

TELEVISION NEWS

In

SAUDI ARABIA

By

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The candidate confirms that the work submitted is his own and that appropriate credit has been given where reference has been made to the work of others.

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Abstract

During the 1970s and 1980s, many viewers in both developed and developing countries found themselves able to receive new television channels, whether from near neighbours or via satellite from further a field. The public service broadcasters have inevitably been affected by the arrival and the activities of the new private-sector media. The arrival of the private channels played a role in many things in our life as people, and brought many problems to the governments especially in Asia and the Arab World. This study illuminates the various issues involved in this problem, focusing especially on the U.K. [BBC], Asia [China & India], and the Arab world [Saudi Arabia].

The quality of the news service on Saudi Television has been characterised by poor quality and has failed to satisfy Saudi viewers as indicated by some of the previous studies carried out during the years 1982, 1983, and 1987. At that time satellite broadcasting was still at its embryonic stage and Saudi viewers had no alternative available to them but since 1991 they started to receive broadcasts from a number of Arab and non-Arab satellite channels and this has increased the choices available to them. With the appearance of specialised satellite news channels the demand for stronger television news service became even more important, both at the official and national levels, in order to follow up what goes on in the world. The researcher conducted fieldwork study in Saudi Arabia, Qatar and London during the period from 15/01/2000 to 15/3/2000. This study of seven chapters is divided into four parts. The first part explores the views and impression of Saudi viewers about the quality of the news service of channel one of Saudi television and the three satellite channels under the study [Al-Jazeera, MBC, ANN].

For this reason, the researcher interviewed eight groups of 48 persons [male & female] from the Saudi audience [(1) academics (2) officials) males (3) academics (4) doctors) females (5) King Saud University students (6) Imam Bin Saud University students (7) farmers and sales merchants (8) unemployed and uneducated) males]. The second part ascertains the news agenda and type of production in each of the four stations. A content analysis of a total of 497 news stories or the total production of the four stations in the week 12/2/2000 and ending 18/2/2000 was undertaken. The third part deals with the news department itself on the four stations, and how they work from the organisation, management, strategy and the employees. For this reason, the researcher interviewed the news makers [twenty persons].

The final part in this study was how can Saudi Television compete with satellite channels, for this reason, the researcher put forward some suggestions in the hope that may contribute to the development of the Saudi media work in general and television news service in particular [chapter 7].

What was found about the Saudi viewers is that they are dissatisfied with the Saudi Television news and they prefer the news service of the other channels under study. And we found the causes of the prevailing shortages and weaknesses in Saudi Television news service [Channel One] into factors related to:

1. - Elements and stages of news service production in Saudi television.
2. - News service management.
3. - Employees of news service sector.

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Dedication

To the memory of my late mother.

May God bless her soul.

INTRODUCTION

Over the past twenty years public service broadcasting organisations in many countries have found themselves subject to competition from new commercial and satellite services. Saudi Television is no exception.

This study sets out to investigate the way in which the monopoly broadcaster has been subject to competition and how it has responded to the challenge. This work is divided into seven chapters. Chapter One examines how public service broadcasting organizations have been affected by the rise of competition and how they have responded. The study examines the situation of broadcasters in the U.K., China and India as well in the Arab World. While the BBC is one of the most successful public service broadcasters, the response of Asian countries when confronted by the challenge of satellite broadcasting is more directly comparable with the situation in Saudi Arabia.

Chapter Two discusses television news in general and television news in the satellite age to understand the news sphere and to provide background knowledge about the nature of television news and the news process. Chapter Three identifies the research problem and the methods used to investigate the subject. Chapter Four is devoted to the views and impressions of Saudi viewers about the quality of the news service of Channel One of Saudi Television compared to the services provided by three other channels, namely Al-Jazeera, MBC and ANN.

We examine in Chapter Five the television news agenda for the four channels by analysing 497 news stories, the total production of the four stations in a week from 12/2/2000 to 18/2/2000 and as a basis for understanding the quality of news production in each of the four stations and how it is produced. Chapter Six examines the news department itself on the four stations in order to gain an understanding of the approach to news production of the four stations. Interviews were conducted with personnel from each of the four channels in Saudi Arabia, Qatar and London.

The researcher also observed the production process inside the newsrooms of the four channels. Finally Chapter Seven deals with proposed solutions that will help Saudi Television to meet the challenge of the competition.

CHAPTER ONE

Changes in Media Organisations

Introduction

In the 1970s and 1980s, many rapid changes occurred altering media organisations. Consequently, many viewers around the globe were able to receive new television channels, including more terrestrial channels and channels which were provided by cable or satellite.

At the national level, these changes have presented a great challenge to public service broadcasting (PSB) principles. For example, the number of people who used to watch the former monopoly channels has declined. Now, terrestrial-broadcasting systems across the World are facing an increasingly unstable future. Television cultures are being forced to adapt to new conditions because of challenges presented by audiences, an explosion of channels, regulations imposed by governments and the attraction of digital technology.

Our study will be focused on Saudi Television, which is a public service broadcasting station already facing huge competition from the satellite channels. To understand the PSB sphere, in this chapter we will examine the following points:

- (1) The impact of these developments on PSB.
- (2) The principles of public service broadcasting and the problems facing it and response to such problems.
- (3) The competition between public and the private broadcasting and consider the BBC's enforced response to this competitive challenge.

The reason behind selecting the BBC is its great worldwide experience and its approach of adopting new ways to satisfy the audience while remaining a public service broadcaster. Studying the BBC's approaches and solutions will also assist in analysing the present weaknesses and future modifications in Saudi Television. Further light can be put forward to highlight the problems that public broadcasting is facing in Asia (China and India) through the competition from satellite channels. The main reason behind that is to know how these countries have tackled such problems. This will help us to discuss and analyse similar problems faced by Saudi Arabian Television which is the main topic of this study. It will thus provide the necessary background to the complex relations between the public service and private sector, following the technological revolution.

1.1 Public Service Broadcasting

Many attempts have been made to define PSB. According to McQuail et-al. public service broadcasting is designed to serve the public, the social institutions within national boundaries. It is organised centrally and expected to protect national language and culture and to represent the national interest. In his view, the viewer is addressed as a citizen of a nation state. Therefore, PSB is assigned the task of contributing to the creation and development of a national identity and culture (McQuail et-al. 1992, p.9). Bulck discusses this further by arguing that it assumes the responsibility in areas such as education, information and entertainment (Bulck 2001, p.57). Kuhn has numerated three elements in his definition of PSB. They are as follows:

- (1) A commitment to balanced scheduling across the different programme genres, with no undue emphasis on any one; hence, public service broadcasting institutions have usually been statutorily required to educate and inform as well as entertain its audience. One institution has frequently had the task of satisfying all the audience's needs;
 - (2) The broadcasting institution is a public body with generally a high degree of financial independence from both governmental and commercial sources;
 - (3) The service is provided to all in return for a basic, initial payment, usually in form of an annual licence-fee or free in some Third World countries; political output is required to be balanced and impartial.
- (Kuhn 1995, pp. 202-206)

The chairman of the BBC, Sir Arthur Fforde, wrote in 1963 about the BBC mentioning that it must be in a steady and responsive relationship with the moral view of the society. He claimed the moral institution had failed the modern society. He believed that broadcasting was the only way which could correct this failure. He also mentioned that it was important that whoever was in a responsible position should be ready to place the duty of assurance. He stressed the importance of freedom and independence, which are considered the most important aspects of broadcasting. (Tracey 1998, p.19)

On the same subject, the Director-General of the BBC, Ian Jacobs (1952-1959) describes public service broadcasting as a compound of a system of control, an attitude of mind and an aim. According to Jacobs the system of control is full independence, or the maximum degree of independence that Parliament will accept. He went on to say the attitude of mind is an intelligent

one capable of attracting to the service the highest quality of character and intellect with the aim of giving the best and the most comprehensive service of broadcasting to the public (Tracey 1998, pp.19-21).

Tracey numerates the main principles of public broadcasting by stating that it has to ensure that its signals are available to all and should understand that television must cater to for existing tastes but should open up new tastes, interests and potentials. It should also consider the fact that some audiences have other specific characteristics and needs. According to Tracey, public broadcasting should allow a nation to speak to itself and recognise its special relationship to a sense of national identity and broad community. It should be distanced from all vested personal interests and should be structured in a way to encourage competition in good programming rather than competing for numbers. In his view, the roles of broadcasting should liberate rather than restrict the programme-makers. (Tracey 1998, pp.26-32).

The principles identified by Tracey are idealistic and difficult to adhere to even for the nations which developed them. Some of these principles are dynamic and are subject to internal or external change.

1.2 Problems Facing Public Broadcasting Services

The public service broadcasters have been affected by the arrival and the activities of the new private-sector media. Stubbe identifies some of these problems by stating that the financial position of the public service broadcasting institutions has declined owing to easy access by the public to commercial television channels. A good example is what happened in countries such as Italy and France where advertising had been introduced on state monopoly public service channels to help supplement licence revenue. Stubbe attributed the damage that commercial channels caused to public services to the following factors:

1. Economic factors. The competition for advertising revenue.
2. Political factors. The commercial channels have more freedom and flexibility than public services broadcasting, which in most countries is controlled by the government.
3. Technological factor. The commercial channels have high quality program telecast equipment.
4. Social factor. This factor is very important from the audience perspective.

Commercial channels meet audience needs. (Stubbe 1997, p.68)

Kuhn identifies other problems, which arise from the linking of the public service broadcasting with government and political output. In his view, the public service broadcasters' success is determined by independence and impartiality. It is dependent in part on the willingness of politicians to refrain from interfering in the day-to-day running of broadcasting. Kuhn also argues that this is not always the case in democratic countries such as France and Italy where political control of broadcasting output has been the norm in the post-

war period. The BBC encountered some difficulties during the Falklands War. It was attacked by the political parties and the government because of the way it covered the war (Kuhn 1985, p.7).

Kuhn also identifies other problems such as the expansion of broadcast outlets coupled with advances in broadcasting technology such as satellite, fibre optics cable and the videocassette recorder. In his view, television in the longer term 'will be used not just for the reception of programmes, but as an integral part of the hardware in the information technology revolution, providing a wide range of interactive services'. The final problem he identifies is the changing nature of Western society. There is an increase in leisure time, the explosion in leisure interests and the differentiation in moralities, tastes and expectations. All these things have contributed to the fragmentation of the old-style mass audience. (Kuhn 1985, pp.7-14)

These difficulties are the main ones and need to be taken into consideration if we want to improve public service broadcasting since they can only increase in the future as audiences further disperse among different broadcast outlets.

Nordenstreng and Schiller discuss the balance between commercial and public broadcasting in the west, which shifted steadily, and perhaps decisively, in favour of the former from the 1970s into the early 1990s. They claim that public broadcasting has been under pressure of competition because of commercial interests and conservative governments throughout this period. Consequently, public broadcasting monopolies have been broken in countries such as France and Italy. As regards commercial broadcasters, they have been rapidly enlarging their domains, encroaching on public system advertising.

This put public broadcasters' funding by the state under further pressure by reducing their audience shares, and forcing them to alter their programmes to compete for audiences. (Nordenstreng & Schiller 1995, p 85).

To cope with these new challenges Tracey mentions that public broadcasting everywhere is being forced to re-examine vital issues such as its purpose, its nature, and its mission. This could be traced from 1970s to 1990s, when broadcasting represented ideas about how western society should be organised economically, but also culturally, creatively and morally. (Tracey 1998, pp.40-41).

The effective way of coping with new challenges imposed by technology and other circumstances in a country necessitates public service broadcasting re-examining its purpose, its nature, and its mission.

As regards the audience, McQuail (1997) identifies four main changes:

1. There are new possibilities for delivering television broadcasting through cable and satellite.
2. There is a rapid development of new ways of recording, storage, and retrieval of sound and pictures.
3. The increased Trans-nationalization of television flows, as a result of the worldwide growth of new services, the capacity for satellite transmission to cross national frontiers, and the greater import and export of film and television programmes content.
4. The increasingly interactive capacity use of various media, because of computer-based systems has led to one-way systems becoming two-way or even multiple networks.

Audiences are not just a product of technology, but also a part of social

life. There are continuing social forces that generate the formation of audiences (McQuail 1997, pp.1-10). These rapid developments in communications will definitely have a serious impact on broadcasting service providers everywhere.

The majority of public service channels have chosen to adapt to the situation, retaining the traditional scope of their output with a broad mixture of programmes in varying combinations. McQuail and Siune mention that highbrow or traditional cultural programmes are pushed outside prime time and the new format of 'infotainment' such as talk shows, reality shows, magazine formats have also been introduced on public channels. The important changes are that news has become sensational, current affairs has become infotainment and talk shows and dramas have become soap operas (McQuail & Siune 1998, p 29).

1.3 The BBC: The Way Forward

In this section, we will focus on the BBC response to the challenge from private channels. The BBC is one of the world's most respected service broadcasters and is seen as an example of the ability of a PSB to respond effectively to the challenge of the contemporary environment. However, it always adopts new ways to satisfy the audience while remaining as a public service.

To cope with such changes the BBC aims to offer valued and distinctive services to the audience by:

- nurturing and cherishing the rich diversity of the UK's heritage, identity and cultural life.
- drawing the UK together for moments of national celebration,

common experience and times of crisis.

- providing the most comprehensive news service, of range and depth, rooted in expertise.
- enabling all sides to join the debate on issues of national, regional and local significance.
- reflecting the nations, regions and communities of the UK to themselves and to the rest of UK.
- keeping the audiences informed with programmes, which document and register what is happening in the UK and around the world
- exposing the audiences to new ideas, to scientific discovery, to great art, music and writing, to the spiritual and to the uplifting.
- helping people to broaden their horizons through learning and by enriching their skills.
- offering them stimulating and intelligent drama and comedy, and working with the best dramatic and comic talent by offering sports coverage of excellence and insight.
- pioneering new technology to offer the audiences extra quality, choice, conveniences and involvement; with easy access to rich reservoirs of knowledge within BBC.
- offering the widest possible range and diversity of programmes by striving to make all BBC programmes and services of the highest quality.

(BBC Beyond 2000, Achieving our aims, 1999. p.2)

The BBC's has to play a role in ensuring that these benefits are reflected in its services and the information society is fully shared by all in the UK.

There is a connection between these promises and the following discussion of delivery platforms which can be put like this. If the BBC administration wants to fulfil their aims and promises to meet their audience needs, the BBC must adopt the following principles. According to the BBC beyond 2000 (BBC statement of promises to viewers and listeners 1989/99), the BBC distribution strategy should be based on three principles:

1. The BBC's public services should be universally accessible across the UK, on all broadcast platforms (digital terrestrial, cable and satellite) on both digital and analogue. They should be easily

accessible for UK audiences.

2. The public services should be received free-to-air so licence funded public services should be distributed free-to-air and other than purchasing the necessary receiver equipment - a television, radio, PC, set-top box - no viewer or listener should have to pay at the point of use for the reception of BBC public services.

3. Diversity in programmes should be included.

However, if we have a quick look at the programmes being presented the BBC today we cannot miss the high level of commitment and the diversity of its programmes. This is done in order to meet the audiences' needs, interests and taste.

When considering the points mentioned earlier about the BBC, we would be tempted to say that the BBC has a greater role to play as a universal broadcasting service in public life in the UK. This has been a constant concern of everybody. Garnham has identified this role by saying:

The government believes that the BBC should move forward into the new multi-media world. The BBC should continue to be making and broadcasting a wide range of programmes for the audiences in the United Kingdom and it should also develop its role as an international broadcaster, building on its present services for an audience overseas. (Garnham 1994, p13)

The new vision, which the BBC will adopt, seems to be very ambitious but it has to be given more time to materialise fully. All these principles seem practical but have to be given sufficient time so that they can be implemented fully.

If we consider entertainment programmes we will find that the BBC has presented many of the world's great twentieth century television comedy series – *Monty Python's Flying Circus*, *Morecambe and Wise*, *Only Fools and Horses*, *Fawlty Towers*, *Absolutely Fabulous*, *The Good Life*, *The Two Ronnies*, *Shooting Stars*, *One Foot in the Grave* and other drama series like *Z Cars*, *All*

Creatures Great and Small, EastEnders, Casualty, Pride and Prejudice, This Life, Our Friends in the North. These series have been successful in finding a place in the mind and heart of the public and have become part and parcel of British national culture. (BBC Beyond 2000, Choice and Distinctiveness, 1999, pp.1-5).

Moreover, most programmes, which the BBC presents to audiences overseas, are of good quality. This fact and other factors give the BBC a credit and make it a trusted and more reliable service.

Through the World Service the BBC has become one the most respected voices in the international broadcasting, trusted for the independence of its journalism and for the quality of its programmes. Broadcasting values of accuracy, fairness and impartiality, in-depth analysis, craftsmanship and innovation have set international standards. Doors that have remained closed to other broadcasters have been opened wide to the BBC (BBC Beyond 2000, Introduction, 1999, p.2).

We have discussed the BBC's policy but we need to find out to what extent this policy is being implemented. However, this can be achieved by discussing what is being practised. In fact, what has been said and written about the BBC is evident in most programmes and can easily be traced.

To meet the increasing needs of its audiences, the BBC recruits men and women of the highest ability in every field, from all sections of society. It also captures almost the full potential of the medium by providing programmes which are characterised by originality, wit and the sense of excitement and enlightenment. It presents, for example, major sporting events, national celebrations and crisis. To engage the whole nation, BBC One and BBC Two offer programmes of real and lasting value at the heart of the BBC schedules. That means more programmes like the recent *Full Circle* with Michael Palin, *The Human Body, Vanity Fair and Dinner Ladies* - all on BBC One. It means

constantly refreshing familiar programmes like *EastEnders* and *Casualty* so they are the best of their kind. It also means creating space for the television of conviction that is passionate about its subject, inspiring people to take a new interest or renew an old one. (*BBC Beyond 2000, Choice and Distinctiveness*, 1999, p.1).

BBC Radio also plays an important role in exploring and explaining the key issues in modern society whether in science, politics, the arts, history, philosophy or religion. The BBC is unique in the world as the producer of a wide range of challenging spoken word programmes and this is a significant source of pride. (*BBC Beyond 2000, Choice and Distinctiveness*, 1999, pp.1-3).

Children's interests, tastes and needs are catered for by the BBC. It competes for attention both with other networks and with dedicated children's channels. BBC News 24 is a dedicated news channel that allows viewers a new way of accessing the resources of BBC news whenever they wish. BBC Parliament covers parliamentary proceedings in Westminster. It is a new channel. Another important channel is BBC Learning and this new channel dedicated to providing learning opportunities for everyone. It focuses on different times of the day on main audiences such as children, parents and those who would like to improve their knowledge. (*BBC Beyond 2000, Choice and distinctiveness*, 1999, pp.3-10)

The audience can access BBC news through the Internet at any time. This has made accessibility to news very easy. From the above discussion, it is clear that the BBC took appropriate and satisfactory decisions to bring forward its new image and to satisfy the needs of the audience (majority, minority, men, women and children's) in this satellite age.

In the following section, we are going to highlight some problems public broadcasting is facing in Asia (China and India) through the competition from satellite channels. The main reason behind that is to know how these countries have tackled such problems. This will help us to discuss and analyse similar problems faced by Saudi's Television, which is the main topic of this study.

1.4 Asian Cases

Sixty percent of the earth's population lives in the Asia-Pacific region: China has more than 1.2 billion people and India has more than 1 billion people in July 2001 (*The World Fact Book*, 2001, p.3). Johnston mentions that in many parts of the world, the broadcast media have less freedom than the print media does and most countries have guidelines and controls for news and public affairs broadcasts (Johnston 1995, pp.241-247).

Johnston mentions three important developments: the end of communism; the growing amalgamation of world markets; and very fast advances in communication technology, which in his view strengthen the media revolution. All these developments have changed the way South Asians see the world. He also believes that satellite TV has made a big difference to the choice of viewing available in small towns in economically under-developed parts of South Asia. It has opened windows to world which were inaccessible before except to the well-to-do, and it has provoked a lively and often heated debate about the implications for communities, cultures and even nations. It has also opened a major challenge to the national broadcasters of South Asia who had the field for so long to themselves. Satellite TV does not respect

borders and it has created new electronic communities, which exceed the old political limits.

1.4.1. The Case of China

Any researcher tracing the history of media developments in the last twenty years would find that China's print and broadcasting media have expanded rapidly. The developments of economy and literacy rates have soared. It also has witnessed a rise in the number of well-to-do citizens, which in turn has created a market for a much-improved range of information. The Chinese media organisations are meeting these new demands by expanding the range of newspapers and magazines and increasing television and radio stations. (*Chinese Media 2001*, p.1)

Chinese media has been for years organised on the basis of national and local monopolies. For example, China had one radio and one television station under each level of government administration. Development could be made in only two ways by establishing new stations by the government administrations and counties in addition to the existing stations. (Zhao 1998, p.94)

Luo Hongado's characterisation of the official model of broadcasting is a useful recapitulation of the main characteristics of traditional broadcasting:

The broadcast system emphasises the media's mouthpiece role for the party and the government and stresses the transmission of policy directives and education of the public. It neglects the role of broadcasting as simultaneously the voice of the people and the means by which the people exercise supervision over party and government. It neglects direct participation by the public. Programmes stress propagandistic, educational, and guidance roles and overlook the function of broadcasting as a means of social communication. In other words, political and ideological functions are fully exploited, but the personal, social, and psychological

dimensions of communication remain unexplored. (Zhao 1998, p.95).

In 1997 there were 3,240 television stations in China (of which 209 are operated by China Central Television (CCTV), 31 are provincial TV stations and nearly 3000 are local city stations. The number of television sets was 400 million, with 417 million radios and 22 million Internet users (*The World Fact Book 2001*, p.3). Chinese Central Television controls the whole broadcasting.

