreed to later clarify any responses that were unclear by telephone this was not overly detrimental to the quality of the results.

Although the Researcher was originally allocated specific appointment times with the interviewees these were cancelled and rearranged several times, sometimes at very short notice, by personal assistants who acted as gatekeepers to the executives' schedules and prioritised their meetings. However, once access was eventually gained to the interviewees themselves, they were more generous with their time than anticipated. The shortest interview took 120 minutes, and the longest was three hours. However, this was mainly due to interruptions rather than necessarily being an indication of the amount that the interviewee actually had to say. Since all of the interviewees were senior executives they were often interrupted during the interview to take important calls or receive messages from their personal assistant. One executive was called away for an urgent unscheduled meeting, leaving the Researcher with no option but to wait in the hopes that the interview could re-commence later on which it duly did. Delays of this type had been anticipated before conducting the interviews and the Researcher ensured that she was available for the whole day in case of interruptions or re-scheduling.

Interruptions of this kind provided an opportunity for the Researcher to catch up on her notes and review responses, but it also meant that the interviewees sometimes became distracted and lost track of what they were saying and in these cases, the Researcher needed to tactfully attempt to help them refocus by repeating the question or reminding them what they had been saying. Most of the existing literature recommends recording interviews. This is firstly, because this allows a verbatim transcript to be made of the interview, and secondly because it allows the interviewer to focus more on engaging with the interviewee and, when necessary, taking observational notes (Richards, 1996). As required, all of the interviewees were asked if they were happy to be recorded and some refused, citing the potential commercial sensitivity of their answers. As Harvey (2011) notes, this occurs frequently in elite interviews with employees from companies which have strict rules about disclosing confidential company information. He argues that on the positive side, some individuals may provide more information when they feel they are talking 'off the record' without being recorded. On the negative side, however, some qualitative data is inevitably lost. However, to ensure that none of the key information needed for comparative purpose was lost, the Researcher recorded all the responses to the close-ended

questions in writing using a print-out of the questions as a matrix. In addition, any notes taken during the course of the interview were written up immediately afterwards. As recommended, this draft of responses was emailed to participants at a later point for approval as a Word document. Some respondents added further clarifications or made amendments to this Arabic text which was used as the basis for analysis.

It was clear that all bar one of the interviewees had read the briefing document and two showed considerable interest in the topic under discussion. One of the representatives was much more guarded with his responses and in this situation, the Researcher's effective interpersonal skills come into play, particularly the ability to build rapport and create trust to increase the chances of obtaining useful information from the interviewee (Fielding and Thomas, 2008).

Harvey (2011) emphasises the importance of the interviewee being aware of the positionality of the participants. Aspects of a researcher's own background, training, experiences and beliefs may affect the research process, so it is important to reflect on the issue of positionality so that readers are able to make their own decision about how the evidence which has been presented might be interpreted. Scholars have argued that the degree of distance or closeness between researcher and interviewees can affect the richness and quality of data, with variables such as gender, race, ethnicity, class, religion, political stance, socio-economic status and educational background potentially influencing these interactions and affecting the research process (Johnson-Bailey, 2001; Al-Natour, 2011). The fact that the Researcher shared a common language and cultural norms with the participants was useful and helped her to gain access and create rapport. However, the obvious difference in the status in this context between a postgraduate researcher and a high-ranking executive can make it difficult to ask probing questions.

In the case of the Aljazeera representative it was made clear from the outset that any questions deemed commercially sensitive would not be answered and 'Nil responses' was recorded in all these cases. In other instances, respondents initially failed to answer the Researcher's question either inadvertently or deliberately. In these circumstances, following Berry's (2002) suggestion, the question was posed again. If an answer was still not forthcoming another question was asked before returning to the original one and this worked in cases bar one. As Table 8-3 shows, the only other 'Nil response' came from the representative for Nile News who

failed to respond to the question concerning whether anchors and correspondents participated in creating the channel's branding strategy.

It was noticeable that towards the end of the interviews, responses started to become less focused and detailed as interviewees began to get tired or were already thinking about the next meeting in their schedule. The Researcher herself also found the latter stages of conducting an interview to be more demanding. Mixing up short close-ended questions and open-ended questions which required longer responses helped to mitigate this as did sometimes encouraging interviewees to continue by using non-committal phrases such as the Arabic equivalent of 'Really?' or 'That's interesting!', a strategy recommended by Harvey (2011). However, it was also important to ensure that the Researcher did not inadvertently influence interviewees towards particular responses by using these phrases.

8.3 Analysis of Interview Data

As previously explained in Chapter Six, analysis of the data obtained from the interviews involves three principal phases, as illustrated in Figure 8-1.

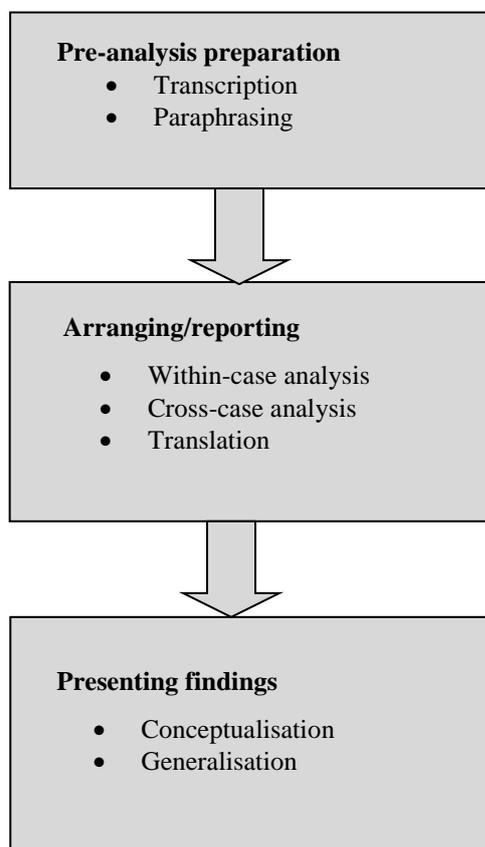


Figure 8-1 Phases of data analysis of the interviews

Source: The Researcher

Prior to analysis, the text was prepared by transcribing word-for-word audio recordings of interviews. All notes from any unrecorded interviews had already been written up immediately following the interview itself. These Arabic transcripts were emailed to interviewees as Word documents for approval, or amendment/clarification if necessary and a final version was created.

The Researcher then familiarised herself with the data by reading/re-reading the transcripts, and also summarising any information judged to be of direct relevance to the research topic by tagging these using the commenting function on Word to tag these using an English paraphrase. This process makes it easier to produce profiles or compare across transcripts at the next stage. All of this process was carried out manually simply using Word for the reasons explained previously in Chapter Six. It is important at this stage to treat these data consistently and objectively.

In phase two, systematic coding of the data begins. This begins by ‘within-case’ analysis, examining each individual interview and firstly identifying responses for specific questions and transferring these to the matrix for each organization. Next, any key elements relating to brand identity/differentiation or the research questions are identified, highlighted and tagged using a keyword. It ensures that any specific aspects of a particular television news channel are highlighted first before any general patterns or trends are identified before comparing across channels. The objective of ‘cross-case analysis’ is to determine any similarities and, more importantly for the purpose of this thesis, any differences since these may represent differentiating factors that reflect brand uniqueness. At this stage also, any relevant quotes from the Arabic transcripts chosen for inclusion in the main text were translated into English by the Researcher herself. The results of this analysis are presented in the sections which follow.

Phase three involves identifying concepts and ideas emerging from the common themes and comparing these with existing literature on brand identity/differentiation. This conceptualization provides the basis for generalisation in the form of a proposed model.

Accordingly, the interviews were interpreted using thematic analysis that explicitly encode qualitative data (Boyatzis, 1998).

Thematic analysis relies on the use of researcher's interpretation to analyse a data set. This takes the form of synthesising raw data by means of codes (Guest *et al.*, 2011). In scope of this research, the technique was adopted to synthesise/generalise data, as well as extracting meaningful data (Guest *et al.*, 2011; Ciesielska and Jemielniak, 2017). Authors such as Ciesielska and Jemielniak (2017) showed that relying on thematic analysis helps to convey core messages of qualitative data. By employing this technique, themes were derived from findings rather than being led by a template developed in advance. Many authors argue that an explicit code developed preliminary is an unrealistic assumption that affects any independent coding, thus biased (Ciesielska and Jemielniak, 2017; Gupta *et al.*, 2018). The rationale of adopting the thematic analysis technique is because it provides new insights into data and allows a free process of mind-map that leads to objectivity and quality assurance in developing themes. Given this aspect, Table 8-1 displays themes generated by interviews.

Table 8-1 Thematic analysis pattern

<p><u>Thematic analysis template</u></p> <p>1. Organisation Vision and strategy 1.1 Marketing strategy 1.2 Content differentiation</p> <p>2. News coverage 2.1 Branding strategy guideline 2.2 Differentiation strategic approach 2.3 News as a tool of differentiation</p> <p>3. News presenters 3.1 Celebrity status of anchors 3.2 Correspondents' performance role</p> <p>4. News production and content 4.1 Visual presentation used for strategic purposes 4.2 High-quality content expectations 4.3 Neutrality and comprehensive coverage</p> <p>5. Branding 5.1 Shifts in competitors' brand identity 5.2 Competitors performance</p> <p>6. Cooperation 6.1 Ideas exchange 6.2 Management cooperation</p>
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Source: Adapted from Ciesielska and Jemielniak (2017)

Table 8-1 outlines the main thematic charts that emerged from an inductive approach which means that the Researcher developed a coding frame based on data analysis to ensure an unbiased pattern examination (Boyatzis, 1998; Ciesielska and Jemielniak, 2017). Adopting a thematic analysis to interpret the data has generated six main themes and additional another 14 sub-themes. Encoding the qualitative information led to sub-themes that are related to the high-level vision of business and branding strategies (a means of differentiation).

A discussion of each theme is discussed in further sub-sections.

8.3.1 Theme One: Organisation Vision-Related

8.3.1.1 Setting the channel's differentiation (branding) through integration of business strategy and marketing strategy

Integration of business strategy and marketing strategy is one of the main themes identified in interviews and it concentrates on aligning organisation visions and brand equity (i.e. consumer reaction to brand), all of which propose to ensure that it differentiate from competitors (Albarran, 2006). In this line, several different factors have been identified due to the specificity of each channel and thus by grouping the questions, it has been found two main sub-themes:

- marketing strategy
- content differentiation

Both of sub-themes represent key pillar for Al-Arabiya, Nile News and Al-Ekhbariya channels. This view is in line with Olson *et al.* (2005), however it proposes integration of business strategy, marketing strategy and additionally it proposes integration of infrastructure as a performance tool. Setting the channel editorial and marketing agenda

Table 8-2 Setting the channel editorial and marketing agenda

QUESTIONS	CHANNEL			
	Aljazeera	Al-Arabiya	Nile News	Al-Ekhbariya
Who sets the channel's news agenda?	Nil Response	News Editing Department	senior executives	senior executives
Does the channel have a marketing strategy? Who sets it?	Nil Response	Yes - Senior Management	Yes - Senior executives	Yes - Senior executives
Is your marketing and branding strategy clear to your anchors and correspondents?	Nil Response	Yes	Yes	Yes
Does the channel promote what makes it distinctive in broadcasting?	Nil Response	Yes	Yes	Yes

Source: The Researcher

As shown in Table 8-2, Aljazeera news channel senior executive declined to respond to any of the questions in this category. However, the responses of the representatives of the other three television news channels confirm that senior executives are instrumental in setting the marketing agenda. This agenda focuses on what differentiates the channel from its competitors, and effectively creates the brand of the channel. There was a noticeable difference between who is responsible for setting the news agenda and the marketing strategy.

