

Al Jazeera's Coverage of Jamal Khashoggi's Murder

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ABSTRACT

In the fall of 2018, the murder of Saudi journalist Jamal Khashoggi became headlining news all over the world. Khashoggi was a prominent critic of the Saudi government, he was especially critical of Saudi crowned prince Mohammad Bin Salman. The news of Khashoggi's murder was followed gradually by Qatari owned news network Al Jazeera. Before the Khashoggi murder, in the summer of 2017 Saudi Arabia and her neighboring allies United Arab Emirates, Bahrain and Egypt placed sanction on Qatar. Those countries gave 13-point list of demands, which included the shutdown of Qatari news network Al Jazeera in order to lift the blockade on Qatar; the Qatar government disagreed with those demands because they believed it would affect their nation's sovereignty. This study looks at how Al Jazeera covered the murder of Jamal Khashoggi, taking into account the Saudi-Qatar diplomatic conflict.

This study analyzed six episodes from the news commentary show *Inside Story* on Al Jazeera English. Secondary data was collected through Al Jazeeras online archives. The study used qualitative methodology through critical discourse analysis.

The findings of this study showed that the issues emphasized in Al Jazeeras coverage of Khashoggis murder were Saudi-US relations and how those relations have affected the Middle East. Al Jazeera used Khashoggis murder to openly criticize Mohammad bin Salman the Saudi crowned prince. Based on analysis the study also found that there was a connection between Saudi-Qatar diplomatic conflict and Al Jazeera's coverage of the murder.

Keywords: Critical discourse analysis, Jamal Khashoggi, Al Jazeera, Agenda Setting Theory, Gatekeeping Theory

ÖZ

2018 sonbaharında Suudi gazeteci Jamal Khashoggi cinayeti tüm dünyada haber başlıkları altına alındı. Khashoggi, Suudi hükümetinin önde gelen eleştirmenlerinden biriydi, özellikle Suudi prensi Prens Muhammed Bin Salman'ı eleştiriyordu. Khashoggi'nin cinayet haberi, Katar'ın sahip olduğu haber ağı Al Jazeera tarafından adım adım izlendi. Khashoggi cinayetinden önce, 2017 yazında Suudi Arabistan ve komşu müttefikleri Birleşik Arap Emirlikleri, Bahreyn ve Mısır Katar'a yaptırım uyguladı. Bu ülkeler, Katar'daki ablukayı kaldırmak için Katar haber ağı Al Jazeera'nın kapatılmasını içeren 13 noktadan oluşan bir talep listesi verdi; Katar hükümeti, ulusların egemenliğini etkileyeceğine inandıkları için bu taleplerde karşı çıktı. Bu çalışma, Al Jazeera'nin Suudi – Katar diplomatik çalışmasını dikkate alarak Jamal Khashoggi cinayetini nasıl ele aldığına bakıyor.

Bu çalışma, Al Jazeera English hakkındaki haber şov programında Inside Story'den altı bölümü analiz etti. İkincil veriler Al Jazeera'deki çevrimiçi arşivler aracılığıyla toplandı. Çalışmada eleştirel söylem analizi yoluyla nitel yöntemi kullanılmıştır. Bu çalışmanın bulguları, Al Jazeera'deki Khashoggis cinayeti kapsamındaki konuların Suudi-ABD ilişkileri ve bu ilişkilerin Ortadoğu'yu nasıl etkilediğini göstermiştir. Al Jazeera, Suudi prensi Muhammed Mohammad Bin Salman'ı açıkça eleştirmek için Khashoggis cinayetini kullandı. Analizlere göre, çalışma aynı zamanda Suudi-Katar diplomatik çatışması ile Al Jazeera'nin cinayeti kapsamı arasında bir bağlantı olduğunu tespit etti.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Eleştirel söylem analizi, Jamal Khashoggi, Al Jazeera, Gündem belirleme teorisi, Kapı tutma teorisi

DEDICATION

To my Parents

Halliru Wunti Abdullahi & Habiba Ibrahim Abdullahi

And my sisters

Rabiyya Halliru Abdullahi

Aisha Halliru Abdullahi

&

Hafsat Halliru Abdullahi

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

CDA	Critical Discourse Analysis
GCC	Gulf Council Cooperation
MBS	Mohammad Bin Salman

Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

News media play a crucial role in giving certain events significance through emphasis and constant report on a certain event. The murder of Jamal Khashoggi is an excellent example of power of media, this study will give an insight into how Al Jazeera covered the murder.

This chapter provides adequate background of the study as well as the researcher's motivation for study, aims of the study, research questions, significance of the study, limitations of study.

1.1 Background of the Study

In the summer of 2017, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and her neighboring allies, United Arab Emirates, Bahrain and Egypt placed sanctions on Qatar. This included severing diplomatic ties, banning Qatar from using their air, water and land space. This happened because they believed Qatar was supporting their enemies and groups they considered terrorist groups (Asisian, 2018). They issued a 13 points list of demands that Qatar should abide by in order for them to lift those sanctions. One of the demands was the shutdown of popular Qatari owned news network Al Jazeera (Kose & Ulutas, 2017). The Qatari government refused to accept those demands because they believed it will affect their sovereignty.

Al Jazeera the Qatari owned news network was created in 1996, at the time it only broadcasted news in Arabic and news content was restricted to the Middle East. A decade later Al Jazeera English was created, it was the first ever international news channel to be owned and based in the Middle East (Usher, 2013). Al Jazeera gives the eastern perspective of events, covering issues concerning the Middle East, Asia especially south-east Asia and Africa. Their main aim is to give a voice to the voiceless. When news broke on the 3rd of October 2018 that Saudi journalist Jamal Khashoggi had not been seen since entering the Saudi consulate in Istanbul on October 2nd 2018, Al Jazeera was at the forefront of the story covering the event step by step as it unfolded.

Jamal Khashoggi was a prominent critic of the Saudi government and was very vocal about the flaws of Mohammad Bin Salman's administration (Telci, 2018). Before his fallout with the government, Khashoggi had good relations with the Saudi royal family. He worked as the media consultant to prince Turki Al- Faisal the former director of intelligence and was editor-in-chief of one of the oldest dailies *Al-Madina* in Saudi Arabia for eight years (Telci, 2018).

Khashoggi's disappearance became major news that was followed closely by popular international news outlets; it sparked protests questioning the Saudi government as to his whereabouts. The government had initially maintained their stance in the situation by stating that he left the consulate. After international criticism, on the 20th of October 2018 the Saudi government put out an official statement stating that Khashoggi died during interrogation. This study will look at how Al Jazeera English (AJE) covered the story of Khashoggi's murder.

The media plays a crucial role in portraying event concerning its government. Although the media claims to be objective, it is an intuition that is owned and funded by a certain group. The ownership of the media network gives the owners the power to tell the story. Even though most media networks uphold the claim of objectivity, they always serve the interest of their owners and sponsors. Taking into account of the Saudi-Qatar diplomatic fall out this study will critically analyze AJE's coverage of Jamal Khashoggi's murder.

1.2 Motivation for the Study

The media has a great deal of influence when it comes to telling us what to think about (McCombs, 1992). In the fall of 2018 Jamal Khashoggi's murder became the center of international news particularly AJE. Everyday there was breaking news about Khashoggi's murder. This repetitiveness of his story made me question why he was so important, because up until his murder I had never heard his name. I was keen on finding out why Khashoggi was so important and why Al Jazeera gave such an emphasis to Jamal Khashoggi.

The main motivation behind this study is to find, if the interest of the owners of news networks affects the way they report news. Al Jazeera is government funded and since summer of 2017 Qatar government has had diplomatic conflict with Saudi Arabia and some of her neighboring allies. I want to conduct a research to see how Al Jazeera covered a major story concerning Saudi Arabia with respect to their diplomatic tension.

1.3 Aims of the Study

This research aims to find out how the murder of Jamal Khashoggi in the Saudi consulate in Istanbul was covered by Al Jazeera English through following these specific objectives:

- To examine what issue Al Jazeera considered important in their coverage of the Khashoggi murder;
- To examine if there was any bias in Al Jazeera's coverage of the Khashoggi murder;
- To examine the affiliation between the Saudi-Qatar diplomatic conflict and Al Jazeera's coverage of Khashoggi's murder;
- To examine how Al Jazeera portrayed Khashoggi.

1.4 Research Questions

This study will aim to answer the following questions:

1. What issues were emphasized by Al Jazeera in their coverage of the Khashoggi murder in 2018?
2. Was there any bias in Al Jazeera's coverage of the Khashoggi murder?
3. Is there a relationship between Al Jazeera's coverage of the Khashoggi murder and Saudi-Qatar diplomatic conflict?
4. How did Al Jazeera portray Khashoggi?