Television broadcasting is controlled by CCTV, the country's only national network. CCTV, which employs about 2,400 people, falls under the dual supervision of the propaganda department, responsible ultimately for media content, and the Ministry of Radio, Film, and Television, which oversees operations. A Vice Minister in the latter ministry serves as chairman of CCTV. The network's principal directors and other officers are appointed by the State. So are the top officials at local conventional television stations in China - nearly all of which are restricted to broadcasting within their own province or municipality - that receive CCTV broadcasts. CCTV produces its own news broadcasts three times a day and is the country's most powerful and prolific television programme producer. It also has a monopoly on purchases of programming from overseas. All local stations are required to carry CCTV's 7pm main news broadcast; an internal CCTV survey indicates that nearly 500 million people countrywide regularly watch this programme (*Chinese Media 2001*, p.23). CCTV has nine channels and broadcasts 138 hours programming daily. (*China Online Information*, 2000, p.1)

In the past, prime-time news in state-owned Chinese Central Television was routinely examined, prior to airing, by the Ministry of Radio, Film and Television. Since 1994, however, the Ministry has ceased to pre-screen CCTV

news programmes; now the programmes are examined after they have aired. The diversity and quantity of material, moreover, have compelled officials to prioritise their reviews of broadcasts; the 7.00 p.m. news broadcasts, for instance, receive far more attention from the authorities than does the midnight news. In another manifestation of weakening government controls, recently launched news programmes such as CCTV's *Focal Report* and Beijing Television's *Express News* include moderate criticism of the party and government and explore some controversial public topics in an effort to make programmes relevant to, and more popular with, viewers (*Chinese Media 2001*, P7).

CCTV's network adopts a large structural reform by pulling out of the production business to concentrate on its broadcast operations. CCTV has three main goals (1) to separate its programme production and broadcasting operations, (2) to start cancelling programmes based on viewer rating and (3) to create profits to help it escape its complete reliance on advertising revenues for income. (*China Online Information*, 2000, p.1).

It is apparent that the fast expansion of local television stations and cable networks has greatly reduced audiences for centralised propaganda, particularly for CCTV. It is important to mention that the rapid growth of cable television and decentralisation of the television industry have threatened the domination of CCTV. This has been reported by its President, Yang Weiguang. Consequently, the audience for CCTV has actually declined, while the reach of local stations has increased (Zhao 1998, p.168).

It has been reported that commercialisation has been a major liberating force for the media in China. The government is far less able than before to

wield financial leverage over the media, which have increasingly become self-supporting through advertising revenues and circulation. (*Chinese Media 2001*, P.4)

'Over the long run, a nation's media can influence popular attitudes only to the extent that the media are believed and trusted. Although survey data are limited, the degree of public trust in and respect for the media in China appears to have remained low despite all the changes that have occurred'. (*Chinese Media 2001*, p.9)

There have been attempts made by the Chinese media to become more responsive to the public. This has begun to happen with regard to television. More than 60 percent of respondents in a 1993 survey in Guangdong Province stated that *Chinese Television* views were more convincing than ten years earlier. (*Media Development Issue 2/1997*, p.3).

It has been reported that the 1990s witnessed a sudden increase in overseas information and programmes getting into China, with Star TV (Satellite Television Asia Region) playing a most important role in China's audience/market expansion. Star TV was launched by Hong Kong-based Hutchvision Whampoa conglomerate in 1991 with a £300 million venture to offer direct broadcast satellite (DBS) service via AsiaSat1. It has also been reported that, in July 1993, Rupert Murdoch's News Corporation took a majority share in Star TV for £525 million and bought the rest two years later (*Media Development Issue 2/1997*, p.3).

In 1992, it was reported that 1.2 million Chinese households could receive Star TV and the number reached 4.8 million in 1993 registering a fourfold growth. The great leap forward came in 1994 when the number jumped

to 30.5 million and then rose to 38 million in 1995 (*Media Development Issue 2/1997*, p.3).

Another important factor contributing to the rapid spread of satellite TV programmes comes from the cable networks in many part of China. The end of 1995 witnessed the operation of about 3,000 cable stations and networks, with only 1,200 receiving official franchises. However, the central authority has failed to take effective measures to curb this trend. Consequently, the number of overseas programmes increased within few years from 4,609 to 40,000 by 1993 (*Media Development Issue 2/1997*, p.3).

The current situation is that millions of China's TV viewers directly receive overseas information and entertainment uncensored. Now, residents of the Chinese mainland receive more than 20 outside television channels by satellite, including Chinese-language services of CNN, Star TV, and the United States Information Agency, according to Chinese media report. Some Chinese can easily use the Internet to access materials, which they could not access in the past. It is important to mention that the Chinese government may have been successful in preventing the Chinese media from publishing or broadcasting anything it considers opposing the Chinese Constitution; harming the socialist system and national security; promoting subversion, rebellion, riots and ethnic animosity; and instigating defiance to the leadership of the Communist Party. (*Media Development Issue 2/1997*, p.3).

It is also worth mentioning that the government issued a ruling in October 1993, tightening control over the import, sale, manufacture, installation and use of satellite dishes. These rules prohibit foreign broadcasting in China and the installation and use of satellite dishes by

individuals. In addition, individual work units, business firms, and government institutions are required to obtain a licence to operate satellite equipment. However, the main problem facing the government is that Chinese society has become more pluralistic and the social structures are now more diversified.

At present, the Chinese government has to re-examine its strategies and laws by drafting new laws and regulations and controlling the Internet service providers. There is no choice but to slow down the process of plunging the country into cyberspace by drafting new laws and regulations, controlling Internet service providers and limiting public access. It will have to rely on improvements in domestic broadcasting programmes to compete with overseas broadcasting (*Media Development Issue 2/1997*, p.6)

To conclude this section, some important points need to be made. First, it is apparent from the discussion of the major developments in the Chinese media that technical advances in communications are undercutting Chinese Government efforts to control media content and may continue to play a big role in the future. This creates a big challenge to the Chinese government. Second, the way forward is that the government should think of new strategies to cope with these new technologies. Third, residents of the Chinese mainland can now receive more than 20 television channels by satellite. However, this weakens the government owned broadcasting services and exposes them to competition. Fourth, the widening Chinese use of the Internet is also undercutting government efforts to control the flow of information. The problem is that the number of people using this service will be on the increase in the future which the government has to take seriously. Finally, a question needs to be asked about what is going on in China. Will the Chinese

government be able to face these new challenges, in a world where globalisation is spreading?

1.4.2. The Case of India

Developments in media can easily be traced in India. In 1959, UNESCO sponsored the introduction of a television as a pilot educational project. It has been reported that India in 1997 had 63 million TV sets, 116 million radios and 4.5 million Internet users (*The World Fact Book 2001*, p.7). As a result Doordarshan (DD), the state television channel was created as part of AIR (All India Radio) until 1976, when it became a separate department under the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting with the aim of educating the national broadcasters and informing and creating a feeling of national identity and helping to maintain national unity. (Thussu 1998, pp.274-275)

Indira Gandhi, the former Prime Minister of India, had a high priority to expand and improve the media. Her regime witnessed a rapid expansion of television. The Indian government launched the Indian national satellite (INSAT) in 1982. This increased the number of transmitters from 19 to 1999 in 1987 and, due to this, Doordarshan was able to cover 70 per cent of the population, as against the 26% it could reach in 1982.

The Broadcast Bill was introduced in 1997 sought to bring order to the broadcasting industry, currently regulated by the archaic Telegraph Act of 1885, and to create an independent broadcasting authority to regulate broadcasting services. (Thussu 1998, p.289). This Bill gave a new role to the Indian government. Arun Jaitley, Union Minister for Information and Broadcasting noted that the Indian government can only play the role of a

facilitator while helping the cable industry since it is being regulated wholly by market forces in these days of globalization and liberalisation. The cable industry is poised to play an important role in the information technology field in the future with the telecom industry making use of the cable systems. We are witnessing a new era of globalization of the India media' (Fine 2000, p.1). This statement indicates clearly the attitudes of the government towards globalisation and the requirements of its viewers. This also opens doors for increased competition waged by media producers and organisations.

With the growing competition from private channels, Doordarshan has to provide mass entertainment as well as education. That infotainment is becoming a dominant factor in news and current affairs (Thussu 1998, pp.289-290). Doordarshan has so many problems to face. It has been overstaffed and on the other side it is having difficulty getting the best people in the industry both in terms of creativity, quality and motivation. (*India Media Review*, 2000, p.1)

It has been noted by the Indian authorities that there is a need for developmental television and that private channels such as Zee may find areas of co-operation with transnational media companies to provide much needed factual programming. The Zee channel has already considerably expanded its news operations, and in January 1998 it converted its EL channel into twenty-four-hour news and current affairs channels called Zee India TV. The Zee's main rival, NDTV, the most professional producer of indigenous news programmes, and since 1996 part of the STAR network, has also started a round-the-clock news and current affairs channels. A survey conducted in Delhi in December 1997 by Cable Wave showed that TV audiences are slowly but surely moving from 'entertainment to infotainment'. (Thussu 1998, p.290)

Doordarshan responded to the challenge, first of video newsmagazines and then of the satellite channels, by commissioning current affairs programmes produced by outside producers. They were previewed and pre-censored, creating real problems in keeping a fast-moving story up to date. (Page & Crawley 2001, p.358).

Also, it has been reported that in the first phase of satellite revolution, Indian advertisers successfully reached middle class audiences in states through Hindi programmes on Zee, Star or Sony and, by 2000, this situation had started to change and a number of regional language channels were established to meet the growing need for regional news and entertainment (Page & Crawley 2001, p.184). It is worth mentioning that during the autumn of 1999, six new regional channels were launched by Doordarshan to provide the public with local news and other educational programmes, for example, the educational channel 'Gyan Darshan' and the Kashmir special channel 'Kashmir'. With these changes Doordarshan can attract more viewers. All these activities indicate that the government is taking the necessary measures to meet the needs of viewers and to face new challenges created by globalisation.

According to Prasar Bharti (Broadcasting Corporation of India), 'Doordarshan's viewership has increased mainly because of the improved reception quality of DD signals in cable and satellite homes, improvement in the presentation of Doordarshan channels, and inclusion of a wide variety of new software offering a bouquet of programmes catering to all sections of viewers'. According to an official release, Prasar Bharti has initiated all the necessary arrangements and preparations relating to accounting and fund management so that it can operate on its own receipts and grant-in-aid received

from the government. It is not easy for the Prasar Bharti to strike a balance between commercial viability and social responsibility.

Arun Jaitley, the Information and Broadcasting Minister, has spoken about Doordarshan's large public responsibility and commercial viability. His logic is that:

Doordarshan should make money on its commercial time. The government's budgetary support should be earmarked for discharging its social obligations (i.e. showing programmes on poverty alleviation, health, environment and several other areas where the government is engaged in improving the quality of life). (*India Media Review*, 2000, pp.1-2)

According to Fine (2000), in the 1998 Salomon Smith Barney report entitled *Asia-Pacific Television. The Big Picture*, indicates that 'the Indian market represents the greatest medium-term and long-term commercial opportunity in the television industry in the Asia-Pacific region. This investment firm projected that the Indian TV market will grow from an estimated commercial revenue level of Rs 1300 crore (crore = 10,000,000) in 1995 to Rs 12,900 crore in 2005. This shows that the market for the Indian television industry is going in the right direction'. (Fine 2000, p.3)

Although India, at the moment, maintains a somewhat hostile stance towards foreign ownership, we expect meaningful liberalisation to occur due to a combination of factors such as rising television penetration rates, rising income and consumption, historical openness to foreign ideas and culture and relatively wide use of English and vernacular segmentation (Fine 2000, p 3). Unlike China, India is more open to foreign ideas than China. This is indicated in its attitudes towards globalisation.

1.5 The Case of the Arab World

Changes in the Arab media can be traced despite the direct control imposed by Arab governments or states. These changes are massive and fast. Satellite channels are the newest media wave to hit Arab countries. The spread of channels and dishes does not mean that the development of global television is proceeding smoothly in the Arab world. Many problems have developed in the area, including religious constraints, censorship, and the problems of cultural invasion and cultural imperialism.

Many voices, especially those of old-fashioned religious groups, who have conflicting views about international television, have put tremendous pressure on different Arab countries to oppose the spread of satellite dishes. In Saudi Arabia and other Gulf States, religious groups have described satellite dishes as a means of cultural penetration and invasion. Most of the programming available from satellite services contains material, which are not acceptable in Islamic societies such as sex, nudity, obscenity and violence. Such programmes are considered to be offensive by Islamic leaders. In 1994, for example, Iran banned the importation of satellite dishes and in Egypt, the governor of Damietta and Dakhahlia banned public viewing of satellite channels in coffee shops. Dislike of satellite broadcasting from a religious angle is spreading throughout the Arab countries. To control or ban the reception of satellite broadcasts, Algeria is leading North African countries. (Amin 1996, p.122).

Satellite services have given much more attention to the issues of globalisation, privatisation, democratisation, access to information, and freedom of the press as the main topics of concern throughout the world.

However, the charisma and the fame of such services in the Arab world have created a major problem for Arab leaders. So to control the flow of information in their countries it is becoming a major struggle for them to strike a balance between media development on one hand, and issues of culture, religion, politics, and their traditional objectives on the other.

The Arab world is divided into two camps in a debate on whether or not satellite services are instruments used to invade Arabic culture, traditions, and customs and are epitomised as below:

The first camp is very sensitive about stereotyping and it accuses satellite services of attempting to change the lifestyle of the Arab family and the education and manners of Arab children. This group also argues that the satellite services promote intercultural intrusion among the Arab states. Although it appears that Arabs share a common language, culture, religion, and geographical borders, there are many cultural differences and diverse political ideologies. The second camp claims that satellite services are essential to project Arab culture internationally, promote a sense of unity across the many nations of the region, and serve the widespread Arab diaspora (Amin 1996, p.122).

In his summary of the role of Third World mass media, Habte also noted that encouraging national unity and development are the chief functions of the media. Habte said that most Third World countries do not have any tradition of media as watchdogs or as catalysts for change; the Third World media has historically served ruling interests, beginning with colonial powers. Today the Third World governments expect the media to reflect national policies and to express national values and attitudes rather than to be a forum for diverse viewpoints (Habte 1983, pp.95-109).

The growing and tremendous development in direct broadcast technology was reflected in the content of television material received by the Arab viewers due to the large number of dish receivers and the increase in the

area of direct broadcasting through satellites. It is well known that the Arab region lies in the footprint of television broadcasts by a number of communications (stationary communication satellites) and direct broadcast satellites (DBS). Therefore, it is capable of picking up a large number of satellite channels using relatively small dishes. The number of receiving dishes in the member states of the Gulf Co-operation Council, for example, is estimated to be between 1,000,000 and 1,300,000 dishes owned by nearly 40 per cent of the population in the region. At first they were used for official purposes by the Royal family and businessmen. They became public only in 1991 at the beginning of the Second Gulf Crisis. The number of dishes in Saudi Arabia varies between 150,000 and 350,000 dishes and between 400,000-600,000 dishes and according to the 1995 statistics there are about two million viewers of satellite channels (Al-Makty 1995, pp.106-110). This created a new situation, which the government had to look into seriously. So the introduction of DBSs and DTH into the Arab have opened up a new international and regional television window to the Arab viewers. However, this has given the Arab audience for the first time more freedom of choice, exposed them to different cultural settings, values, and offered them news not controlled by the their national government. Also, the proliferation of satellite broadcasting in the Arab region has led to the appearance of another phenomenon in some Arab countries, namely the creation of Free Media Zones, allowing the private sector to establish private radio and television stations. This important step will break the monopoly of the official media channels. Among the countries which took this big step were Egypt, Qatar, Bahrain, and Jordan. The latter decided to allow private media ventures only at the end of last July 2000 (*Alsharq Al-*

Awsat 6th July 2000, p.18).

Now with the Internet, many satellite channels, and the Arab countries facing many social and political problems such as the violence in Algeria, governments are not taking any notice because of the difficulty of controlling this media and are just relying on the public to control Internet use and satellite channels. At present, the governments' main objectives are centred on how to control violence and resolve other social, economic and political issues, which are high on the agenda.

According to *The World Fact Book*, Saudi Arabia had 22.7 million people in July 2001 and 5.1 million TV sets in 2001 and 400,000 Internet users. Egypt had 69.5 million people in 2001 and an estimated 7.7 million TV sets in 1997, and 300,000 Internet users. Jordan had a population of 5.1 million people in 2001 and in 1997, there were 500,000 TV sets and 87,500 Internet users. (*The World Fact Book, 2001*, pp.3-8).

In recent years, the Arab world has witnessed the development of large number of international television services. This wave began with the launching of the Egyptian Space Channel (ESC), soon followed by the creation of the Saudi Middle East Broadcasting Centre (MBC), The Kuwaiti Space Channel (KSC), the Jordanian Arab Space Channel (JASC), the Space Network of Dubai, Tunisia TV7, Moroccan Satellite Channel, Oman TV, and United Arab Emirates TV. Other national television services, such as Saudi and Egyptian national television channels, were later put on ARABSAT for direct-to-home reception across the Arab world. The Arab region has also witnessed the birth of private specialised international television services, such as Arab Radio and Television, which carries four specialised television channels, and

the Orbit television package to Middle East that consists of sixteen television channels in Arabic and English. (Amin 1996, p.101).

The primary objective for the development of these services in each country is to project a favourable image to the rest of the Arab world. A secondary objective is to broadcast Arabic language programming to Arab nationals living abroad. It is estimated that there are over 5 million Arabs living in Europe and more than 2 million in the USA. This fact has created new foreign markets for Arab broadcasting services.

The current situation has witnessed the emergence of several satellite projects in the Middle East. For example, Egypt wanted to have an effective medium of transmission that would cover all parts the country. In so doing, it took advantage of two important issues i.e. Egyptian culture, which is regarded as the most dominant culture in the region and the popular Egyptian Arabic dialect. This was regarded as a new challenge that the government had to deal with. Therefore, in 1998, it launched its first satellite, Nilesat, that provides services in various fields such as education, media and culture. It also launched its second satellite Nilesat102 in the same year. This satellite was launched to provide new services that deal with webcasting and datacasting. The third generation of Arabsat is also based on digital technology, which is also providing additional transponders. It is also worth mentioning that Eutelsat has five satellites. (Amin 2000, p.1)

If we try to trace satellite broadcasting history in this region, we can say that it started first as free-to-air satellite. It can be dated back to 1990 when the Egyptian satellite started transmission. Nile TV International was considered the second Egyptian satellite. It started experimental broadcasting in 1993 in

English and French with the main objective of promoting the image of Egypt in Europe and to attract tourism. However, what is happening now is that Egypt Media Production City is welcoming private and international production houses. Recently Egypt has adopted a contract signed between Al- Jazeera and the Media Production City whereby Al-Jazeera is given facilities to produce and to transmit without censorship. This is regarded as a remarkable change in the media in the Arab world. (Amin 2000, p 1)

One year after the Egyptian satellite channel was launched and Saudi Arabia launched the Middle East Broadcasting Centre (MBC) which is privately owned. It is known that Saudi Arabia symbolises the heart of Islamic World. This is always reflected in Saudi Television programming and it takes the lion's share of broadcasting. (Amin 2000, p.2)

Other Arab countries made similar projects. In 1995, Qatar initiated the project of introducing an Arab all-news and public affairs channel. The Al-Jazeera Satellite Channel surprised and shocked Arab governments and audiences by presenting free-ranging political debates such as interactive debates with live phone-ins that formed a new forum of freedom of expression in the region.

Two Lebanese stations, LBC and Future developed satellite delivery to the Middle East in 1996. They used a relaxed and informal approach. However, their impact can be felt in the Gulf and Saudi Arabia. Kuwait started its own network after the Gulf War, Kuwaiti Space Network, in 1991. All these channels are still operating.

After this period some stations started broadcasting from other countries. In 1993, the Jordanian Radio and Television Corporation started

broadcasting the Jordanian Arab Space Channel using channel 24 on Arabsat 1-C that covers most of the Arab world and Europe. Recently, it has covered Canada and the United States. Now, it is possible for viewers from the Middle East to access information using compressed digital and the Internet. They have the luxury of selecting news from a menu of news networks such as CNN, MBC, Nile News, ANN, BBC and Al-Jazeera

The benefits of satellite television are many. Today many Arab countries allow the public to access satellite broadcasting because satellite broadcasting has the potential of providing educational programmes to local audiences. In addition, it has the potential to empower Arab women to exercise their right to seek and receive information and ideas. Amin argues that satellite broadcasting through Arab channels has united Arab women and deepened the dialogue between Arab women regarding the issues concerning them. It has also provided a forum for them to discuss the challenges of the Millennium 2000 (Amin 2001, pp.1-2). Alterman identifies another benefit of satellite broadcasting, arguing that it has reintroduced and strengthened the concept of Arabism to the world (Alterman 1999, pp.1-3).

1.6. Conclusion

From the above discussion, it is apparent that the growing complexity of modern society has been accompanied by improved living standards and better education which in turn has given rise to a commensurate growth in the systems of communication and a consequential enlargement of the public sphere. In this century, technological progress has resulted in a further

expansion of the communication system, as the previous discussion concerning the competition between the public service and the private sector highlights in both developed and developing countries, this is an international problem. The winner of this competition is the audience, as they will have increased choices.

We discovered how the PSB claimed to be part of the culture and society of the nations in which it is present. And from the previous discussion, it is apparent that the new technology has already had a dramatic impact on broadcasting and these technologies will make it possible for people to take control of their own scheduling, deciding when they want to watch a programme and how. We concluded from the previous discussion how the BBC responded to the challenge by creating more channels and putting the interests of the BBC audience first.

The arrival of the private channels played a role in many ways in our life as nations, business, and further added a new dimension to civil society such as marketing, economic, social way of life and the forum for public debate. On the other hand, the satellite channels brought many problems (politics and social) to governments especially in Asia and the Arab world and they have tried to control the importation of satellite dishes. Some of them introduced regulations to control the satellite invasion but achieved very little success and extra channels [China and India] were made available for audiences.

In chapter two, we will concentrate on the television news product, news values, gathering and sources and we will examine the news philosophy under different political regimes. The aim of this study is to provide the necessary background for the sphere of news, which is the main subject of this study.

CHAPTER TWO

News Sphere

Introduction

In the previous chapter we examined the changing nature of the relationship between the media and Western European society. In the changing media such as the development of satellite channels in Asia and other Arab countries we studied the principles of public service and the problems arising due to rapid changes in technology. We further discussed the competition between public and private broadcasting and the problems each faced following the technological revolution. We established that the satellite channels could cause problems to some countries because of the difficulty of controlling the media and the competition it may cause for public broadcasting.

