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HOW AMERICAN TALK SHOWS PORTRAIT SAUDI ARABIA?

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ABSTRACT

This study examines how Saudi Arabia is represented and depicted in the American talk shows. It qualitatively analyses 13 episodes of (The Daily Show with Trevor Noah) that discussed issues relating to Saudi Arabia from 2015–2019. The study adopted the content analysis in order to answer the research questions. The results revealed 10 themes represented what had been discussed in the talk show regarding Saudi Arabia. These themes have been framed in a negative way and included highlighting the wealth and well-being, barbarism in penalties, strangeness in lifestyle, delay in positive changes and modernization, in addition to prejudicing the Saudi figures. Along with minimizing the reality of the common interests with the United States, promoting the stereotype of Saudi Arabia in mainstream media, exaggerating Saudi control over the world, doubting the reality of fighting corruption and finally mentioning positive decisions. The findings indicated that the representation of Saudi Arabia in the program was cynical and biased, using the negative frames in relation to most of the Saudi issues and decisions. These negative frames also have been used in the positive changes and achievements which were considered as challenges.

Keywords: Content analysis, mental image, Saudi Arabia, talk shows, USA.

INTRODUCTION

The United States of America (USA) media was the first to initiate the broadcast talk, not only on TV but also, in radio stations since the former was not popular at the time (in the 1930s). By the emergence of televisions across the world in the 1950s, the public interest shifted to televisions. Media especially tv has a great influence on audiences (Heidari; 2019). However, the first talk show to be broadcast on television was in 1951. Since then, the host, Edward R. Murrow, became famous for his program, *Tonight Show*, which discussed politics and life in America every Sunday (Zidane, 2011).

Talk shows enjoy popularity and close attention all over the world, about its dependence on discussing important, favored issues in an easy, understandable manner, whether political, cultural, social, or economic ones. Notably, in foreign talk shows, veteran politicians, intellectuals, and officials are keen on appearing on those talk shows owing to its high ratings and viewing by all various classes of the society.

Decision-makers acknowledge the role of media in their policies, especially talk shows that can change numerous concepts and shape public opinion, to support or oppose. Therefore, they fund it and conciliate its owners to gain their loyalty and support. That is, to spread a positive image, attracting support from a broad spectrum of the public (Newspaper, 2014).

In fact, media is the pillar of reporting news, information, and conceptualizing opinions, as it contributes to human societies and affects the different aspects of life as many other factors

(Salehzadeh et al., 2019). Granted, it offers information, notions, impressions, and perceptions, forming diverse public convictions.

Media studies suggest that media tops the vehicles for building one's perceptions and meanings, as it is the chief source of information for many people. Regarding its influence and potentials, the media promotes comprehension and recognition amongst the public. Moreover, it rivals other sources of knowledge. A set of theoretical hypotheses shows that forming mental images and meanings are among the functions of the media. Some of the examples of such forms are the symbolic interactionism, observational learning, and cultivation theory, spiral of silence, knowledge divide, and social marketing theories. Agenda-Setting Theory stresses the significance of mental images and framing people's views (Morad, 2011).

Many Arab studies have focused on the Western media's mental images of Islam and Muslims, though most of these images are portrayed in a negative and distorted manner. That is due to their immense influence, persuasion, and the ability to store images in the collective memory. Furthermore, studies employed the results of the Arabs' image of the post-9/11 incident and how the Western media treated Islam and Muslims, especially in their production of Movies, drama, and news. Examples of such studies are studies conducted by (Hijaz, 2013; Rababah, and Al-Kilani, 2014; Belkhiri, 2018).

While foreign studies have highlighted the impact of talk shows on the decisions of the American public concerning many issues relating to the American society, e.g. the presidential election (McCraw 2006; Jackson, 2010) the study of Sharifi et al. (2017) is the closest to the subject of the current study, from our perspective. The mentioned study observes the representation of Islamic entities in the Cable News Network (CNN), using the analysis approach on the episodes of Global Public Square (GPS), talk show by the host *FareedZakaria*. The subject of the study has included 34 episodes addressed by analysis. Eventually, the results have revealed anti-Islam bias, emphasizing Muslim women's oppression and the so-called Islamic terrorism. The researcher adopted the textual analysis of meaning, arguments, and approach, as well as the contextual analysis in viewing numbers and participants. The findings have pinpointed that CNN's Muslim-related issues presentation was biased and stereotyped at all levels.