1.5 Significance of Study

This study does not simply talk about how the media portrays an event. It takes into consideration the effects foreign policies have on how the media presents a story. This research will contribute to the field of political communication and also media representation. The media has the power to affect people's reception of an event based on the way they portray it. Also this study investigates media representation and its

country's interest. The study will be useful when looking at the way power influences media ability to be objective. Not many studies have been done on Al Jazeera and the way it presents its news with respect to the owners of the network. This study merges two fields' international relations and Media and communication studies. The study can be used when looking at the interest of the owners of the News network and how they frame events to support their agenda.

1.6 Limitations of Study

Firstly this study is limited to the coverage of one event which is the murder of Jamal Khashoggi. Secondly it is limited in time as data will be collected from October 2018 till November 2018 and that data collection will be restricted to the one-hour news commentary program *Inside Story*, the timing is limited because the peak of Al Jazeera's coverage of the Khashoggi murder was between October and November. Finally, the study is limited to one news network which is Al Jazeera.

Chapter 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter reviews the literature related to Al Jazeera's coverage of Jamal Khashoggi's murder. Starting with Saudi-Qatar relations in the Gulf council cooperation, Al Jazeera, news media representation and theoretical framework.

2.1 The Saudi-Qatar Relations in the Gulf Council Cooperation (GCC)

This part of the literature review will focus on the on the Saudi-Qatar relations, its multilayered rift and how the media is seen as soft power in the crisis.

2.1.1 Understanding the Saudi-Qatar Relations

Since the gulf war and Iranian Revolution in the late 1970s, the Persian Gulf peninsula has received significant changes to its geopolitical and economic structure. With abundance of natural resources i.e. Oil and political power vacuum; this has allowed the Saudi kingdom dominance within the GCC. The GCC is an important organization within the Persian Gulf region that has witnessed organizational crisis with rising tension within member countries i.e. Saudi Arabia, Qatar, United Arab Emirates, Oman, Kuwait and Bahrain (Asisian, 2018).

This has led to imbalance of power within the region. The United States of America has had significant interest within the Gulf region with its special relationship with Saudi Arabia and Qatar the two countries are housing two of United States biggest bases in the region. The emergence of a potential hegemon makes the other regional

players fearful, so riskier policies are being pushed forward in order to change the course in which the power balance is tilting towards (Asisian, 2018). Following the United States President Donald Trump's visit to Saudi Arabia in 2017, powerful allegation was directed towards Qatar. Qatar was accused of being an advocate of terrorism because they let Iran harness more influence in the region through economic and security measures. They were also accused of not doing their part in the struggle against terrorism in the Middle East, all these allegations were upheld by Trump without any tangible evidence. Tensions arose in a sustained media onslaught that exhibited Qatar as a threat in a report published by Qatar News Agency that alleged the Emir of Qatar has said some statement that goes against the core principles of the GCC nations. It was later discredited by government communication office falsifying the statement and claiming the agency website to be hacked (Ulrichsen, 2017). This led to an anti-Qatar coalition being formed in order to confront these allegations which led to blockade by the coalition state which comprised of Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates, Egypt and Bahrain. The Gulf Crisis which was actually aggravated when the Coalition tabled its 13 Demands with an ultimatum demanding compliance within ten days (Falk, 2018).

Giving into the demands of Saudi Arabia and its allies would not only weaken Qatar's sovereignty and power within the region and the world but accepting that Saudi Arabia is the hegemonic power in the Gulf peninsula. These demands are viewed from an international law and diplomatic protocol as unreasonable with respect to Qatar sovereignty. This seeming effort to compel Qatar to except external pressures, including a demand of compliance with U.S. sanctions imposed on Iran sets a precedent that could work against the sovereignty of other GCC members in the future (Falk, 2018). The demand to 'shut down Al-Jazeera news and news outlets' that is

funded by Qatar directly/ indirectly became a worldwide outcry and was viewed as an assault on media freedom and the right of expression violation Articles 18 & 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (Lynch, 2017).

2.1.2 Media as Soft Power in the Crisis

The use of soft power through the media in Qatar has been viewed as a threat to the GCC nation's especially Saudi Arabia, which has always viewed the biggest news satellite *Al-Jazeera* as a means of instigating unrest within the region (Asisian, 2018). The campaign to discredit Qatar was an immediate response from Saudi Arabia and United Arab Emirates by blocking transmission from Al-Jazeera and all Qatar based news outlet in their countries. The Saudi-Emirati media campaign against Qatar coincided with a high-profile event in Washington, where analysts and former senior U.S. officials cast doubt on Qatar's reliability as a regional security partner (Ulrichsen, 2017). The network has acquired a large Arab audience because it has aired opposing views and news and its programs have criticized most Arab governments. In a recent interview, when the UAE ambassador to Russia Mr. Ghobash in response to a question:

Closure of Al-Jazeera was a reasonable demand, he said: we do not claim to have press freedom. We do not promote the idea of press freedom. What we talk about is responsibility in speech. Freedom of speech has different constraints in different places. Speech in our part of the world has a particular context, and the context can go from peaceful to violent in no time simply because of words that spoken" (Wintour, 2017, p. 1).

The control freedom of expression by all GCC nations through laws have carefully control the Internet and the media while monitoring the behavior of their own citizens (Jones, 2017).

Al-Jazeera maintained journalistic norms by outlining the allegations against Qatar without censorship, through seeking commentary from various non-coalition countries in order to debate the issues at stake and put forward the coalition's perspective (Cherkaoui T. , 2018). Although Al-Jazeera gained its international profile during their coverage of Arab spring in 2011; according to Kinninmont, "the only Arab broadcaster to make serious inroads with western audience, challenging the stereotype that globalization must mean westernization" (Kinninmont, 2013, p. 4). A journalist and staff writer recently opined: "Al Jazeera, a lively media operation which is frequently critical of Saudi Arabia and other Persian Gulf states. And much to the chagrin of Saudi Arabia and the current Egyptian government, it supported the Islamist Muslim Brotherhood throughout the Arab Spring. Back in 2014, Saudi Arabia, the UAE, and Bahrain temporarily pulled their ambassadors out of Qatar because of its support for the group" (Aleem, 2017, p. 2) Through acquisition of current TV by Al-Jazeera in America, it gained over 40 million American consumers which would change the mindset towards Arabs and in a way a small nation from the Middle East through media power can exerting soft power influence on super-power of the world (Antwi-Boateng, 2013).

2.1.3 Multilayered Rift Between Qatar- Saudi Arabia and GCC Nations

Qatar has adopted a role as a mediator in conflicts within the region within Lebanon, Sudan, Egypt and Palestinian -Israeli conflict through foreign aid as well as large number of investors abroad and also with talks on its large satellite broadcaster Al-Jazeera between Israeli officials and members of Taliban and Hamas. The GCC nations have made several accusations against Qatar, based on objections to its foreign policy, emphasizing its support of 'extremism', through relations with Iran, and its sponsorship of the satellite broadcaster *Al Jazeera*. In May 2017 Qatar's state news

agency appeared to broadcast statements by Emir Tamim Al Thani in praise of Iran, Hamas and Hezbollah, to the outrage of the other countries' media which Qatar blamed hackers for this action and the *Washington post* provided report implication UAE as the mastermind behind the cyber-attack which UAE denied (Kinninmont, 2019). Qatar provided safe haven for exiled Khaled Mashal, a Hamas leader and Yusuf Al-Qaradawi of Egypt and also financial support for Muslim brotherhood within the country; Al-Jazeera network became a platform for populist and electoral Sunni Islamist views in the regional (Gause-III, 2017).

Turkey and Qatar shared similar views regarding Egypt; during the Arab spring they supported the Muslim brotherhood leadership and did not regard it as a terrorist group after the military coup and also in Syria where both countries supported rebels fighting to overthrow the Assad regime. With Turkish military presence in Qatar is unequivocally official infuriates Saudi and its efforts of power generation and influence within the region (Asisian, 2018). With the death of well-known Saudi Journalist in Turkey, the Saudi media intensified campaigns against Qatar and the negativity between the two countries has mounted with accusation directed towards Qatar with involvement in the murder and Saudi denying any knowledge about his death (Telci, 2018). However, due to credible evidence and UN investigation conclusion, Saudi could no longer deny its involvement including high-level Saudi officials in his murder including Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman with the murder (Kirby, 2019). Turkey president Erdogan's position on the case was "premediated murder" and desires to uncover the perpetrators those who are responsible for the killing should be tried in Turkish courts while keeping bilateral relations with Saudi. Khashoggi's murder has become a turning point in Middle Eastern politics. With the region's future, it is important for these nations to allow

freedom of expression, respect difference of opinion, and to honor and exalt human rights (Telci, 2018).