In this chapter we will briefly discuss television news in general and then turn our attention to television news in the satellite age. We will consider how it fared under different political regimes and finally we will compare news practices. We will thereby try to understand the news sphere, the nature of television news and the news process.

Technology has a tremendous impact on media. When television news first started, producers assumed that people had already read about the main stories. Film could take days to come in from remote places. Television was able to provide a visual backdrop to the news, taking viewers to places they had heard about but could not imagine. Now, with the coming of the satellites and

round-the-clock coverage, it is the other way around. When people read their paper, they are seldom surprised.

News is one of the major sources of information for the public. Broadcast news is brief and highly structured. Like any other part of broadcasting it is a programme, a cultural construct reflecting the organisation of its manufacture and the presumed demands of its expected audience. Broadcast news has been affected by globalization. The spread of CNN International to almost every country has provided a model for television news format and style of presentation that has given it importance throughout the world. BBC World Radio Service has over the years been the main point for news where local news programming has not been able or willing to tell the whole story. Television news is the means by which people increasingly get their information about the world and as such reputedly sets the public agenda. It needs, therefore, to be examined carefully and to be understood fully.

2.1. What is News?

The news impacts on many facets of our daily lives. It affects the way we dress for work by watching the local weather news, even sometimes the route we take to work when we have to redirect after news of an accident or of some heavy traffic, what we plan to do at the weekend depending upon the current social events, and our general feelings of well-being or insecurity. We focus our attention toward the world beyond our immediate experience when something extraordinary happens e.g. in international politics, economy, any air accident, uncontrollable events and war, and our concerns about the issues of the day.

News is thus the set of events judged newsworthy, it is probably best seen not as feature of events but as a set of criteria used by professionals in their judgements about events, criteria which enable them to make a selection of events for the purposes of reporting. It is also the case that the public who buy news media must accept the judgements in question: if they do not, then sooner or later they will switch to another Newspaper or TV or Radio channel. The criteria are to that extent publicly shared ones.

Gans defines newsworthiness in terms of the suitability of events, of which there are three basic forms: substantive, product and competition. Substantive suitability consists of elements of story content, essentially its importance or interest. Product suitability is based on the relationship between the story and the format of the medium or channel reporting it. Competition suitability refers to the desire not to miss something that rival channels have got, and if possible to scoop them with an exclusive. (Gans 1980, pp.145-180)

Before examining the nature of news, it is useful to first consider how news is defined and the limits of that definition. Some researchers define the news according to their cultural and ideological concepts. For these reasons there are many different definitions of news but no single unified agreed definition. Desmond, moving away from the definitions which concentrate on the conceptual content, defines the news by saying that it is the civilisation material, the wealth of the present, the product of the past and the imagination of the future (Desmond 1973, p.1). Martin and Chaudhary, on the other hand, define it as everything that arouses curiosity. They argue that defining the news in this manner reflects an international concept because the human being wherever s/he lives on this planet has an inborn sense of curiosity, a need to

know about things and events (Martin & Chaudhary 1983, p.2). Izard et. al. argue that the most famous western definitions of news define the news as 'everything new that attracts public attention as regards their personal and public affairs or their relation to society. The best news items are those which attract the highest degree of attention of the largest number of people'. He adds that most of the western definitions of news confirm the process of change as an essential element of the news. (Izard et. al. 1973, p.12).

A number of researchers in the field of communication in general, and the news in particular, have attempted to define the news with varying degrees of success in a manner which reflected their political, social, and economic systems (see Campbell and Wolseley 1961, Harris, Leiter and Johnson 1981, Altheide 1976, Ault and Emery 1965, Dovifat 1967, Tuchman 1978). These news definitions were formulated on the basis of the cultural background prevailing in society in general.

If we move from western to other conceptions of news we will discover more different things. For example Martin and Chaudhary point out that western text books define news in terms of interest, proximity, importance, size, novelty, and timeliness. They add that in such a system, the wishes of readers, listeners and viewers are paramount because they shop around for the news they want; they are not forced to accept what a publisher or broadcaster wishes to provide whereas the communist approach was to look at the news as an ideological weapon serving the interest of the state and the party (Martin & Chaudhary 1983, pp.3-5). Thus, it was possible to regard events as news if they helped in the creation and improvement of communist society. In other words, various events can be regarded as news if they represent positive development in the

social process, and not just that the events are exciting or associated with certain personalities. The news process, according to the communist view, was seen as a process of incitement involving facts and as such it must be instructive (Markham 1967, p.141).

In the developing countries, the definition of the news must contain a sensible recognition and clear understanding of cultural perceptions. The news in these countries must contribute towards the creation of a state of awareness and interest in the various events. This must be based, and in unequivocal terms, on cultural factors. The news in Third World countries is seen as one of the national resources in the process of development (UNESCO 1980, pp.157-181).

The definition of news in this sense is different from the western understanding. Martin, et. al. indicates that developing nations vary from the western world in their definition of news in terms of interest, proximity, importance, size, novelty, and timeliness. In the Third World, interest in news is not judged on the basis of audience needs or wants, but rather according to the government's developmental and educational objectives (Martin et. al. 1983, p.3).

As a result new concepts of the news have emerged in the Third World. However, the features and limits of this definition are still unclear. Aggarwal says that development news does not necessarily reflect the positive aspect of the news but deals with both its positive and negative aspects equally (Aggarwal 1979, pp.180-181). In fact many Third World countries do not adopt this definition and this has made many suspicious about it and to regard it as part of the propaganda used by totalitarian regimes in these countries and their leaders, which is infact not far from the truth.

On the basis of this disparity in the definition of the news under different political systems, an array of other disagreements has emerged about the criteria that can be used to evaluate the news, its content and presentation. To avoid getting bogged down in ideological differences, it is sufficient to mention here that the majority of news personnel in the west agree that the concept of news has matured with the development of the popular press. This definition postulates that the news is anything that interests the majority of the people in the community (Al-sayed 1988, p.10).

Very briefly this means that whatever is published in the media becomes the focus of peoples' discussion and consequently it is the media which determines people's interests and not the people themselves. In any case the majority of definitions of news concentrate in particular on the needs of the public as the consumer. A high demand for a particular type of news is seen as a sign of success and a slack demand is seen as a sign of failure. Diaz-Bordenave, one of the leading figures working in the media field in Latin America, says:

We are manipulators and we cannot be anything other than this. We are agents and influence makers. When we carry out a process of communication, we want our public to understand that some of the definitions we present are correct as we see them ourselves and anything other than this is incorrect. We communicate to manipulate; we communicate to produce change. Any one who says that s/he did not use manipulation to convince his/her audience to produce change in the public, s/he is either trying to hide his true intentions or s/he shows an unawareness of the nature of the communication process (Bordenave 1976, p.135).

From the previous discussion, there appears to be a big difference between the news concept in the First and Third Worlds. For this reason it is important to focus on how journalists write the stories and under what influences they do this. If we are looking for what journalists consider to be a

well written effective story we can find most newsmen and media academics argue that a good news story has a set of definable characteristics, which could be summarised as follows: who, what, when, where, why and how (the 5W's and one H). These are the basics of what a reporter is told to find out and the essence of the craft.

In Ginneken's view the contents of television news stories should be unexpected, all items should be brief and snappy as possible, colourful and dynamic, impressive and attention grabbing. Reuven Frank, the executive producer of NBC news, said in a famous phrase: every news story should, without any sacrifice of probity or responsibility, display the attributes of fiction, of drama. It should have structure and conflict, a problem and a denouement, rising action and falling action, a beginning, a middle and an end (Ginneken 1998, p.180).

Briggs and Cobley noted that the most commonly used news categories are hard news, soft news, spot news and breaking news. The distinction between hard and soft news involves various dimensions of events. Primarily, it is a question of importance of the events which mean an event is judged by its importance as well as its interest which is more likely to be considered hard news than one which is only interesting. For example, the personal relationships of figures in the entertainment world may be mentioned in a context defined by some other feature of their lives (e.g. a court appearance), but might find more difficulty in appearing in news media without such an event. On the other hand, soft news is the combination of information which is considered to be relatively unimportant or whose availability is not very directly related to the passage of time. Spot news is so called because the circumstances under which it becomes

available and that the events occur on unpredicted occasions. Where an event which is so incomplete that its profile is difficult to summarise in an authoritative and reliable manner and also whose importance of interest is great enough for a cautious report to be included in a bulletin it is called a breaking news. (Briggs & Cobley 1998, pp.383-384).

2.2 The News between Objectivity and Duty

In this section we will examine objectivity in the news. Objectivity as an ethical standard is one of the most pervasive in all of journalism. There are two approaches: the first view is the western view which calls for objectivity and bases this call on two elements: -

- (1) The journalist in any field whether in the Press, Radio, or Television is professionally and morally responsible to present the news without bias especially if the news contains controversial issues or different points of view. He/She must present the news as it is and give the public the freedom to choose their viewpoint.
- (2) It is impossible to win public confidence unless the facts are presented to the public without bias, and uninfluenced by the personal views of those who work in the news or their employer in a professional body. The process of interpretation, explanation, expression of an opinion and putting across the various view points, is part of the commentator's work, not that of the editors or the correspondents. (Siebert & Schramm 1956, p.47)

If we look at this theory on the basis of these two arguments and take into consideration the nature of television work, we find that it is difficult to put this view into practice for a number of reasons. Television work has a risky element built into it and the personal element is one of its basic constituents. The person who presents the programmes and makes contact with the public through his/her voice or picture, will be influenced in his presentation of the news by his/her views, beliefs and ideological affiliation and this will pass through to the news service. Every individual is in one way or another biased and this casts doubt about this theory.

The second approach the theory of social responsibility. The starting point of this theory is that the means of communication, especially Radio and Television, have the greatest impact on the public and consequently must be a public service to try to achieve their objectives. This can only be achieved in the presence of institutions specifically built for this purpose with the object of educating people politically and socially beside their other duties. In other words, according to this theory the main aim of the news would be to educate the public politically and socially and their clear allegiance to the line of thought from which this activity originates without any claim of neutrality or objectivity. In this way the news becomes mixed with commentary and they both have the same objective even though they differ in form. (Sibert & Schram 1956, p.47). This theory does not mean withholding the most important news from people or not telling them the truth. No apparatus should be in a position to withhold news from the people in the present age.

There are certain values and elements which must be present in television news to become worthy of being included in news bulletins. The most important

of these elements is its spontaneity, importance, truthfulness, accuracy, lack of discrimination, excitement, its human value and benefit to the viewer. This is in addition to the fame and prestige of the person who is the centre of the event. Every event or television news item containing one or more of these elements becomes important enough to warrant its inclusion in the news bulletin. Also the presence of visual characteristics is a major consideration in the case of television news. News employees must understand that they have to defend peoples' right of access to knowledge. This does not mean that they should disclose personal secrets of newsworthy individuals or to breach state security but to concentrate on what matters to people in their daily lives and influences their well-being either directly or indirectly. They must do this without curtailing others personal interests or the supreme interests of society. From this angle most media researches and studies (e.g. Schramm in his book Mass Media and National Development 1964, p.59) recommend that more attention should be paid to the local elements in news material. This is because each person pays attention to himself first and then his surrounding environment. In this particular context there is no consensus among viewers' as to what should be the leading news item in the bulletin: should it be the domestic news items closely associated with peoples' lives or should it be the international news items which informs the public about globally important events?

2.3 News Values

There are two aspects to news values. Firstly, how do journalists select stories and secondly are these stories valued by the audience. News values are the qualities of events or of journalistic construction, whose relative absence or presence recommends them for inclusion in the news product.

Stuart Hall, in his essay on news photographs, tried to define the indefinable news values or news sense that journalists regularly talk about.

He writes:

News values are one of the most opaque structures of meaning in modern society. All 'true journalists' are supposed to possess it: few can or are willing to identify and define it. Journalists speak of 'the news' as if events select themselves. Further, they speak as if which is the 'most significant' news story, and which 'news angles' are most salient are divinely inspired. Yet of the millions of events which occur every day in the world, only a tiny proportion ever become visible as 'potential news stories': and of this proportion, only a small fraction are actually produced as the day's news in the news media. We appear to be dealing, then, with a 'deep structure' whose function as a selective device is un-transparent even to those who professionally most know how to operate it. (Hall 1973, p.181).

News values are used in two ways. They are criteria of selection from material available to the newsroom of those items worthy of inclusion in the final product. Second, they are guidelines for the presentation of items, suggesting what to emphasise, what to omit, and where to give priority in the presentation to the audience. News values are qualities of events or of their journalistic construction, whose relative absence or presence recommends them for inclusion in the news product. Some news values are important to the audience. News values derive from unstated or implicit assumptions or judgements about three things:

The audience. Is this important to the audience or will it hold their attention? Is it of known interest, will it be understood, enjoyed, registered, perceived as relevant?

Accessibility - In two senses, prominence and ease of capture. Prominence: to what extent is the event known to the news organisation, how obvious is it, has it made itself apparent? Ease of capture: how available to journalists is the event, is it physically accessible, manageable technically, in a form amenable to journalism, is it ready prepared for easy coverage, and will it require great resources to obtain?

Fit: Is the item consonant with the pragmatic, technical and organisational possibilities, is it homologous with the exigencies and constraints in programme making and the limitations of the medium? Does it make sense in terms of what is already known about the subject?

In other words, news values themselves derive from the two immediate determinants of news making, perceptions of the audience and the availability of material. (Golding & Elliott 1979, pp.114-115).

Some of the news is more important to the production which is as follows
Drama: News stories are, as the term suggests, stories as well as news. Good ones exhibit a narrative structure akin to the root elements in human drama.

Visual attractiveness: Television is a visual medium and the special power of television news is its ability to exploit this advantage.

Entertainment: News programmes seek, and usually find, large audiences. To do so they must take account of entertainment values in the literal sense of providing captivating, humorous, titillating, and amusing or generally diverting material.

Importance: The most frequently cited for including a particular item in news bulletins is its importance. This is usually taken to mean that the reported event has considerable significance for large numbers of people in the audience.

Size: The bigger the story the greater the likelihood of its inclusion, and the greater the prominence with which it will be presented. The most common considerations are the numbers or type of people involved, or the scale of the event as an instance of type.

Proximity: They are the kinds of events which require a wide range of common language and shared cultural assumptions.

Negativity: Bad news is good news. As a journalist once pointed out, given a choice of two calamities news editors choose both that the audience will be held by the dramatic power of tragic narrative.

Recency: The requirement that news must be up to date and refer to events as close to transmission time as possible.

Elites: As a value within news values emphasise that big names are better news than nobodies, major personalities of more interest than ordinary folk.

Personalities: News is about people, and mostly about individuals. This news value emphasises the need to make stories comprehensible by reducing a complex process and institutions to the actions of individuals. (Golding & Elliott 1979, pp.114-123).

In the following discussion we have to highlight some information about the news values in the Arab world which reflect the developing countries' needs for national unity, cultural identity, and social and technological development. The Arab States Broadcasting Union [ASBU] was founded in 1969, a satellite system intended for the exclusive use of member Arab broadcasters which

coordinates daily news exchange and weekly exchange of television programmes. The ASBU report on news and programme exchange listed the following goals as the most important for Arab media: a) national unity, b) high cultural standards and awareness, c) preservation of the Arab and Islamic heritage, d) supplementation of education, and e) modernisation and social development. As Rachty noted, the Arab media seek to present, explain, and hand down government views (Rachty 1979, pp.2-5).

According to Abubakr, Arab broadcasting networks are highly centralised, with 'scarcely any provincial or local access or participation' (Abubakr 1980, p.12).

The Former Director General of Jordan Radio and Television, explains how the public understanding of an unbiased media balances with tradition:

The news in the Arab world used to be all protocol - pure protocol; no information was given. When I was appointed the Director General, four and one-half years ago, the King noted the changes we had to make. For example, in one story with the King of Sweden with the King of Jordan, the TV showed twenty minutes of protocol - kissing each other, the national anthems, and the soldier saluting. When the King of Jordan arrived in Yemen, they showed the same thing. The audience didn't know why he was going to Yemen or what was happening. It's all protocol. We are trying this. But it also involves changing the perception of the people who watch it. Some people say, if you don't show the protocol, you don't pay respect to the King. You have this mentality among some people. You have to respect that. We are trying to change things without offending them (Johnston 1995, p.299).

From this researcher's point all these Arab news values are no longer appropriate and Arab media officials should acknowledge another set of values for news in the satellite age. Lastly we must emphasise that these news values in general are normative rather than descriptions of practice.

2.4 News as a Product

In this section we will study how the news is produced. News, like any product, is subject to pressure of supply and demand. On the one hand changes in the technology, both of production and distribution, in the organisation of news gathering and production, and in the purposes, political or economic, which prompt production in the first place, all shape the form and context of journalistic activities. On the other hand, there is no news without an audience to be informed by it. Changes in the size and distribution of populations, in literacy levels and in the different needs of various audience groups which bring to journalism, all play a significant part in the evolution of some types of news media rather than others.

MacGregor argues that technology has radically changed the way in which news is reported. This also led to institutional changes in the structure of broadcasting around the world. For example, there are news services such as CNN, Sky News, Euronews, CBC News World and BBC World which are available around the clock, broadcasting across continents or around the globe. All this has changed the information map radically. According to MacGregor the news comes in many forms: 'broad sheet and tabloid, rolling and fixed point, global and local, public service and commercial, specialist and general, live and recorded, delivered by cable, satellite, the Internet and over the old-fashioned airwaves'. He goes on to say that it can be gathered by one organisation, packaged by a second and transmitted by a third to a niche market audience viewing at home. However, these changes are apparent to news professionals. He believes in a seismic shift that will change the broadcasting landscape forever

(MacGregor 1997, p.2).

Alleyne discusses this point further by stating that global news seemed by 1980 to be no longer a hierarchical mediated structure dominated by the international agencies. CNN came to provide a symbol of the coming of a global village. At present live TV cameras seem to be a global mirror, an objective tool for the collection and dissemination news. The live television news has the ability to provide a world audience and send information to both the elite and common citizens. (Alleyne 1997, pp.9-11).

Simply stated, newsgathering is most concerned with news sources with the audience. On the same subject, Golding and Elliott noted that this is an over-simplification, but the presentation of news is, of all the production processes, and what audiences will and will not accept, and comprehend or enjoy. The same ignorance could be used as evidence that the news should stick to a bald narrative of facts, rather than risk going over the heads of viewers. (Golding & Elliott 1979, pp.20, 111)

The most important point that they have made is that news is not simply stating facts. Charles Bantz and colleagues emphasized most items on the television news are technically uniform, visually sophisticated, easy to understand, fast-paced, people-orientated stories that are produced in a minimum amount of time. In recent years, the style and pace of most TV news has also shifted to meet the competition of other programme categories such as spots, clips, action movies, etc (Ginneken 1998, p.176).

Arab TV production is based mainly on news (informative programmes) These are called political programmes in the Arab countries, because they contain many political items. They occupy an important place in the Arab TV

programming. Particular importance is given to news bulletins which are considered the most attractive source of news information. News bulletins contain three categories of news, domestic, Arab and international news. (ASBU 1986, p.12)

2.5 The Production Process of the Television News

Scientists and specialists in the media field agree on a number of steps which they regard as corner stones in the building of television news bulletins. The news bulletin contains local and international news stories. It starts with an introduction called the news summary which usually does not exceed 15 seconds, this is repeated in the middle and at the end of the bulletin and the total duration of the bulletin is usually between 15-30 minutes. The basic principle in arranging news items is to make the bulletin a show like any other programmes and not just a simple collection of news items with nothing holding them together.

In the production process of the news in television news bulletins pass through two stages. These are:

(A) News Gathering

News gathering begins in the early hours of the morning by a planning meeting attended by the chief editor, the news director, and the rest of the news team including editors, newsreaders, producers, etc. to agree on domestic and foreign news items to be included in the news bulletins and to allocate work load among correspondents on locations.

(B) The Production of the News Bulletin

The news "show" is the term commonly used by most media people to denote television news bulletins because these bulletins are no more than presentations or shows of events produced or executed using an attractive style to capture the attention of viewers. Television news bulletins require a specific production style because of the nature of the work on this medium. This clearly indicates the importance of this stage in the news production process in which the producer assumes total control of technical matters. (Lewis 1993, pp.22-30).

2.5.1 The Style of Television News

In principle the writing of the news should begin with the most important opening piece. It requires great skills. This is particularly the case because if the editing (writing) style fails to attract the attention of viewers from the opening of the news item, their attention is lost for the subsequent news stories (Koch 1990, p.31). In most cases the news story consists of two parts: a lead and a body with the lead forming the basis of the news item irrespective of its duration. Its function is to attract the viewer's attention and inform him/her of what has happened. News leads have various forms and many configurations and mostly they provide answers to one or two of the known questions such as who, what, when, where, why, and how. Television uses ordinary language and the editor addresses all factions of viewers and for this reason his/her style must be simple and clear and must depend on realistic, direct and fast language. He also must use the language viewers can readily understand. However, one must point out that there is no single procedure for presenting news stories and they can be presented from various angles and in different ways (Lewis 1993, pp.31-91).

Editing [writing] of news stories take three different forms. The first of these forms is known as the 'Climax Style'. This style depends on showing the most important news first which gives the viewers all the facts quickly. The second style is called the 'Time Arrangement Style' which uses the most exciting news to attract the attention of the viewers. It starts with exciting information to attract the viewers in a brief and simple lead followed by the body of the news story including its subject, the result and the end of the story. The third and final style is what is known as the 'Interpretation Style' which differs from the two preceding styles in that the lead includes important information followed by the less important details. This style attaches the same importance to the various items and elements forming the news stories (Barakat & Muawad 1996, pp.169-170).

There are a number of factors which must be considered when editing [writing] television news, the most important of which are:

- (1) For the news material to be understood and assimilated by the viewers the text must follow and agree with the video picture;
- (2) The news story must be simple and have clear unity and must be short, direct and must be as close to the facts as possible;
- (3) There must be complete freedom in exposing the different points of views concerning current affairs and to highlight the views for and against a news event as well as to interpret the news without prejudice and without expressing a personal opinion;
- (4) It is important to pay attention to the local voice from the sources of events because it is one of the elements that make the story more real as then the picture is not the only element expressing the event.