Since the lack of studies approaching the impact of American talk shows concerning Arab affairs, specifically the Saudi affairs, it is obvious that the public takes the ideas and beliefs of these programs for granted. Not to mention how these programs address the Arab issues, Saudi ones in particular, and how they include the Saudi image and citizens in the context of their talk shows.

The current study is the first to analyze and explore the Saudi image in the American media, represented in the talk shows. The importance of discussing these talk shows, which present an unjustifiable mental image, lies in their high view rates in the American classes, and world-widely. Thus, what is conveyed and repeated in these talk shows is worth studying and analyzing to help Saudi decision-makers comprehend and recognize such stereotypes and the way to tackle it.



OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

This study targets analyzing how the American media portray Saudi Arabia in their talk shows. The underlying objective consists of two subordinate ones:

1. Identify the main axes when dealing with US talk shows on Saudi issues
2. Analyzing the frameworks and templates in which US talk shows present Saudi issues

PROBLEM AND QUESTIONS

The media play a fundamental role, raising the public interest in the ongoing issues and problems. Matter-of-factly, the media is a chief source of information for the public to obtain all output of political, cultural, and social issues as a consequence of its social effectiveness and prevalence. The ability of the media to direct and address social masses displays an indirect potential to influence, shaping social awareness. (Hilles and Mehdi, 2010)

Moreover, the present world social orientation imposes its influence over the social life of people via the media discourse, thanks to information and communication technology (Al-Gram, 2015). Talk shows, notwithstanding, are one of the media's critical types of high ratings and views and therefore, it can largely contaminate people's minds and way of thinking, as is the case with the US talk shows, especially comedy shows. The findings suggest this form of programs turn issues into satirical dialogues, paying the attention of viewers who are usually not necessarily interested in following the issues or news (Russo, 2013). These programs are capable of building the perceptual aspect of the individual not only in America but also for the world as the United States has a multinational social environment and a mass media nature (Lawrence, 2000). American media is presently considered as the main international media and the most capable to form, draw and even devote mental images on various topics, including those of the Middle East.

Many researchers have underlined the magnitude of the media's influence on public opinion, especially the political scientist, Harold Laswell, who undertook to study this influence, strength, and magnitude through methodological questions that became the basis for studying the media in general (Hawary, 2018).

The main overarching question of the study is:

What is the mental image of Saudi Arabia in the American talk shows?

Given the above central question of the study, some sub-questions arise:

1. What are the main pivots when dealing with the US talk shows on Saudi issues?
2. What are the frameworks and molds provided in US talk shows about the Saudi issues?

METHODOLOGY

Methods and Tools of the Study

The study was guided by a qualitative methodology through analyzing the primarily collected data subjectively and objectively to evaluate the mental image of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia to grasp the social context and the way the US talk shows and programs interact with Saudi issues. As such, the study will help to identify the meanings and implications of these American talk shows that took a strong stance to deal with Saudi affairs.



In view of the above, it is the authors' perceived views that the design of the exploratory case study is the most appropriate to generate results, achieving the objectives of this study, which seeks to identify the most common frameworks when discussing the Saudi issues in the talk show (*The Daily Show*). It is important to shed light on these frameworks—what it underlines and the reception of Saudi Arabia among Americans. That is, through the qualitative analysis of the episodes during which the Saudi issues were discussed.

The primary data of the study was collected through the qualitative content analysis tool. More specifically, the method of content or documents' analysis relies on the posit that the attitude of the groups and individuals are reflected in their writings, laws, newspapers, literature, arts, and sayings. However, when all the mentioned undertakes to analysis, it discloses the trends of those groups (Abou El Nasr, 2017). Thanks to the researcher, George Kelly who was the man detected the differences between the quantitative and qualitative methods in 1959 and adopted the former one, demonstrating its usefulness and flexibility in analyzing some areas. For example, propaganda and clinical psychology (Chandra, et al., 2004). Later, Holste (1969) affirmed George's views in 1955 and defined the qualitative content analysis as a research method designed to produce inferences by the objective and systematic diagnosis of specific attributes of hidden messages (Al-Khaleel, 2013).