2.2 Al Jazeera

The originality of Aljazeera English (AJE) stemmed from the necessity to fill the void of high demand for unbiased English reporting from middle-eastern and other non-western parts of the world especially after major events such as the 9/11 attack that occurred in 2001. This comes as no surprise considering that historically the original Aljazeera (Arabic) was established after the Emir of Qatar, Shiekh Hammad came into power and abolished the then Ministry of Information and created Aljazeera an independent journalism body free of government interference (Abubakar, 2013). Even though Al Jazeera is state funded, it is autonomous and independent of Qatar and the state's policies (Kasmani, 2014) (Abubakar, 2013) (Powers & El-Nawawy, 2009).

Consequently, Aljazeera Network's mission is "to inform and empower people with accurate, in-depth and compelling content that upholds the value of truth and elevates the human spirit" (<https://network.aljazeera.com/about-us/our-values>). This is reflected in AJE's code of ethics 'endeavor to get the truth and declare it in our dispatches, programs and news bulletins unequivocally in a manner which leaves no doubt about its validity and accuracy' and 'present the diverse points of view and opinions without bias and partiality' (<https://www.aljazeera.com/aboutus/2006/11/2008525185733692771.html>). From inception till date AJE depicts transparency, autonomous and unequivocal style of journalism.

2.2.1 Message Content

AJE produces content for the global audience with broadcasts to nearly all countries around the world. However, it has been evidently proven by that AJE covers more of Global South news than Global north news by having in-depth news format and increased number of on ground correspondents which has always been the contrary with other international new bodies (Figenshou, 2010). The ultimate focus is for the marginalized, the voiceless and those from developing countries to be heard. To further impact the audience, AJE uses graphic and dramatic visualization while reporting war and suffering (Abubakar, 2013). This is in accordance with findings from a quantitative content analysis by Bruce to examine framing of conflict and violence images from five pan-Arab transnational satellite news channels (Bruce, 2012).

All of this is achieved using the following editorial strategies- to cover world news without any domestic agenda, to report forgotten stories from the perspective of the voiceless, to cover other controversial and oppositional views in international news (Abubakar, 2013). Evidence found by Painter, suggests that the editorial perspectives of AJE includes significant coverage of news from developing countries and 'geopolitical homeland' i.e. the middle-east and includes more voices of the voiceless (Painter, 2008). It has been further argued by Painter, that the uniqueness of AJE stems from its editorial perspective, reporting style and staff profile (Painter, 2008).

2.3 News Media Representation

Representation has been an area of study for decades crossing between multiple academic fields. According to cultural theorist Stuart Hall; "Representation connects meaning and language to culture" (Hall, 1997, p. 15). Representation is a social

construct so its meaning depends on its creator, who circulates it and its cultural context (Carah & Louw, 2015). Hall explains how meaning is created by representation, through his three theories of representation; reflective, intentional and constructionist approach. In reflective approach meaning is thought to lie in the object, person, idea or event in the real world, and language functions like a mirror, to reflect the true meaning as it already exist in the world.” (Hall, 1997, p. 24). This representation approach is the one used by news media, which claims to represent what is happening in the world exactly as it is with no bias. In intentional approach the creator of the text imposes their meaning through language (Hall, 1997, p. 25). This could be seen in films since films are created by directors and producers everything seen and heard is intended by the director and film creators. The way the characters act, the way each scene is represented is done intentionally by the film’s director. In constructionist approach, meaning is constructed through representational systems which are concepts and signs; meaning depends on the language. What is represented is understood by the viewer through his/her understanding of language and codes (Hall, 1997, p. 25).

The news media is the branch of the media that informs the general public about what is going on in the world both locally and internationally. They do so through newspapers, radio, television and most recently the internet. The news media represent issues going on in the world by selectively relevant stories to report. Even though most new media claims to be transparent and not bias in their news report many studies and theories claim otherwise.

2.3.1 Correlation Between News Media Ownership and News Content

News media generally claims to be an objective means of storytelling by simply reporting what is going on in the world. The claim of objective by the news media has

always been questioned by media scholars. Many media scholars believe that news that is reported by news media outlets has an affiliation with the interest of the news media outlets owners and sponsors. As stated by Altschull “The content of the press is directly correlated with the interests of those who finance the press” (Altschull, 1984, p. 254). Altschull used the word “interest pattern” to describe how news content reflects the objects and interests of whoever is financing it (Altschull, 1984). In a research done by Shoemaker and Resse they found that news organizations that are commercial are more likely to be objective since their goal is towards profitability through advertisements. They found that news organizations that are financed by interest of the people owning were less objective, because the news they reported reflected the interest of the controlling them and financing them (Shoemaker & Resse, 1991).

Based on the studies mentioned above the news organizations report events and stories in a way that sides with the ideology and interest of their owners and sponsors.

2.4 Theoretical Framework

This research will utilize two communication theories which are Agenda setting theory and Gatekeeping theory.

2.4.1 Agenda Setting Theory

News media are a powerful industry because they inform people about what is going on in the world around them. People do not only get their information from news media, they are also guided to pay attention to certain events, people and topics the news media have the power to do so through agenda setting.

Agenda setting theory was founded on the work of Walter Lippmann who wrote in his book called *Public Opinion (1922)* that the mass media plays a crucial role in connecting the events going on in the world and peoples' perception of those events. Based on this Maxwell McCombs and Donald Shaw conducted a study in Chapel Hill, North Carolina on the 1968 U.S presidential elections (McCombs, 2019). They found a connection between what voters found important and the issues the mass media repetitively emphasized on the news their work created a new theory in the field of media and communications called agenda setting theory (McCombs, 2019). Since then hundreds of studies have been done using agenda setting theory that has focused on the link between public attention on events and the importance mass media gives those events. As stated by McCombs

The power of the news media to set a nation's agenda, to focus public attention on a few key public issues, is an immense and well-documented influence. Not only do people acquire factual information about public affairs from the news media, readers and viewers also learn how much importance to attach to a topic on the basis of the emphasis placed on it in the news. Newspapers provide a host of cues about the salience of the topics in the daily news – lead story on page one, other front page display, large headlines, etc. Television news also offers numerous cues about salience – the opening story on the newscast, length of time devoted to the story, etc. These cues repeated day after day effectively communicate the importance of each topic. In other words, the news media can set the agenda for the public's attention to that small group of issues around which public opinion forms. (McCombs, infoamerica, 2019, p. 1).

Agenda setting theory states that the media may not be successful in telling us what to think but they are successful in telling us what to think about (McCombs, 1992). This assumption suggests the media have the ability to increase public attention on certain issues through repetitiveness and pervasiveness in their coverage of the issue.

Agenda setting theory has two levels according to McCombs, the first level the media tells us what to think about which is the transfer of salience from their agenda to the

agenda of the general public. In the second level the media frames an event in a way that affects how the general public views an event. This first level of agenda setting can be related to another media and communications theory gatekeeping theory.

2.4.2 Gatekeeping Theory

Gatekeeping theory was first coined by social psychologist Kurt Lewin. He conducted a study on how food goes from the supermarket or garden to the dining table, he found that a decision was made on what food is put on the table by someone he called the gatekeeper. Gatekeepers refer to people that control access to something. This theory was then adapted into the field of media and communications studies.

Davis Manning White, Lewin's former student did a study on *the wire* newspaper. In this study he asked the editor who he called Mr. Gates to document his decision making process in accepting or rejecting news that will be published for one week (Shabir, Safdar, Imran, Mumtaz, & Anjum, 2015). White found that the editors selection of news items that were published were high subjective and was largely based on his personal preference. According to Shoemaker gatekeeping is the process by which news items are selected and ranked before being transmitted to the public (Shoemaker & Vos, 2009).

Gatekeepers are the people that have the power to decide what news items are shared with the general public. They are the editors, journalists, owners of broadcast companies, cameraman etc (Shabir, Safdar, Imran, Mumtaz, & Anjum, 2015). These people in these positions have the power to choose what they want to inform the public about. Many factors affect gatekeepers, selection of news items such as the interests of their sponsors and owners, new editors are less likely to publish or broadcast stories that would negatively affect the interest of their sponsors and owners.

Related Literature Using CDA

The media has become an integral part of people's daily lives; people are constantly bombarded with media texts either intentionally or unintentionally. Media scholars constantly study media text and its effects on viewers. One of the many research techniques they use is critical discourse analysis, they utilize this method of analysis in order to uncover hidden ideology and also power relations within media text.