As a result of the huge technological advances in the means of media the effect of these media production has developed into a separate art full of human innovations. For example, the more diverse the number of voices providing the commentary on news stories, the more diversity there is which attracts viewers. This is in addition to the increased use of illustration by means of for example slides, maps, etc., to further increase the concentration of the viewer even more. Finally, there is the linking of the news story inside the studio with an analyst or expert on the subject or a correspondent from location to complete the coverage. This style is used by British Television. All these points will be taken into consideration when we analyse the content of the news stories in the four channels under study (chapter five) to see how the editing and preparation of the news stories in each channel agrees or disagrees, either wholly or partially, with these points.

2.5.2 People engaged in the Formation of News Bulletins

The main individuals engaged in making news bulletins are the news presenters, the editorial team (i.e. the chief editor, the editors & reporters), and the producers. What is most important is that the personality of the newscaster is associated, in the minds of the recipients, with the information they like to hear which is presented to them on a regular basis by the newscaster. This relationship sometimes develops into a bond between the presenter and the recipients to the extent that the recipients become obsessed and look forward to the news bulletin because it is presented by their favourite character regardless of the news items contained in the bulletin (Barakat & Muawad 1996, pp.71-

72). Conversely people are sometimes put off from watching a certain news bulletin because the presenter does not possess the qualities they like in a presenter.

2.6 Audience Needs

The great advances in computer technology and the advent of cable television gave the receiver a greater power to order what he wants from the mass media when he wants it. A kind of media service that might bring into the home television, radio, printed news, and information and educational services according to the tastes and needs of home audience.

The word audience has long been familiar as the collective term for the receiver in the simple sequential model of the mass communication process (source, channel, message, receiver, effect) that was deployed by pioneers in the field of media research. (McQuail 1997, p.1).

Audiences expect broadcasting to meet many needs: entertainment, relaxation, inspiration, information, education, individual delight and shared experience. They expect television to extend their knowledge, inform political, consumer and life choice, offer access to the arts, stimulate curiosity and learning, provide insights into their own society as well as other communities; in short, to add to and enrich daily life.

Mayer discusses the uses of news stating that people use news for different purposes such as self-aggrandizement, personal or corporate. They tend to use news to secure a sense of their own position, enjoying the tales of the downtrodden. Mayer goes on to say that people like to fantasize about

celebrities and political leaders. They like to be entertained. In the writer's view, the great function of news in the lives of its consumers is to help them integrate themselves into a community beyond their immediate experience. This gives them a reason to hope that they know what they can expect next from the world, because their lives relate to a larger whole. (Mayer 1987, p.27).

In a complicated audience activity study Levy and Windahl defined audience activity as follows:

The term 'audience activity' postulates a voluntaristic and selective orientation by audiences toward the communication process. In brief, it suggests that media use is motivated by need and goals that are orientated by audience members themselves, and that active participation in the communication process may facilitate, limit, or otherwise influence the gratifications and effects associated with exposure (Levy & Windahl 1985, p.110).

From the discussion of audience in relation to news, news plays an important role in their lives because they use it for different purposes.

There has been a great deal of research on television news consumption, which has primarily focused on audience rating, the construction of the news, the reception of news programmes, and the relationship between text and audience (Wicks 1989, Galician 1986, Gauntlett and Hill 1989). In this section, we are going to highlight how some ideas about how news should be presented influence the content and presentation of news.

Schramm noted that news consumption is guided by either 'reality motives', which have delayed rewards, or 'pleasure motives', which have immediate rewards (Schramm 1949, pp.249-269). On the same subject Rubin concluded that two types of television viewers exist - those who use it to 'relieve boredom and for entertainment' (pleasure motives) and those who use it 'to seek

information and to learn' (reality motives) (Rubin (1983, pp.48-50). According to Wicks study which was conducted to find out what people think about local television news. He discovered that five issues were important to the audience:

1. Sport: one interviewee mentioned that a benefit of the news is to keep up on sports.
2. Credibility: one of the interviewee made a very important point that I like professionalism in a local newscast.
3. Social news: in this point all respondents have said that they enjoy to see human interest stories, people-orientated news stories and features, positive aspects of community life and family oriented stories with happy endings.
4. Production consideration: one of the interviewers said that live news pieces given the impression that the television station is on top of the story.
5. Weather information: all respondents have said that the weather forecast is very important relevant because it helps them to plan ahead. (Wicks 1989, pp.383-390)

The lead, or the first story, in a television newscast has a special significance. Unlike a newspaper editor who can put several lead stories on the front page, broadcast journalists must decide on one story that transcends the other in importance. According to network news executive, Westin 'the lead story is the most important story of the day. It is the news that professional journalists believe must be told first and, usually, at a greater length' (Westin 1983, p.58).

As we know the contents of any news bulletins have many stories

prepared in different environments and which may effect the viewers to watch the bulletins or not. One study focuses in the perception of good news and bad news on televisions and the media critics and consumers complain that local and network television newscasts are too negative, too pessimistic, too gloomy, too depressing. In this study, the researcher has examined the balance of good news and bad news. From the viewers' point of view [249] 36% thought of good news in terms of a funny/happy ending, 29% cited human interest stories, and 18% mentioned personally informative news. Bad news was almost universally defined, as depressing. However, there is likewise no need for television newsmakers to overselect trivial bad news, especially if it could be harmful and if they could instead present interesting newsworthy good news. (Galician 1986, pp.611-616).

In the west, negative news is thought to be of greater interest than positive news. On the other hand in the Third World, negative news is avoided because of the fragile political structure of most of the Third World. In the communist world, negative news was used to provide object lesson (Martin, et. al. 1983, pp.5-6). Bohle in his study found that the negativism does seem to play a greater part in the news selection process than positive news because the negative holds more information of value or because it is less ambiguous, and more vivid (Bohle 1986, pp.789-796).

Research on television coverage of news events has shown that news coverage can have an international impact, and different ways of presenting news event can have different effects on viewers. The Glasgow University media group, for example, showed how news bulletins contained a hierarchy of information, with certain types of news items, such as royal stories, being given

more importance than others e.g. foreign news. The Glasgow University media group also looked at the construction of news events, and they conducted a detailed study of BBC news which focused on the construction of reality, reality which was not free from bias. The study of other news or human-interest stories has shown that news coverage can be categorised as serious and non-serious. The non-serious news stories tend to focus on the domain of common sense and lived experience which is popular with television audience. (Gauntlett & Hill 1999, pp.52-53).

From the above studies in this section, it is clear that there are many factors which affect the audience. Some are related to the content of the news stories or employees [newscaster]. The important point is that the television newsmakers should put great emphasis on researching viewers opinions and tastes to meet the audience needs.

If we looking into the contents of the news bulletins in the Third World we can discover that the news values are often based on regional political and cultural considerations and the audiences receive the news after it has been revised and reshaped by the government or media gatekeepers. At the same time in most Third World countries, the news media give the public what the public needs not what the public wants. (Martin et. al. 1983, pp.52-58).

One study by Mohammed al-Murssi in 1983 to evaluate the news and television news programmes of Egyptian Television, it was found that the local news is the main item of attraction in the news followed by news from the Arab world and then by international news. The study has also found that political news is the top preference and that the local coverage deals with only the official state news (Al-Bad 1989, pp.8-26).

The contents of the news bulletins especially the international news stories in the Third World televisions rely directly on international news agencies which influenced the concept of news in Third World countries by playing an agenda-setting function and promoting the idea of speed and impartiality (Martin, et. al. 1983, p.54). In a study of the contents of the news in the Egyptian Television in 1986 and the effect of the use of satellites on the content of these news, Susan Al-Qalini concluded that political news received top priority in terms of importance among the news subjects received by the Egyptian TV from the Eurovision Network. This was followed by sports. The author also pointed out that the Eurovision Network gives priority to European news (Al-Qalini 1986, pp.91-97).

In the news sphere it is not possible for the news makers to show or publish all the time all the public demands especially if there is control or policy on the media. From that this control or policy subsequently will influence the contents of the news stories or how it is made. One researcher has interviewed a number of chief editors, producers and those in charge of the news bulletins in one of the television networks and found great differences between them in what they believed actually represented the public's wishes. He also found a common feeling between them that it was inappropriate to give into all the demands of the public (Malcolm 1968, pp.60-75).

As we discovered the importance of audience needs, the news contents, audience wishes and the news makers are influenced by many factors which are different from country to country and also from the First World to the Third World. But the natural news sphere itself depends on the state system.

2.7 Conclusion

From the previous discussion it is clear by 1990 the definition of news had been rewritten and had changed in some news from an incident that took place in the past to an incident unfolding in front of the eyes of the individual watching on his television screen as it happens. The world is progressing very fast in information delivery.

It is clear now how the news impacts on our daily lives. The inventors of radio, television and the telecommunications satellite could have had no idea of how the technology would be used to create the globally 24 hours a day available news services of the late twentieth century. The development of dedicated news services such as CNN, Sky News, has changed the information map radically, and it has become possible to see news happening live from anywhere in the world-in real time. From the above discussion, it is clear what is the big difference about the news concept between the Third World and the First World. In the Third World the news is seen as one of the national resources in the process of development, but in reality it is part of the propaganda used by totalitarian political regimes in these countries and their leaders. In the First World the news is seen as everything that attracts public attention.

It is clear that if portions of the television news audience are described as active, then by definition the audience members must be selective in choosing the particular newscast to watch. This is true for audiences that have a multiplicity of channels and corresponding newscasts to choose from. We will discuss in more detail in Chapter Four the Saudi audience, to understand audience opinions about the news service on Saudi TV and the other channels

under study (Al-Jazeera, MBC and ANN). But before discussing further about the audience we will concentrate in chapter three on identifying the study problems. This will include the methods used to investigate views on the subject problems.

CHAPTER THREE

Identifying the Problem

Introduction

As it has been argued in previous chapters, the viewers in both developed and developing countries during the 1970s and 1980s found themselves able to receive new television channels, whether from inside or outside the country. These new channels brought many problems to the governments especially in the Third World. As a result, many broadcasting organisations are having to make some major changes in programming strategies, whether in language, programme content or telecast schedule in order to defend their share of the audience. Like other countries, Saudi Arabia suffers from this problem. As we will see from the studies discussed in this chapter the Saudi audience was not pleased by what Saudi TV news was presenting even before the emergence of competition (Al-Orabi 1987, King Saud University 1983, Najai 1982). From this reason, a detailed study is needed to find the root causes of this problem, and try to come up with some solutions so as to lessen this problem by improving the news service in Saudi Television. This chapter describes the method used to investigate views on the subject problem.

3.1. Research Problem

From the introduction in this chapter and the discussion in the previous chapters, we can see how the new television environment impacts on the broadcasting organisations both in developed and developing countries.

Television in general, and political programmes in particular, play an important role in the political development of Saudi Arabia. When the Saudi government announced, in late 1963, its intention to establish a national television system, at least three of the reasons behind that decision were political. First, it wanted to draw the Saudi audience away from politically hostile radio broadcasts. Second, the government wanted to air its own controlled newscasts. Third, television was seen as a way to integrate the population which was dispersed over the vast and remote desert areas of the country. In order to achieve these goals the government needed an attractive media presentation, and television as a modern influential innovation provided that eye catching charm (Boyd 1982, pp.126-136).

Political content in the Saudi Television, with these motives, is designed to achieve what Katz and Wedell defined as 'national integration'. That is, to create a sense of national awareness, of being a Saudi; 'to increase loyalty and lend legitimacy to existing political leadership; and to gain support for the government's internal and external policies' (Katz & Wedell 1977, pp.153-154). In order to meet these goals, current television programming on Saudi Arabia's Television first channel (STV1) contains about 25% news and information segments (Al-Orabi 1998, p.139).

From 1991 Saudi citizens started to receive satellite broadcasts in their homes. Those Saudi citizens were not pleased by what Saudi TV news was presenting at that period, before the satellite age, will be clear when we summarize the previous studies about Saudi TV in this chapter section 3.4. Today the audience may be tuned to these satellite channels except when they watch matches in the Saudi Soccer league.

The channels are opening new and different prospects for viewers. The satellite channels handle news in modern and developed ways with live transmission of incidents and quick coverage of the issues. Boyd argues that Saudi TV emerged as a way of dealing with competition from international radio broadcasting. Now there is a new form of competition. With the appearance of specialised satellite news channels the demand for stronger television news service becomes even more important, both at the official and national levels, in order to follow up what goes on in the world. This study focuses on the Saudi audience's opinions about the news service on Saudi Television, and the news department in particular and compares this service with the three satellite channels under study. This study also focuses on the need to improve Saudi TV news in order to meet the challenge of these new channels.

3.2. Importance of this Study

The importance of this study lies in the fact that it is the first study of its kind to deal with the audience for news in Saudi Arabia and the Saudi News Department in the satellite age, the content of television news bulletins and the organisation, management, strategy, employees. It makes a detailed comparison, involving the specialised satellite Arabic news channels (Al-Jazeera, MBC, ANN). It focuses on the news bulletins as a basic source of news and information. This study is also a contribution to a broader study of the impact of the new television environment on broadcasting organisations. The study will also fill a gap in this field resulting from the lack of research on news in Saudi Television. Thus, the present study and the comparisons suggested in it would help to determine the weaknesses and shortcomings in the Saudi Television Arabic news and consequently put forward solutions and suggestions which if implemented will attract viewers.

3.3. Aims of the Study

This study is an investigation of the impact of satellite news channels on Saudi Television in particular it aims to:

1. To find out what the Saudi audience thinks about the Saudi TV news in comparison to specialised satellite television channels.
2. To understand the four channels in terms of the content of their television news bulletins, their organisation, management, strategy, and employees.

3. To find the best way to determine the weaknesses and shortcomings in Saudi Television news.
4. To find out how Saudi TV can compete with satellite channels.

3.4. Previous Studies that Dealt Directly with the News Services in Saudi Television

As we mentioned in chapter two section 2.6., a great deal of research has been carried out on television news consumption which has primarily focused on audience ratings and the stated opinion about the television news (the construction of the news, the reception of the news programmes). In this section we will summarise the main conclusions on the previous studies that dealt with Saudi Television and the reason to discuss them to provide us with a statement of what is known about Saudi Television prior to this study.

One of the studies which dealt with Saudi Television, in general, and news bulletins in particular is the Ph.D. thesis by Abdurrahman Shobili. This thesis studied television programmes in 1965 and 1971 and compared them in terms of programme structure. In this analysis the writer makes reference to television news as a percentage of the total programmes. He provided a broad description of it in general based on the actual programme structure which mean the programming material and formats (talk shows, quiz and audience participation programs) (Shobili 1971, p.14).

Another study about Saudi Television is the Ph.D. thesis by Douglas A. Boyd dealing with the history of the establishment of Saudi Television in which a whole chapter is devoted to the history of programmes of Saudi Television and

the programme structure for 1972. From his observation of the news bulletins in the spring of 1972 the author describes those bulletins, their content and the order of the news stories in them, their sources and the way in which they were presented (Boyd 1972, pp.228-242).

Three pieces of research on the audience which were conducted in the country show some signs of audience dissatisfaction with television newscasts on Saudi Television before the satellite age.

According to a study carried out in 1987 into Saudi Television viewers 60% of the respondents interviewed stated that the news bulletins did not cover most of the international news and that the number of news bulletins was insufficient. They also said that the news content and its format needed updating. The young persons interviewed emphasised that the news service come first in their list of sources of interest in their television viewing (Al-Orabi 1987, pp 5-15). These findings should be disappointing to mass media officials in Saudi Arabia.

Another audience study, conducted by a research team from King Saud University in Riyadh in 1983, found some alarming opinions about television newscasts among the Saudi audience. The study revealed that up to 66% of Saudi viewers thought that all newscasts on both channels (Arabic; STVI, and English; STV2) were inadequate. Respondents identified some of the deficiencies in the television newscasts as:

- (1) The film-shots do not usually represent the news story.
- (2) The newscast does not cover all areas of interest.
- (3) News variety is not enough in the newscasts. (King Saud University 1983, p 372).

Najai, while conducting research aimed at exploring the relationship between television and young Saudi viewers, found that television news broadcasts were ranked third to Saudi newspapers, and friends, as a news source by Saudi adolescents. He also tried to measure social conformity and found that only 36.3% of young Saudi viewers felt they were part of the Saudi society, and concluded by stating:

Unfortunately, the social conformity factors does not seem to support the concept of television's effectiveness in the psychological unification of Saudi Arabia (Najai 1982, pp 145-157).

In their study a titled 'Television News in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia' Hudson and S. Swindel investigated the sources of imported news in Saudi Television with the aim of trying to understand the type of news story chosen by Saudi censorship (the gate keepers) for broadcasting on television and to the extent to which the decisions of this body influenced the cultural, social, political and religious beliefs. The authors of this study confined themselves to the recording the percentage of the news on a particular subject from every source. This study identifies two major characteristics of Saudi Television news:

Firstly, the Saudi Ministry of Information depend heavily on the news borrowing concept for the newscasts; only 37.7% of the news stories originated in Saudi Arabia. The news sources in Europe, United States and the Middle East contributed almost 40% of the total news stories.

Secondly, the Saudi gatekeepers seemed to conform to their political and religious beliefs. Stories related to the Royal Family were broadcast more frequently than those on any other subjects. Additionally, Islamism was

the only religious subject broadcast, and there was no Saudi violence portrayed in the newscast. (Hudson & Swindel 1988, pp 1003-1006).

In his study of television and society in Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and Bahrain, Beayeze investigated the dynamics of the social and political systems in these countries and their effect on media policy (television) with regard to programmes sources, kinds and the admission of commercial advertising and foreign ownership to television stations. Beayeze examined the social and political systems in the three countries and found that all systems were similar but that Saudi TV has more effect on media policy. The author also examined the television programmes including news programmes and news bulletins, and the content of the news programmes (Beayeze 1989, pp 150-151).

Another study conducted by Abdurrahman al-Habib into Saudi Television news in 1993 contained an analysis of television news in Egypt, Saudi Arabia and Tunisia. This study gives a description of the news content in these countries and concludes that international news in these three countries, specially in Saudi Arabia, dominates the local news with the international news accounting for 54% in Egypt, 55% in Tunisia, and 62% in Saudi Arabia and that all three countries have tried to put the local news first. The local political news leads the table of all other news (Al-Habib 1993, pp.2-132).

After reviewing the most prominent studies dealing with Saudi Television in general and television news in particular, it is clear from the above that there was audience dissatisfaction with television newscasts on Saudi Television before the satellite age. Most of the studies dealt with Saudi Television programmes in general and in some cases described the content of the news stories without any analysis and never dealt with the news department itself. The

important point to make here that all the previous studies were conducted before the satellite age.

This research, which to the writer's knowledge is the first of its kind, deals with the audience (eight groups) for news in Saudi Arabia, after the arrival of satellite competition. This study will give a full analysis of the news department itself from the content (497 news stories), organisation, management strategy, and employees (20 people) and compare it with the broadcasts from the specialised satellite television channels, i.e. Al-Jazeera, MBC and ANN. It is hoped that the research will in this way fill a gap in media studies about news on Saudi Television which is important to the Saudi viewer in order to be conversant with what is taking place around him on the same day, if not the same moment.

3.5 Research Questions

The investigation in this study has four parts. Firstly, what do the Saudi audience think of TV news? Secondly, can we explain why they think this by looking at the content of the bulletins? Thirdly, can we explain why this content is produced by looking at the management structure and working practices of the stations? Fourthly can we suggest how Saudi TV can compete with the new forms of competition? To deal with the above parts the researcher for this study put the following questions:

1. What does the Saudi audience think about the news on Saudi TV and other satellite channels (Al-Jazeera, MBC & ANN)?

2. What are the news agendas of the four television channels?
3. How do the four stations work operate in terms of organisation, management, strategy and employees?
4. How can Saudi TV compete with satellite channels?

We will explain in more detail how the methods answer these question later in this chapter (section 3.7.1).

3.6. The Research Hypotheses

As we mentioned from the previous studies (section 3.4) the Saudi citizens were not pleased by what Saudi TV news was presenting at that period before the satellite age. They started from 1991 to receive satellite broadcasts in their homes and we predict that:

H1. The Saudi audience is likely to be eager to watch the news on the specialised satellite Arabic news channels as they are not satisfied with Saudi Television news.

From the previous studies [chapter two], we examined how the gender of the newscaster influences the audiences. From that we predicted that:

H2. The Saudi audience would prefer a female news presenter to a male presenter

As we mentioned previously, the lead, or the first story, in a television newscast has a special significance. And according to network news executive A.V. Westin, the lead story is the most important story of the day. It is the news that professional journalists believe must be told first and, usually, at greater length' (Westin 1983, p.58). From that we predicted that:

H3. The measures used by Saudi Television and the specialised television broadcasts to determine news priorities on the basis of their importance are different.

Because the television is a visual medium and the special power of television news is its ability to exploit this advantage. And according to Charles Bantz and colleagues most items on the television news are 'technically uniform, visually sophisticated' (Ginneken 1998, p.176). We surmise that:

H4. The technical resources in Saudi Television compares favourably with those of Al-Jazeera, MBC and ANN.

Specialists in the media field agree on a number of steps which they regard as corner stones in the building of the television news bulletins. These steps are: (1) the stages in the production process of the news [news gathering and preparation of the news bulletin and the production of the news bulletin] (2) the building of the news bulletins (chapter two, section 2.5). From the above we surmise that:

H5. The skills of the personnel working in Saudi Television are small compared to that of those working in the news sphere in the three satellite television stations.

From the previous studies (Wicks 1989, Galician 1986) we discovered some viewers rate the newscast independently of the editorial stances presented. Many other factors may figure in management decisions about editorialising - factors such as company policy, market history or station personnel. From the above we surmise that:

H6. In contrast to the satellite channels under investigation, Saudi media policy plays a big role in the determination of Saudi news.

3.7. Methods of Study

In addition to the literature review, interviews have been conducted involving focus groups and personal interviews in order to investigate views on the subject. From these interviews, the researcher would hope to measure the views of the Saudi audience and Saudi TV news employees and how they react to this problem.