For instance, Al-Arabiya executive stated that “Marketing strategy is formed with the administration and News Editing Department, taking into account the ambition of achieving consensus among the viewers”.

However, for both of the state-funded channels (Al-Ekhbariya and Nile News), this role was played by the organisations’ senior executives who stressed that this was “in accordance with Saudi government media policy”, emphasizing the links between the state and media although the marketing strategy is set by senior executives, and clearly conveyed by television news anchors and correspondents, who point out that the news channels try to promote distinctive features to the audience. In this respect, Al-Arabiya representative points out that:

“The strategy of the channel is built on two pillars: 1) own objectives, and 2) attention to the views of the audience. The channel administration takes into account the ambition of achieving consensus among the viewers”.

Enhancing the business strategy with marketing strategy and content differentiation creates a business model that has a key target the audience. Key to this approach is to create a profitable business that has the ability to ensure channel’s mission, and vision achievement and also

deliver its promise to audience in terms of their expectations/preferences. Because it includes values of branding strategy, it influences the business model that lifts from profitability to brand equity (Kapferer, 2012).

8.3.2 Theme Two: News Coverage

8.3.2.1 Branding the Channel via its News Coverage

Analysis of interviews revealed that the channels use their news coverage to differentiate themselves from competitors, employing this as a means to create their own media brand identity. By grouping the questions, it has been found three main sub-themes:

- Branding strategy guideline
- Differentiation strategic approach
- News as a tool of differentiation

Evidence produced show that all three sub-themes are considered valuable by Al-Arabiya, Nile News and Al-Ekhbariya. For instance, Ekhbariya representative affirms that:

“Every channel has its own style. And thus, Al Ekhbariya hopes to be different. We use all available forms of presentation to empower the channel’s own character. There are many strategies adopted by the channel. At times they differ. But they want to serve viewers by giving balanced and neutral material.

Likewise, Nile representative points out that the channel provides the audience with up-to-minute coverage and: “... the channel excels by news coverage and neutrality by exposing all sides of the story.”

As noted by Vissol (2005) the news channels are encountering a high competition, as well as a change in viewers’ expectation. Thus, using news as a tool of differentiation, requires capacity and resources to fund provision of diverse and geographical coverage (Vissol, 2005). Technology influence the way news are released and more specifically the internet expands the geographical coverage, type of content delivered, style of coverage and scope of coverage (Currah, 2009).

In this regard, Al-Arabiya representative puts forward the view that by presenting the news in a professional manner creates a means of differentiation. However, Al-Arabiya insisted that attracting viewers should come first. Much of the current debate revolves around profitability,

cost-efficiency or productivity (Currah, 2009). In contrast, Al-Arabiya representative’s view is that, “lighting, moving the camera within the appropriate frame, the smile of the presenter, the way of conveying facts, all are factors of performance. However, all must be created considering the buy-in from viewers”.

In addition to professional delivery of news, the Al-Arabiya representative explains that: “The newsroom and the production department should have a branding strategy guide to differentiate from other television”. In the below Table 8-3 can be observed that in most cases all channels agree that news coverage can be used as a mean to differentiation.

Table 8-3 News coverage as a means of branding

QUESTIONS	CHANNEL			
	Al Jazeera	Al-Arabiya	Nile News	Al-Ekhbariya
Does the channel have a manual that explains to the newsroom and the production department what they should do in order for the channel to be different and branded for that difference?	Nil Response	Yes	Yes	Yes
Does the channel have a strategy to differentiate from other television news channels?	Nil Response	Yes	Yes	Yes
Does the channel view its news coverage as an important part of achieving excellence and fulfilling its own branding vision and competing with other channels in the Arab World?	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Does the channel view its anchors as playing an important role in achieving excellence and fulfilling its own branding vision and competing with other channels in the Arab World?	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Does the channel view its correspondents as playing an important role in achieving excellence and fulfilling its own branding vision and competing with other channels in the Arab World?	Nil Response	Yes	Yes	Yes
Do you think that making use of news coverage as a means of differentiation (branding) of the channel is a strategy adopted by television news channels in general and by Arab channels in particular?	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Do you think that the news coverage contributes to promoting the fame of the channel and to accentuating its distinctiveness and ability to compete?	Nil Response	Yes	Yes	Yes
Do you think that the audience can easily recognise your channel as a brand?	Nil Response	No	Yes	Yes

Source: The Researcher

Table 8-3 outlines that the majority of the representatives indicated that their organizations use a manual that provides guidelines to be followed by the newsroom and production department.

Certainly, the key aspect of the guideline is to assure that good practices are followed for differentiation, and brand image sustainability. In this regard, the responses support the validity of findings from the content analysis, which revealed that news coverage is used by channels as a means of branding. This can extend to news content and specify how the information about the event should be reported, in terms of presenters' appearance, anchors, correspondents, on-screen persona, along with the technical aspect of the news coverage and the production values. Evidence from the interviews indicate that the television news channels consider their news anchors and correspondents to form important elements of channel branding; branding plays an important role in giving channels a distinctive personality that helps make them stand out from competitors.

In this respect, a news anchor may literally become the face of a particular news channel. All the representatives interviewed agreed that news coverage was used as a differentiation strategy by television news channels in general, and by Arab channels, in particular. Interestingly, the representative for Al-Arabiya was the only interviewee who did not think that their channel could be easily recognized as a brand, in terms of its news coverage.

The Aljazeera representative declined to respond to some of the questions in this category.

8.3.3 Theme Three: News presenters

8.3.3.1 The Role of Channel's Presenters in Branding

A closer look at the data shows that news presenters are an inclusive part of brand differentiation. By grouping the questions, it has been found three main sub-themes:

- Celebrity status of anchors
- Correspondents' performance role

Al-Arabiya and Al-Ekhbariya representatives propounds the view that anchors and correspondents play a role in creating the branding strategy of their channels, along with the company management.

Because again the Nile News representative did not respond to this question it can be only assumed that news representative's opinion may or may not differed from the opinions of all three other interviewees, who thought that their channel used the celebrity status of anchors and correspondents, as a means to outshine their competitors. All three representatives who

responded to the question, agreed that television news anchors and correspondents were also asked to promote their channel, by making reference to it during news broadcasts.

Table 8-4 Presenters as means of branding

QUESTIONS	CHANNEL			
	Aljazeera	Al-Arabiya	Nile News	Al-Ekhbariya
Do anchors and correspondents participate in creating the branding strategy of the channel?	Nil Response	Yes	Nil Response	Yes
Does the channel make use of the fame of news anchors and correspondents to outstrip competing channels in news broadcasting?	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
Does the channel ask anchors to promote its name during news broadcasts?	Nil Response	Yes	Yes	Yes
Does the channel ask correspondents to promote its name during news broadcasts?	Nil Response	Yes	Yes	Yes
Do the anchor, correspondents and the director of the newsroom think about the channel logo and slogan during news coverage?	Nil Response	Yes	Yes	Yes

Source: The Researcher

As shown in Table 8-4, all three news channels stated that those involved in news bulletins including anchors, correspondents or newsroom executives, were mindful of the channel logo and slogan, during news coverage. Nile News representative’s view rest on the assumption that the best way for correspondents to promote a channel during news reporting, is by providing excellent news coverage. Nile News representative argues that: “If you are looking to promote the channel while presenting the news, then including the right information, covering interesting things, it’s worthy for to be reiterated to viewers.”

The representatives’ views seem to indicate the important role of news presenters as being “friendly presenters” and the presentational style to contribute to establishing and maintaining a brand image for news channels.

In the case of news anchors, this was best done by ensuring that the audience acknowledges that the news coverage constituted a channel exclusively. Yet, achieving excellent news coverage implies many other components.

In Al Arabiya representative view, “A difference can be achieved when the newscaster, the presenter and the director reflect vision and objectives of the channel to their audience.” Henceforth: “When a correspondent masters his profession and believe in its importance and role in serving the targeted society that significantly contribute to a channel performance a differentiation” (Al Ekhbariya representative).

This view aligns with Brewer and Macafee (2007) who indicated the importance of successful characteristics of news presenters (anchor) in branding the channel. It is believed that experience, reporting style, personality, appearance, sex, ethnicity or politics are all contributing in delivering a news channel brand image (Brewer and Macafee, 2007).

8.3.4 Theme Four: News production and content

8.3.4.1 The Role of News Presentation in Branding the Channel

From interview with executives, the Researcher found three main sub-themes:

- Visual presentation used for strategic purposes
- High-quality content expectations
- Neutrality and comprehensive coverage

Out of four, three of the channel representatives believed that the visual presentation employed during the news bulletin could be used for strategic purposes. It has been agreed by all three-senior executives (Al-Arabiya, Nile News and Al-Ekhbariya) that news presentations can create a distinctive televisual style between competing channels.

Table 8-5 Production as a means of branding

QUESTION	CHANNEL			
	Aljazeera	Al-Arabiya	Nile News	Al-Ekhbariya
Do you think that the visual presentation of your news bulletin enables your channel to achieve a distinctive style and to stand out from competing channels?	Nil response	Yes	Yes	Yes

Source: The Researcher

By referring to Table 8-5, it can be observed that Aljazeera representative declined to provide a response to this question.

To reflect on the extent of audience expectations, Al-Arabiya pays explicit attention regarding audience viewing habits, patterns of news consumption as well as performative monitorisation

of competitive television news channels (i.e. making use of social media analytics). Whilst Al-Arabiya senior executive highlighted the content quality, the executive of Nile News echoed the importance of immediacy, event follow-up, neutrality and comprehensive coverage, as the key factors that a television news channel needs to focus on, when branding its news coverage. According to the executive of Al-Ekhbariya, the news content, high production values and technical expertise are core components of successful television news channel branding in the Arab world.

With regard to distinctive content, Arab audiences' exigency requires neutral news coverage and truthful treatment of news, Al Ekhbariya representative says: "I believe that distinctive content and neutral and truthful treatment of material are capable of a successful image-making."

Ekhbariya representative reports that: "The channel's main objective is to provide an all-inclusive coverage of news, enabling the viewer to form a comprehensive idea of our stories. As a current affairs channel, Al Ekhbariya is bent on providing its audience with a broad informative scope of news items."