In a study done by Kalyango in 2011, he compared news gathering aims of gatekeepers with attitudes regarding the coverage of Africa by CNN international. A critical discourse analysis was done through interviews and focus groups, CNNI producers and executives were interviewed while 6 focus groups of Ugandan viewers were conducted in 2004 and 2008 (Kalyango, 2011). In the interviews CNN gatekeepers said in their coverage of Africa they had aims and goals which were to give a voice to the voiceless, promote peace and fair reporting. Contrary to what CNNI producers and executives said Ugandans felt CNNI portrayed Africa as "cold blood killers who just murder each other" the focus group believed that CNNI news produced on Africa flaunts bloody wars and political turmoil. Kalyango found that CNNI is popular in Uganda because of its quality and ability to deliver global news about different parts of the world. But they disliked CNNI because it constantly presented Africa in a negative way.

It also advances van Dijk's (1988, 1992) thesis that media construction of events may reflect power relationships in discourse and in social interaction, and that these relationships produce social inequality in CNNI news coverage, replicating egoistic Western power and ideology that misrepresents information about Africa, in CNNI's own interest (Kalyango, 2011, p. 176).

The way CNNI portrays news coming from Africa has a lot to do with its interests, instead of reporting news from the African perspective they report African news with western perspective and ideology (Kalyango, 2011).

A study done by Amer used critical discourse analysis to analyze the representation of political actors in western media coverage of 2008-2009 Gaza war. The study analyzed four UK and US newspapers *The Guardian*, *The Times London*, *The New York Times* and *The Washington post* (Amer, 2017). The UK and US are strong Israeli allies, and all the four newspaper used in the study were UK and US owned. The researcher found that choice of text carried ideological meaning. In the study the researcher found that Palestinians were mostly referred to as hamas were portrayed as a danger to Israel and Israel was doing everything in its power to protect their country (Amer, 2017). He found that the UK and US audience that were getting their information from these newspapers were not properly informed about the war on both side. The four newspapers covered the story in a way that favored the Israeli perspective (Amer, 2017).

Critical discourse analysis was conducted by Teo in Australia on two Sydney based newspapers *The Sydney Morning Herald* and *The Daily Telegraph* in order to find if there is racism in the way the two newspapers covered stories related to minorities. The study focused on how the two newspapers reported stories about the Vietnamese gang (Teo, 2000). Teo found that there was an 'us' 'them' complex in the way they presented the stories; they depicted Vietnamese as lawbreakers and white Australians as law makers. Through the language they used the newspapers were able to create a stereotype about the Vietnamese in Australia (Teo, 2000).

Similarly, a study conducted by Tabe and Fieze explored private and public newspaper headlines on the Anglophone crisis in Cameroon using critical discourse analysis (Tabé & Fieze, 2018). The main objectives of the study was to find out the lexical choice and rhetorical questions used in reporting the crisis, and how they portray the ideology of the newspaper and its reporters and also shape readers thoughts. They found a difference in how government owned and private owned newspapers reported the crisis. The lexical choice of the private owned newspaper painted an image of the government as not giving any significant attention to the crisis, while the government owned newspapers presented the Anglophone contestants as terrorists and people tampering with Cameroonian children's future. They found that newspaper publishers have power through language to influence Cameroonian people idea and opinion on the Anglophone crisis (Tabé & Fieze, 2018).

In addition, a CDA was carried out on political talk shows in Pakistani media. The aim of the study was to uncover the relationship between language and ideology and how this relationship is represented in the analysis of spoken words using Van Dijk socio-cognitive model (Bilal, Ahsan, Gohar, Younis, & Awan, 2012). The study analyzed two episodes of a popular political talk show broadcasted by private TV channels through CDA in order to find the hidden ideologies. The study found that words and texts used in the shows have the power to manipulate and produce meanings that are not always obvious to viewers (Bilal, Ahsan, Gohar, Younis, & Awan, 2012).

Fauzan carried out CDA on Indonesia's MetroTV in order to study the ideology behind their news reports (Fauzan, 2014). The study found that MetroTV does not only inform its viewers about what is going on in Indonesia they also push their ideology through emphasizing on the bad things that are going on in the country and de-emphasizing on

the good things. They are able to achieve these emphasize through the language they use when reporting the story (Fauzan, 2014).

In addition CDA was done by Pornjan in order to analyze newspaper headlines on youth crimes in Thailand. The main objective of the study was to discover the underlying ideologies of new practitioners that are reflected in their news headlines through finding discursive feature of language (Pornjan, 2012). He found that the language used in the newspaper headlines represented negative ideologies of the news practitioners and it also created some negative social identities of the young offenders (Pornjan, 2012).

This research will also use CDA in order to understand and find the underlying ideology behind Al Jazeera's coverage of Jamal Khashoggi's murder. Based on all the literature reviewed above CDA is highly effective when doing critical analysis on language and issues related to politics and power.

Chapter 3

METHODOLOGY

This chapter discusses not only the research methodology used for this study, but also the research approach, population sample, data collection method and analysis

3.1 Research Methodology

This study employs qualitative method of research. According to Creswell, qualitative research studies things in their natural environment in an attempt to make sense of phenomena or interpret it in terms of the meaning people associate to them. There isn't one rigid definition for qualitative research but the factors applied in qualitative research are as follows:

The key to understanding qualitative research lies with the idea that meaning is socially constructed by individuals in interaction with their world. The world, or reality, is not fixed, single, agreed upon or a measurable phenomenon that it is assumed to be in positivist, quantitative research. Instead there are multiple constructions and interpretations of reality that are in flux and that change overtime (Merriam, 2002, p.3).

Qualitative research is used in this study in order to get an in-depth understanding of Al Jazeera's coverage of the murder of Jamal Khashoggi through critical discourse analysis which is method of qualitative research. Qualitative research would give the research the ability to critically look at how Al Jazeera covered the Khashoggi murder.

3.2 Research Approach

Critical discourse analysis (CDA) is a branch of discourse analysis that relates language to power, the use of language to maintain power. Fairclough see CDA as the

relationship between textual analysis and sociocultural analysis; textual analysis questioned what was in the text and how the text was represented while sociocultural analysis questioned what was not mentioned in the text (Ulinuha, Udasmoro, & Wijaya, 2013). During analysis what is mentioned and what is not mentioned are equally important in order to find the hidden ideology behind the text.

Fairclough invented his three dimension CDA model, the first dimension being the text, second discursive practice and third is the social practice. At the text level is done on what speech, images and what is written which is the social event, discursive practice was the language itself and social practice was discourse (Fairclough, 2010). Fairclough believed that language could be used to change behavior and it was a power tool.

According to Van Dijk ‘Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) is discourse analytical research that primarily studies the way social-power abuse and inequality are enacted, reproduced, legitimated, and resisted by text and talk in the social and political context’ (Van Dijk, 2015, p. 466). Van Dijk looks at how power relations are created through language.

This research will utilize Critical Discourse Analysis. Secondary data will be collected through the internet and will be analyzed through Van Dijk Critical Discourse Analysis. Van Dijk divided CDA into two concepts when analyzing news micro and macro level, micro concentrates on texts, sentence structure, the words used in news and rhetoric when analyzing, while macro concentrates on power, dominance and inequality between social groups during analysis (Van Dijk, 2015). This study will use Van Dijk’s perspective on CDA through micro and macro levels on CDA. On the

micro level this study will analyze what was said on these news segments, the sentence structure and the manner in which topics were discussed. While on the macro level the study will analyze how ownership of Al Jazeera influences the way the story was covered.

3.3 Population and Sample

Population refers to the all the general things related to the study, sample refers selected items from the population that would be used for the study. The Population of this study is all the news programs done on Al Jazeera from October, 2018 till December 2018. From this population specific programs will be selected through purposive sampling from analysis.