The field study section of the research was focused on TV news employees in all media channels under exploration. This involved personal interviews to collect essential information and an analysis of the data collected to ascertain the answers to the questions prompted in the study. In addition to the personal and focus groups interviews, the study used the content analysis methodology to study the basic changes in the news story in both channels One of Saudi Television and a specialised satellite station This is in addition to giving a descriptive survey of the characteristics of these media channels.

3.7.1. Focus Group and Personal Interviews

In this section we will explain how the methods provide answers to the research questions. The first question will be answered through focus group interviews with the audience (eight groups), the second question will be answered through the content analysis of the news stories [497] for the four channels, the third question will be answered through personal interviews with the news makers at the four stations (20 persons), and the final question will be answered in the final chapter which will give recommendations and suggestions to resolve the problem facing Saudi Television. [Chapter Seven]

Interviews allow the researcher to obtain data which cannot be gathered by means of a questionnaire. An interview allows the researcher the independence and flexibility to reveal the basic feelings of the subject (interviewee). There are several kinds of interview apart from the 'focus group' and the 'face-to-face personal interview' (individual), including 'telephone interview', 'mail interview' and 'drop-off interview'.

The importance of the interview varies according to the field of study and subject on which data is being collected. In some surveys, or studies, it is necessary to conduct a face to face interview, to observe facial expressions, and feelings in order to better gauge a person's opinions. The researcher conducted field work in Saudi Arabia, Qatar and London from 15/1/2000 to 15/3/2000. The research methodology took in two sections. Firstly, an element of the field work was conducted from focus group interviews with the audience for news television in Saudi Arabia in the city of Riyadh, as the audience is more or less uniform throughout the Kingdom. Secondly, the face-to-face personal interviews (individual) were conducted with newsmakers, and administrators (to explore official understandings and evaluations of the problem) and also the role of organisation, management, strategy and the employee in Saudi TV news, Al-Jazeera, MBC and ANN channels.

3.7.1.1. The Focus Group Interviews:

In chapter four we concentrate on focus groups. All members of the selected focus groups were asked direct questions which sought to explore their views about the news service on the four channels in this study. The discussion lasted

between one and half and two hours per group. The focus groups comprised of eight groups totalling 48 persons both male or female from the Saudi audience [(1) academics (2) officials) males (3) academics (4) doctors) females (5) King Saud University students (6) Imam Bin Saud University students (7) farmers and sales merchants and (8) unemployed and uneducated) males]. Six people were selected per group for the interview (see chapter four, section 4.1).

3.7.2. Content Analysis

The content analysis methodology concentrates on the analysis of the content of the media message. Berelson has defined content analysis 'as a research method by which to achieve a quantitative, organised and objective description of the content of the apparent means of communications'. (Berelson 1952, p.18). Besides objectivity and organisation, Berelson emphasises the quantitative aspects in content analysis. But in addition to the quantity in content analysis Berelson, as well as Stemple and Westley, have highlighted the importance of the manner of presentation of content analysis and this is regarded as one of the important aspects of content analysis since the 'numerical record in itself does not mean anything in most situations' (Stemple & Westley 1981, pp.121-122). Thus this study analysed the content of the news bulletins in both Channel One of the Saudi Television and specialised satellite stations. It includes a descriptive survey of the characteristics of the content of these media channels.

3.7.2.1 The Research Population and Sample Size

The determination of the research population and the size of the sample drawn from this population are an important element in quantitative studies. The study was dealing with news in the main television news bulletin on Channel One of the Saudi Television and the main news bulletins in the satellite television channels chosen for this purpose. The duration of the fieldwork was one week from 12/2/2000 to 18/2/2000.

The main news bulletin on Saudi Television was chosen because it is presented at peak viewing time and the broadcast represents the cream of the coverage of the main events during the day. In addition, the main news in all satellite channels was chosen for this purpose (see chapter five).

Table [1]

Television Station	Time of the Main Evening News (GMT)	Time of the Main Evening News (Saudi Time)
Saudi Television	6:30 p.m. GMT	9:30 p.m.
Al-Jazeera	6:30 p.m. GMT	9:30 p.m.
MBC	6:00 p.m. GMT	9:00 p.m.
ANN	6:00 p.m. GMT	9:00 p.m.

(Timetable of the main evening news selected for the research)

These private satellite channels (Al-Jazeera, MBC and ANN) were selected as mentioned in the introduction of this thesis, because they are the most popular ones. This result was reached after earlier telephone research which was conducted by the researcher with academics who are directly involved with media from various universities of Saudi Arabia, when it was ascertained that these three satellite channels are the main rivals to the Saudi

Television station especially in relation to news broadcasting. Further they all share a common language as all broadcast their programmes in Arabic.

3.7.2.2 Unit of Analysis

The unit of analysis was the news story which represents an independent news unit dealing with a specific and independent event completely detached from the previous story by a natural barrier. The barrier may be a change in the subject of the news or the news presenter of the news (Muawad 1984, pp 144,146). In addition to the material being read, the analysis of the news story also includes the visual material accompanying the news. The second (1/3600th of an hour) was adopted as the unit of time for measuring the research variables.

3.7.2.3. Analysis Items

To compare the news agendas of the four channels the researcher examined the following items.

- (i) The place where the news story took place,
- (ii) The subject of the news story,
- (iii) The source of the news story,
- (iv) Duration of the news story,
- (v) The type of visual material accompanying the news story, and
- (vi) The main character in the news story.

The percentages of the contents news stories become the basis for analysis of these items.

3.7.2.4 The Place where the News Story Occurred

This item deals with the geographical location where the news story has occurred and it is classified into:-

- (a) Domestic: which include any event happening inside the home county of stations. This item only applies to Saudi Arabia because of the regional target audience of the other stations.
- (b) Arabic Countries: which include any event happening in one of the Arab countries which are members of the Arab League (22 countries).
- (c) Islamic Countries: This includes all the fortyfive Islamic countries which are members of the Islamic Conference but excluding the Arab countries.
- (d) Western Countries, which include West European countries, the United States, Canada, Japan, Australia (and the United Nations).
- (e) East European Countries, which include East European countries, and the former Soviet Union.
- (f) Third World Countries, including Central American countries, South American countries, African countries, countries in South East Asia, India and China.
- (g) Others, which include any news not falling in any one of the above locations.

3.7.2.5. The Subject of the News Story

The news stories was classified into fourteen subjects based on Deutchmann classification as outlined in Stemple's book, Research Methods in Mass Communications (1981, pp.121-122) and the classification used by Stevenson and Shaw (1984, p.27). The subject classifications which are going to be used in the study are: (1) political, (2) military, (3) economic, (4) religious, (5) accidents, disasters and crimes, (6) education and culture, (7) sports (8) humanities, (9) social services, (10) development, (11) community health and medicine, (12) arts, (13) science and innovations, and (14) others.

The researcher took this classification because it fits with the television news in general and most of the Arab news bulletin specifically cover these subjects.

3.7.2.6. The Source of the News Story

It is very important to know the sources of the news in each station, because if we find that then we can define the mass and the quality of the material in each station. The source of the news story deals with the association of the news to one of the known media sources in the field of news such as the news agencies for example. Since the television news stories usually contain visual material accompanying the read material, the researcher subdivided the source of the news into two main sub-divisions. The first division deals with the source of the read material and the second division deals with the source of the visual material.

(I) Sources of the Read Material

These include:-

- (1) Local News Agencies
- (2) Arabic News Agencies
- (3) International News Agencies
- (4) Others (any news agency not falling in one of the above classifications)

The source of the read material was classified into two classes: (a) mentioned if the newscaster mentions it, or (b) not mentioned if the newscaster did not mention it.

(II) Sources of the Visual Material

These include:

- (1) Arabic television stations
- (2) Other countries' television station
- (3) Picture news agencies
- (4) Others

The source of the visual material was identified if the newscaster mentions it or if the visual material has a logo or the name of the source written on it, but if neither of these two means were possible, the material source was classified under not mentioned.

3.7.2.7. Duration of the News Story

Time is considered one of the important elements in the audio-visual media channels. As far as television news is concerned the duration of the news

story gives an indication of its importance. The second ($1/3600^{\text{th}}$ of an hour) was adopted as the unit of measurement for the duration of the news story. The duration was outlined into four groups: (a) less than one minute (b) 1-2 minutes (c) 2-3 minutes and (d) 3 minutes and over.

3.7.2.8. Types of Visual Material Accompanying the News Stories

Television news is characterised by using visual material to accompany the read material. This accompanying material is classified into seven types as follows:-

- (1) Video tape
- (2) Photographic pictures and slides
- (3) Maps
- (4) Cartoons
- (5) Illustrations (such as tables)
- (6) Text
- (7) Mixed material (two or more visual or illustrative materials)

3.7.2.9. The Main Character in the News Story

By the main character in the news story is meant the individual around whom the news item is based and who is the centre of attention. For example, the Queen will be the main character in the news story in a report about the reception of the Australian Prime Minister during a visit to Britain. The main character in the news story was classified into six items:

- (1) The head of state: This means the highest figure in the state, which include Kings, Queens, Head of States, Prime Ministers, and the like.
- (2) Government officials such as Ministers, under-secretaries, Ambassadors and the like.
- (3) Prominent figures in the private sector which include members of the private sector, company owners, company directors, etc.
- (4) Common persons such as inventors, individuals who have undergone major or complex surgical operations, artists, athletes, etc.
- (5) Corporate bodies which refer to government institutions or groups without mentioning specific individuals, such as announcements by ministries or departments, activities of environmental groups, etc.
- (6) Others which include any news or main character which does not fit in to any one of the above categories.

3.7.3. Personal Interviews : 'Face -to-Face'

To explore official understanding and evaluation of the problem and also the organisation, management, strategy and employees in Saudi Television news, Al-Jazeera, MBC and ANN channels, the researcher conducted interviews with newsmakers and the administrators [see Chapter Six]. Each discussion lasted about two and a half hours. Interviews were conducted with personnel from each of the four channels in Saudi Arabia, Qatar and London.

1. TV news managers in the four channels.
2. TV news editors-in-chief in the four channels.
3. TV news editors in the four channels.

4. TV newscasters in the four channels.

5. TV news directors in the four channels.

The main reason for interviewing these groups (twenty persons) is because they dominate the production of the news. The researcher also observed how these groups operate inside the news room in each of the four channels.

3.8 Conclusion

From the above discussion we highlighted and identified the problems of the research and the methods used to investigate views on the subject. It is clear from the results of previous studies on television news in the previous chapter and this chapter that the importance of the audience is needs, especially if we understand that broadcasting will never be the same in future.

In the next chapter we will comprehensively study the Saudi audience, to understand the audience's opinions about the news service on Saudi TV, and the other channels under study (Al-Jazeera, MBC and ANN).

CHAPTER FOUR

The Audience for News in Saudi Arabia

Introduction

The previous chapter described the methods used to complete this study. This chapter reports the outcomes of the focus group interviews with eight groups of Saudi viewers. This was designed to investigate Saudi viewers' opinions' about the news service on Saudi Television and the other three satellite channels in this study.

Rapid advances in communications technology have shifted the balance of power away from big television networks and regulatory organisations in favour of the viewer. Today's viewer is different from the viewer of an earlier time. In effect today's viewer has control of what he wants to watch, when he wants to watch it and what information s/he needs. This has been made possible by the wider choice now available to him from direct satellite broadcast channels and the large variety of programmes offered by these stations.

Clearly it is impossible to impose on the viewer what s/he does not to watch, but it is possible to make him/her choose the programmes, the media and the news material the broadcast authority wants him to watch provided that this is done in the right way i.e. by exploring the viewer's personal tastes and wishes and viewing times. This can only be achieved by paying attention to regular research and surveys in order to discover what viewers really want

In this chapter we give an example of this by exploring the views of the Saudi Arabian viewers about the Saudi Television news services and the other specialised satellite channels under study. We will also present the outcome of discussions with the Saudi audience about the television news in the four channels.

4.1. The Views and Impressions of Saudi Viewers

It is clear from previous chapters that little attention has been paid to the views of Saudi viewers about Saudi media, especially television. Thus this section examines the views of the focus group about the news service on Saudi Television and the other channels under study. These views were recorded during fieldwork conducted by the writer in Saudi Arabia during the period 15/01/2000 and 15/03/2000. During the same period the writer also conducted personal interviews (face-to-face interviews) with the staff and personnel of the news section in the Saudi Television in Riyadh, Al-Jazeera Satellite Channel in Qatar, MBC and ANN satellite channels in London, which will be discussed in chapter six. Analysis of the news stories on all channels will be discussed in chapter five.

The groups (eight groups of 48 persons) selected for interview were as follows:

(1) Six academic males, three of whom hold a Ph.D. in media studies at the Imam Mohamed Bin Saud Islamic University in Riyadh, the other three holding Ph.Ds. in political science from King Saud University in Riyadh. The main

reason for interviewing these groups is because they are elite and have the power to become involved in moulding Saudi society.

(2) The second group consisted of male senior government officials representing the Ministry of Interior, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Defence, Ministry of Health, Ministry for Petroleum and the Higher Council for Youth, holding the rank of directors general. The reason for the selection of this group was that the activities of these offices normally help make the news be it security news, political news, military, health, finance or sports news. In addition to that they are elite and could be involved in moulding Saudi society.

(3) The third group consisted of six women with a Ph.D. in sociology and Arabic languages, who work in the female students section of King Saud University in Riyadh.

(4) The fourth group consisted of six women medical doctors working in King Faysal Teaching Hospital in Riyadh.

The main reason for selecting these two groups (3 & 4) is because they both represent the elite section of society and women are the unresearched half of Saudi society. Therefore their views are very important. The members of all of these four groups were aged between 29 and 45 years and thus provided data based on mature opinion.

In this context it is important to mention that because of the sensitivity in Saudi society of free mixing of men and women, the researcher had to convince the husbands of these women of the importance of the interviews. A family house was then chosen as a place for conducting the interviews using two separate telephones and a loud speaker with the researcher in one room and the

women interviewees in another room. The interview was then conducted with all the twelve members of the groups (3 & 4) together with the researcher being assisted by his wife.

It must be pointed out that it is extremely difficult for men to carry out research among women in Saudi Arabia because of the nature of local customs and traditions and the religion which prohibit the mixing of men and women. Despite the fact that education of women in Saudi Arabia has progressed considerably over the last few years, both quantitatively and qualitatively, and despite the fact that they now receive university education in all disciplines to suit their role in society, the real problem lies in the women's inability to take an active part in national economic activities. Female participation in economic activity is very weak and still confined to teaching, medicine, social care and clerical work. In general female participation in economic activity does not exceed 5.5 % compared to a male participation rate of 54.4 % (see table 2). This low level of female involvement can be attributed due to the prevailing social conditions and customs and traditions as well as the general view of the nature and role of women in Saudi society. (Ministry of Planning 1995, p.188)

Table [2]

Sex	Number of Economically Active Population 1994-1995	% Contribution	Number of Economically active population 1999	% Contribution
Males	39862	54.4	47693	54.7
Females	39191	5.5	47155	5.8

Perhaps modern communications techniques could help Saudi society to make use of women's energies by involving them in all scientific disciplines without

risking the mixing of the two sexes together or neglect of their duties towards their children. The table two shows the effective rate of Saudi women participation in national economic activity.

(5) The fifth group consisted of six male university students in their final year from King Saud University: three were specialising in Media studies while the other three were studying social sciences.

(6) The sixth group consisted of six male university students in their final year from Imam Mohammed Bin Saud University, three studying religious studies and of the remaining three one was studying Arabic language, one studying psychiatry and one was studying sociology.

The main reason for interviewing these groups (5 & 6) is because they are immature viewers, and these two groups will provide the youth's impressions about the news service on the four television channels under study.

(7) The seventh group consisted of six uneducated Saudi males, three of them were farmers and the other three were vegetable and fruit sales merchants.

(8) The final group, the eighth group consisted of six unemployed and uneducated Saudi males, all of them without specific jobs, who came from one of the villages neighbouring Riyadh. The reason for selecting these two groups (7 & 8) is to get the general view of this section of Saudi society.

It is clear from the selection of these groups, which include males and females, educated and uneducated, mature and immature from Saudi society, that hopefully we are able to provide some intelligent answers about the subject. During these interviews in Riyadh, videotapes from four channels' newscasts were used.

During the discussion with these groups, the researcher, who had taken a television set, a video, and video cassettes containing recorded news bulletins for one day 12th February 2000 from Saudi Television, Al-Jazeera, MBC, and ANN with him showed these [four news bulletins] to all the groups before the start of the interviews, taking four days, a day for two groups. The recorded material was part of what had been chosen and recorded by the author to conduct the content analysis of the story news in these news bulletins (see Chapter Five). This material was from the main news from the four channels on 12th February 2000 as follows:

~ **Saudi Television** 55 minutes 27 events (16 events of domestic news, (situation between the South Lebanon and Israel, Russian forces in Chechnia, the situation in Belfast, Ireland, the Indonesian President, negotiations between Greece and Turkey, the Indian Election, one event about pollution in Hungary, three events about the economy in America, Thailand and Saudi Arabia, and a trip in Space).

~ **Al-Jazeera** 30 minutes 14 events (situation between the South Lebanon and Israel, the situation in Ireland, the Indonesian President, the visit of Portuguese President to Timor in Indonesia, Russian forces in Chechnia, violence in Algeria, the Iranian election, opposition to the present Iranian regime, negotiations between Greece and Turkey, fighting in Somalia, the former Chilean President in Britain, violence in Bangkok in Thailand, the election in the Morocco - Sahara, and a medical report from Brazil).

~ **MBC** 20 minutes 10 events (situation between the South Lebanon and Israel, the situation inside Lebanon, the Algerian President's visit to Saudi Arabia, the release of hostages in Kenya, the Russian forces in Chechnia, negotiation

between Greece and Turkey, the Indian election, Japan's economy, two events from India and South Africa)

~ ANN 15 minutes 7 events (situation between the South Lebanon and Israel, the peace process in the Middle East, violence in Algeria, Russian forces in Chechnia, violence in Belfast, Indonesia's President, and a trip in Space).

From this material all the groups realised the different approach in news amongst the four channels and also compared the news period with the events.

The following section summarises what the Saudi viewers had to say about the Saudi Television news and the other channels under study knowing that the duration of interview with each group took between one and a half hours to two hours.

4.1.1. Watching Saudi Television

Despite the fact the response of all the interviewees to this question [did they watch Saudi Television] was positive, there was marked differences in the answers given by members of the different groups. Members of the first group, which consisted of the academics have said that they watch Saudi Television but with varying modes of watching. The six academics, for example, said that they watch Saudi Television on a regular basis but they watch only selected programmes such as the cultural and religious programmes. The one interviewee who has a PhD in Media studies mentioned that there are no real discussion programmes on Saudi Television to provide information about our society.

Senior officials from the second group, on the other hand, said that they watch Saudi Television but without mentioning any specific programmes and

one of them who is working in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs said that there are no political programmes where the issues in general affecting our country or outside which could be analysed.

Similarly the answers given by the third groups of women academics reflected different kind of programme in the pattern of television viewing. The fourth group said that they watch the Saudi Television less frequently especially drama plays and some of the very few women's programmes, as mentioned by one of the respondents who has a PhD in sociology that the Saudi Television is not up to a modern standard especially for women and that she always considered that all the programmes were designed to suit men.

Members of the fourth women's group said that they watch Saudi Television sometimes depending on their free time and there are no specific programmes they like to watch.

All respondents of the fifth and sixth groups, which consisted of male final year university students, said that they watch Saudi Television on a regular basis especially live football games and other entertainment programmes. One of the fifth group who is a student in media studies made a very important point:

If you watch a football match on Saudi Television there are no proper reports and discussions with other players and audience compared to other television channels which sometimes brings a different view of the same match.

Similarly all members of the seventh group of interviewees, which consisted of uneducated males (farmers and merchants), said that they watch Saudi Television but there are differences between the viewing pattern of the seventh and eighth groups in terms of programme preferences. For example, the seventh group favoured religious programmes while the eighth group's favourite

programmes were documentary programmes on Bedouin life, customs and traditions. The respondents did not mention specifically what programmes they watched. The first six groups all said they watch the Arab satellite channels especially Al-Jazeera, MBC, and ANN in Arabic language and CNN, and BBC World news in the English language. For entertainment and sports they watch other Arabic satellite channels such as ART and Orbit.

4.1.2. News on the Saudi and Other Television Channels

The views of the members of all the groups on this subject were highly critical of Saudi Television news and praised all aspects of the news of the other channels under study. Members of the first group, for example, said that they watch the Saudi Television news on an irregular basis during the week, except Monday. This is because each Monday there is news coverage of the Council of Ministers activities which include both internal and external affairs and this is important for the members of this group. Members of the second group also agreed that the Saudi Television news is boring from a number of angles including the style of presentation, the language of the news, and their direction which means how the director of the show produces the news stories live on the air. They also complained that Saudi Television news contains too much domestic news which should not have been shown in news bulletins. The second group admitted that they watch the news on the other channels under study on a regular basis except Monday for the same reason mentioned above. They all agree that there is a big difference between the Saudi Television news and the news on the other channels.

Members of the third group, the women's group (academics), described the Saudi Television news as stagnant while the fourth group (doctors) complained that there is no freedom in news presentation on Saudi Television. They argued that there is important news on the other television channels which is not shown on Saudi Television. One interviewee from this fourth group (a medical doctor) said that she does not believe the news shown on Saudi Television. In her words:

When I watch a piece of news on Saudi Television, especially international news, I try to verify it by watching the Al-Jazeera channel because I believe that unlike, Saudi Television, this channel is more convincing and it would show all points of view.

The answers of members of the fifth and sixth groups, which consisted of male university students, were very different. They all confirmed that they watch Saudi Television news especially the domestic news because, in their words, it may bring them good news about job opportunities, a subject that has become a constant worry for students and a problem they have to face after their graduation. The same groups (5 & 6) also mentioned that they watch the other channels regularly because of the beautiful way in which the news is presented on these channels.