The content analysis assesses various forms of human communications, including books, newspapers, and films, to pinpoint patterns, themes, or prejudice (Bashtaa, 2017). Over the last few decades, media discourse or the content of media offerings have become an important source in determining political, economic, social, and cultural frameworks for the public, informing them of the events of the society. Thus, it is imperative to analyze the contents of the media discourse as the media is involved in providing information about local and international issues as well as important events. To clarify, all of the aforementioned concepts can help the public to better understand the turns of events, prominent issues and eventually form opinions, trends, and make decisions that control the behavior (Aldubaisi, 2017).

The Study Subject

The choice of the talk show, *The Daily Show*, as a subject was due to several factors. One such factor is the survey studies of the Pew Research Center and Colbert Political Information Report which denote that young voters in American masses prefer programs like *The Daily Show* (Eidtson, 2013). Research suggests that viewers may receive late-night comedy and political satire programs, such as *The Daily Show*, differently from traditional media. They consider late-night comedy programs as a source of political information (Feldman, 2013). A study in 2004 showed that more than 60% of young voters are taking information about the political campaigns from entertainment programs, such as *The Daily Show* (Lawrason, 2016).

The Daily Show, enjoys high view rates, as the number of subscriptions on its YouTube channel reached over 4.5 million subscribers. The program is also broadcasted on the Comedy Central channel. The current study analyzed the episodes that aired between 2015–2018 which include any content about Saudi Arabia. This period is called a New era of Saudi Arabia as this period witnessed the arrival of King Salman bin Abdulaziz to the throne. The researchers used the keywords “Saudi” on the program website and found that 13 episodes mentioned Saudi Arabia between 2015–2018. These episodes have been analyzed using a Qualitative thematic analysis approach.



RESULTS AND DISCUSSION:

This study is considered the first of its kind to analyze and explore the image of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia in American talk shows. Moreover, it aims, as stated previously, to identify and reveal how Saudi Arabia is represented in the US media, especially satiric talk shows, through qualitative thematic analysis of *The Daily Show* program's episodes, which deliberated on the Saudi affairs in 2015–2019.

Since satiric programs play a role in shaping the awareness of a sector of the public regarding some social and political issues, they have managed to reach the average person in plain language, and entertain viewers with sarcastic situations. Usually, encouraging criticism fosters knowledge of the political and social debate in the community. The more these kinds of programs are watched, the greater the knowledge and attention of political affairs and political positions increase (Hefnawi, 2017).

The literature review reveals that a few studies have addressed the cynical approach of talk shows. Most of these studies investigated the impact of talk shows on the US voters and few studies discussed the social content of the talk shows. The current study analyzed 13 episodes of *The Daily Show* between 2016-2018 and found 10 main themes that portrayed Saudi Arabia to the viewer's Diagram (1): pivots of talk in Saudi affairs.

Highlighting Wealth and Well-Being

The program deals with some Saudi political decisions sarcastically and cynically, framing the idea of wealth and well-being of Saudi society in conjunction with the decision of the arresting several officials and princes on charges of financial and administrative corruption in 2017. At the time, the authorities arrested princes, ministers, and officials on the background of corruption cases and others related to taking advantage of the power and suspected of money laundering (Okaz, 2017). In 2019, Saudi Arabia announced that it had ended an expanded crackdown on corruption, which was ordered by Crown Prince, Mohammed bin Salman in 2017 and it included dozens of princes, ministers, and prominent businessmen. Meanwhile, government officials confirmed that over 100 billion dollars were retrieved through settlement procedures with 87 people after they have fully admitted their guilt and accepted the settlement (BBC, 2019).