Table 1: List of all the news programs related to Khashoggi murder from Oct-Dec 2018

Show	Title	Date
Inside Story	Is Khashoggi the latest victim of Saudi Arabia's crackdown in dissent?	8/Oct/2018
Inside Story	US steps up pressure on Saudi Arabia over Jamal khashoggi's disappearance.	9/Oct/2018
Inside Story	What happened to Saudi journalist Jamal Khashoggi?	11/Oct/2018
Inside Story	What's next in the case of Jama Khashoggi's disappearance?	12/Oct/2018
Upfront	Jamal Khashoggi: The world demands answers	12/Oct/2018
The Listening post	Covering the disappearance of Jamal Khashoggi	13/Oct/2018
Upfront	Saudi Arabia's MBS: 'Gadafi on steroids'?	13/Oct/2018
Inside Story	Where does Jamal Khashoggi's case leave Saudi Arabia?	13/Oct/2018
Inside Story	Whats behind the Arab silence over Khashoggi's fate?	14/Oct/2018
The Listening post	Jamal Khashoggi, Mohammed Bin Salman and the media	14/Oct/2018
Inside Story	How will Saudi Arabia deal With the stock market plunge?	15/Oct/2018

Inside Story	Why did it take so long for Saudi to open its doors?	16/Oct/2018
Inside Story	Who is behind Khashoggi's disappearance	16/Oct/2018
Inside Story	How will Khashoggi's suspected killing affect MBS?	17/Oct/2018
Inside Story	Will Jamal Khashoggi's disappearance affect US-Saudi relations?	19/Oct/2018
Inside Story	Is Riyadh's claim Jamal Khashoggi died in a fist fight credible?	20/Oct/2018
Inside Story	Trump is 'not satisfied' with Saudis but will pressure Riyadh?	22/Oct/2018
Inside Story	Can Saudi Arabia get away with murder	22/Oct/2018
Inside Story	Cooperating or clashing over the killing of Khashoggi	23/Oct/2018
Inside Story	Is the global response to Khashoggi's murder tough enough?	24/Oct/2018
Inside Story	What effect will Khashoggi's have on the middle east?	28/Oct/2018
Inside Story	Can Saudi Arabia and turkey team up to reveal Khashoggi's killer?	28/Oct/2018
Inside Story	Is Saudi Arabia protecting whoever ordered Jamal Khashoggi's killing?	30/Oct/2018
Inside Story	Will the body of Jamal Khashoggi ever be found?	3/Nov/2018
Inside Story	How much is Turkey prepared to reveal on Khashoggi's murder?	7/Nov/2018
Inside Story	Will Saudi Arabia ever reveal who ordered Khashoggi's murder?	11/Nov/2018
Inside Story	Who is 'the boss' in the phone call after khashoggi's murder?	13/Nov/2018
Upfront	Will Saudi Arabia execute one of its top clerics?	16/Nov/2018
Inside Story	What can Khashoggi tape reveal about his murder?	16/Nov/2018
The Listening post	Saudi Arabia post Khashoggi: business as usual	17/Nov/2018
Upfront	Saudi Clerics son: Everyone is threatened	17/Nov/2018
Inside Story	Will US punish MBS over Khashoggi's murder?	17/Nov/2018
The Listening Post	Saudi's war on journalism	19/Nov/2018

Inside Story	How much can Donald Trump shield MBS?	21/Nov/2018
Inside Story	Can Turkey trigger international probe into Khashoggi's murder?	27/Nov/2018
Inside Story	What is ahead for the US-Saudi Arabia relationship?	30/Nov/2018
Talk to Al Jazeera	Michelle Bachelet: External Khashoggi investigation needed	1/Dec/2018
Inside Story	How will new Khashoggi revelations affect MBS?	2/Dec/2018
Inside Story	Will Turkey push for UN investigation into Khashoggi murder?	4/Dec/2018
Inside Story	Will Donald Trump change his mind on Khashoggi killing?	6/Dec/2018
Inside Story	How will Donald Trump respond to the senate's rebuke of Saudi Arabia?	15/Dec/2018
Talk to Al Jazeera	Maria Fernanda Espinose on Khashoggi, Yemen and the GCC	16/Dec/2018
Talk to Al Jazeera	MBS overestimated his position in the region	17/Dec/2018
Inside Story	What's the latest into the probe into the murder of Khashoggi?	23/Dec/2018

Purposive sampling is used to choose samples that will be analyzed from table 1.

3.4 Data Collection Method

Al Jazeera has multiple news programs in which the main news topics are discussed with experts in the topic. Programs like Inside story, the listening post, Talk to Al Jazeera, Upfront etc. in these programs the news anchor asks her guests questions concerning the main topic at hand. These program analyze news with the use of expert opinion, the guests or panel usually consist of politician, academicians like professors, world leaders, experts and journalists. This study will collect data through Al Jazeera's online archives. Six episodes from Inside Story have been selected through random selection.

Chapter 4

ANALYSIS

This part of the research analyzes the selected episodes from the news commentary show *Inside story* through CDA. The episode will be analyzed using Van Dijk micro and macro analysis of the show at the micro level the research would look at the choice of words and sentence structure and at the macro level the researcher would analyze the underlining ideology behind the show.

4.1 “Is Riyadh’s Claim Jamal Khashoggi Died in a Fistfight Credible?”

This episode aired on 20 October 2018; the day the Saudi government officially announced that Jamal Khashoggi was dead; three guests were invited to speak on this episode. Saad Al Fagih a Saudi dissident, critic of the Saudi government and head of the movement for Islamic reform in Arabia. Amanda Rogers a professor of Middle East and Islamic Studies at Colgate University and John Jones Former US senior congressional adviser, the episode was presented by news anchor Imran Khan.

4.1.1 Analysis

The questions asked by the presenter are very detailed and ideologically packed, it is based on how he asked the question that the guests answer. Many of the questions he asks in this interview have a very sarcastic tone towards the Saudi Government.

The presenter introduced the episode by first stating “Saudi Arabia now admits Jamal Khashoggi is dead after weeks of denying it, Riyadh says the Saudi Journalist died in

a fist fight inside its Istanbul consulate but as globe outrage melts does this account even seem credible?” this opening statement drives the show into the direction of challenging the Saudi governments statement. Before the presenter introduced the guests he stated that Turkish security had a different story than the one being told by Saudi Government, he said they “tortured, killed and cut him into pieces”. This same statement is repeated later on by a correspondent in Istanbul, the choice of words they used to describe his murder painted the Saudi government as gruesome, vile and inhumane.

The presenter introduces the guests and the first question he asked was directed to Saad Al-Fagih. He asks him “Is anyone buying this story that Jamal Khashoggi was killed in a brawl in the Saudi consulate in Istanbul?” Al-Fagih is a prominent Saudi opposition leader that is in exile. He is highly critical of the Saudi government, went on to say that “people are looking at that statement with sarcasm that goes on to show the idiocy of the people that created it”. After making that statement the presenter now replied “there is someone that buying it lets bring in John Jones. President Donald Trump says he thinks this is credible.” The presenter directed that statement to John Jones, which Jones made a brief statement stating that “even if Trump agrees on what Riyadh have said about how Khashoggi died it does not impact what congress is going to do because members of the senate have rejected and criticized Saudi’s version of event.” The way the presenter asked Al-Fagih about the credibility of Saudi’s statement on the death of Khashoggi knowing that he is a vocal critic of the Saudi government and switching the question to Jones by saying the US president found the story credible highlights the fact that the US government can support lies. Based on this Jones defends his country by saying the president and the congress have different perceptions of the story. Both guests clearly show they are not in support of neither

the Saudi government nor Donald Trump. The next question was to Amanda Rogers, the presenter asked:

Historically speaking authoritarian regimes have often put out messages that they think is believable simple because they control the narrative but this is an international story they haven't been able to control the narrative, why put out a story that many across the world simply say is not believable? (Al-Fagih, Rogers, & Jones, 2018).

Rogers stated that it's not about Trump believing what Saudi said, but the socio-economic and geopolitical ties the countries have to one another, affects how his decision making. She went on to say MBS labelled himself as a reformer the same way Saif Ghaddaffi did in Libya and to some extent Bashar Al-Assad in Syria. All the people she listed with MBS are popular names within the Arab world because of their families' authoritarian rule, both men B. Al-Assad and S. Ghaddaffi faced revolution from their people. This example she gave is ultimately predicting MBS's future, he might face the same fate as his counter parts Ghaddaffi and Al-Assad.

The presenter went on to ask Al-Fagih "The Saudi crown prince is in charge of intelligence over hall, do you think everything the Saudi government has done so far is to protect him?" Al-fagih now responded by saying MBS decides everything that happens in Saudi not even the king decides, MBS has all the power. He said people who think in a psychopathic way like MBS does, doesn't care who dies or goes to jail for him. Al-Fagih continued on to say that:

Trump accepts the story because he contributed to creating the story; it is in his personal interest to create this story that is why he sent Pompeo to MBS. He did not send him to encourage him to tell the truth he sent him to formulate and create this story. (Al-Fagih, Rogers, & Jones, 2018).

While he was making that statement Amanda Rogers was nodding in agreement to what he was saying. This statement made by Al-Fagih criminalizes Trump and his administration, for helping to create that cover story.