The three farmers in the seventh group, which consisted of uneducated male respondents, said that they watch Saudi Television news in the hope that they might hear a good price quoted for their barley crop. The rest of the same group, however, said that they watch the news because they have been watching it for a long time and they have become used to it.

As far as the other channels are concerned all members of the eighth group have said that they do not watch these channels on a regular basis, except

one respondent who comes from a village said that he watches MBC because he likes to see the beautiful faces of the women newsreaders.

4.2. Similarities and Dissimilarities between Saudi Television News and the News of the Other Channels

The answers of all the interviewees in the following section exploring the similarities and dissimilarities of the four channels is as follows:

4.2.1. Presentation i.e. News Presenters

All the interviewees except the last two groups (7 & 8) pointed out that there are a number of differences between the Saudi newsreaders and the newsreaders of the other channels. They said, with the exception of two presenters, Majid al-Shible and Ghalib Kamel, the Saudi newsreaders are dull and lack the commanding presence the newsreaders of the other channels have. One interviewer from the first group who has a PhD in political science mentioned that except for Al-Shible and Kamel who speaks clearly, friendly and naturally.

The style of news reading on Saudi Television is very poor, old fashioned and not up to the standard compared to other modern television stations. This one reason alone put him off watching Saudi Television.

Secondly, with the exception of the two readers mentioned above, the performance of the Saudi newsreaders and appeal is far below that of the other channels. Moreover, unlike the newsreaders in the other channels, who always appear with smiles on their faces, and are calm and collected, the Saudi

newsreaders look very formal and too serious during the reading of the news.

One of the senior member of Ministry of Interior (group two) specified:

The newsreaders are very old fashioned and as far as I know there is no order given to them to present the news in such a way.

When asked if they prefer to see female newsreaders instead of male newsreaders all the respondents from the first six groups have said that:

Provided that there is high degree of professionalism, it does not matter whether the news were read by a male or female.

This answer casts doubt about the validity of the researcher's second hypothesis that says that both male and female Saudi viewers prefer the news to be presented by female and not male newsreaders. The respondents also went on to say that:

The cultural and educational level of most of the Saudi newscasters is generally very weak compared to that of the newsreaders of the other channels. They say that this is very clear from the way the Saudi newsreaders conduct interviews and the way they pronounce foreign names.

One interviewer who has a PhD in media studies (first group) said that:

How do you want me to evaluate the newscaster when I and you know that he does not influence what we see in the news?

One angry student studying religious studies (group six) pointed out:

The newscaster is merely a reader. If you want me to judge somebody associated with television news ask me about my opinion about the Information Ministry Officials who determine what we should and should not see in the news.

4.2.2. Linkage of News Events

By this is meant how the news are presented and analysed from all angles using text, video picture, outside correspondent's reports and analysis inside the studio. Members of the first group said that the news on Saudi Television,

especially foreign news, are presented as a text [script] and video picture without the excitement which is supposed to accompany the news stories. By contrast other channels present the news story as a text and picture first and in complete form as a report and then the news studio is linked directly with the correspondent on the location where the event took place or is taking place. Then a specialist joins the newsreader in the studio to analyse the news and shed light on the subject being discussed. According to one of the respondents (second group) who is a senior member in the Ministry of Defence:

It is this type of coverage, which makes the viewers more attracted and willing to watch the news on these channels than watching them on Saudi Television which lacks these excellent features in the news field.

From second to sixth groups, every comment on this aspect of the news was identical to the views of the first group, whereas members of the seventh and eighth groups have admitted that they have no comment on this subject due to lack of knowledge.

4.2.3. The Content of the News

This refers to what is included in the news in terms of news items and news stories within its duration. The views of the first six groups of the respondents were identical on this issue. They all said that the Saudi Television news includes domestic (protocol) news dealing with the government and its employees which are read in addition to the regional and international news and the sports, economic and medical news. The weakness of Saudi Television news however lies in the fact that it contains too much domestic news which should not have been included in the main news bulletins and, in their view, should be

included in the regional news programme. This is a daily programme, which shows the domestic activities of senior government officials. They also added that government domestic news, which always form the top news stories, like the Royal engagements (i.e. a reception of the king, the heir to the throne, the second in line to the throne) and the activities of the Minister of Interior and the Minister of Exterior should be shown on the news bulletin. However, for these news items to be more impressive and useful, there should more explanation of the information given in this news.

One respondent (first group), who holds a Ph.D. degree in political science, stressed this point by saying:

We love to follow the news and activities of national leaders, but the basic problem when the television shows this news, they are difficult to understand and they are not clear. For example, if a news item says: King Fahd Bin Abd al-Aziz has received a British envoy and during the meeting he discussed with him aspects of bi-lateral co-operation, as a viewer I would not understand, given this presentation of the item, what the news item really means. In other words, in this form the item is ambiguous and from my point of view they must say what has taken place in the meeting and why there was a need for this meeting.

As far as the domestic and international news is concerned, members of these groups have pointed out that:

There is a tendency for the editorial team of the Saudi Television to concentrate on quantity and not quality of the edited material. They show a large number of items of regional and international news, which do not necessarily have to be included in the main bulletin. It is quite enough to concentrate on four or five main news headlines in a day and show them in a good way, but unfortunately this is not the case.

Members of the fifth and sixth groups, which consist of twelve university students, also said that the content of the Saudi Television news contains too much domestic (protocol) news to the extent that they are put off by this

quantity of domestic news and have lost interest in watching the domestic news. For this reason, they said, they watch the regional and international news regularly on the Al-Jazeera, MBC and ANN television channels. One of the students who is studying the Arabic language (group six) mentioned:

While setting the agenda for domestic news, the priority is always given in news casting to the coverage of senior officials rather than knowing what the audience want.

Members of the seventh and eighth groups, on the other hand, said that they watch Saudi Television news regularly without paying attention to what is included in it or its contents and what they are hoping from watching them is that it might contain some news concerning their livelihoods.

Members of all the first six groups agreed that the news on the other channels contain a certain number of highly concentrated news items which are well researched and contain satisfactory information to suit all tastes including political news, economic news, military news, sports news, etc. The regional and international news is presented in a convincing and professional manner. If there are news stories concerning Saudi Arabia and its government, they are shown on these channels, especially the Al-Jazeera Channel, in a totally different format, both in terms of the content and the essence of the news, in complete contrast to the way the same news items are presented on Saudi Television. This situation is quite strange and quite confusing, as one of the respondents (first group) commented who holds a Ph.D. degree in media studies and who also raised the question of what is the cause of this problem: does the problem lie in Saudi News Agency, which is the source of all the domestic news or does the problem reflect a lack of understanding by the news editors of the concept of the media message?

4.2.4. The Direction (Director Show)

This refers to the way the news is shown on the air and the accompanying slides, maps and music intervals. On this issue there was almost total agreement among all the interviewees (the first six groups) that the production of the news on the other channels is much superior to that of Saudi Television. For example one respondent from the first group, who holds a Ph.D. degree in media studies, has said that:

The viewer can notice the effort spent on this aspect in Al-Jazeera Channel and MBC where there is the accompanying music, the illustrative pictures, maps showing the area where the events had taken place, and there is constant movement of the cameras in the studio. All this makes the news interesting material unlike the production in the Saudi Television where you notice no effort is made and as a result there is routine and boredom in this aspect of news.

4.2.5. Decor and Lighting of News Studio layout, decoration and lighting

The answers of the respondents to this part of the research were very much in favour of the other satellite channels. Respondents have said that the decor of the studios of these channels is simple, modern and match as the requirements and needs of advanced newsrooms. A senior member of Higher Council for Youth (second group) said:

By contrast the decor of the Saudi Television news studio is a 1960s style and consists of a lifeless map which lacks any creative work and this adds to the many problems Saudi Television is facing. Moreover, the lighting in Saudi Television is primitive unlike the situation in other channels where light makes the decor in the studio and the newsreader brighter and more attractive to the viewer.

4.2.6. The Duration of the News (or the specified time for the news)

The interviewees in this study, especially the first six groups, have pointed out that the duration of the news on MBC, Al-Jazeera, and ANN

channels is half an hour whereas on the Saudi Television there is no set time for the news. Officially the main evening news bulletin should start at 9:30 PM but it lasts one or two hours (no fixed time). One female participant (group three) who has a PhD in Arabic language questioned the present policy of the Saudi Television by saying:

In almost all televisions in the world there is a set time for the news bulletin (when it should start and when it should stop) but the Saudi Television news is an exception to this rule and we do not know the media philosophy behind this action.

4.2.7. Writing the News

When the news was shown to the interviewees they started complaining about the writing of the news in Saudi Arabia. The exciting style and the building of the news story from the bottom and trying to give answers to questions like what, who, where, why, when, and how about specific events is the style used by the editorial boards of most satellite channels specialising in news broadcasting under study. With the exception of members of the seventh and eighth groups, who admitted that they know nothing about this issue, the answers given by members of the first six groups taking part in this study confirmed this point. News writing in Saudi Television lack all these basic requirements and according to the respondents the editorial board of Saudi Television news need rehabilitation and training on these matters and in the art of writing the news stories which must reflect deep analytical thoughts and convincing explanations so that the viewer can take a specific stand. One of the respondents who belongs to the first group mentioned that in our country the

news writing is sometimes only based on what and who and no consideration is made for why, when, where and how.

4.2.8. Prioritisation of the News

The order of the news according to their importance. The answers given by members of the first four groups were in total agreement as far as this item is concerned. They all mentioned that the Saudi Television news follows a fixed format in ordering the news items whereby the news of the government (i.e. the king, the first heir to the throne, the second heir to the throne, the emirs, the ministers) comes first in every news bulletin irrespective of whether there are other important news items or not in the same bulletin. (For a chronological list of names according to their appearance in the news bulletins see Appendix A). This is in total contrast with the situation in the other channels which, always put the main item of the news of the day first and give it a wider coverage. This in the eyes of the participants in this study makes the watching of the news more attractive.

The answers given by members of the last four groups, on the other hand, were straight and simple. They all pointed out that they know exactly the order of the news items in the news bulletins on Saudi Television, because they have been watching them for quite a long time and nothing has changed over those years. If there is a big news item of international importance, they try to follow what is going on from other sources such as BBC Radio or MonteCarlo Radio.

4.2.9. Economic and Sports News

On the issue of economic and sports news the participants pointed out that coverage on other channels is more comprehensive and appealing than on Saudi Television because (1) it satisfies their needs, and (2) there is more diversity in the news items. Moreover, the news, especially the economic news bulletins, is delivered in a simple and interesting way. The coverage of these news items by Saudi Television on the other hand is superficial; particularly noteworthy, as pointed out by one of the participants in the interviews who is a student in social science (group five) is that:

There are economic and sporting events that take place inside the Kingdom which we do not see on Saudi Television and the interested viewer can see them on the other channels. This is sad because the events take place in our region and they are covered by outside sources.

4.2.10. Current affairs Programming (Daily, Weekly or Monthly Events)

This refers to daily, weekly or monthly news programmes which record and analyse events in greater length than that usually given in news bulletins. On this issue about the current affairs programming, the answers given by members of the first four groups seem to suggest that this type of news programmes is completely lacking on Saudi Television. All that Saudi Television presents is one weekly programme called World Events in One Week, which its presenter claims is an analysis of the events of the previous week. In reality, however, it is simply a collection of images and texts from past news items shown on previous news bulletins without any analysis. As the respondents (second group) have pointed out:

Comparing those programmes with what is offered by the other channels in terms of good quality programmes and both in terms of concept and content and analysis, one could easily come to the conclusion that it is really worth nothing in any rating scale.

The same group raised questions as to who bears the responsibility for the poor quality of such programme. As there is no shortage of academically qualified Saudis able to discuss and analyse events the failure must be that of the news teams working in this field or the media policy. This point is going to be discussed further in Chapter Six when the interviews with those in charge of the news in both the Saudi Television and the other channels are analysed

4.3. Analysis

It is clear from the above that the first aim of this study and the first research question has been accomplished by researching the views of Saudi viewers on Saudi Television news as compared with news on other channels covered in the interviews. In addition, the viewer's points of views about Saudi Television news and the news of the other channels have also been established. From these two sets of answers it is clear that the viewers prefer the news of the other channels under study and they are dissatisfied with Saudi Television news. This answer also supported the first hypothesis of the research.

As far as the second hypothesis of the research, which stipulates that the Saudi viewers prefer female newsreaders to male newsreaders, is concerned, it appears that it has no support as is evident from the answers given by the viewers in the third section and which concerns news reading.

It also emerged from the answers given by the interviewees about the news on the Saudi and other television channels that the basic motive for watching Saudi Television news was to keep in contact with current domestic news in the Kingdom with international news coming second on viewer's preference scale. This can be attributed to the presence of other channels from which to get information about current world events which are much better in terms of presentation and coverage than Saudi Television. Moreover, the viewer lacks the additional political and economic news which he finds in the other channels which provide analysis, and explanation of the news show in a rather simple and effective way.

As mentioned above the assumption is that Saudi Television forms the main source of domestic news and other television channels the main source of world news. The answers obtained from the groups however do not lend support to this assumption. Instead they reveal that the other channels are the main source of domestic news when important domestic events take place in addition to world news. This means that the other channels remain an important source of both domestic and world news and dependence on Saudi Television for news information is very weak. One also feel that the viewers, as reflected in the answers given by the interviewee sample, are dissatisfied with the performance of Saudi Television newsreaders except for two readers, Majid al-Shible and Ghalib Kamel. For this reason the researchers thinks that these two readers should be permanently attached to the news section and to employ the remaining readers as correspondents whose role would be to prepare news reports. One should mention here that BBC1 and ITN, the British Television stations, do the same thing with their newsreaders. This is a good decision especially during the

main news bulletins which usually attract a large audience especially the evening news.

The style and content of the Saudi Television news was also the subject of criticism by the interviewees. Respondents praised the other channels for the style and content of their work despite the fact that the news are more or less the same in all channels and though Saudi Television also broadcasts domestic news because of government involvement in television. In the researcher's view however, this is not an excuse for inefficiency. The views and wishes of the viewers which became apparent from the answers they have given during the interviews concentrated mainly on improving the style of presentation of the news and putting more effort into analysis and explanations of the news in order that the viewers understand the background to the events reported. This is in addition to increasing the sports and economic news and to reducing usage of protocol news. It must be pointed out, however, that the media policy as set out in various documents and articles does not restrict improvements to the news or increasing the duration of the news to meet viewers' demands. It is worth quoting here again the example set by the BBC1 news especially during the deliberation of the annual budget in Parliament for the year 2000, where the subject was presented on television by using ten separate reports which explained in simple terms the various items of the budget. Even the simple man on the street was made to understand fully the minor details of the budget and what it really means to him. This excellent style could not have been achieved by the BBC1 if there were not full knowledge of the tastes, wishes and abilities of the viewers through regular research and canvassing of consumers as mentioned

earlier in Chapter One of this research. Saudi Television is totally lacking in such research.

The viewers demands for more information about the content of the news seems to be a logical demand even though the researcher believes that there are situations where there should be a limit on what can be covered in the news in the interests of national security. Finally comes the lack of current affairs programmes on Saudi Television to add to the discontent about the news service. All these factors have contributed to viewers opting for the other channels which they say have satisfied their demand for well presented and high quality television news both in terms of content and analysis and explanation.

4.4. Conclusion

From the above discussion it is clear that the Saudi viewers like to watch the other satellite channels especially those specialising in news services in preference to Saudi Television. This reflects, if anything at all, their dissatisfaction with the news service of Saudi Television. An important point to be made here is that this is not something new. Television viewers have expressed their dissatisfaction with Saudi Television news for some considerable time (see chapter three, section 3.4). This is evidenced by that the results of this investigation accord with the results of previous research into Saudi Television viewers in general and those on television news in particular. At the times these studies were conducted (1982,1983, and 1987) there was no public satellite broadcasting in the region. The results of this research conducted in the year 2000 show that dissatisfaction with Saudi Television news still persists. This is

a serious matter which should not be treated lightly and is strong justification for conducting this research in order to find a comprehensive and lasting solution to this problem.

The next chapter will analysis the quality of the production from the four channels by conducting a content analysis of their news stories (497) recorded during the fieldwork from 15/01/2000 to 15/03/2000. The reason to elaborate this is because we want to explain why the Saudi audience think the News Service on Saudi Television is of poor quality compared to the other three channels under study by looking at the content of the bulletins.

CHAPTER FIVE

Content Analysis of News Stories

of the Main News Bulletins of

Saudi, Al-Jazeera, MBC and ANN Channels

Introduction

From chapter four, the results have demonstrated that people in Saudi Arabia don't like Saudi Television news. In this chapter we are going to look at the programmes (news stories) in the four channels in order to see why they prefer other channels.

As we mentioned previously the second step in this study is to ascertain the news agenda and type of production in each of the four channels. This chapter firstly describes the news stories of the main news bulletins of the four stations. Content analysis is used to identify the main differences in news stories and the way in which the bulletin is constructed, i.e. presenters, running sequence, duration, the stories and how they are covered on the four stations. Emphasis will be put on the location of a news story, its subject matter and source, duration, the type of visual material used and its main character. This chapter provides a basis for the productions method carried out in chapter six.

5.1 Analysis of Television News Bulletins of the Four Stations

The following sections give the results of the analysis of the contents of news stories in the four stations conducted by the author over the week commencing 12/2/2000 and ending 18/2/2000. This work was part of the fieldwork undertaken by the researcher during the period 15/01/2000 and 15/03/2000. The main news bulletins of the four stations were recorded over a week using a video tape recorder. Al-Jazeera, MBC and ANN broadcast unlike Saudi Television economic news bulletins and sports news throughout the day separately from the main news. Economic and sports news form part of the main news bulletins on Saudi Television provided that they pass the selection procedures and acquire a place in the main news bulletins. The times of the main news bulletins recorded by the researcher during the period 12/02/000 - 18/2/000 were as follows:

Table [3]

Television Station	Time of the Main Evening News (GMT)	Time of the Main Evening News (Saudi Time)
Saudi Television	6:30 p.m GMT	9:30 p.m.
Al-Jazeera	6:30 p.m GMT	9:30 p.m
MBC	6:00 p.m. GMT	9:00 p.m.
ANN	6:00 p.m. GMT	9:00 p.m.

These times were selected because they fall within the peak viewing period. 497 stories were analysed representing the total covered by the four stations during this period.

5.2. The Results

~ Saudi Television

The total number of news stories analysed was 164, broken down as follows: Saturday (27), Sunday (30), Monday (21), Tuesday (25), Wednesday (24), Thursday (20), and Friday (17). Total transmission time for the week was approximately 375 minutes (22,505 seconds).

~ Al-Jazeera

The total number of news stories covered in the week in question was 114, broken down as follows: Saturday (15), Sunday (15), Monday (13), Tuesday (14), Wednesday (12), Thursday (13), and Friday (32). The total transmission time for these news stories was 180 minutes (10,800 seconds).

Table 4 Numbers and Duration of News Stories during the Week

Day of the Week	Saudi Television		Al-Jazeera		MBC		ANN	
	No. of news stories	Duration (minutes)	No. of news stories	Duration (minutes)	No. of news stories	Duration (minutes)	No. of news stories	Duration (minutes)
Saturday 12/2/00	27	55.5	15	30.0	10	20.0	7	15.0
Sunday 13/2/00	30	83.0	15	30.0	10	20.0	8	15.0
Monday 14/2/00	21	39.0	13	20.0	13	30.0	8	15.0
Tuesday 15/2/00	25	53.0	14	20.0	19	30.0	20	30.0
Wednesday 16/2/00	24	75.0	12	20.0	23	20.0	20	30.0
Thursday 17/2/00	20	41.0	13	30.0	23	30.0	24	30.0
Friday 18/2/00	17	29.0	32	30.0	24	30.0	10	20.0

~ MBC

The total number of news stories analysed was 122 news, broken down as follows: Saturday (10), Sunday (10), Monday (13), Tuesday (19), Wednesday (23), Thursday (23), and Friday (24). The total transmission time for these news was 180 minutes (10,800 seconds).

~ ANN

The total number of news stories analysed was 97, broken down as follows: Saturday (7), Sunday (8), Monday (8), Tuesday (20), Wednesday (20), Thursday (24), and Friday (10). The total transmission time was approximately 155 minutes (9,300 seconds).

Table 4 shows the days of the week, the number of news stories in the news bulletin on a particular day and the duration of the bulletin for each of the four stations.

Close examination of the table shows that the largest number of news stories transmitted on Saudi Television was 30 on Sunday 13 February 2000 whilst the lowest number transmitted was 17 on Friday 18 February 2000. Table 4 also shows that the number of news stories varies from day to day. The duration of news bulletin varies from one bulletin to another. The total duration of all news bulletins for the week was 375 minutes with the shortest bulletin shown on Friday 18 February, 2000 lasting 29 and the longest shown on Sunday 13 February 2000 83 minutes. Table four clearly shows that Saudi news bulletins are not of fixed duration. The other three channels follow the common international practice by fixing the duration of their news bulletins to between 15 and 30 minutes.

The lowest number of news stories shown on Al-Jazeera channel was 12, shown on Wednesday 16th February over a period of 20 minutes. The largest number of news stories transmitted was 32 on Friday 18th February over a period of 30 minutes. MBC on the other hand showed only ten news stories on Saturday 12th February (over a period of 20 minutes). The highest number shown on this channel was 24 on Friday 18th February over 30 minutes.

The lowest number of news stories on ANN, whose weekly total was 97 news stories, was 7 shown on Saturday 12th February over a period of 15 minutes. The highest number news stories shown on this channel was 24, recorded on Thursday 17th February, over a period of about 30 minutes. Moreover, the same number of news stories (see table 4) was shown on Saturday 12th February and Sunday 13th February on Al-Jazeera channel, over 30 minutes, but the number varied on the other days. The duration of news bulletins varied ranging from 20 minutes on the 14, 15, and 16 February to 30 minutes on 17 and 18 February. Similarly, MBC had also shown an equal number of news stories on these two days by broadcasting 10 news stories on Saturday and a further 10 on Sunday with varying numbers of stories for the rest of the week but kept the duration of the news bulletins on 12th Feb at 20 minutes, 13th 20 minutes, 14th 30 minutes, 15th 30 minutes, 16th 20 minutes, 17th 30 minutes and 18th 30 minutes. This is in contrast to ANN which had shown 8 news stories on Sunday and a similar number on Monday and 20 stories on Tuesday and the same number on Wednesday and variable numbers in the remaining days of the week and a duration ranging on 12th Feb from 15 minutes, 13th 15 minutes, 14th 15 minutes, 15th 30 minutes, 16th 30 minutes, 17th 30 minutes and 18th 20 minutes.