In a similar manner, the Al-Arabiya respondent emphasises the importance of high-quality content, when today's Arab audiences demand advanced production techniques most often related to visual information.

Either high-quality content (accuracy), all-inclusive coverage, distinctive content (message characteristics) or neutral content (truth, objectivity, and credibility), the view is that news presentations leverage brand differentiation (Oyedeki, 2008).

8.3.5 Theme Five: Branding

8.3.5.1 Studying Competitors' Differentiation (Branding) Strategies

In the contemporary media market: "It is important for any channel to be fully informed of its competitors' strategies and products in order not to be similar to them (Al-Ekhbariya representative).

This response (Table 8-6) emphasised that news channels employ processes to gather data on competing channels, in order to monitor shifts in competitors' brand identity. Nile News representative stated that one of the reasons for this practice was to learn what other channels

perform, in order to maintain leadership in the market. Nile News asserts that the channel: “...always try to learn from other channels predominance strategies. We do this in order for us to improve the channel performance. For example, if we found that a channel covered an event better than our channel, we meet and try to do more in the future. Such remarks validate the view that understanding the strategies of competitors it is a common practice.”

As before, the Aljazeera representative declined to respond to this question.

Table 8-6 Data about competitors

QUESTION	CHANNEL			
	Aljazeera	Al-Arabiya	Nile News	Al-Ekhbariya
Does the channel gather data about the news coverage strategies adopted by competing channels?	Nil response	Yes	Yes	Yes

Source: The Researcher

8.3.6 Theme Six: Organisational Culture and Cooperation

8.3.6.1 Cooperation Between Departments

The data gathered from representatives of three of the channels as shown in Table 8-7 revealed that cooperation exists between the channel management, and the newsroom with regard to strengthening the branding strategy for the channel as a whole. Al-Arabiya, Nile News and Al-Ekhbariya also suggested that this is facilitated by exchanging ideas and views between these different areas within the channel, specifically in terms of how the news bulletin can be used in order to create a positive image of the channel brand among the audience. The Aljazeera representative declined to respond to this question.

Table 8-7 Newsroom and management cooperation

QUESTION	CHANNEL			
	Aljazeera	Al-Arabiya	Nile News	Al-Ekhbariya
Do the management and newsroom cooperate in building the channel’s branding strategy?	Nil response	Yes	Yes	Yes
Do ideas and views get exchanged in the hope of making use of the news bulletin to build a positive image among viewers?	Nil response	Yes	Yes	Yes

Source: The Researcher

The findings, highlighted in Table 8-7 above, provide support for the key arguments of relationship between newsroom editorial staff and the management, in developing and promoting the channel brand's identity.

With reference to newsroom and management cooperation, Nile representative, stated that "...coordination can be achieved through meetings and aimed at activating plans and correcting mistakes.

Al Ekhbariya representative also expressed the importance of cooperation stating that: "All departments of the channel are interdependent in order to achieve cooperation and coordination."

The findings suggest that the relationship between creativity, professionalism on the editorial side, and financial factors work hand-in-hand with the managerial side. The necessity to make discerning judgments about the balance between the journalistic and economic dimensions in managing a television news channel brand, is a business aspect in today's competitive media environment (Siegert *et al.*, 2011; Matteo *et al.*, 2013).

In relation to the above-mentioned themes, the findings revealed a variety of themes and sub-themes that influence the success of a news channel. Among the identified themes, both strategic and operational-related, the product and brand differentiation recommend a need to deliver an increase quality in customer experience. The table below encompasses a more detailed view of identified themes.

Table 8-8 Interviews thematic analysis results

Main theme	Focus	Sub-themes
1. Vision and strategy Setting the channel's differentiation (branding strategy)	The process focuses on integration of business strategy and marketing strategy.	a) Marketing strategy b) Content differentiation
2. News coverage Branding the channel via its news coverage	The process focuses on on various news coverage factors (topic, framing style, news processing, scope of coverage, sources of news stories, inclusion of editorial comments, news directions, exclusivity, news focus, geographical area, reference to channel prediction and reference to channel prediction) as a way of differentiation.	c) Branding strategy guideline d) Differentiation strategic approach e) News as a tool of differentiation
3. News presenters The role of channel's presenters in branding Capability to promote channel brand during news broadcasts	The process focuses on presenter's contribution in terms of time allocated, correspondents' language variants and correspondents' location.	f) Celebrity status of anchors g) Correspondents' performance role
4. News production and content The role of news presentation in branding the channel	The process focuses on news production and news content by making use of video communication, time allocated to the news story, type of visual illustration, type of interview, coverage style and time of the event being reported.	h) Visual presentation used for strategic purposes i) High-quality content expectations j) Neutrality and comprehensive coverage
5. Branding Studying competitors' differentiation (branding strategy)	The process focuses on understanding competitors strategies.	k) Shifts in competitors' brand identity l) Competitors performance
6. Cooperation Cooperation between departments	The process focuses on monitoring organization alignment towards building the channel's branding strategy.	m) Ideas exchange n) Management cooperation

Source: The Researcher

Table 8-8 puts forward the idea that considering the growing and changing environment for news channels represents a great opportunity, and thus the identified themes represent key factors to reach customer expectations. In short, news channels can build branding strategies by understanding what is needed for improving organisation's channel strategy.

8.4 Conclusion

This Chapter has addressed an investigation to identify the differentiation criteria elements among news channels, to determine the elements of branding of the four selected television news channels (Al Arabiya, Al Ekhbariya, Al Jazeera and Nile News), based on Research Question One. Using qualitative data, the analysis explored whether channels use brand identity to differentiate their offerings from those of their competitors. The data were based on the Researcher's observation, feedback from supervisors at the University of Salford, United Kingdom and King Saud University of Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, and from the pilot study for this research.

In addition, data gathered from the interviews with the representatives of the four selected television news channels, largely supports the findings of the content analysis carried out on the main news bulletins for these television news channels. Interviewees' responses confirmed that television news channels continue to rely heavily on the quality of their news coverage, as a distinguishing feature, placing major emphasis on news content to convey the information about the event being reported. Moreover, the presentation of the news presentation is also of key importance, since viewers in the Arab world have become increasingly demanding about the standards of the production techniques used in reporting news. A third component (news presenters, anchors and correspondents) is becoming an increasingly important dimension of a company's brand identity, and often, these features are used to represent the literal face of the brand. These results are also in line with previous studies on television news branding and product differentiation.

The findings of thematic analysis of interviews revealed that the production of the news can also be a crucial factor in branding, allowing consumers to differentiate between hundreds of television news channels. In news broadcasts, the audience demands immediacy, and expects channels to capture live events as they unfold. The findings for both elements of this study, namely, content analysis and interviews, also highlight the growing importance of news presenters (both anchors and the correspondents), in acting as means of differentiating television news channels as a brand. Although the phenomenon of the celebrity news presenter is a fairly recent development, there are examples of both men and women who have achieved fame in this field and became inextricably associated with particular television news brands.

The regional or Pan-Arab news channels tend to use their news coverage to differentiate themselves from competitors. The local government-supported news channels do not appear to have the ability or the professionalism to use their news coverage to differentiate themselves from competitors. Regarding the questions addressed in this chapter (Question 1, Question 2 and Question 3), the elements of differentiation categorised in analysis of news content, news production and news presenters have been analysed through their components (news content, framing style, news processing, coverage, news source, editorial comments, news direction, news focus, geographical areas, channel prediction, interviews, exclusivity, news production, time allocation, type of visuals, type of interviews, coverage style, time of events being reported, news presenters, language and location of correspondents) to analyse the differences between the news channels.

The following Chapter presents a discussion of the main findings of this research.

Chapter 9 Discussion of the Findings

9.1 Introduction

This Chapter presents a synthesis of the results of the quantitative and qualitative analysis and considers the extent to which official discourse on the channel's perceived brand strengths as stated by the representatives of the respective television news channels matches the reality of the channel profile that emerged from the content analysis.

Understanding the extent to which competition acts as a powerful force, motivating media companies to differentiate their offerings and ensure audiences prefer them over rivals continues to be of major interest to academic researchers and media companies (Haubmann, 2016). In the Arab world, this need for enhanced competitiveness has come from a number of sources. As elsewhere, technological developments ushered a new era of competition in the Arab media industry, with cable and satellite technologies radically transforming the structure of television and enabling the audience to choose stations that they think are relevant to their particular needs and preferences. The advent of digital technology, the introduction of the internet, and the emergence of social media have not only altered our fundamental understanding of what constitutes news coverage and reporting with the rise of citizen journalism but have also radically shifted patterns of consumption of television news and audience engagement with the media.

As a result of these factors, the Arab news media landscape changed dramatically in the late twentieth century and early twenty-first century, as Arab television news channels appeared that responded to the Arab audience's thirst for credible and professional news, in a region that has witnessed dramatic political and economic changes in recent times (Amara, 2011). The creation of companies such as Al-Jazeera offered Arab audiences real alternatives to both western television news channels and official state-funded channels, providing distinctive perspectives on news and current affairs within the region and beyond. More recently, events such as the Arab Spring and its aftermath have further stimulated the demand from Arabic-speaking audiences for high-quality coverage and analysis of the dramatic changes that have occurred.

Previously, media theory focused on concepts such as news values and the gatekeeping function of editors in the news production process. More recently, however, news has become increasingly viewed as a product that is subject to market competition and has been

accompanied by a shift from a citizen-centred model to a consumer-oriented model, in which news selection and processing represent a means of creating a brand identity and differentiating one particular news product from its rival brands. Paus-Hasebrink *et al.* (2005, p. 236, in Foster, 2011, p. 5) pointed to the central importance of the daily news bulletin for television channels, since it functions as “an essential characteristic element that helps the audience orient itself”. Thus, it can be said that news can be considered as a core product for television news channels when they attempt to create their brand identity. News reporting can be used as a strategic marketing tool, to help channels build a long-term relationship with their audience, and to attract new audiences to join them in an increasingly competitive regional market. At the same time, news enables the audience/consumers to remember the product and its distinguishing characteristics, making it easier for them to differentiate it between the vast range of competing media offerings.

Siegert *et al.* (2011) argue that two main players are involved in ensuring the success of a channel’s branding strategy: those with responsibility for editorial performance, and those in charge of management operations. They also identify three main aspects of branding that the editorial management of television news channels can use as part of that strategy: the news content (i.e. the way that information about events is framed for the audience), the use of news presenters (anchors and correspondents), and the production techniques used to present news coverage. Siegert *et al.*, (2011) also posit that if the journalistic and economic dimensions of a media product are not aligned, this can create mixed messages about brand identity to the audience. Successful media branding, therefore, entails joint commitment between those in charge of management operations, and those with responsibility for the news as a media product.