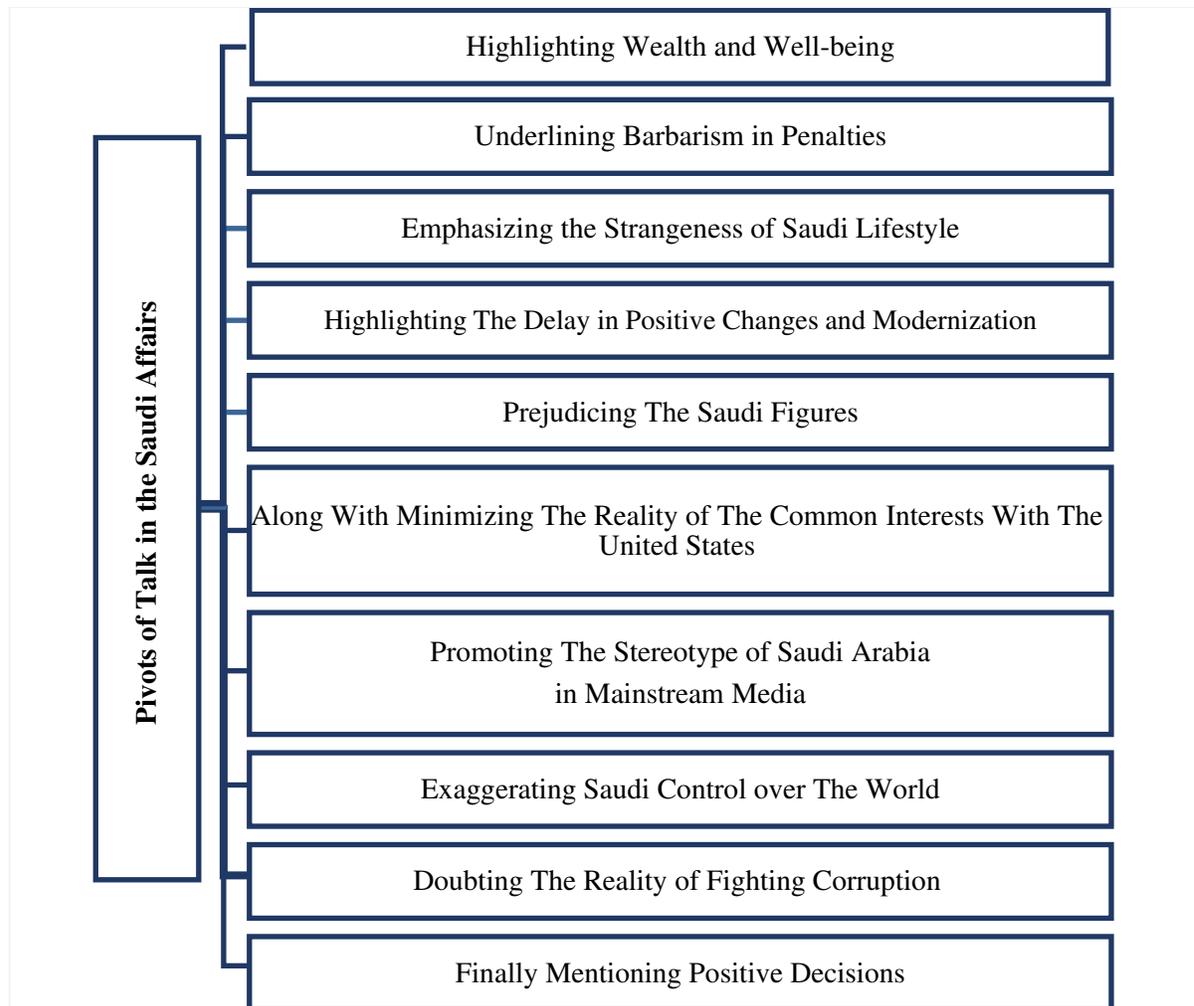


Diagram 1: Pivots of talk in the Saudi affairs

The introduction of this Saudi crackdown decision in the program was undoubtedly satirical using exaggeration and exclamation to denote wealth and luxury. For instance, the host mentioned: “Corruption? These Saudi princes have all the wealth already (a series of pictures of expensive planes is shown) Look at this plane of one of the princes! Who can offer a bribe to this person?”. (*The Daily Show*, 07-11-2017).

Speaking of Saudi Arabia's decision against corruption and the use of an exaggerated manner to describe Saudi wealth and welfare, the host, Trevor Noah, goes on to say: “Since Saudi Arabia is ‘Saudi Arabia’, they are being held in the most difficult places in Riyadh! They are at the Ritz-Carlton. This how you know your country is rich—the best hotels in the world is your prison”. He continues to make jokes at the place of residence by fabricating a dialogue between a prisoner and the officer:

“Prisoner: I am imprisoned like an animal; my rights have been robbed. Alexa, play some quiet music!

Officer: Turn down the sound or you'll go to the Marriott.

Prisoner: “No, no.”



Noticeably, the host deviates from the primary purpose of the Saudi campaign against corruption and turns to another side in an attempt to keep away the focus on the true story, framing the image of luxury, welfare and wealth in Saudi Arabia.