This shows that although there was some variability in the number of news stories shown on Al-Jazeera, MBC and ANN, the three stations have maintained the duration of their news bulletins within set limits something which Saudi Television has failed to do. This highlights the question of news bulletins production, discussed earlier in chapter two, which shows that this point in the production is the key to the success of news programmes and a key

factor in attracting audiences by selecting and stream lining the elements of news stories in a fast and concise way.

5.3. News Gathering & Presentation of News Bulletins in the Four Channels.

It would be useful here to briefly explain, as an example, how the news bulletins are collated and presented in each of the four stations including the style of presentation and the duration of time given to these stories. To achieve this aim the researcher has chosen, as an example, one news story whose topic was the situation in Northern Ireland and which was presented in the four stations on Wednesday 16th of February 2000. The content of this news story will be analysed to identify these points in addition to the language used in the text by the four stations, extra material used and the similarity or lack of it in the style and method of presentation. This is particularly important if we knew that most of the text and picture clips for this news story were provided by the international news agencies and that this particular news item was the top news headline in the four stations on that date. We will first report the news story as presented in each of the four stations and the picture clips that accompanied it on that day and later we are going to give a qualitative analysis of the content of the news item.

1- Saudi Television

The duration of this particular news item on Saudi Television was two minutes and ten seconds of which ten seconds were spent on reading the introductory text. This was read by the news presenter from inside the studio, accompanied by slides of the British Isles and the Irish and British flags. The

remaining two minutes were devoted to the report itself and the pictures associated it which were presented by the London correspondent as we will show later.

News Presenter only:

Only one news presenter from inside the studio

The decision of the IRA to halt all its contacts with the committee in charge of the decommissioning of arms has increased fears of the resumption of terrorist activities in the Province. The British Prime Minister, Tony Blair, and his Irish counterpart and other political leaders continued their efforts to diffuse the situation and avert the crisis; our correspondent in London has more details.

Pictured Report

The picture clips that accompanied this item consisted of posters on the walls of the streets against the Unionists and the Province's elected assembly, weapons, Tony Blair with the Irish Prime Minister.

Observers consider the withdrawal of the Irish Republican Army (IRA) from the international committee entrusted with collecting paramilitary weapons a strong blow to the peace efforts and back tracking on the part of the RA from its previously announced suggestions to the committee in which it was rumoured that the RA has made major concessions. This decision comes as a reply to the British government's decision to cancel plans to form a provisional government in Northern Ireland.

Voice and picture of Jerry Adams

Frankly, the meeting was bad and we saw how they put pressure on us to claim victory over us.

Picture of the leader of Ulster Unionist Party

On the other hand, David Trimble, the leader of the Ulster Unionist Party, commented on this decision by the IRA by saying: have the Republicans any idea of the loss resulting from these decisions to the peace process? I hope they give this long thought.

The voice of the presenter plus clips of weapons

It appears that the British government is racing against time to save what can be saved.

The voice and Picture of the Correspondent at the End of the Report

The accompanying clips consisted of the picture of the correspondent

This decision might be regarded as a manoeuvre by the Republicans against the government but at the same time it shows the complexity of the problem.

2- Al-Jazeera Channel

The duration of the news story itself on Al-Jazeera channel was given two minutes and twenty seconds in which slides were used which included a still photographs of Tony Blair, the British Prime Minister, and Jerry Adams the leader of Sinn Fein, the political wing of the Irish Republican Army. The accompanying text was read by the presenter from inside the studio which together with the slides ran for twenty minutes. During the reading of the text by the same presenter photo clips of Jerry Adams and the House of Commons were shown for thirty seconds. This was followed by a picture report of the news item presented by another presenter and it lasted for one and a half minutes. This report was prepared inside the station from various pictures broadcasted by the International News Agencies as we mentioned before.

One Presenter from the Studio and Slides

One presenter from inside the studio plus slides of Tony Blair and Jerry Adams

Jerry Adams, the Leader of Sinn Fein, the Republican political party, has called on the government to withdraw its decision to dissolve the Government in Northern Ireland which was formed following the Good Friday Agreement. Adams, who is going to meet with Tony Blair today, added that it is inappropriate to speak about the peace process in light of the one-sided decision taken by the British government by which it has frozen the institutions based on it.

Clips of Jerry Adams

In an effort to surpass the consequences of these crises, Tony Blair will meet his Irish counter-part, the Irish Prime Minister, today; in the mean time the two sides in the conflict, the Unionists and the Republicans, continued to exchange accusations with each other.

Photo clip report, accompanying clips plus a Clip of Jerry Adams

The decision of the IRA to stop its contacts with the Committee for Decommissioning Arms is seen as a severe set back which will throw the precarious peace process into greater chaos.

Weapons plus Posters

The Irish Prime Minister, Bertie Ahern, and the British State Minister for Northern Ireland, Peter Henderson, described the situation as discouraging and naturally, David Trimble, the leader of Ulster Unionists, agreed with them on this:

Voice and picture of David Trimble

I am amazed by this behaviour. During the last eleven weeks there was an opportunity which the Republicans did not seize to achieve peace and I wonder here whether they realise the amount of damage to the peace process

Jerry Adams says:

Voice and picture of Jerry Adams

There are a number of reasons for this decision. We saw the failure of policies and we saw how the Unionists oppose any agreement reached and agreed upon.

*Voice of the presenter
plus clips of arms*

Sinn Fein argues that the Good Friday Agreement did not make the decommissioning of arms a precondition but the Unionists want the peace process to be implemented after the decommissioning of arms.

*Picture of the
spokesman of the
State Department*

The United States is putting pressure on the Republicans to continue the peace process.

President Clinton made a tremendous effort to resolve this conflict and we call upon all parties, including the Republicans Party, to contribute a great deal to the peace process.

Conclusion: The Voice of the Reporter:

*Picture of Tony
Blair with the Irish
Prime Minister*

But the new crisis needs more than statements to be resolved and the contacts that Tony Blair will make bring hope in this regard.

3- MBC Channel

The time duration allocated to this news story by MBC was one minute and twenty seconds in which slides showing the British and Irish Flags were used together with a text which was read by a presenter from inside the studio. This lasted for twenty seconds followed by a video picture report about the news item for one minute using a different voice this time. The report was compiled inside the station itself as in the case of Al-Jazeera and the presentation format was as follows:

One Presenter from inside the Studio Plus Slides (A map and the British and the Irish flags)

Clips from Jerry Adams's meeting with the British officials.

Before his meeting with Tony Blair, the British Prime Minister, Jerry Adams, the Sinn Fein (political wing of the Irish Republican Army) President stated that overcoming the difficulties in the peace process in Northern Ireland depends on the withdrawal of the decision to suspend the devolved government in the Province.

Picture Report (Different voice)

The accompanying clips included: the House of Commons, Jerry Adams, weapons, and wall posters.

Tony Blair, the British Prime Minister, is holding talks with his Irish counterpart, Bertie Ahern, and separate talks with the leaders of the political parties including the Unionist parties, Sinn Fein, and the Socialist Democratic Labour Party in Northern Ireland. This comes in the aftermath of the withdrawal of the Irish Republican Army from talks with the Committee for the Decommissioning of Arms following the suspension of the activities of the Constitutional Assembly in the Province last Friday (11th February, 2000). After his meeting with the State Minister for Northern Ireland, Peter Henderson, Jerry Adams stated that the Republicans have no option but to withdraw their co-operation with the committee.

Voice and Picture Statement by Jerry Adams

Clip of Jerry Adams

Frankly the situation was unacceptable and I found that the British government is using the veto which pleases the Unionists.

Voice and Picture of Statement by David Trimble, the Leader of the Unionists

*Voice and Picture of
David Trimble*

We saw how the Republican movement has wasted the peace process.

Conclusion

*The voice of the
report presenter plus
clips of posters on the
walls of the streets in
Ireland*

Wall posters on the streets of central and west Belfast, Republican areas, blaming the Unionists for the failure of the peace process.

4- ANN Channel

One minute and forty seconds was the time duration allocated to this item of news by the ANN. Slides consisting of photographs of the British Prime Minister, Tony Blair, and the Irish Prime Minister, Bertie Ahern, were used in conjunction with the text which was read from inside the studio and lasted twenty seconds. This was followed by a picture report about the event produced by the station and read by a different presenter. The report lasted one minute and twenty seconds. The procedure followed in presenting this item by the ANN was as follows:

One presenter from the Studio plus Slides of Tony Blair and the Irish Prime Minister

Tony Blair will meet the Irish Prime Minister, Bertie Ahern, to try to save the peace process in Northern Ireland which was rocked by the withdrawal of the IRA from the Committee for the Decommissioning of the Arms of the paramilitaries.

Picture Report (voice only but a voice of different presenter)

*Presenter from
inside the studio
plus slides*

The decision of the IRA to withdraw from the Committee for the Decommissioning of Arms served a big blow to the peace process in Northern Ireland and contributed to the crisis the process is facing.

Clips of Jerry Adams

And in a hardening position the leader of the Republican Party, Jerry Adams, accused the British government and the Protestants of trying to score a victory over them and he said that he is withdrawing any decision agreed upon with the committee.

*Picture and sound of
Jerry Adams*

The meeting was unsatisfactory and saw the failure of the government.

On the other hand, David Trimble, the Unionist leader, stated that the Republicans are always trying to abort the peace process.

Analysis

-The Slides

From the events of this news story we can see that the two main parties in this crisis are the British government and the British Prime Minister, Tony Blair, on the one hand, and the leader of the Republican Party, Jerry Adams, on the other. Hence the most suitable position of this information is at the beginning of the news item and when the explanatory slides are used, they must start with pictures of the British Prime Minister and the leader of Sinn Fein. This was done reasonably well by Al-Jazeera news and to lesser extent in case of MBC and the Saudi Television. The explanatory slides consisted of a map showing the position of Britain and Ireland and the British and the Irish flags.

The ANN, on the other hand, chose to put the pictures of British and Irish Prime Ministers side by side at the beginning of the news story.

- The Prelude or Opening Part of the News Item

This comprises the opening of the news item, which is usually read by the presenter from inside the studio, together with the accompanying explanatory slides which normally appear at the top of the screen. Besides the presenter, the MBC, the ANN and the Saudi Television stations all gave equal duration of time to the introductory part of the news item (twenty seconds) and for the text and the accompanying slides as we mentioned earlier. The only difference between the three stations was in the language of the text used in delivering the item of news, for whereas the introduction of the Saudi Television said that the decision of the IRA to stop all contacts with the committee for the Decommissioning of Arms might increase violence in Northern Ireland, the introduction of MBC consisted of Jerry Adams's statement that the solution to the problem lies in the scrapping of the British government's decision to suspend the work of the Provisional Constitutional Assembly in the Province.

The introduction of ANN said that the British Prime Minister would meet the Irish Prime Minister to save the peace process which has been affected by the decision of the IRA to withdraw from the Committee for the Decommissioning of arms.

From the above we see that the introduction of MBC and the words used in it were very precise and direct concentrating on the basic demand to overcome the crisis. In other words, the station adopted the climax style which depends on giving the important bits of news in the introduction. The aim of

this is to give the viewers all the facts quickly (see Chapter Two, section 2.5.1). The introduction in the case of Saudi Television and ANN was very general and had no elements of excitement or specificity. The introduction of the news item in case of Al-Jazeera was completely different from all the three stations in terms of the style of presentation, duration, and the words used. In terms of style the station used the slides to accompany the text which was read from inside the studio for twenty five seconds and consisted of clips of Jerry Adams, the Republican political leader. Overall, however, the introduction of Al-Jazeera was similar to that of MBC with Al-Jazeera providing some additional information explaining the reasons behind the crisis between the British government and the Republican Party and how to resolve this conflict by referring to the statement made by Jerry Adams. Hence, one can say that Al-Jazeera has used more than one explanatory method in its introduction (slides plus video) whereas the other three channels were content with one method of explanation (slides). There was also a similarity in the language used by both Al-Jazeera and the MBC Channel and both channels used very precise language to reflect the causes of the problem and how to resolve it. In comparison Saudi Television and ANN used more general terms and failed to provide specific and concise information in their introductions as we mentioned earlier.

- The Body (or the Middle Part) of the News Story

All the four stations showed a picture report after the introduction which dealt with the issue from all its angles i.e. the body of the story as it is called in the style of presentation terminology (as mentioned in Chapter Two, section 2.5.1).

The duration of the report in the four stations was between one and two minutes and the accompanying clips in the report were similar in the four stations (weapons, posters on the streets of Northern Ireland, the House of Commons, Jerry Adams, David Trimble, Tony Blair, the British Prime Minister, and the Irish Prime Minister). This is in addition to the spokesman of the US States Department in the case of Al-Jazeera. Saudi Television remarked that the report was prepared by its London correspondent*, whose picture appeared at the end of the report, though the writer is very sure that the clips used in this report were the same clips used by the other three stations in their reports. This is not forgetting that the other three stations have produced their reports inside their own stations using the clips and scripts of the International News Agencies which are the main source of such material to these stations. This is in addition to the additions introduced by Al-Jazeera to its own report as mentioned earlier.

The language used in the report and the style of presentation were more or less similar in the four stations as evidenced by the report scenario of each station with a minor difference in the arrangement of information according to the importance reflecting the editorial style of the chief editor in each station and his ability to prioritise events according to their importance i.e. from the more important to the less important. It was noted, for example, that Al-Jazeera started by pointing out the reaction of the British government to the decision, followed by the reaction of David Trimble, the Unionist leader, to the IRA decision and the Unionist Party, who the Republicans claim is the cause of the

* The cost of one report is about \$ 350 and APTN Company, through an annual contract, supplies the Saudi television with daily reports about events from around the World.

problem. In doing so, the channel has actually exposed both sides of the argument by giving the Republicans a chance to air their views by showing Jerry Adams' statement (in his own voice). The report also makes reference to the fact that none of the other reports by the other stations has mentioned, which is the fact that the Good Friday Agreement did not make the decommissioning of arms a pre-requisite for the peace process to take place. This is an important fact, which in addition to highlighting the role of the United States in trying to resolve this conflict in the form of the statement of the spokesman of the US States Department has added strength to the news story.

The use of the natural voice of officials when quoting their statements was used in all the reports by the four stations and the translation to Arabic was imposed as an accompanying voice to the report.

The expressions used in the reports of the other three stations were more or less similar except for small differences in the style of narrative, for whereas the introduction to the report in both ANN and the Saudi Channel were both exactly the same, in that they both agreed that the decision of the IRA to withdraw from the committee will lead to more violence in the Province and destroy the peace process, we find that MBC highlighted the political initiatives of the British PM, Tony Blair, to contain the crisis. In addition all statements by the officials in the Unionist and Republican parties in the three stations were quoted in the actual voices of these officials.

From the above and very briefly we notice that the presentation of the news story and its pyramid structure with respect to the amount of information

the viewer wants to see is one of the important factors in attracting viewers to watch the news bulletins of the particular station. There are, of course, other important factors which must be taken into consideration including the character and the commanding presence of the presenter inside the studio and his/her popularity, studio decor, etc.

The above analysis was an example of what the four stations broadcast to give an idea of the style of each station and to give the reader a glimpse of the important work put into the news bulletins which consists of a number of news stories. Finally, the key to attracting the viewer on a continuous basis lies in adopting an excellent style of presentation.

Whilst the content of news programmes is obviously important to the viewers who watch the news for a variety of different reasons for example to keep in touch with world events or local news items. The following section is the analysis of the content of news stories in the four stations with the aim of discovering location, subject and sources of the news stories. This is in addition to the duration of the story and the visual material accompanying the news stories and the main character in the news story. The reason for that is to understand what the four stations provide to the audience.

5.4. The Location of News Stories

This section attempts to demonstrate the policy of each station about the world countries and at the same time to find out more about the source in each station. The location of news stories deals with the geographical location where the news story has occurred and it is classified into:-

- (a) Domestic: which include any event happening inside the region, the home country of the stations. This item only applies to Saudi Arabia because of the regional target audience of the other stations.
- (b) Arabic Countries: which include any event happening in one of the Arab countries which are members of the Arab League (22 countries).
- (c) Islamic Countries: This includes all the fortyfive Islamic countries which are members of the Islamic Conference but excluding the Arab countries.
- (d) Western Countries, which include West European countries, the United States, Canada, Japan, Australia (and the United Nations).
- (e) East European Countries, which include East European countries, and the former Soviet Union.
- (f) Third World Countries, including Central American countries, South American countries, African countries, countries in South East Asia, India and China.
- (g) Others, which include any news not falling in any one of the above locations.

Domestic news stories occupy a leading position among news stories in terms of priority in news bulletins on Channel One of Saudi Television on the full week of broadcast as Table 5 shows.

From the table on the next page it can be seen that the total number of domestic news stories which include any event happening inside Saudi Arabia was 85 news stories, or 51.8% of total news stories, with a duration time of 13,954 seconds. This was followed by news stories from western countries

which accounted for 26 news stories, or 15.9%, with a time duration of 2,304 seconds. Surprisingly Arabic news stories came third in ranking with a total of 19 stories and a time duration of 1,790 seconds (i.e. 11.6%) whereas Third World countries and Eastern countries registered the same number of news stories with each accounting for 13 news stories but with varying time duration. Islamic countries came last in the ranking accounting for only eight news stories and a duration of 430 seconds.

**Table 5 Distributions of News Stories by Geographical Location
(Duration in Seconds)**

	Domestic		Western Countries		Arab Countries		Third World Countries		Eastern Countries		Islamic Countries		Total	
	No	D	No	D	No	D	No	D	No	D	No	D	No	D
Saudi TV	85	13954	26	2304	19	1790	13	890	13	1492	8	430	164	20860
	51.8%	67%	15.9%	11%	11.6%	8.6%	7.9%	4.1%	7.9%	7.2%	4.9%	2.1%	100%	100%
Al-Jazeera	-	-	42	3065	30	2510	10	725	12	1235	20	2580	114	10115
			36.8%	30.3%	26.3%	24.8%	8.8%	7.2%	10.5%	12.2%	17.5%	25.5%	99.9%	100%
MBC	-	-	51	3280	41	4430	10	455	7	455	13	1530	122	10150
			41.8%	32.3%	33.6%	43.6%	8.2%	4.5%	5.7%	4.5%	10.7%	15.1%	100%	100%
ANN	-	-	37	2850	35	3660	5	150	11	1253	9	1300	97	9213
			38.1%	31%	36.1%	39.7%	5.2%	1.6%	11.3%	13.6%	9.3%	14.1%	100%	100%

In Al-Jazeera channel western countries news stories came first in the ranking with 42 news stories and a time duration of 3,065 seconds or 36.8% of the total followed by news stories from the Arab countries which accounted for 30 news stories and a duration of 2,510 seconds or 26.3%. Islamic news stories occupied the third position with a total of 20 stories and a time of 2,580 seconds, i.e. 17.5%, while news stories from Eastern countries occupied the fourth position with a total of 12 and a duration of 1,235 seconds and news stories from Third World countries came last with 10 news stories and the shorter duration of 725 seconds.

The MBC had the highest overall total number of news stories from western countries with a total of 51 news stories and a duration of 3,280 seconds (or 41.8%) followed by Arab news stories which accounted for 41 stories shown over a duration of 4,430 seconds (or 33.6%). Islamic news stories came third in ranking with a total of 13 stories shown over a duration of 1,530 seconds (or 10.7%) followed by news stories from Third World countries with a total of 10 stories and duration of 455 seconds or 8.2%. News stories from Eastern countries occupied the last position with 7 news stories and a duration of 455 seconds.

Similarly news stories from the western countries occupied the top position in the order of ranking on ANN accounting for a total of 37 stories (38.1%) and a duration of 2,850 seconds followed closely by news stories from the Arab countries with a total of 35 and a time duration of 3,660 seconds (or 36.1%). Unlike MBC however news stories from Eastern countries came third in ranking with a total of 11 news stories and a duration of 1,253 seconds whereas the Islamic countries came fourth with 9 news stories and a duration 1,300 seconds (or 9.3%) and at the bottom came news stories from Third World countries which accounted for only 5 news stories shown over a duration of 150 seconds (or 5.2%).

From this analysis news stories from western countries emerged as the overall leader in terms of the total number of news stories shown in all the four stations. This is not surprising since the four stations depend for the import of the majority of their news stories on international news agencies and other Western sources. In addition these countries, especially Britain, USA, France

and Japan, are leading industrial economies and major economic and political powers as well as centres for major international events.

On the other hand, this analysis has also revealed the high percentage of protocol news on Saudi Television and this is the cause of discontent among the Saudi public. They are merely protocol news and cannot be called news stories with relevance to peoples' daily social and economic matters as we explained in Chapter Four. In fact, watching video recordings of this news during the analysis, one cannot call these shows news stories in the real sense of the word since they report meetings and receptions of government officials without any analysis of these functions. This takes us back to the point we had made earlier about the importance of television reporters in the preparation and reporting of these activities, since these news are currently prepared by the editor of the Saudi News Agency who provide the same service (script) to all media channels (newspaper, radio & television) in the country at the same time [see chapter six].

The analysis has also shown the importance of Arabic news in the list of priorities of the four channels which accounted for a total of 125 news stories. This is quite understandable since one of the main objectives of establishing these channels was to serve the Arab cause and to make the Arab viewer aware of what is taking place in his own country as well as other Arab countries. However, the available data show that there is less emphasis on the news stories of the Islamic countries in both the Saudi Television and the ANN. This is probably due to weak programme exchanges between these countries and the lack of ANN and Saudi correspondents in these countries. MBC and Al-Jazeera on the other hand have correspondents in most of these

countries and this was reflected in the high number of news stories reported by these two stations from Islamic countries which amounted to 20 and 13 news stories in the two stations respectively.