9.2 Comparative Analysis of Distinctive Brand Features

9.2.1 Synthesis of Results of Quantitative Analysis

The four television news channels examined here represent private Pan-Arab television news channels (Aljazeera and Al-Arabiya) and national state-supported broadcasters (Nile News and Al-Ekhbariya), for comparative purposes. The detailed content analysis of the main news bulletins from these channels (Chapter Seven) identified the main elements of differentiation among the channels, and discussed how individual features of content, presentational style and

production techniques found in the news coverage can all be used to contribute to creating a distinctive brand identity. Chapter Eight evaluated each channel’s performance in its news coverage in relation to its stated intentions as reflected in the channel’s respective promotional slogans. This analysis was intended to gauge the extent to which there is a match between the core values encapsulated in this statement, and those that can be seen to be underpinning the news coverage that was sampled.

Quantitative data analysis, relating to the **content** of the sampled coverage, identified statistically significant differences between the results for the four television news channels in some 22 elements in total. These were organised in three key areas: coverage of news stories (news content), news production techniques, and news presenters (see Table 9-1).

Beginning with the content of the news stories in the sample, the study revealed that 13 of the 14 elements included in this category were statistically significant.

Table 9-1 News story content profile across four selected channels

Elements of differentiation	PRIVATE CHANNELS	PAN-ARAB	STATE-FUNDED CHANNELS	NATIONAL
	Al-Arabiya	Aljazeera	Nile News	Al-Ekhbariya
Topic	Prioritised hard news	Prioritized hard news	Prioritised soft news	Prioritised soft news
Framing style	Slightly greater tendency towards episodic	Slightly greater tendency towards episodic	Thematic	Thematic
News processing	More descriptive than analytical; most frequently reflected both sides of an issue	More descriptive than analytical	More descriptive than analytical	More descriptive than analytical
Scope of coverage	Offers some analysis of reasons for events	Offers some analysis of reasons for events	Heavy reliance on descriptive accounts of events	Heavy reliance on descriptive accounts of events
Editorial comments	Limited but more than state-funded national channels	Limited but more than state-funded national channels	Infrequent	Infrequent
News direction			Items longer on average	
News focus	More frequent coverage of items featuring individuals	More frequent coverage of items featuring individuals	More frequent coverage of officials	More frequent coverage of officials

Elements of differentiation	PRIVATE PAN-ARAB CHANNELS		STATE-FUNDED NATIONAL CHANNELS	
	Al-Arabiya	Aljazeera	Nile News	Al-Ekhbariya
Geographical area	More frequent coverage of non-Arab countries than national channels	More frequent coverage of non-Arab countries than national channels	Focusing on local news	Focusing on local news
News sources		Least likely to cite itself as source of news items	Frequent use of public sources	Frequent use of public sources
exclusivity		Most frequently identified its news items as exclusive		
Reference to channel prediction		Highest percentage of references to channel prediction		Least references to its own prediction
Self-nomination		Greatest use of self-nomination		
Interviewees	Tended to interview experts and people involved in events	Most frequently interviewed own correspondents; featured a higher percentage of Interviews with people involved in events; interviews between correspondents and officials	Highest number of interviews featuring officials and people involved in events	

Source: The Researcher

Regarding **news production** techniques, the analysis indicated that statistically significant differences were found for six elements (see Table 9-2).

Table 9-2 News production techniques profile across four selected channels

Elements of differentiation	PRIVATE PAN -ARAB CHANNELS		STATE-FUNDED NATIONAL CHANNELS	
	Al-Arabiya	Aljazeera	Nile News	Al-Ekhbariya
Use of videos	Highest frequency for items with video making up 50%			
Time allocated to news story			Devoted longest time to its news bulletin	
Type of visual illustration	Infographics		Still pictures/ camera shots	Still pictures/ camera shots
Type of interviews	Satellite Interviews	Interviews conducted by the cameraman,	Interviews carried out via phone.	

Elements of differentiation	PRIVATE PAN -ARAB CHANNELS		STATE-FUNDED NATIONAL CHANNELS	
	Al-Arabiya	Aljazeera	Nile News	Al-Ekhbariya
Coverage style	Highest use for items featuring anchor with the recorded report; anchor, interviewing officials, experts or people involved.	Ranked highest for live from event location; use of correspondent with recorded camera shot/video recording; interview via satellite; anchor with video recording/video shot; correspondent interviewing officials or people involved.		Highest for items featuring anchor only.
Currency of event being reported	Highest frequency for Items not indicating when the events being reported had occurred.		Highest frequency for items covering events occurring as the bulletin was broadcast.	

Source: The Researcher

Regarding **news presenters** (anchors and correspondents), the study found that statistically significant differences were found for three elements (see Table 9-3).

Table 9-3 News presenter profile across four selected channels

Elements of differentiation	PRIVATE PAN ARAB-ARAB CHANNELS		STATE-FUNDED NATIONAL CHANNELS	
	Al-Arabiya	Aljazeera	Nile News	Al-Ekhbariya
Time allocated to correspondents		Ranked highest for the frequency of news items in which time allocated to the correspondent took up over 50% of the running time for the story.		
Language variant		Highest use of MSA by correspondents.	Much higher use of a local variant of Arabic (Egyptian) be anchor.	
Correspondent appearance	Ranked highest for inappropriate appearance for the event being reported.	Ranked highest for suitability of their appearance.		

Source: The Researcher

9.2.2 Channel Profiles: Analysis vs. Official Discourse

This Section will provide a concise summary of the findings of Chapters Seven and Eight for each of the four Arab media channels. An individual profile is presented here for each of the four television news channels, which compares the results of the content analysis with official discourse i.e. details provided by the representatives of the four channels during interviews. This approach is used to identify any potential mismatches between what representatives believe their unique brand features are (which are usually encapsulated in official discourse and the channel slogan) and what the analysis of the news coverage revealed about elements of differentiation.

9.2.2.1 Al-Arabiya Profile

Table 9-4 presents the results of this comparative analysis for Al-Arabiya channel.

Table 9-4 Al-Arabiya profile: analysis vs. official discourse on brand

	Elements of differentiation	RESULTS OF ANALYSIS	INTERVIEW
NEWS CONTENT	Topic	Prioritised hard news	Political events, business and sport
	Framing style	Slightly greater tendency towards episodic	
	News processing	More descriptive than analytical; most frequently reflected both sides of an issue.	Non-sensationalist, devoid of hatred and sectarianism.
	Scope of coverage	Offers some analysis of reasons for events	
	Editorial comments	Limited but more than state-funded national channels	
	News focus	More frequent coverage of items featuring individuals	Human interest
	Geographical area	High coverage of Arab world; more frequent coverage of non-Arab countries than found on state-funded national channels.	Coverage of the news of the Arab world in general and the Gulf region in particular
	Interviewees	Tended to interview experts and people involved in events	Human interest
NEWS PRODUCTION	Use of videos	Highest frequency for items with video making up 50%	
	Type of visual illustration	Highest usage of infographics	Conveying facts in an informative style

	Elements of differentiation	RESULTS OF ANALYSIS	INTERVIEW
	Type of interviews	Highest usage of satellite interviews	Up-to-the-minute and modern
	Coverage style	Highest use of items featuring anchor recorded report or anchor interviewing officials, experts or people involved.	
	Currency of event being reported	Highest frequency for items not indicating when events being reported had occurred.	Speed, Timeliness
PRESENTERS	Correspondent appearance	Ranked highest for inappropriate appearance for event being reported.	Friendly presenters

Source: The Researcher

Al-Arabiya interviewee stressed exclusivity, speed and timeliness, as constituting core elements of Al-Arabiya's brand. He noted that Al-Arabiya was first to report the assassination of former Lebanese Prime Minister Rafiq Hariri, carrying CCTV footage of the explosion in which he was killed, and running a live interview in which politician Abdulhaleem Khaddam announced that he was to break away from the Syrian Regime. However, despite the interviewee highlighting exclusivity and timeliness, the content analysis showed that Al-Arabiya ranked well after Aljazeera in terms of explicitly stating to viewers that the story being covered was an exclusive. Moreover, although the interviewee stressed that the channel prided itself on its speed and timeliness, analysis demonstrated that Al-Arabiya had the highest frequency for carrying news items that failed to indicate when the events being reported had actually occurred. Clearly, without this vital information, the audience cannot judge the speed or timeliness of the news item they are viewing.

In addition, a further contradiction occurred in relation to the channel's presenters. The interviewee stressed that one of the key elements of Al-Arabiya's brand was the professional ethics and commitment of its journalists, as demonstrated by the fact that 12 of them lost their lives while reporting on the Iraq war. It seems somewhat odd, then, that Al-Arabiya's correspondents were ranked the highest in terms of their inappropriate appearance for the event being reported, since this may give the impression to the news audience that Al-Arabiya's correspondents are lacking in professionalism. The same interviewee also described Al-Arabiya's reporters as "friendly". The lack of a formal dress code for reporters may send out

mixed messages to viewers who judge the lack of formality in appearance as a lack of professionalism.

When the Al-Arabiya representative was asked about the level of cooperation on channel branding between the administration and editorial staff, he stated that “Views and ideas were exchanged about news impact and audience preferences and needs”, suggesting that the channel placed considerable emphasis on marketing and public relations.

The results of the analysis suggest that Al-Arabiya uses specific elements of its news bulletin to reflect its brand identity, in terms of the news content mirrored in its topics and news processing. It also has a distinctive visual style, particularly its use of infographics and videos. However, there is also evidence that official brand discourse about the speed and timeliness of its coverage (considered as a key characteristic for audiences) is not conveyed to viewers because this information is missing from the news item.

9.2.2.2 Al Jazeera Profile

The interviewee for Aljazeera emphasised that the news channel perceives itself as much more than simply a television channel, as it “uses all available media formats to enhance its identity”. He stressed that Aljazeera is “distinctive” and has its own presentational style. While the analysis confirmed some of these characteristics, Aljazeera was ranked highest in many of the elements relating to the style of coverage, screen time allocated to correspondents, and to their appearance. Another element of differentiation emphasised by the interviewee was that, Al Jazeera “invests in human and technical resources to provide complete, comprehensive coverage of events”; this opinion was confirmed the results of the analysis of the channel’s use of technology, particularly its ability to report live from the event location.

Insights drawn from the interview suggest that Aljazeera differs from its competitors in terms of news content, news production and news processing. Given that the channel’s well-known slogan is “The opinion and the other opinion”, it was not surprising that the interviewee referred to its news coverage as being “balanced” and “comprehensive”, and repeatedly returned to this distinguishing feature of the channel that “seeks to extend media freedom”. For example, the interviewee emphasised that the channel ensures that its viewers are accustomed to “hearing and accepting views that may be contrary to their own”; and also, that the coverage that it offers “provides all perspectives and gives all parties equal opportunities to participate,” providing “opportunities for opposing views to be heard”. Despite the interviewee’s claims, these qualities

failed to be reflected in the analysis of the Aljazeera sample. It is striking that overall, a significant part of the coverage actually consisted of input from the channel's own correspondents. Despite the interviewee's claim that Aljazeera offers analysis of events, this did not prove to be a distinguishing feature of the sample of coverage analysed.