While Jones was talking about Khashoggi he referred to him as a dissident the presenter quickly corrected him and said “we need to be careful describing Jamal Khashoggi as a dissident he never referred to himself as one, he described himself as a journalist that wanted analyze and just be free.” The image the presenter wanted of Khashoggi was one of a journalist that just wanted the freedom to do his work properly in his country. Choosing to emphasize that Khashoggi was not a dissident, just a journalist that was critical of his government further tarnishes the image of Saudi government to the viewer.

The presenter was the main engine behind this show the questions he asked determined the direction in which the guest would reply. None of the guests were supporters of the Saudi government, they were all very critical of MBS and his regime.

4.2 Trump ‘Not Satisfied’ with Saudis but will he Pressure on Riyadh?

This episode aired on 21 October 2018; and was presented by news anchor Imran Khan. The guests on this episode were Mohammed Cherkaoui a Professor of conflict resolution at George Mason University, Andrew Smith the Media coordinator for Campaign Against Arms Trade and Andrew Finkel the Cofounder of P24 and an Al Jazeera correspondent in Turkey for over two decades.

4.2.1 Analysis

This episode was not centered on Khashoggi's murder rather his murder was used as an introduction to talk about geopolitical politics going on between the US, Saudi Arabia and Turkey. The presenter asked:

The US president Donald Trump has ring-fenced the sales of arms to Saudi Arabia saying just not worth putting 110 billion dollar deal at jeopardy, although research has proven those figures as incorrect. Why has it taken the killing of a journalist for the sales of arms between US and Saudi Arabia to be put under the spotlight? (Cherkaoui, Smith, & Finkel, 2018).

The choice of words used by the presenter to describe Donald Trump depicts that the US president is a dishonest man. Smith replies by saying the US are the largest weapons dealer in the world and Saudi Arabia is their biggest customer. "It shouldn't take the death of a journalist for politicians to consider whether it is right or wrong to sell weapons to one of the most abusive dictatorships in the world." Smith referred to Saudi Arabia as an "abusive dictatorship" these words have a very negative connotation towards the Saudi government. He went on to say US weapons have played an exceptional role in the bombardment of Yemeni people by the Saudi Arabia.

The politicians who are now raising questions were all very happy for these arm sells to continue, when US bombs were destroying school, hospitals and when US bombs destroyed a school bus just two months ago killing dozens of children.

Smith words create a notion that all American politicians care about is money, and the only reason they are talking about arms sales to Saudi Arabia is because the country has come into the spotlight due to the killing of Khashoggi. His statement also places the blood of innocent people in America's hands.

The entire episode is circled around Saudi's power and dominance in the region. The presenter stirred the conversation from Khashoggi to US-Saudi arms trade and also the geopolitical unrest going on in the region. The presenter said "the Turks have long viewed Saudi dominance of the Sunni Muslim world with jealousy and suspicion; they would like to take that role for themselves." This statement made by the presenter is considered shocking since Turkey is Qatar's biggest ally, using the word "jealousy" belittles Turkey. The presenter later said "Saudi Arabia and Turkey have terrible records on human rights" again this comment he made on Turkey puts the country not too far away from Saudi Arabia in respect to human rights.

4.3 Can Saudi Arabia Get Away with Murder

This episode aired on 22 October 2018 and was presented by news anchor Peter Dobbie. The guests on this episode were Ali al-Ahmed the director of the Gulf Affairs Institute and former Saudi political prisoner, Matthew Brodsky a senior fellow with the Security Studies Group in Washington, DC and Mustafa Akyol a senior fellow with CATO Institute's Center for Global Liberty and Prosperity.

4.3.1 Analysis

The episode starts off with the presenter giving the latest updates on the Khashoggi murder. He talks about the change in Saudi's story about Khashoggi's killing. The Saudi government put out a statement claiming that MBS had nothing to do with the murder it was a rogue operation done by some members of the government who will face punishment. He talked about the how isolated the Saudi government is feeling because of the backlash they faced from international powers including their western allies. The presenter asked Akyol what the ultimate response would be when the actual truth comes out. Akyol responded by saying:

Riyadh "taking responsibility" for this is not very credible, when news first broke of Khashoggi's disappearance the MBS and the Saudi government

denied it and said that he had left the consulate. After weeks of exposure by Turkish and foreign media they finally had to admit Jamal Khashoggi was killed on that day.

When Akyol said taking responsibility he made air quotes with his hands, that is a gesture that what they said is ironic and to an extent mocking the statement made by the Saudi government. What Akyol said seems like the Saudi government are only admitting to the killing because they were cornered by global press. He continued on to say that the Saudi government is giving us new stories about the killing of Khashoggi. Akyol based on his comments seems very skeptical about the Saudi government. Not only is he skeptical but the tone he uses when talking about the Saudi government is that filled with doubt and mockery.

The presenter said “The more that Donald Trump hardens his stance because he has too; because he has to react to what people are saying, does that make the powers inside the royal palace feel more alone?” The presenter said that Trump is reacting “because he has too” this choice of words highlights that Trump was not acting on free will but as a result of pressure. These words the presenter used to describe Trumps actions puts doubt in the credibility of the US presidents action in the viewers mind. The presenter then asked “would the Saudi leadership feel less isolated if they point the world toward where Khashoggis body is, but if we believe the reports they can’t do that because they desecrated the body, for a Muslim in the worst possible way.” CDA deals with complex problems by understanding the historical background (Van Dijk, 2014). Saudi Arabia is a the most known Muslim country in the world, the country is known in the Muslim world for Masjid Al-Haram that houses the Kaaba and Masjid An-Nabawi where the grave of the Prophet Mohammad lays. The country is known for its conservative Islamic ways and prides itself on that. The presenter

saying “for a Muslim in the worse possible way” his choice of words brings back the historical and religious context into the discussion. Although the Saudi prides itself as being an Islamic country, the way they killed Khashoggi was not Islamic and the presenter does a very subtle job of reminding the viewers of that. Akyol’s responded to that question by saying “ultimately I believe they desecrated the body and tore it into little pieces and buried it all over Istanbul.” Akyol choices of words further maximize the crime from murder to mutilation which emphasizes on the brutality of the crime. Although the statement Akyol made is not factual main will believe it is real because he did not use the word alleged.

The presenter went in further to dissect the Saudi government and royal family by asking about king Salman, he directed the question to Al-Ahmed. His response was “King Salman is not in the place or capacity to run the state his health is not well, he is basically isolated, he hasn’t seen his wife for four years his son MBS has absolute control over him.” Al-Ahmed believes that even the king serves under the control of his son the crowned prince MBS. He points out that complete control of the Kingdom is under MBS. Al-Ahmed, like many other Saudi critics as seen in previous episodes has blamed the death of Khashoggi on the crowned prince. He went on to compare MBS to North Korea’s Kim Jong Un another young dictator, Al-Ahmed criticism of the Saudi government is zeroed upon MBS. He also believes Saudi Arabia has the power to do what it does because of the support they get from the US. Based on Al-Ahmed remarks of US turning a blind eye to all the unjust activities being done by the Saudi government; the presenter asked:

Is this a huge wake up call for the Saudi in as much as do what you want in Yemen no consequences, pick a fight with the Canadians no consequences, stir up the GCC blockade of Qatar no consequences, snuff out that one reasonable voice of free speech and do it in a way you allegedly did it, there will be consequences.

The question was a rhetorically question, it was more of a statement giving the ideology of the presenter. He stated all the things Saudi Arabia had gotten away with including the Qatar blockade, he reminded the viewers of the unjust atrocities that Saudi has committed and were left unpunished. He then talks about Khashoggi as a martyr; by saying all he wanted was freedom of speech.

4.4 What Effect will Khashoggi Have on the Middle East?

This episode aired on 28 October 2018 it was presented by news anchor Imran Khan. The guests were Majed Al-Ansari a professor of political science at Qatar University, Shafeeq Ghabra a professor of political science at Kuwait University and Hillary Mann-Leverett a former US state department and White House official.

4.4.1 Analysis

The discussion on this episode was centered on the Saudi-Middle East relations, Saudi's action in the region and also the fate of their relations with the US post Khashoggi murder. In this episode the flaws of the Saudi government were clearly stated by the presenter and the guests.

The presenter begins by asking the guests about their thoughts on the comments of US secretary of defense made on the Khashoggi murder. He said that Saudi's actions threatened regional defense. Mann-Leverett said this is the first time the US has used this type of language while addressing Saudi Arabia, that type of language is usually reserved for countries that aren't strong allies of the US. She used the word "unprecedented" to describe the comment made by the secretary of defense, because the comments came as a shock to her since as she stated even when 9/11 happened the US didn't react like this towards the Saudi government. Adding to Mann-Leverett remarks, Al-Ansari said "the Americans are quite unhappy with what's happening,

they cannot sweep it under the rug as the usually do.” His statement shows that he believes the Americans are only reacting because of the large amount of international pressure not because they care about the murder of Khashoggi. His comment draws the viewers’ attention into the US-Saudi relations as said before by guests in the episode analyzed above the Saudi’s are able to do whatever they want in the region because of their close ties with the US. The US basically does not mind all the atrocities that goes on in Saudi Arabia as long as the public is not aware.