Underlining Barbarism in Penalties

One of the episodes addressed in the analysis, Saudi Arabia was framed with some descriptions that carry negative meanings and indicate barbarism in penalties. At the beginning of the talk about the Saudi affairs in the episode, the host reminds: “Saudi Arabia is a conservative state where women cannot drive, homosexuals are whipped in them, and thieves' hands are cut off”. As is repeated in another episode through a negative portrayal of the Saudi state, the host described Saudi Arabia: “it is the evil, weird uncle of America who decapitates people now and then”. (*The Daily Show*, 16-10-2018)

The launch of these epithets forms a very negative mindset. Mentioning a set of descriptions in conjunction with Saudi Arabia and using words, such as Whipping, hands cut off, decapitating, a barbaric and uncivilized image may be formed in minds of others about Saudi Arabia. As if to say: Saudi Arabia is based on those mentioned descriptions, without giving any fair regard to the other characteristics and features.

Emphasizing the Strangeness of Saudi Lifestyle

The program repeats its attempt to implant a cynical mental image of Saudi society by giving certain signals that the lifestyle of their own is strange and cannot be imagined. Also, the host, in one of the episodes, exploited a video published by a news channel of a fashion show in Saudi Arabia, in which drones were showing the dresses on the display corridor wherein the end, the host commented: ”The Middle East and drones... Whatever comes up to your mind, it will not be the matter I will talk about!” (*The Daily Show*, 11-06-2018).

(The Fashion Show video is being displayed)

The host continues: “Fashion show by drones is one of the strangest things I've ever seen, but if you add Harry Potter's music (a movie about magic) that makes sense”.

About the unusual Saudi lifestyle, the program uses the Saudi woman as a trump card in this pivot. That is, giving a closer look at what women of Saudi Arabia were experiencing in recent years, specifically, during King Salman's reign, which is currently witnessing many aspects of the women's rights expansion. In contrast, an individual who claims adherence to democracy in their rhetoric makes jokes and mocks Saudi women in their beliefs, shape, and lifestyle.

While commenting on the decision to allow women to drive, the program's preparation team used a report published in the Columbia Broadcasting System (CBS) TV channel's *This Morning* program, showing Saudi women drive. Among them was a girl, named Hana, driving a racing car at a tremendous speed. Nonetheless, the host commented on this report: “You will not convince me this is their first time driving when they drive like this!”. He continued: “Women will celebrate until others ask them to drive them to the airport:

Others: Fatima, can you give me a ride to the airport?

Girl driving: No, I follow the old law; I don't think we should drive cars”. (*The Daily Show*, 25-06-2018)



The host may have meant to refer to the congested roads leading to the airport, but the expression and body language used can be seen to be making a mockery of Saudi women's beliefs for sure.

Also, the program uses sarcastic phrases to mock Saudi women more than once. For example, talking about the decision to allow women to enter the stadiums, the host fabricated a dialogue between two personalities:

“Girls: Wow, this is amazing! We'll finally see Messi and Ronaldo.

Males: No, you will only see the Saudi team.

Girls: We prefer to be repressed.” (*The Daily Show*, 18-01-2018)

The use of the word ‘repression’ is an explicit and sarcastic reference to the status of Saudi women.

The program also uses many images of Saudi women wearing the niqab and makes sarcastic expressions. For instance, in an episode discussing mobile phone programs capable of recognizing the faces of people, the host went to show an image of a woman wearing niqab and says: “In Saudi Arabia, there is a ban on face recognition for half of the people” (*The Daily Show*, 18-01-2018)

In another episode, while talking about President Trump's visit to Saudi Arabia, a picture of a group of veiled women was shown and commented on by fabricating President Trump's voice: “Oh, a lot of ninja fighters here” (*The Daily Show*, 30-05-2017).

Highlighting the Delay in Positive Change Modernization

In an attempt to portray the Saudi decision negatively, as if it came too late, the program exploits the decision of allowing women to drive to address it cynically. The host tries to say that the decision came late indirectly. For example, the host said: “The government decided to double the traffic jam by allowing women to drive, just in time! A year before cars turn into self-driving cars, Saudis planned this!”. (*The Daily Show*, 25-06-2018)

It occurs again when the program dealt with the decision of lifting the cinema ban in Saudi Arabia, saying: “Perhaps, the cinema decision seems small in our world, but for Saudis, it is way big! Although I am surprised that they start with new movies and then moved to the old ones! Why not see the classics before nowadays movies?! They are going backward now”. An indication that shows Saudi Arabia as lagging behind other countries. (*The Daily Show*, 18-01-2018)

Prejudicing the Saudi Figures.