Table 9-5 Al Jazeera profile: analysis vs. official discourse on brand

	Elements of differentiation	RESULTS OF ANALYSIS	INTERVIEW
NEWS CONTENT	Topic	Prioritized hard news	To raise audience awareness about the issues that are important to them.
	Framing style	Slightly higher tendency towards episodic	
	News processing	More descriptive than analytical	Balanced news; seeks to extend media freedom by hearing and accepting views that may be contrary to their own; ensuring that event coverage provides all perspectives and gives all parties equal opportunities to participate; giving opportunities for opposing views to be heard.
	Scope of coverage	Offers some analysis of reasons for events	Analysis of events; comprehensive coverage
	Editorial comments	Limited but more than state-funded national channels	
	News focus	More frequent coverage of items featuring individuals	
	Geographical area	More frequent coverage of non-Arab countries than state-funded national channels	Focus on specific topics or geographic areas that are a priority in the channel's main news agenda.
	News sources	Least likely to cite itself as source of news items	
	Exclusivity	Most frequently identified its news items as exclusive	
	Reference to channel prediction	Highest percentage of references to channel prediction	
	Self-nomination	Greatest use of self-nomination	
NEWS PRODUCTION	Interviewees	Most frequently interviewed own correspondents; featured a high percentage of interviews with people involved in events; interviews between correspondents and officials	
	Type of interviews	Most frequently featured interviews conducted by the cameraman	
	Coverage Style	Ranked highest for live from event location; use of correspondent with recorded camera shot/video recording; interview via satellite; anchor with video recording/video	Uses all forms of technology

	Elements of differentiation	RESULTS OF ANALYSIS	INTERVIEW
		shot; correspondent interviewing officials or people involved	
PRESENTERS	Time allocated to correspondents	Ranked highest for frequency of news items in which time allocated to the correspondent took up over 50% of the running time for the story	
	Language variant	Highest use of MSA by correspondents	
	Correspondent appearance	Ranked highest for suitability of their appearance	

Source: The Researcher

Analysis showed that one of the key distinguishing features of Aljazeera’s coverage is its frequency of reminders to its audience that the news they are viewing is an exclusive; it also had the highest percentage of references to predictions that it had made, and overall it made the greatest use of self-nomination (see Table 9-5). This suggests that Aljazeera has a strategic approach to its brand identity, constantly reminding its viewers about the qualities that differentiate it from its competitors. It is not surprising that when the interviewee was asked about the level of cooperation between newsroom and administration concerning channel branding, he stated: “All sectors and departments of the channel are integrated and work together to affirm the channel brand”.

9.2.2.3 Nile News profile

The interview with the representative from Nile News suggested a lack of awareness in terms of the channel’s direction which is a significant constraint for a state-funded national station. The interviewee noted that a change of policy had taken place after recent political developments in Egypt (this may have been a reference to the Arab Spring revolution or to more specific developments related to the elections as it was not specified). As a result, the coverage of domestic affairs had increased, and “official news, such as news about the President or the Prime Minister is now more prominent”. However, the statement was contradicted by his later comment that the channel “has always paid attention to the most important news and not coverage of official events”. Equally, in terms of the comments on news content, the points that the interviewee made about the channel’s focus (specifically Egyptian perspective on both national and international news) were difficult to follow. Table 9-6 provides more details.

Table 9-6 Nile News profile: analysis vs. official discourse on brand

		RESULTS OF ANALYSIS	INTERVIEW
NEWS CONTENT	Topic	Prioritised soft news	
	Framing style	Thematic	
	News processing	More descriptive than analytical	In-depth analysis of all perspectives
	Scope of coverage	Heavy reliance on descriptive accounts of events	
	News direction	Items longer on average	
	News focus	More frequent coverage of officials	Attention to the most important news and not coverage of official events
	Geographical area	Highest frequency of stories involving Arab countries (specifically Egypt)	Informs the audience about Egyptian and international issues; greater focus on local (i.e. Egyptian) news To address the problems facing the Arab world and internationally/To focus on presenting the Egyptian point of view.
	News sources	Frequent use of public sources	Official news, such as news about the President or the Prime Minister is now more prominent.
NEWS PRODUCTION	Interviewees	Highest number of interviews featuring officials and people involved in events	
	Time allocated to news story	Devoted longest time to its news bulletin	
	Type of visual illustration	Still pictures/ camera shots	
	Type of Interviews	Interviews carried out via phone	
PRESENTERS	Currency of event being reported	Highest frequency for items covering events occurring as the bulletin was broadcast	Timeliness
	Language variant	Much higher use of a local variant of Arabic (Egyptian) by anchor	Caters for the average Egyptian citizen and makes their voice heard; Knows the hopes and dreams of its audience.

Source: The Researcher

The analysis of the coverage tended to contradict the views put forward by the Nile News representative. This suggested that Nile News was very much focused on presenting the Egyptian point of view, and on covering local (i.e. Egyptian) events in keeping with the channel’s slogan “Closer to you”. This was reflected in the anchor’s much higher use of a local

variant of Arabic (Egyptian) rather than Modern Standard Arabic. Although the interviewee highlighted that the distinctive features of Nile News coverage were its exclusivity and the fact that it is accurate, professional, and “objective [...] presenting all sides of the story”, these features were not always reflected in the analysis of the sample coverage.

Nile News emerged as a government mouthpiece that made frequent use of public sources, and showed the highest number of interviews featuring officials and people involved in events. As previously noted, the sample of coverage used for analysis was recorded during the time that the elections were taking place, and this could have skewed the results. Nile News also registered the highest frequency for news items covering events occurring as the bulletin was broadcast, reflecting the interviewee’s claim about currency being a specific feature of its brand identity. In terms of its news production, Nile News was clearly not able to compete with the technology employed by the two private Pan-Arab channels.

When asked about the level of cooperation on channel branding between administration and editorial staff, the Nile News representative noted that “The marketing department cooperates with the newsroom”, suggesting that the latter still very much drives news content and production, and that as a channel, they do not have a coherent differentiation strategy intended to help create a strong brand identity.

9.2.2.4 Al-Ekhbariya Profile

In the case of Al-Ekhbariya (another state-funded national news channel), the profile also reflected its role as a government mouthpiece, with its frequent use of public sources and coverage of officials, as emphasised by its objective “to present a new image of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA)”. Similarly, in terms of the main elements that set the channel apart from its competitors, Al-Ekhbariya’s representative noted that the channel provided “a high-quality product that is representative of KSA’s information policy”. The adjectives “all-inclusive” and “comprehensive” were repeated in relation to the channel’s coverage by the representative, however, scarce evidence was found in the sample of items analysed to sustain this statement.

Similar to Nile News, the news channel Al-Ekhbariya was less able to compete with the technology employed by the two private Pan-Arab channels; this may go a long way towards explaining why it was more reliant on its use of items featuring an anchor only than all the other channels. Interestingly, in the sample of news items from Al-Ekhbariya, there was no marked

usage of the local variant of Arabic (Saudi) over Modern Standard Arabic, unlike Nile News which, as previously noted, heavily featured Egyptian Arabic being used by presenters. While Nile News was very clear about its focus on Egyptian news and perspectives, the Al-Ekhbariya interviewee claimed that one of the objectives of the channel was “To provide the audience with informative scope of news items abroad”. However, analysis of the content with respect to content by geographical area did not find any particular focus that marked it out from its competitors.

When asked about the level of cooperation on channel branding between administration and editorial staff, the interviewee from Al-Ekhbariya stated that “The newsroom fulfils the main mission of the channel, while the administration helps it to achieve its goal of distinctive branding”. As with the other state-funded news channel, then, this suggests that the newsroom still drives news content and production, while other departments are seen as simply offering support to achieve this by using marketing. The influence of branding was perhaps only seen at the superficial level, with the interviewee highlighting the use of the colours blue and green which form part of the channel’s logo and are also visible on its website. As with Nile News, and unlike the two private Pan-Arab channels, Al-Ekhbariya does not appear to have a well-developed differentiation strategy intended to help create a strong brand identity, despite the interviewee referring to its distinctive news content and presentational style. Table 9-7 below outlines the comparison between results and interview.

Table 9-7 Al-Ekhbariya profile: analysis vs. official discourse on brand

		RESULTS OF ANALYSIS	INTERVIEW
NEWS CONTENT	Topic	Prioritised soft news	
	Framing style	Thematic	
	News processing	More descriptive than analytical	Objective and truthful treatment of material
	Scope of coverage	Heavy reliance on descriptive accounts of events	To provide the audience with informative scope of news items abroad.
	News focus	More frequent coverage of officials	
	News sources	Frequent use of public sources	
	Reference to channel prediction	Least references to its own prediction	
NEWS PRODUCTION	Type of visual illustration	Still pictures/ camera shots	
PRESENTERS	Coverage style	Highest for items featuring anchor only	

Source: The Researcher

9.3 The framework developed

By looking at the findings of the content analysis of the news coverage of the four selected television news channels along with the findings of the interviews with the representatives of those channels, the study has developed a model of the elements of branding that can be used by television news channels via their news coverage (Figure 9-1).

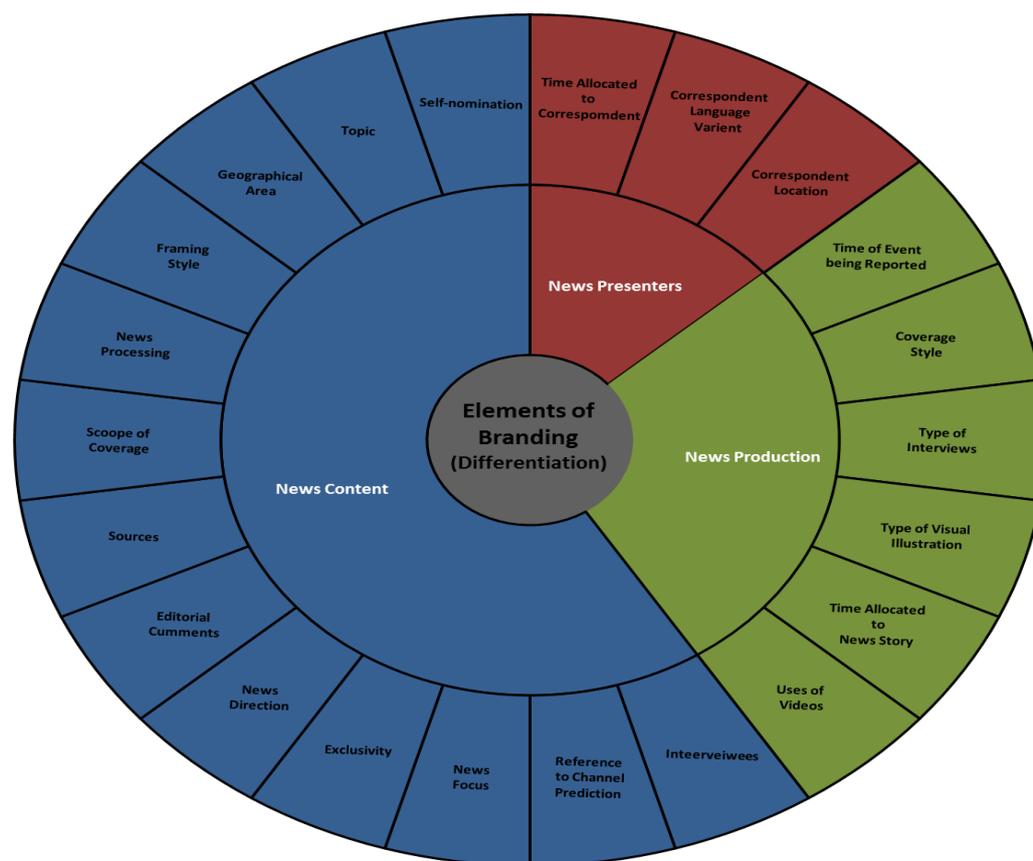


Figure 9-1 Elements of TV branding through the product (news)