The Saudi-Qatar conflict was introduced into the discussion when the presenter asked “Does this present Qatar with an opportunity to really present its case when it comes to the blockade.” The presenter meant does the Khashoggi murder and the mounting international pressure on Saudi Arabia present Qatar with a way to get the blockade lifted. Before asking this question the presenter had listed the number of mishaps done by Saudi Arabia in the Middle East, starting with the Yemen War, the blockade on Qatar and growing tension between Saudi Arabia and Iran with each accusing the other of meddling in Arab countries internal affairs. Al-Ansari replied by saying he wanted to clarify some rumors that the Saudi government has gotten in touch with Qatar in order for them to mediate between them and Turkey he said they are just rumors. He continued by saying “A halt to the Saudi and Emirati project in the region will be beneficial to Qatar, since Qatar has been one of the victims of Saudi and Emirati movement in the region.” Al-Ansari used the word victim to describe Qatar in respect to Saudi Arabia. This word puts Qatar on the same level as Khashoggi both victims of the Kingdom.

The presenter talked about the comments of the Saudi foreign minister Adel Al-Jubeir on the Khashoggi murder, he described the international reaction as “hysterical”. The

presenter was very keen to discuss Al-Jubeir choice of words, Mann-Leverett said that Al-Jubeir said what he said as a result of US secretary of defenses remarks about the situation. Mann-Leverett was implying that the Saudi's are unhappy with US response, in the sense that they are over reacting.

Toward the end of the show the presenter and the guests discussed new and more responsible allies in the Middle East for the US. Mann-Leverett said "for the first time some in Washington and I wouldn't say this is widespread but some in Washington to rethink the US relationship with other key players in order to balance Saudi recklessness in the region." She is very critical of the Saudi government and the backing it's getting from the US, she described Saudi as reckless and believes the solution to their recklessness is the US to have stronger ties with other countries in the region. Mann-Leverett's tone and language throughout the show towards Saudi Arabia has been very critical but also diplomatic. She mentioned that the key players that would help balance Saudi recklessness would be Qatar, Turkey and Islamic Republic of Iran. "Those countries represent not an anti-Saudi movement but potentially balancing states that the US can have a better relationship in order to have some much control and so much recklessness coming out of Riyadh." Mann-Leverett further emphasizes on Saudi misbehavior in the region due to US backing. She said "the Saudi reaction to the Khashoggi murder is even more strategically important in Washington than the murder itself because it draws a real question mark about Saudi Arabia being the one and only strategic pillar for the US in the region." Her remarks can be used in a larger context, the murder of Jamal Khashoggi by itself was the reason for global uproar instead it was the geopolitical, economic and diplomatic issues in the Middle East with respect to the US that were raised using the Khashoggi murder.

4.5 Will the Body of Saudi Journalist Jamal Khashoggi Ever be Found?

This episode aired exactly a month after Khashoggi's killing on 2 November 2018. It was presented by news anchor Peter Dobbie and the guests were Mehmet Celik a political analyst and political news editor for Daily Sabah newspaper, Selva Tor an International financial security expert and international strategist and Ahmet Kasım Han an international relations lecturer at Altinbas University.

4.5.1 Analysis

This episode was shot in Istanbul, the presenter Peter Dobbie introduced to the show in front of the Saudi consulate in Istanbul. He reported that while pointing at the Consulate that on the 2nd of October 2018 Jamal Khashoggi entered the Saudi consulate but never came out. He stated that Khashoggi had gone to collect a stamp document in order to marry his fiancé Hatice Cengiz but instead of collecting a stamped document he was “tortured and brutally murdered”. The opening statement made by the presenter gives a tragic romance effect to the Khashoggi murder a man that simple wanted documents to allow him marry the woman he loves. This would resonate with many viewers to further empathize with Khashoggi and be very critical of the Saudi government.

The first question the presenter asked the guests was “would we ever see the body of Khashoggi?”, Celik responded by saying it is very unlikely that the body would be recovered based on reports he had heard the body was cut and “melted in acid”. After that statement the conversation shifted towards Saudi-Turkey and Saudi-US relations. In their discussion about how Turkey handled the Khashoggi murder the presenter said President Erdogan is a “phenomenally well experienced politician” while the Saudi

crowned prince MBS has relatively no experience and “he has never been a successful businessman he has just been a prince”. The presenter here compared MBS to Turkish president Recep Tayyip Erdogan and also the US president Donald Trump, the successful businessman that is in power is the US president Trump. The comparison made by the report between MBS, Erdogan and Trump although he did not name him directly, belittles MBS as someone that should not be in the political sphere since he is just a prince. The presenter, based on his comment believes MBS is unqualified to run the Saudi government, the position he is holding is as a result of his birth into the Saudi royal family. The presenter’s comment discredits MBS’s position; since the majority of the world believes in democratic leaders and aims for democracy in the countries by having a chance to freely elect their heads of state, MBS will not appeal to majority global audience because he is described as an authoritarian leader although Saudi Arabia is a monarchy. MBS being just a prince then seems undeserving of the political power he is holding in his country and the region.

Tor talked about the Saudi-US relations in depth saying the two countries are close allies although they share very different morals and values. Their close relations depends on their economic ties “the US has the power of dollar and Saudi Arabia has the power of energy”. She introduced the power relations between the US and Saudi Arabia, they have a mutualistic relationship which has to do with trade and money their ties doesn’t not include their domestic and internal politics. She then said those economic and strategic ties between the US and Saudi Arabia is what will determine the US action towards Saudi on the Khashoggi murder.

The episode criticized MBS for his incompetence and praised the Turkish president Erdogan for his ability to handle the situation. The comments they made painted the

Turkish president as a highly skilled politician that is very well articulated in the international and foreign politics concerning his country while Mohammad Bin Salman was described as an impulsive tyrant.

4.6 Who is the Boss in the Phone Call After Khashoggi's Murder?

This episode aired on 13 November 2018, it was presented by news anchor Martine Dennis. The guests on the show were Abdelwahab El-Affendi a professor of politics at Doha institute for graduate studies, Mehmet Celik a Political news editor at Daily Sabah newspaper and Bill Law a Journalist and analyst at The Gulf Matters.

4.6.1 Analysis

This episode was centered on a recording of a phone call made immediately after Khashoggi was killed; by a one of his suspected killers to one of MBS's aids, in the phone call the suspect says "tell your boss". The show is introduced by the presenter; she asks a rhetorical question while introducing the topic of the today "Is the boss in the message the Saudi crowned prince Mohammad Bin Salman" (El-Affendi, Celik, & Law, 2018). Rhetorical questions are known to carry the answer within the question, instead of it being a question it is a claim.

The presenter opened the show by giving the latest update on the Khashoggi case, she said the *New York Times* had received a transcript of one of the recordings from Turkey, they said the telephone call was made by Maher Mutreb a security officer that frequently travelled with the crowned prince. She said Turkish intelligence believed that Mutreb was speaking to one of the crowned prince's aids although officials in Ankara say the audio does not conclusively implicate MBS. In this introductory statement the presenter used many references such as the New York Times, comments made by Turkish officials and comments made by other heads of states about the latest

development on the case. While she was speaking about Mutreb images of him next to MBS were shown, those images were used to show that Mutreb is closely linked to the crowned prince.

The presenter began by asking the guests what they understood from the three words “tell your boss”. The first to was Mehmet Celik and he said there is definitely a high ranked executive that gave the order, he believes the boss is either MBS or someone with close ties to MBS. When Celik made that statement he used references to the *New York Times*, all the references used in the show makes what they are saying more credible. El-Affendi responded by saying “Jamal was a dear friend of mine and I was with him a week before his murder let’s look at the human side of story before we get into the politics”. He continued on to say that Saudi Arabia had owned up to the crime not by admitting it but by working full time to try to hide it and try to reconstruct it. He said:

If prince Abdul Aziz Bin Fahad is in prison for a tweet, what would happen to people who would go to Saudi consulate and kill other people and then use planes owned by the state to get there without the permission of the crowned prince, I think that is impossible.