One of the government's systems of the ruling constitution in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia is stated in Article V of the Basic Law—The ruling monarch shall be in the sons of the founder King Abdul Aziz bin Abdul Rahman Al Faisal and the sons of the sons (Basic Law of Governance, 1992). The existence of one dynasty in Saudi Arabia means that each individual, belonging to it, is called a prince. The program keeps on commenting on the Saudi regime in an episode through the satirical handling of the number of Saudi princes: “Saudis have a large number of princes more than a Halloween party in Minneapolis... It is very difficult to follow the news of all this!”. (*The Daily Show*, 07-11-2017)

Remarking on the decision to allow Saudi women to drive, the host cynically wonders about the reason for such a decision: “Perhaps, the king of Saudi Arabia required a ride to somewhere and couldn't find but his wife. So, he decided to allow women to drive”.



Sarcastically, the host made up a manly voice: “Well, alright, women can drive. Now, can you pick me up quickly?”. (*The Daily Show*, 26-09-2017)

This comment, in addition to its mockery of Saudi symbols, represented in the king of Saudi Arabia, also conveys a mental image to the listener that the Saudi decision is taken individually and quickly according to the ruling family’s needs.

“As for thieves, one cannot say they have not been warned, as Saudi Arabia has a sword on its flag... To be aware, they are very honest”. (*The Daily Show*, 16-10-2017) Along with the negative framing, here is the ridicule of Saudi Arabia’s symbols, as mentioned about the Saudi flag—a form of warning of cutting and retribution.

Minimizing the Reality of Common Interests with The United States

The program discusses several times, the relationship between the US and Saudi government, puts it within the framework of the financial interests directed by the Saudi state to the United States to gain support. For example, the program approached the case of the disappearance of a Saudi journalist inside the Saudi consulate. The host then commented: “One of the reasons pushing President Trump to support Saudi Arabia regarding the Saudi press issue is that Saudi Arabia has promised him to buy US arms worth \$ 110 billion. This is a relationship both parties would like to maintain”. Moreover, the host, Trevor Noah, shared the host, Michael Costa, as a guest inside the studio to talk about the relationship between the two countries. Michael mentions in the role-play of America: “What if know that our closest friend in the Middle East has lost a journalist? Then we would have to stop selling weapons worth billions of dollars! However, if we both decided that the journalist had fallen into a volcano then... ‘Bring the sales ticket with you, O’ Saudis”. (*The Daily Show*, 16-10-2018)

Ultimately, this description of the incident dedicated and framed that the Saudi-US relationship is based upon the context of the financial interests only.

As the program treats the first trip of Trump as the President of the United States, he visited Saudi Arabia as the first country to arrive to as President of the United States, it did not overlook putting the financial interests first. That was further elaborated by showing a picture of King Salman of Saudi Arabia, President Trump, and the President of Egypt. The host commented: “To unite the forces of *oil*, Saudi Arabia, *plutonium*, Egypt, *Samra spray*, President Trump”. (*The Daily Show*, 30-05-2017)

In another episode, the same topic of the arms deal was tackled using a tweet of President Trump on his personal Twitter account, in which he wrote:

We get hundreds of billions of dollars back to the US from the Middle East, which means jobs, jobs, and more jobs.” The host comments on a tweet saying, “Great news, but the thing is that there is no real agreement between Saudi Arabia and President Trump. It is just a sentence, ‘We would like to hold a deal in the future.’ Mainly Donald Trump likes to be a president, not to do the work of the president. (*The Daily Show*, 6-06-2017)

Regardless of what the host, Trevor Noah means of the ironic character of President Trump, he used Saudi Arabia to formulate mockery and ridicule by reinforcing the mental image of Saudi Arabia being a wealthy state and able to make President Trump change his beliefs by the promises of money.