9.4 Conclusion

This Chapter provided a comparative analysis of the quantitative and qualitative results of the study, exploring the extent to which official discourse on the channel's perceived brand strengths, as stated by the representatives of the respective television news channels matches the reality of the channel profile that emerged from the content analysis. There was a clear difference between the brand awareness of the representatives from the private television channels, Al-Arabiya and Aljazeera, and their state-funded counterparts from Nile News and Al-Ekhbariya. Of the four channels, Aljazeera had the best match between official discourse and actual coverage, as measured by the content analysis. Al-Arabiya was also largely aware of those elements that differentiated it from competitors. It is difficult to judge Nile News on the basis of what was effectively a skewed sample of coverage due to unexpected elections and also

because it is possible that recent political events and regime change in this country had impacted significantly on the policies and philosophy of this state-funded news channel. Although the interviewee from Al-Ekhbariya referred to its distinctive news content and presentational style, unlike the two private Pan-Arab channels, this state-funded channel did not appear to have a well-developed differentiation strategy that would help it to create a strong brand identity.

Chapter 10 Conclusions and Recommendations

10.1 Introduction

This Chapter begins by exploring the extent to which the research goals of this study have been achieved and addresses the research questions originally posed. It then considers the nature of the contribution of this research, in both theoretical and practical terms. The third Section of this Chapter offers a series of practical recommendations regarding how television news channels could make use of their news programmes (news bulletin) to brand themselves. The Chapter concludes by discussing the limitations of this research and proposals for future research directions are also provided.

10.2 Aims, Objectives and Research Questions

This study aimed to analyse how the four selected television news channels use their news programmes, to create or enhance their own branding image in their audience's mind, gathering quantitative and qualitative data for this purpose. The comparison between two private Pan-Arab television news channels (Aljazeera and Al-Arabiya), and the two state-funded national television news channels (Nile News and Al-Ekhbariya), revealed that there was an empirical evidence to suggest that the two private Pan-Arab channels are keen to create a brand identity in order to distinguish themselves from key competitors in the field. Content analysis of a wide spectrum of elements of differentiation (branding) via news content, news production and presenters of the main news bulletin for these two channels (Aljazeera and Al-Arabiya) suggests that the news editorial team pays close attention to establishing and maintaining this brand identity. Despite the clear brand strategy of both Aljazeera and Al-Arabiya, it has been found that sometimes there are mismatches between the official brand discourse, and how this has been interpreted by the editorial team. It demonstrates a need for a more explicit guidance and guidelines on all aspects of the news production, content and presentational style, to ensure consistency in brand identity. With respect to differences between the two private channels, it could also be argued that Aljazeera's brand awareness is better than that of Al-Arabiya, as it recorded higher scores when it came to remind its audience about what it claims to be its distinctive features, constantly reinforcing its brand identity. Additionally, analysis of the content of the two channels suggest that, in fact, some of the distinctive characteristics

associated with Aljazeera as a brand (providing opposing views on issues), have now been adopted by its competitor Al-Arabiya. Analysis of the sample of coverage showed that in fact this channel, rather than Aljazeera, most frequently reflected both sides of an issue.

In contrast, it was challenging to draw any clear conclusions about brand identity when comparing the results of the analysis for Nile News, with the official discourse, due to the lack of uncertainty at the time of the interview concerning the impact of recent political changes in Egypt. This illustrates the difficulties that state-funded national television news channels can face, when attempting to create brand identities or to differentiate themselves, when they are effectively at the mercy of possible regime changes that may require major shifts in editorial policy or emphasis in coverage.

It seems to be the case that both of the state-funded national television news channels examined in this study, namely Nile News and Al-Ekhbariya, are less clear about their brand identity; there was often a lack of match between what they claimed to be their distinctive features and what was found in the analysis. Furthermore, in comparison with the private channels, both of the state-funded national channels (Nile News and Al-Ekhbariya) seemed to view brand creation in terms of marketing or presentational style, rather than something that had any role to play in decisions concerning news content or production values. The evidence points towards the idea that, as a result of their guaranteed state funding, the news channels are reluctant to compete to the same degree as their commercial counterparts. It is noticeable, for example, in terms of production that the two private Pan-Arab channels invest heavily in the use of new technology to gain an edge.

Taken together, these results suggest that in the case of state-funded television, the Arab audience now have fewer reasons to watch these channels. The analysis of events and current affairs have expanded far beyond state television, and governments may find themselves having to invest heavily in creating brand identities that act as their mouthpieces for the news media. The extent to which state-funded news channels propose to distinguish themselves, is a problem that needs to be addressed, if governments want to attract citizens-customers back from more appealing private sector alternatives.

10.3 Contribution of the Study

The study has made original contributions in two distinct areas, focusing on televisual media from the Arabic-speaking world. This region still remains under-represented in the literature, despite the enormous strategic geopolitical importance of this area for the Western World. In addition, it offers significant commercial potential for media companies, due to the rapidly expanding population within the region, and of the Arabic-speaking diaspora beyond it. Both of these groups constitute highly appealing markets, as television is still considered to be the main and most important source of local, regional and international news for most Arabs (Tucker, 2010; Gunter and Dickinson, 2013).

10.3.1 Contributions to Framing Theory

In theoretical terms, this study has used detailed comparative analysis of coverage of four television news channels in the Arab World to reflect on the potential that framing theory represents as a means of identifying the ideological bias underpinning particular media products in the non-Western context. It has provided valuable insights into the ways in which they use different types and elements of framing, to invite their audiences to read and evaluate the issues presented in particular ways (Ardèvol-Abreu, 2015). Thus, it offers further evidence from Arab media cultures (a field that is still relatively rarely studied) that, framing theory remains relevant to the study of both public and private television channels. It is still a valid theoretical framework that helps to explore how news media may make concerted attempts, to shape individual attitudes towards an issue, and group opinions that may play a key role in shaping social processes, such as social action, decision-making and political socialisation (Ardèvol-Abreu, 2015).

More importantly, this study has also established the extent to which framing can be used explicitly by television channels in news coverage, as a means of differentiating themselves as a brand, encouraging audience loyalty and providing a competitive edge in an ever more crowded media landscape. This was achieved by comparing the results of the content analysis, with each channel's own official marketing discourse, as articulated in interviews and in the brand promise encapsulated in its slogan.

10.3.2 Contribution to Media Branding Practice

This study has also highlighted the need for television news channels to establish what makes them unique, and distinguishes them from competitors, exploring the different ways in which they can engage audiences, and maintain their loyalty. In addition to identifying the underlying concept values, this involves integrating these concepts at the level of both production and presentation. As the interviews with television representatives made clear, this necessarily involves close cooperation between media management teams, the editorial department and the media newsroom, in building the branding strategy of their product. The framework developed by this study (Figure 9-1) has the potential to act as a guide for media branding practice, and as the basis for further theoretical testing.

In practical terms, a key accomplishment of this study is that it has laid the foundations for a model, based on theory and empirical study that has real-life applications in the commercial context of media branding, and product differentiation, intended to satisfy the audience. It has helped to establish an initial version of a model (Figure 9-1) that can serve as a means to measure the degree of distinctiveness of a channel's brand identity, in a number of key areas of its news coverage.

Figure 9-1 represents an approach that can be used for establishing and maintain the distinctiveness of a channel's brand identity. In theory, this will allow television news channels to analyse competitors' coverage and create channel profiles that can help them identify the similarities and differences between television news brands, providing them with data needed to create a more differentiated media product. Therefore, the key priority in terms of the direction of future research is to submit this model to more empirical testing, and to fine tune the elements within it to improve its reliability and ease of use. Clearly, given the growing importance of the role of social media for attracting and engaging television news audiences, work needs to be done on incorporating a measure that relates the use of social media within the framework developed above.

10.4 Recommendations for Media Management

On the basis of the research findings from this study, the Researcher concludes with following recommendations:

1. Media managers must ensure that the channel's mission statement and its core values, as established by senior management, are conveyed meaningfully to all employees, and the important role that they play in differentiating the company's product from those offered by competitors must be emphasized;
2. All of those interviewed by the Researcher, representing the four selected television news channels, agreed that close collaboration and regular contact between media management and the newsroom is essential, to ensure that all areas of the news product are aligned with these core values, and serve to establish the channel's identity and differentiate it as a brand;
3. Visual identity style guides can be a useful means of ensuring that core values of the brand are reflected consistently in design elements in on-air programming, and across other media forms including online, and that brand messages are conveyed correctly to the target audience (see, for example, the *Channel 4 Identity Style Guide* available at Channel4.com); and
4. Core values should also be reflected consistently in editorial decisions and conveyed to all journalists, presenters and correspondents. Ensuring this consistency requires strong editorial leadership. As with visual identity, clear and transparent guidelines should be made available to news teams, to reiterate how brand identity is reflected in core editorial values (see, for example, the BBC's editorial values available at bbc.co.uk). Core values can also be instilled and reinforced at team briefing meetings.

10.5 Limitations of the Research

Although great care was originally taken to record a representative sampling for the four television news channels analyzed in this study across the same period of time, unexpected political developments in Egypt led to general elections being held there. Given the level of interest of the Egyptian people in this political process and its outcome, and also its broader importance within the region following the Arab Spring, Nile News carried unprecedented levels of coverage of every aspect of this news event, making the most of the fact that it was

well placed to benefit from this, as a potential means to attract new audiences. As noted previously, it is possible that the content of the data sample for Nile News and the subsequent channel profile produced, was heavily skewed, as a result, in particular subcategories, for example in those of topic, geographical area, interviewees, time allocated to news story, type of interviews and time allocated to correspondents. The Researcher believes that, if the study was repeated again over a different time period, there might be noticeable variations in the results.