Law response to the question was also along the line of El-Affendi’s answer he said all signs point to MBS; he said MBS assumed total control of the kingdom and we would never get that truth instead we will get a strong opposition from the Saudi’s denying MBS’s involvement. “The murder of Khashoggi has ruined MBS’s reputation in the western and the myth of him being a reformer has crashed around him”. All of the guests directly and indirectly believe the boss is MBS, Law used the word myth to describe MBS’s label as a reformer which means he thinks the MBS having the label of being a reform is an absolute illusion not reality. El-Affendi also believes it is MBS

that is the boss referred to in the tape; he had a personal relationship with Khashoggi and for that reason it is impossible to expect his views to be completely objective.

The presenter then asked, “President Erdogan has been drip feeding information to what end why is turkey providing the evidence in this way” (El-Affendi, Celik, & Law, 2018). All of the guests responded in a similar manner, commending President Erdogan for the tactic he used to provide the public with the evidence. Celik said the tactic used by President Erdogan kept the story alive and turned the story into a major international issue. Law said the tactics that was used by Erdogan to deliver the evidence was very effective and it really damaged MBS’s reputation. He said now because of international pressure Saudi government would consider reducing the crowned prince’s power because “he is a reckless and dangerous man”. El-Affendi said that the prince had already taken out multiple internal coups first against Abdallah and his heirs and second on princes that challenged him he said many of them are either in prison or killed. He said “I don’t think Bin Salman has a reputation to be damaged; everybody knows he is a thug”. These guests are very critical of not the Saudi government itself but the crowned prince Mohammad Bin Salman. The language they used to define the crowned prince was derogatory.

The final question asked by the presenter was “It seems everyone from the international community is being rather muted in their response, it’s almost as if they are trading on egg shells waiting for the US to take the lead”. Law answer by saying:

Washington is a key player in what happens to MBS and Donald trump is very anxious to keep MBS in place that is because there is the ‘peace process’ that Jared Kutshner, Netanyahu and MBS have made up which is a terrible offer for the Palestinian people. Donald Trump also wants to keep the alliance against Iran cooking and he also wants oil prices to remain manageable. And he will keep MBS close as long as he needs him, but the minute he becomes a liability to the point he can’t handle he will cut ties with him.

In that Law talks about the strategic and geopolitical aspect of the US-Saudi relations. He is not pleased with their alliance and the peace process they plan to offer the Palestinians.

4.7 Discussion

The issues that were emphasized in the coverage of Jamal Khashoggi by Al Jazeera were the Saudi-US relations and how those relations affect the Middle East. The Saudi crowned prince Mohammad Bin Salman was the center of all the talking points, the guests were very critical of him in particular and his way of governing Saudi Arabia. The guests were mostly critics of both MBS and the US president Donald Trump. The guests were scholars, politicians, journalists or activists; they were people with an educated opinion. The murder of Khashoggi was used as an introductory means to talk about the flaws of the Saudi regime through which they talked about the Saudi war in Yemen and the Qatar blockade. The news anchors that presented the show were very well articulated in diverting the show from talking about the murder of Khashoggi to addressing issues concerning the Saudi government most especially the crowned prince Mohammad Bin Salman. When they talked about the murder, they talked about it in detail using very explicit language they did so in order to maximize the gruesomeness of the act. Based on the way the guests described MBS he is portrayed as an impulsive tyrant that is reckless.

Based on the analysis of the shows there was no Saudi government perspective in the show. All the Saudi guests were either former prisoners of the kingdom or exiled dissidents; they were people that were very critical of the Saudi government. If there were Saudi government supporters invited to the show Al Jazeera would have been a more objective channel in its coverage of the Khashoggi murder. Instead the entire

guests all had one stands towards the Saudi kingdom and MBS. The different shows that were analyzed all had the same outcome, different guests said the same thing but in different ways. The producers of the show acted as gate keepers by selecting the guest speakers on the show. The ideology of all the guests was very repetitive only gave one side of the story which was the ultimately opposing the Saudi kingdom if there was a border perspective from the point of view of the guests the show would have been objective. Based on the questions asked by the presenter there was already a presumed notion about the murder of Khashoggi, the kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the crowned prince MBS instead of having guests that challenged the notion they all agreed and further explained the supposed notion.

Based on the analysis done on the selected shows the researcher found that there was a connection between the Saudi-Qatar diplomatic conflict and Al Jazeera's coverage of the Khashoggi's murder. When listing the amount of havoc caused by the Saudi government the region the Qatar blockade was also talked about. Al Jazeera used the Khashoggi murder to talk about and highlight all the mishaps being committed by Saudi Arabia. It is in Qatar's best interest if Saudi Arabia's actions are being spoken of in the international sphere. Based off what was said in the shows the US is the power supporting Saudi Arabia's misbehavior in the region and they believe if Saudi Arabia's image specifically MBS's image is tarnished the US would look for better options for strategic alliance in the region. One of the presenters in the show Imran Khan suggested in one of his questions that Qatar or Oman would be a more reliable strategic alliance for the US in the region because they aren't as reckless as the Saudi's. Although the Saudi-Qatar diplomatic was subliminally part of the reason Al Jazeera gave the Khashoggi murder emphasis in order to get the international sphere to pay attention to Saudi recklessness.

Based on the analysis, the researcher found that Jamal Khashoggi was portrayed as an honorable journalist that just wanted to freely speak in his country and criticize his government. Al Jazeera were very particular in saying he was not a dissident he was just a journalist, because the presenter had corrected one of the guests that called Khashoggi a dissident. Some of the guests that came on the show were friends of Khashoggi and they all spoke highly of him using words like noble and honorable to describe him.

Chapter 5

CONCLUSION

This chapter gives the summary of study, the conclusions drawn from the study and suggestions for further research.

5.1 Summary of Study

In the fall of 2018, the murder of Jamal Khashoggi hit international news outlets with daily updates on the case. This study concentrated on Al Jazeera's coverage of the Jamal Khashoggi murder because of its geopolitical dimension. The researcher used Al Jazeera specifically because Al Jazeera is Qatari owned, and Qatar and Saudi Arabia have had diplomatic conflict since 2017. The researcher aimed to find what issues Al Jazeera considered important in their coverage of the khashoggi murder, if there was any bias in Al Jazeera's coverage of Khashoggi murder and examine the affiliation between the Saudi-Qatar diplomatic conflict and the Al Jazeera's coverage of the murder. Finally, the research aimed to find how Al Jazeera portrayed Khashoggi.

The research used Agenda setting theory and gate keeping theory, the repetitiveness of the Khashoggi story made him relevant. Al Jazeera was setting agenda in viewer's minds telling them what to think about and the producers and directors in Al Jazeera acted as gatekeepers by selecting the guest's speakers on the show and the type of questions that were asked.

Analysis was done through Critical Discourse Analysis in which six episodes from the news commentary program *Inside Story* was analyzed in order to find the hidden ideology behind how Al Jazeera covered the Khashoggi murder.

The research found that the issues emphasized in the Khashoggi murder on Al Jazeera were mostly the reckless acts of the Saudi crowned prince Mohammad Bin Salman. Khashoggi was used as an introductory means to talk about all the atrocities committed by the Saudi kingdom especially MBS. The researcher found that there was bias in the way Al Jazeera portrayed the killing of Khashoggi, the questions and guests that spoke about the issues concerning the murder were all against the Saudi kingdom and the rule of MBS.

Al Jazeera is known to give the Middle East perspective the region of the world most western media represents in a negative light. This study wanted to conclusive find if there a link between how Al Jazeera covers events in the Middle East and Qatar's interest. The research found in Al Jazeera's coverage of the Khashoggi murder, the news network portrayed the murder in a way that suited their country.

5.2 Conclusions Drawn from the Study

The researcher found that the Al Jazeera used Jamal Khashoggi to talk about the underlining problems and issues concerning Saudi Arabia's government and its flaws in the region. The amount of emphasis news media gives to certain events makes them relevant in public, Khashoggi was not a very prominent name before his murder but after his death due to the amount of times the news media mentioned his story he became globally known.

5.3 Suggestion for Further Research

This study used only analyzed six episodes from one commentary show on Al Jazeera. Further research can be done through comparative analysis between other well-known international new channels such as BBC, CNN and Al Jazeera in order to find how each channel covered the Khashoggi murder. This study can be done on other news channels and there coverage of stories concerning their country, to see if there is bias in their coverage of the story.

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APPENDIX

Links to the Selected *Inside Story* Episodes

<https://www.aljazeera.com/programmes/insidestory/2018/10/riyadh-claim-jamal-khashoggi-died-fist-fight-credible-181020180349743.html>

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<https://www.aljazeera.com/programmes/insidestory/2018/11/boss-phone-call-khashoggi-murder-181113173352687.html>