Exaggerating Saudi Control over the World

The program attempts claiming that the Saudi state has ambitions of dominating the world by referring to a report from CNN channel, showing Trump's son-in-law, Jared Kushner who visited Saudi Arabia just days before the anti-corruption campaign. The report said Jared and the crown prince stayed together until 4 am, and Trevor Noah commented: "Jared and the Crown Prince are together until 4 am, maybe talking about taking over the world!". (*The Daily Show*, 07-11-2017)

Despite the renaissance and development of the Saudi state since King Salman's rise through several resolutions, including the anti-corruption campaign, the program has consistently portrayed the campaign as having other goals and interests and never showed once that this campaign is meant to fight corruption.

Promoting the Stereotype of Saudi Arabia In Mainstream Media

Again, the program approaches the arms deal, framing and highlighting a particular aspect of the story clearly to bring as many jokes and ridicule as possible. Commenting on President Trump's travel to Saudi Arabia, the host keeps on using negative descriptions, indicative of terrorism and that the deal contradicts what Trump has called for previously. "What is this nonsense, Trump went to Saudi Arabia and didn't mention 'Extreme Islamist Terrorism' even once (Making up Trump's voice), as the former President Obama criticized about it. On top of that, he signs the biggest deal in the history of America with the Saudis! They are the same people he accused of being behind the events of 9/11". The host means that President Trump is contradicting himself on the financial side. But the use of "Extreme Islamist Terrorism" reinforces the image that the Saudis are terrorists and extremists. Additionally, he digresses by making up a dialogue between Trump and Saudi Arabia:

"Trump: Well, you must promise me not to use this weapon to trigger another 9/11 attack.

Saudi Arabia: No, we will change history.

Trump: All right, then". (*The Daily Show*, 30-05-2017)

Doubting the Reality of Fighting Corruption

Addressing the campaign to eliminate corruption in Saudi Arabia and the arrest of several officials and princes pending investigation in cases of financial and administrative corruption, the host attempted to question the objectives of this campaign in Saudi Arabia. Moreover, he portrays it as one of the hidden goals to eliminate competitors on power, employing satire on President Trump and showing his personal opinion about the campaign against corruption in Saudi Arabia. Furthermore, he depicted the matter as one of President Trump's wishes of imprisoning all his rivals, through fabricating a dialogue between Trump and Prince Mohammed bin Salman:

"President Trump: Is that true, Prince? Have you imprisoned all enemies?

Prince: Yes, all of them.

President Trump: Even Hillary?

Prince: No, Donald, this is another country". (*The Daily Show*, 07-11-2017)



Mentioning Positive Decisions

On the other hand, the program used very little positive hints associated with the assumption of Prince Mohammed bin Salman, the Crown Prince of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. For example, while coming across the campaign against corruption, the host, Trevor Noah, stated: “To be fair, the situation in Saudi Arabia is more complex. The Crown Prince does not try to take over the power only but also trying to develop Saudi Arabia, diversify the sources of income, as well as expand women's rights” (*The Daily Show*, 07-11-2017)

The host mentions the action of lifting the ban on cinemas, a positive hint was said: “Saudi Arabia, the largest conservative state in the world, but since the prince, Mohammed bin Salman was nominated the Saudi Arabia’s Crown Prince in June, many steps have been taken, trying to develop the state. One of such is allowing women to drive and now they can also attend games and the ban on cinemas was lifted”. (*The Daily Show*, 18-01-2018)

Although these hints came after much negative framing of Saudi Arabia, clarity of vision is obvious to other societies, as well as the ongoing pursuit to develop and change the Kingdom Saudi Arabia during the new era, since his highness, King Salman took over the thrown and Prince Mohammed bin Salman became the Crown Prince.

CONCLUSION

The current research utilizes the content analysis approach to address the objectives: Finding out the most prominent frameworks when treating Saudi affairs in American talk shows. The results showed 11 classifications upon which Saudi Arabia is framed by a set of negative descriptions. These classifications are: highlighting the wealth and well-being [1], barbarism in penalties [2], strangeness in lifestyle [3], delay regarding positive change [4], in addition to prejudicing the Saudi symbols [5]. Along with illuminating utilitarianism, in common interests [6], promoting propaganda in the media [7], exaggerating Saudi control [8], questioning fighting corruption [9], doubting the nature of decisions [10] and finally ignoring the positive decisions [11].

The results imply, in more than once in the current study, the attempt to distort the Saudi mental image and underline a particular aspect, serving this purpose, through the negative framing of all issues and decisions of the Saudi society and its policy.

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