As noted previously, the Researcher also faced difficulties with regards to conducting the interviews with official representatives of the four selected television news channels. Despite the researcher's own strong connections with officials in the administrative levels of all four channels, as well as journalists working in the field of media, it was not easy to conduct the interviews and obtain the information required. It initially took the Researcher months to convince channel management to allow the interviews to take place, then, a similar amount of time to obtain appointments for conducting interviews. Often, these were cancelled or re-scheduled at short notice. As a result, the Researcher needed to travel several times to some of the countries where officials were based, in order to conduct the interview or obtain this approval further, increasing the time and resources needed for this data collection. After conducting each interview, it was necessary to transcribe the answers, and then email them to the interviewee for approval. The answers were not usually returned promptly.

A further difficulty arose from the fact that these officials were very guarded in their responses, and often failed to provide detailed answers to questions posed by the Researcher; representatives judged this information to be commercially sensitive, as it relates to the company's marketing and branding strategies. The Researcher would suggest that, in future studies, while using this data collection method, careful thought should be given to making the interview questions more indirect, so that the Researcher might be able to get more informative answers.

In this study, it was not possible to analyse the role played by new media in branding for these television channels, given the quantity of data generated from the content analysis. Since all of these channels are now paying increasing attention to the use of their own websites and of social media platforms, such as Twitter, not only to provide breaking news, but also to engage audiences and enhance the distinctiveness of their channel identity, this is an area which merits inclusion in future studies of this type.

A focus group composed of media professors or postgraduates researching in this area could have been asked their opinion about the brand personality of the channels, in order to bring added value to this study, by examining the degree of success these channels have accomplished via their news reporting as a means of branding.

10.6 Directions for Future Research

Overall, the literature review highlighted that few studies in the area of media differentiation have focused specifically on the content of television news, as a means of creating and reinforcing the brand identity of a television channel, with previous research mainly considering the perceptions of audiences, or drawing on explicit strategy statements relating to commercial aims from various official company sources. Also, this research concluded that, to date, no studies had specifically looked at media branding in the context of the Arab World, using Arabic language channels as a case study. Given the increasing geopolitical significance of events in this part of the globe, the demographic growth patterns in this region, and the numbers of those in the Arab diaspora who can now access Arabic language channels and maintain a keen interest in the affairs of their countries of origin, research in this area merits further work on both academic and commercial grounds. It may also be useful to conduct comparative research on media branding in the Arab world and the EU and/or USA. This would be a useful means of exploring the impact of culture and politics on media branding.

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Appendix A: Random Numbers and Dates

Random numbers chosen by Stat Trek and the corresponding dates

Number	Random number	Matching date
1	028	28 October 2015
2	031	31 October 2015
3	038	7 November 2015
4	044	13 November 2015
5	054	23 November 2015
6	056	25 November 2015
7	057	26 November 2015
8	059	28 November 2015
9	062	01 December 2015
10	063	02 December 2015
11	065	04 December 2015
12	073	12 December 2015
13	075	14 December 2015
14	077	16 December 2015
15	079	18 December 2015
16	085	24 December 2015
17	087	26 December 2015
18	089	28 December 2015
19	090	29 December 2015
20	091	30 December 2015
21	094	02 January 2016
22	098	06 January 2016
23	108	16 January 2016
24	111	19 January 2016
25	116	24 January 2016
26	127	04 February 2016
27	131	08 February 2016
28	133	10 February 2016
29	135	12 February 2016
30	141	18 February 2016
31	144	21 February 2016
32	146	23 February 2016
33	151	28 February 2016
34	164	12 March 2016
35	171	19 March 2016
36	172	20 March 2016
37	178	26 March 2016

Appendix B: Letters Sent to Interviewees

(An example of letters to the four selected television news channels)

Dear representative,

Greetings,

I am currently a PhD student at Salford University in Manchester, UK. My research is on mass media and how they compete in the saturated era we live in. My study requires conducting several interviews with editors-in-chief of the prime news of the leading television news channels in the Arab World. As your channel is considered one of the leading television news channels, I hope that you allow me to have the honour of conducting an interview with your representative. The interview will involve questions about the channel strategies and techniques in utilizing its news coverage to indicate its strength in handling news coverage of events around the world. Questions will also involve indications of the degree of cooperation between management and editorials regarding branding the channel and marketing it for its targeted audiences.

I really appreciate your help and support by allowing me to have the chance of meeting with your representative and conducting the proposed interview which should take place in November or December of this year 2015. If you agreed to allow me to conduct the interview, would you please provide me with a letter of consent so that I can submit to my supervisor.

Thank you for your help and support

Safiya I. Alabdlkarim

Salford University

siaprphd@gmail.com

Appendix C: Response Letters by Interviewees

A sample letter from a television news channel responding to the Researcher's letter

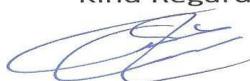
Kingdom of Saudi Arabia
Saudi Broadcasting Corporation
Al-Ekhbariya Channel

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

المملكة العربية السعودية
هيئة الإذاعة والتلفزيون
قناة الإخبارية

Safiya I. Alabdalkarim
Salford University
United Kingdom

Dear Safiya,
Greetings,
Thanks for your interest in studying the strategies and techniques, which are implemented by some of the leading television news channels in the Arab World. We would like to welcome you to conduct your study and we are glad to provide you with the required data needed for your study including interviews with selected staff of the channel.
Kind Regards,



Jasser Aljasser
General Manager Alekhbariya Channel
Email: jaaljasser@sbc.sa



Appendix D: Details of interviewees

ID	Channel	Role of the interviewee	Dates of interviews, follow-ups and approvals	Length of interview	Other information
01	Al Jazeera	Public Relation Manager – Aljazeera research centre	13 November 2016 24 November 2016 27 November 2016 29 November 2016 07 December 2016	Two hours	The interviews took more than only one phone calls and followed by phone calls and emails
02	Al Arabiya	Deputy Director-General	8 August 2015 12 August 2015 30 August 2015 9 September 2015 4 October 2015 21 October 2015 9 December 2015 28 January 2016 16 February 2016 4 April 2016 18 August 2017 18 August 2017 27 August 2017	Three hours	More than one visit followed by phone calls and emails
03	Nile News	General Director	17 August 2016 17 December 2015	Four hours	Followed by emails

			27 January 2016 7 February 2016 5 April 2016 2 November 2016 15 December 2016 10 January 2017		
04	Al-Ekhbariya	General Director	2 August 2015 25 August 2015 1 February 2016 24 June 2016 27 October 2016 2 November 2016 1 December 2016 19 April 2017 27 April 2017 08 May 2017 30 May 2017 12 June 2017	Three hours	Followed by phone calls and emails

Source: The Researcher

Appendix E: Participants Consent

Participant information sheet (Informed Consent)

Dear representative,

Greetings,

I am a postgraduate student at Salford University in Manchester, United Kingdom. The topic of my PhD research is concerned with how television news channels in the Arab World use news programmes as a means of branding their channels and a way of competing in the clutter media landscape in the Arab World. The study involves conducting interviews with representatives of the four selected television news channels (Al-Jazeera, Al-Arabiya, AlEkhbariya and the Nile news). The questions will shed lights on how news content, news production, news presenters (anchors and correspondents) of the television news channels participate in enhancing the channel brand and how news can be considered as a brand of the television news channel. In conducting the research, I need your support, as a representative of the selected television news channel, by answering the attached questionnaire and I am ready to answer any questions regarding to it and clarify any points in this regard. You have the right to withdraw consent once given at any stage, without prejudice, and, where appropriate, to withdraw data collected. All data presented by you in answering the questionnaires will be dealt with confidentially and for the purpose of the study only. As a representative of the selected television news channel, you have the right to allow us to mention your name in the study or keep it confidential and mention the name of the channel only. I can assure you that the acquired data will be used for academic purposes only and will not be disseminated to any other individual or institution.

Thank you for your support and participation

Safiya Ibrahim Alabdalkarim

Salford University

Siaprphd@gmail.com

Appendix F: Interview Questions



Al Arabiya

A sample of the interview questions (in Arabic)

مع الشكر وكل التقدير لسعادتكم

أسئلة القناة التلفزيونية

اسم القناة: العربية

اسم الجهة المالكة للقناة:

.....

اسم الشخص (الذي تفضل مشكورا بالإجابة على الأسئلة):

.....

مسماه الوظيفي:

.....

■ هل بالإمكان التفضل بتقديم تعريف شامل بالقناة يشمل:

- تاريخ نشأة القناة :

.....

- الشعار 

- شرح معاني الشعار:

.....

- التطور التاريخي للقناة:

.....

أهداف القناة:

.....

- رؤية القناة ورسالتها في حال وجود ذلك:

- أهم التحولات التحريرية التي مرت بها القناة:

- أهم التحولات الإخراجية التي مرت بها القناة:

- أهم التحولات التي مرت بها القناة فيما يتعلق بالسياسة التحريرية:

▪ كيف يتم تمويل القناة؟ ... أعني ماهي مصادر تمويل القناة؟

- هل القناة تمول من الحكومة؟ نعم لا

- هل القناة تمول من الإعلانات؟ نعم لا

- هل القناة تمول من مجالات تمويلية أخرى (ما هي)

- هل تقوم القناة بتمويل تكاليف تشغيلها ذاتيا؟ نعم لا

▪ من الذي يرسم سياسة القناة الإعلامية ويحدد أجندتها الإخبارية؟

▪ ما مدى الحرية التي تتمتع بها القناة؟

▪ هل بالإمكان التفضل بموافاتي بمعلومات حول العلامة التجارية للقناة (The Channel Brand)

▪ هل لديكم وضوح حول متى وأين يتم استخدام وإبراز شعار القناة؟ نعم لا

- ماذا يعني الهتاف الخاص بالقناة (the slogan) "أن تعرف أكثر" ؟ (أمل التفضل بشرح معاني الهتاف)

- كيف تعمل القناة على تحقيق المعاني المذكورة في هتافها المعلن؟

- هل لديكم دليل واضح للعمل الإخراجي يتم اتباعه من أجل تحقيق التميز لنشراتكم الإخبارية عن غيرها من القنوات المنافسة لكم؟ أمل شرح ذلك مع الشكر:

- ما هو الشكل الإخراجي لهوية القناة؟

- وما هي هوية القناة؟ كيف تصفونها؟

- هل لدى قناتكم التلفزيونية استراتيجية للتسويق؟ ماهي وكيف يتم بنائها؟

- هل لدى قناتكم استراتيجية لصناعة الفرق والاختلاف بينها وبين القنوات الأخرى العاملة في نفس المجال (القنوات الإخبارية)؟ نعم لا
- من يصنع سياسة القناة التسويقية؟

- ما مدى التعاون والتنسيق بين العمل الإخباري والعمل الإداري في بناء سياسة القناة التمييزية (branding)؟ أمل شرح ذلك :

- هل سياساتكم التسويقية والتمييزية (branding) واضحة لدى رؤساء تحرير النشرات الإخبارية؟ نعم لا

- هل سياساتكم التسويقية والتمييزية (branding) واضحة لدى المذيعين؟ نعم لا
- هل سياساتكم التسويقية والتمييزية (branding) واضحة لدى المراسلين؟ نعم لا
- أمل إيضاح ذلك ... كيف يتم تعريفهم بها وهل يساهمون في الأفكار المتعلقة بصياغتها

- هل سياسة القناة الخاصة بكيفية رسم صورتها عند الآخرين واضحة لدى رؤساء تحرير

- النشرات الإخبارية / المذيعين / المراسلين؟ نعم لا

- كيف يتم ذلك؟ وهل لديكم دليل ارشادي لذلك يتبعه الجميع؟

- هل تقوم القناة باستثمار أسماء مذييعها كأحد مكونات تمييزها عن غيرها من القنوات المنافسة لها في مجال الخدمة الإخبارية؟ نعم لا
- هل تقوم القناة باستثمار أسماء مراسليها كأحد مكونات تمييزها عن غيرها من القنوات المنافسة لها في مجال الخدمة الإخبارية؟ نعم لا
- هل تنظر القناة إلى المحتوى الخبري كجزء مهم في صناعة التميز وبناء الـ(brand) الخاصة بها والمنافسة مع القنوات الأخرى العاملة في مجال الأخبار بالوطن العربي؟ نعم لا
- هل تنظر القناة إلى مذييعها كجزء مهم في صناعة التميز وبناء الـ(brand) الخاصة بها والمنافسة مع القنوات الأخرى العاملة في مجال الأخبار بالوطن العربي؟ نعم لا
- هل تنظر القناة إلى مراسليها كجزء مهم في صناعة التميز وبناء الـ(brand) الخاصة بها والمنافسة مع القنوات الأخرى العاملة في مجال الأخبار بالوطن العربي؟ نعم لا
- برأيك .. هل تساهم التغطيات الإخبارية في صناعة اسم القناة وتأكيد تمييزها ومنافستها؟ نعم لا
- هل توجه القناة مذييعها للتركيز على إبراز القناة من خلال بث الأخبار التلفزيونية؟ كيف؟ نعم لا
- هل توجه القناة مراسليها للتركيز على إبراز القناة من خلال تقديم التغطيات الإخبارية التلفزيونية؟ كيف؟ نعم لا
-
- بشكل عام .. من خلال النشرات الإخبارية .. هل تعمل القناة على إبراز ما يميزها عن غيرها من القنوات العاملة في مجال الأخبار؟ كيف؟
-
- ما الذي يجعل التغطيات الإخبارية الخاصة بقناة متميزة ومختلفة عن غيرها؟
-
- كيف يمكن أن يكون مذيع النشرة الإخبارية / المراسل / الإخراج الفني للنشرة الإخبارية عاملاً أساسياً في تمييز القناة التلفزيونية الإخبارية واختلاف منتجاتها عن غيرها من القنوات؟
-
- هل تعتقد أن تمييز القناة التلفزيونية الإخبارية (branding) من خلال النشرات الإخبارية يمكن أن يكون عملية سهلة؟
-
- وهل يمكن أن يتم ذلك دون ملاحظة الجمهور؟ نعم لا
- ما الذي تفعله القناة من أجل أن تكون نشراتها الإخبارية مختلفة ومتميزة عن غيرها؟

-
- هل يضع المذيع / المراسل / المخرج للنشرة الإخبارية شعار القناة وهتاها (Logo & Slogan) نصب عينيه عند تقديم النشرة الإخبارية؟ نعم لا
 - من أجل أن تكون متميزا ومختلفا .. ماهي أهم الجوانب التي تركز القناة عليها؟
نعم لا
 - ما هي الاستراتيجيات التي تتبعها القناة (من خلال النشرات الإخبارية وغيرها) من أجل أن تصنع انطبعا إيجابيا لدى الجمهور عنها؟
-

- هل تقوم القناة بالتعرف على ودراسة الاستراتيجيات التي تتبعها القنوات المنافسة في مجال التغطيات الإخبارية؟ نعم لا
 - إذا كانت الإجابة بـ(نعم) .. فلماذا؟ وإلى أي مدى يتم ذلك؟ وكيف يتم ذلك؟
-

- إذا كانت الإجابة بـ(لا) فلماذا؟

.....

- هل هناك علاقة تعاون وتنسيق بين غرفة الأخبار وإدارات العلاقات العامة والتسويق من أجل تسويق القناة وبناء صورتها لدى الجمهور؟ أمل شرح ذلك
-

- وهل يتم تبادل الأفكار والرؤى حول استثمار النشرات الإخبارية لبناء صورة القناة الذهنية لدى الجمهور وتأكيد تميزها؟ نعم لا
 - هل تعتقد أن استخدام النشرات الإخبارية كوسيلة لتأكيد تمييز القناة تعتبر استراتيجية ممارسة في القنوات التلفزيونية الفضائية الإخبارية بشكل عام والعربية بشكل خاص؟ نعم لا
 - إلى أي مدى تعتقد أن سعي القناة ورغبتها في تحقيق التميز على منافسيها يمكن أن يؤثر في عملية اختيار الأخبار ومعالجتها؟
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أمل شرح ذلك؟

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- بعد تقديم الشكر لكم لتفضلكم بمساعدتنا في الحصول على المعلومات المتعلقة بالدراسة .. أتطلع إلى كريم إضافة ما ترون مناسبته حول كيف يمكن أن تكون الأخبار وسيلة من وسائل بناء الصورة الذهنية عن القناة وتأكيد تميزها ومنافستها
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Appendix G: Summary Responses

Summary of responses to interview questions by representatives of the four selected television news channels

	AL-ARABIYA	ALJAZEERA	NILE NEWS	AL-EKHBARIYA
Objectives	To provide viewers with coverage of the news of the Arab world in general and the Gulf region in particular.	To raise audience awareness about the issues that are important to them.	To address the problems facing the Arab world and internationally After recent political developments in Egypt, coverage of domestic affairs has increased.	To present a new image of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA) To provide all-inclusive news coverage, enabling the viewer to form a comprehensive idea of our stories. To provide the audience with informative scope of news items abroad.
Vision and Mission	To provide news and programmes based on a concept of news that is non-sensationalist, humanitarian, devoid of hatred and sectarianism.	To provide balanced news processing of events, enabling Arab audience of having the opportunity to follow news and analysis of events.	To focus on presenting the Egyptian point of view	To provide audiences with news reporting, talk shows and news analysis programmes.
Main elements that set channel apart from competitors	<p>Coverage of the Iraq war. Al Arabiya has been (and still is) a high-ranking source of news coverage of this conflict, where it lost 12 of its correspondents. Its bureaux were also targeted and some of its correspondents were either kidnapped or assassinated. Others were killed accidentally by American troops.</p> <p>Al Arabiya was the first to report the news of the assassination of former Lebanese Prime Minister Rafiq Hariri and to broadcast, exclusively, on 27 March 2005, video footage of the incident taken by the HSBC bank overlooking the scene of the explosion. This was used in the official investigation into the case.</p> <p>On New Year's Eve, Al Arabiya broadcast an interview with Abdulhaleem Khaddam, former Vice President of the late Syrian President Hafez Al Assad, in which he announced his break from the Syrian Regime.</p> <p>Coverage of the Arab Spring events in 2011.</p> <p>Comprehensive and almost exclusive coverage of these events and political changes in the Arab World.</p> <p>Coverage of the American elections from an international perspective.</p>	<p>Its media policy and news processing methods.</p> <p>Aljazeera uses all available media formats to enhance its identity and establish this to attract viewers.</p> <p>It invests in human and technical resources to provide complete, comprehensive coverage of events.</p> <p>It uses all forms of technology in its TV reports, dialogues, news analysis.</p> <p>To provide its audience with comprehensive news services.</p>	<p>Nile News has always paid attention to the most important news and not coverage of the official events</p> <p>A change of policy has taken place. Official news, such as news about the President or the Prime Minister is now more prominent.</p> <p>Greater focus on local news</p>	<p>Its programmes and news content</p> <p>Presentation style</p> <p>Providing a high-quality product that is representative of KSA's information policy</p>

Channel brand	<p>Varied material (political events, business and Sport)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Speed • Exclusivity <p>Moderation which is being non-sensationalist</p> <p>Observing journalistic professional ethics</p>	<p>Seeks to extend media freedom through hearing and accepting views that may be contrary to their own.</p> <p>Distinctive and comprehensive media coverage.</p> <p>Ensuring that coverage of events provides all perspectives and gives all parties equal opportunities to participate.</p>	<p>To present objective coverage of the news with in-depth analysis of all perspectives.</p>	<p>To provide all-inclusive comprehensive coverage of events using all of the channel's human and technical resources to cover all aspects of the news and translate theory into practical way of news processing</p>
Distinctive features of channel's presentational style	<p>The appropriate use of Lighting</p> <p>Moving the camera within the appropriate frame of producing news</p> <p>Friendly presenters</p> <p>The way of conveying facts in an informative style</p>	<p>The channel has its own style and invests in all available media formats to enhance its identity and establish this by attractive presentations to the audience.</p>	<p>Attracting audience by all means</p> <p>Providing current objective coverage.</p> <p>Presenting all sides of the story</p>	<p>Using dominant colours such as blue and green.</p> <p>Paying attention to form and presentation.</p>
Channel identity	<p>Markedly realistic, elegant, stylish and fashionable in its news production</p> <p>Up-to-the-minute and modern.</p>	<p>Content represents the indirect identity.</p> <p>Quality of coverage and news processing.</p> <p>Choice to focus on specific topics or geographic areas that are a priority in the channel's main news agenda.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Current • Accurate • Professional 	
Channel's slogan and meaning	<p>To Know More</p> <p>The dissemination of knowledge</p>	<p>'The opinion and the other opinion'</p> <p>Giving opportunities for contrary diverse views to be heard</p>	<p>'The nearest to you'</p> <p>Emphasising local (Egyptian) events</p>	<p>'Events 'News' within a comprehensive vision'</p> <p>Providing the audience with full information related to the event being reported</p>
What features does channel emphasise in order to be different and distinctive	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • News content • News production • Exclusivity • Timeliness 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • News content • News production 	<p>It focuses on the exclusivity of its coverage</p> <p>Caters for the average Egyptian citizen and makes their voice heard</p> <p>Knows the hopes and dreams of its audience</p> <p>Informs the audience about Egyptian and international issues.</p>	<p>Its successful image and distinctive brand identity are based on</p> <p>Distinctive content</p> <p>Objective and truthful treatment of material</p>
Level of cooperation between	<p>High level of cooperation between newsroom and all administration offices especially marketing and public relations</p> <p>Exchange of views and ideas about news impact and about audience preferences and needs</p>	<p>All sectors and departments of the channel are integrated and work together to affirm the channel brand</p>	<p>The marketing department cooperates with the newsroom</p>	<p>The newsroom fulfils the main mission of the channel while the administration helps it to achieve its goal of distinctive branding</p>