The number of news stories from Third World countries shown on the four stations, are more or less equal and accounted for only small percentage of the total number of news stories shown on the four channels. These were mainly in the form of reports about floods and other natural disasters that affected these regions in addition to reports of the conflict in Chechnia in the Russian Federation.

5.5. The Topics of News Stories

The news stories were classified into fourteen subjects based on the Deutchmann classification (as mentioned in Stemple's book, Research Methods in Mass Communications 1981, pp.121-122) and the classification used by Stevenson and Shaw (1984, p.27). The subject classifications which are going to be used in the study are: (1) political, (2) military, (3) economic, (4) religious, (5) accidents, disasters and crimes, (6) education and culture, (7) sports (8) humanities, (9) social services, (10) development, (11) community health and medicine, (12) arts, (13) science and innovations, and (14) others. The researcher took this classification because it fits with the news television in general and most of the Arab news bulletins specifically covered these subjects.

Table 6 gives fourteen news topics each of which represents a category in the news bulletin, the subject of this research. These categories cover all

political, economic, religious, educational and other human activities, which most Arab channels deal with all the time on the news bulletin. The news coverage of these activities varies in terms of their number and time duration and this variation reflects the policy of each station in dealing with these various subjects.

**Table 6 Topics of News Stories
(Duration in Seconds)**

	Political		Military		Economic		Religious		Accidents & Disasters		Educational & Cultural		Humanitarian	
	No	D	No	D	No	D	No	D	No	D	No	D	No	D
Saudi TV	47 28.5%	5114 25%	18 11.0%	2122 10.4%	23 14.0%	2280 11.1%	8 4.9%	600 2.9%	6 3.7%	340 1.7%	5 3.0%	1090 5.3%	-	-
Al-Jazeera	39 34.2%	5850 52.3%	17 14.9%	1570 14%	11 9.6%	805 7.2%	-	-	10 8.8%	560 5%	-	-	7 6.1%	990 8.8%
MBC	33 27.0%	3545 36.1%	8 5.6%	1045 10.6%	28 22.9%	1870 18.9%	-	-	13 10.6%	715 7.2%	-	-	5 5.4%	370 3.7%
ANN	22 22.7%	2630 28.4%	16 16.5%	2160 23.3%	26 26.8%	1500 16.2%	3 3.1%	420 4.5%	8 8.2%	945 10.2%	-	-	7 7.2%	725 7.8%

Table 6 (Continued)

	Sports & Youth		Development		Social Services		Medicine & Hygiene		Arts		Science & Innovation		Others		Total	
	No	D	No	D	No	D	No	D	No	D	No	D	No	D	No	D
Saudi TV	25 15.2%	4675 22.8%	5 3.0%	1215 5.9%	12 7.3%	1430 7%	2 1.8%	80 0.4%	-	-	2 1.2%	100 0.5%	11 6.7%	1445	164 100%	20491 100%
Al-Jazeera	16 14.0%	540 4.8%	1 0.9%	35 0.3%	-	-	4 3.9%	260 2.3%	-	-	4 3.9%	340 3.2%	5 4.4%	225 2.0%	114 100%	11195 100%
MBC	20 16.4%	815 8.2%	-	-	3 2.4%	490 4.4%	1 0.8%	35 0.4%	5 4.1%	460 4.7%	3 2.4%	335 3.4%	3 2.4%	240 2.4%	122 100%	9880 100%
ANN	10 10.3%	655 7.1%	-	-	1 1.0%	30 0.3%	2 2.1%	140 1.9%	1 1.0%	30 0.3%	1 1.0%	30 0.3%	-	-	97 99.9%	9265 100%

* Figures don't add up to 100 because of rounding.

A look at Table 6 reveals that with a total of 164 news stories Saudi Television has the highest number of news stories, followed by Al-Jazeera with 114 news stories, then MBC with 122 news stories and finally ANN with 97 news stories.

Political issues occupied the leading position on Saudi Television and accounted for 47 stories shown over a duration of 5,114 seconds (or 28.5%), in the second place came sports news stories with a total of 25 stories and duration of 4,675 seconds (or 15.2%), followed by economic stories which

totalled 23 stories shown over a duration of 2,280 seconds (or 14.0%). The total number of military stories was 18 stories and a duration of 2,122 seconds, whereas the social, religious, medical, educational, and development stories, and disasters accounted for the least number of subjects their total varied between 2-12 subjects as the table shows.

Political news stories also occupied the leading position in Al-Jazeera channel with a total number of 39 news stories and a duration of 5,850 seconds (34.2%), followed by military news stories whose total was 17 news stories and its duration 1,570 seconds (or 14.9%). In the third place came sports news with a total number of 16 news stories and a duration of 540 seconds followed in fourth place by economic news stories whose total was 11 news stories and 805 seconds or 9.6% of the grand total. Other subjects were the least covered and their total ranged between one and ten news stories.

A similar picture emerges from MBC with political news stories again occupying the leading position accounting for 33 news stories (27.%) and 3,565 seconds, but followed in the second place by economic news stories with 28 news stories and duration of 1,870 seconds (22.9.0%). Sports news occupied third place in MBC with a total of 20 news stories and a time duration of 815 or 16.4% with accidents and natural disasters in fourth place with a total of 13 stories and a duration of 715 seconds or 10.6%. Other subjects were the least covered and ranged between one and eight news stories as the table shows.

By contrast it is economic news which occupied the leading position in ANN with a total of 26 stories and a duration of 1,500 seconds or 26.8% followed in second place by political news which accounted for 22 stories and a duration of 2,630 seconds or 22.7%. Military news occupied the third

position with 16 stories (16.5%) and duration of 2,160 seconds followed in fourth place with the sports news accounting for 10.3% of the total number of news stories. Other subjects were less in importance and varied between one and eight news stories.

From the above it is quite clear that political, economic, military and sports news had the largest share of coverage in the news of the four stations and that most social and political issues are covered by the stations. The only difference one can see from watching the videos of these news lies in the style of presentation. Thus, while there is agreement in terms of the subjects covered there is marked differences in the way they are covered. For example if a subject is covered in MBC or Al-Jazeera we find that analysis or comment by an expert inside the studio accompanies the coverage followed by direct link to the correspondent from the location of the event. Saudi Television by contrast shows exactly the same news stories but without any addition to what it has received from the source of the news story. This drives the viewers away from watching Saudi Television and forces them to watch the other channels since the style of presentation is an important aspect in attracting viewers as we mentioned earlier (see chapter four).

5.6. Topics of News Stories and the Geographical Location

As we discover in chapter two (section 2.8) the location of the events is very important to the audience. The purpose of this analysis is to explore the kind of story used by Saudi TV and the sources if it is different from the other three channels and to discover the policy of the news agenda in each station.

(1) Saudi Television

Table 7 shows the topics of the news stories and their association with the geographical location.

Table 7 Topics of News Stories by Geographical Location- Saudi Television

	Domestic		Western Countries		Arab Countries		Third World Countries		Eastern Countries		Islamic Countries		Others		Total	
	No	D	No	D	No	D	No	D	No	D	No	D	No	D	No	D
Political	16 34.0%	2772 54.2%	7 14.9%	652 12.8%	15 31.9%	1250 24.4%	3 6.4%	155 3%	2 4.2%	80 1.6%	4 8.9%	205 4%	-	-	47 99.9%	5114 100%
Military	2 11.1%	80 3.8%	2 11.1%	450 21.2%	3 16.7%	455 21.4	1 5.9%	50 2.4%	9 50.0%	1027 48.4%	1 5.9%	60 2.8%	-	-	18 99.9	2122 100%
Economic	14 60.9%	1555 68.2%	-	-	-	-	8 34.8%	665 29.2%	-	-	1 4.3%	60 2.8%	-	-	23 100%	2280 100%
Religious	8 100%	600 100%	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	8 100%	600 100%
Disasters	-	-	3 50.0%	175 51.5%	-	-	1 16.7%	60 17.8%	-	-	2 33.3%	105 30.9%	-	-	6 100%	340 100%
Cultural & Educational	4 80.0%	970 89%	-	-	-	-	1 20.0%	120 11%	-	-	-	-	-	-	5 100%	1090 100%
Humanitarian	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Sports	14 50.0%	3600 77%	10 40.0%	1000 21.4%	1 4.0%	75 1.6%	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	25 100%	4675 100%
Development	4 80.0%	1085 89.3%	1 20.0%	130 10.7%	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	5 100%	1215 100%
Social Services	11 91.7%	1375 96.2%	-	-	-	-	-	-	1 8.3%	55 3.8%	-	-	-	-	12 100%	1430 100%
Medicine	2 100%	80 100%	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2 100%	80 100%
Arts	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Science & Innovation	-	-	2 100%	100 100%	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2 100%	100 100%
Others	10 90.9%	1385 95.8%	1 2.1%	60 4.2%	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	11 100%	1445 100%

In the case of Saudi Television political, economic, social and sports topics dominate the domestic news followed by religious issues (8 domestic stories), while educational and developmental issues were given the same level of importance with each scoring four domestic stories. No emphasis is given to humanitarian, science, arts topics and accidents locally. In the Arabic domain only two topics attracted attention: political issues with 15 stories and military issues with three stories. There was only one sports story and no coverage of the other topics listed in the table. This is interesting since news exchanges between Arab countries should not be confined to political and military new

but should include all other fields. The predominance of political and military coverage may reflect the nature of the political regimes prevailing in the Arab region.

In the case of western countries, sports news was the most heavily exchanged news topic (ten stories) followed by political news (seven stories), then accidents and natural disasters (three stories). Science and military news each had two stories and there was no coverage of other fields. This raises the issue of the procedures used by Saudi Television to select news from the western countries. This comment applies equally to the other three stations, which during the same period had covered the same subjects.

In the case of Third World countries, economic news dominated the news (eight stories) followed by political news (three stories). The military, accidents, sports and culture each had one story. No coverage of the other topics was discernible. In the case of Eastern countries, military news dominated with nine stories followed by political and social news. No coverage of the remaining topics was revealed. Islamic countries have provided Saudi Television with four political stories, two accidents and natural disasters, one military story and one economic story. None of the remaining topics was covered by this source.

A close look at the figures of Table 7 therefore reveals that all topics originate locally except the humanitarian topics, accidents and disasters, arts, and science and innovation. This gives a clear indication that Saudi Television prefers not to cover these topics locally, local news consisting mainly of protocol news of members of the government. It further appears from Table 7 that the material available on Saudi Television on other regions of the world is

almost exclusively confined to western countries with little coverage of Third World countries. This is a result of Saudi Television's reliance on international news agencies. This again shows the importance of increasing the number of correspondents and reporters that Saudi Television has in other parts of the world.

(2) Al-Jazeera Television

Table 8 shows topics of news stories and their association with the geographical location for Al-Jazeera station.

In the political field we find that the greatest emphasis is given to news from Islamic countries (13 news stories) followed by news from the western countries (12 stories).

Table 8 Topics of News Stories by Geographical Location- al-Jazeera Television

	Domestic		Western Countries		Arab Countries		Third World Countries		Eastern Countries		Islamic Countries		Others		Total	
	No	D	No	D	No	D	No	D	No	D	No	D	No	D	No	D
Political	-	-	12	1135	7	1315	5	400	2	245	13	2835	-	-	39	5950
			30.8%	19.1%	17.9%	22.1%	12.8%	7.1%	5.1%	4.1%	33.3%	47.8%			99.9%	100%
Military	-	-	-	-	6	585	1	180	10	805	-	-	-	-	17	1570
					35.3%	37.3%	5.9%	11.4%	58.8%	51.3%					100%	100%
Economic	-	-	8	640	1	75	1	30	-	-	1	60	-	-	11	805
			72.7%	79.5%	9.1%	9.3%	9.1%	3.7%			9.1%	7.9%			100%	100%
Religious	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Disasters	-	-	2	85	5	355	1	30	-	-	2	90	-	-	10	560
			20.0%	15.2%	50.0%	62.4%	10.0%	5.4%			20.0%	16%			100%	100%
Cultural & Educational	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Humanitarian	-	-	3	670	1	210	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	880
			75.0%	76.1%	25.0%	23.9%									100%	100%
Sports	-	-	13	465	2	30	1	45	-	-	-	-	-	-	16	540
			81.3%	86.1%	12.5%	5.0%	6.2%	8.3%							100%	100%
Development	-	-	-	-	1	35	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	35
					100%	100%									100%	100%
Social Services	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Medicine	-	-	1	30	-	-	1	30	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	60
			50.0%	50%			50.0%	50%							100%	100%
Arts	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Science & Innovation	-	-	2	160	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	160
			100%	100%											100%	100%
Others	-	-	2	130	2	60	-	-	-	-	1	35	-	-	5	225
			40.0%	57.7%	40.0%	26.7%					20.0%	15.4%			100%	100%

In third place came coverage of political news from Arab countries (7 stories) followed by coverage of Third World countries and Eastern countries (between 2 and 5 stories). In the military field emphasis is given to Eastern countries (10 stories), followed by Arab countries (6 stories) and lastly Third World countries (only 1 story). There were no stories on this issue from either western countries or Islamic countries.

Economic stories centred on western countries (8 stories) whereas the Arab, Third World and Islamic countries came joint second with one story each. Religious, social and arts' issues were not addressed at all as shown by the table. The Arab countries topped the table in the category of accidents and disasters (5 stories), followed by Western and Islamic countries (2 story each) and lastly Third World countries (1 story). Stories from western countries also predominate in coverage of the remaining topics. For example in the sporting field they provided 13 stories and their contribution in the remaining topics is between three and five stories as the table shows.

The above analysis shows that there are some variations in the topics covered according to geographical location, but more importantly there is a logical sequence in the coverage of the specific subjects from all their angles and a comprehensive analysis of the issues involved. However there is a lack of emphasis on religious, social, and art topics. Further more there is less coverage of events in Third World and Eastern countries despite the fact that the station is equipped to do so.

(3) MBC Television

Table 9 in the next page shows the relationship between the topics of news stories and the geographical local of the MBC channel.

From the table we see that the Western, Arab, and the Islamic countries have the largest share of news coverage. For example, the table shows that in the field of politics, Arab politics occupies the top position with 13 stories, followed by Islamic countries with nine stories, then Western countries with 6 stories, then Third World countries with 3 stories and finally Eastern countries with 2 stories

Table 9 Topics of News Stories by Geographical Location- MBC Television

	Domestic		Western Countries		Arab Countries		Third World Countries		Eastern Countries		Islamic Countries		Others		Total	
	No	D	No	D	No	D	No	D	No	D	No	D	No	D	No	D
Political	-	-	6	795	13	1360	3	45	2	85	9	1280	-	-	33	3545
			18.2%	22.3%	39.4%	38.1%	9.1%	1.3%	6.0%	2.4%	21.3%	35.9%			100%	100%
Military	-	-	-	-	3	560	-	-	5	485	-	-	-	-	8	1045
					37.5%	52.0%			62.5%	46.4%					100%	100%
Economic	-	-	17	1205	9	600	2	65	-	-	-	-	-	-	28	1870
			62.7%	64.4%	32.1%	32%	7.1%	3.9%							99.9%	99.9%
Religious	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Disasters	-	-	5	180	5	375	2	125	-	-	1	35	-	-	13	715
			38.5%	25.2%	38.5%	52.4%	15.4%	17.5%			7.0%	4.9%			100%	100%
Cultural & Educational	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Humanitarian	-	-	2	110	2	140	-	-	-	-	1	120	-	-	5	370
			40.0%	29.7%	40.0%	37.8%					20.0%	32.5%			100%	100%
Sports	-	-	13	485	6	310	1	20	-	-	-	-	-	-	20	815
			65.0%	59.5%	30.0%	38%	5.0%	2.9%							100%	100%
Development	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Social Services	-	-	2	385	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	45	-	-	3	430
			66.7%	89.5%							33.3%	10.5%			100%	100%
Medicine	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	35	-	-	-	-	1	35
									100%	100%					100%	100%
Arts	-	-	3	220	1	180	1	60	-	-	-	-	-	-	5	460
			60.0%	47.8%	20.0%	39.1%	20.0%	13.1%							100%	100%
Science & Innovation	-	-	2	195	1	140	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	335
			66.7%	58.2%	33.3%	41.8%									100%	100%
Others	-	-	1	40	1	170	1	30	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	240
			33.3%	16.7%	33.3%	70.7%	33.3%	12.5%							99.9%	99.9%

From the table we see that the Western, Arab, and the Islamic countries have the largest share of news coverage. For example, we see from the table that in the field of politics, Arab topics occupies the top position with 13 stories, followed by Islamic countries with nine stories, then western countries with six stories then Third World countries with three stories and finally Eastern countries with two stories. In the military field, only the Eastern

countries and the Arab countries have been covered with 3-5 stories and none of the other areas has been covered.

In the economic field topics of western countries occupied the first position with 17 stories followed by the Arab countries with nine stories and Third World countries with two stories. On the other hand, in the field of accidents and disasters both the Arab countries and the western countries had five stories whereas the Islamic and Third World countries had between one and two stories as the table shows. Western countries are way ahead in the field of sports and youth with 13 stories followed in the second place by those of the Arab world with six stories whereas in humanitarian, science and innovation and arts' topics the level of importance was between western countries, Arab countries and the Islamic countries with the number of stories ranging between one and three stories. Other topics listed in the table were not covered at all as the table shows. This is perhaps one aspect the officials in the MBC must pay more attention to in future, but like Al-Jazeera news topics were arranged in a logical manner and comprehensively analysed and covered.

(4) ANN Television

A close look at Table 10 in the next page, which summarises the relationship between the topics of the news and the geographical location, shows that topics from all geographical locations have been covered by the ANN with the exception of education and cultural topics and development topics.

From the table it can also be seen that western countries had the lion's share of coverage. In the field of economics there were 21 stories from western

countries, 7 sports topics and the rest of the topics varied between one and two topics.

As far as the Arab countries are concerned political stories were dominant with 12 stories followed by military stories with 6 stories and coverage of the remaining varied from one and four stories each. Military topics were the prominent topics in case of Eastern countries with 8 stories with one story each for arts and humanitarian subjects and none of the other topics were covered. In the case of Islamic countries political topics came first with four stories and the rest of the topics varied between one and four each with a similar picture as regards Third World countries.

Table 10 Topics of News Stories by Geographical Location- ANN Television

	Domestic		Western Countries		Arab Countries		Third World Countries		Eastern Countries		Islamic Countries		Others		Total	
	No	D	No	D	No	D	No	D	No	D	No	D	No	D	No	D
Political	-	-	2 9.1%	280 80.7%	12 54.5%	1425 54.2%	2 9.1%	90 3.4%	2 9.1%	135 5.1%	4 18.2%	700 26.8%	-	-	22 100%	2630 100%
Military	-	-	1 6.3%	85 3.9%	6 37.5%	965 44.7%	-	-	8 50.0%	970 44.9%	1 6.2%	140 6.9%	-	-	16 100%	2160 100%
Economic	-	-	21 80.8%	1325 88.3%	4 15.4%	145 9.7%	1 3.8%	30 2.0%	-	-	-	-	-	-	26 100%	1500 100%
Religious	-	-	1 33.3%	210 50%	2 66.7%	210 50%	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3 100%	420 100%
Disasters	-	-	2 25.0%	365 38.6%	4 50.0%	460 48.7%	-	-	-	-	2 25.0%	120 12.7%	-	-	8 100%	945 100%
Cultural & Educational	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Humanitarian	-	-	2 28.3%	210 29%	3 42.6%	280 38.6%	-	-	1 14.3%	60 8.3%	1 14.8%	175 24.1%	-	-	7 100%	725 100%
Sports	-	-	7 70.0%	565 86.3%	2 20.0%	60 9.1%	1 100%	30 4.8%	-	-	-	-	-	-	10 100%	665 100%
Development	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Social Services	-	-	-	-	-	-	1 100%	30 100%	-	-	-	-	-	-	1 100%	30 100%
Medicine	-	-	1 50.0%	115 82.1%	-	-	-	-	1 50.0%	25 17.9%	-	-	-	-	2 100%	140 100%
Arts	-	-	-	-	-	-	1 100%	30 100%	-	-	-	-	-	-	1 100%	30 100%
Science & Innovation	-	-	1 100%	30 100%	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1 100%	30 100%
Others	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

In summary Tables 7, 8, 9 and 10 highlight the following points:

1- Political, economic and sports topics were the most dominant in all four stations. The coverage mainly concentrated on Western and Arab countries. These topics also occupied a major part of Saudi Television programmes even though domestic issues dominated the coverage.

2- Eastern countries were the source of military topics and this may be attributed to the prevailing conflict in Chechnia.

3- There is a conspicuous lack of coverage of educational, cultural and development stories in news of Western, Arab and Islamic countries. In all four stations this may attributed to the fact that the stations share the same sources of news and therefore receive the same material.

4- Western countries were the prime suppliers of science and innovation topics due to the rapid technological advances taking place in these groups of countries.

5- All the topics from Arab, Islamic, Third World and Eastern countries reflect the situation in these countries and hence the International agencies distributing stories about these countries portray the bare facts without any additional negative reporting.

5.7. Sources of News Stories

The source of news story items deals with the association of the news to one of the known media sources in the field of news such as news agencies.

We have divided the sources of news stories in this study into two parts: (I) sources of reading material, and (II) sources of visual material that accompanied the news story. As we mentioned in Chapter three (section 3.7.2.6) the sources of the read material was classified into two classes (a) mentioned and (b) not mentioned. The source of the visual material was identified if the newscaster mentions it or if the visual material has a logo or the name of the source written on it but if neither of these two applies, the material source was classified under not mentioned.

(A) Saudi Television

Table 11 Source of the News Story - Saudi Television

1-Sources of Written Texts		
Name of the Source	Number	Percentage
1- Local News Agencies	15	55.6
2- Arab News Agencies	3	11.1
3- International News Agencies	7	25.9
4- Others	2	7.4
Total	27	100.0
2- Sources of Visual Material		
Name of the Source	Number	Percentage
1-Arab Television	2	20.0
2-Television of other countries	0	0.0
3-Picture News Agencies	8	80.0
4- Others	0	0.0
Total	10	100.0

Out of 164 news stories, the Saudi Television acknowledged the sources of the texts of 27 stories or 16.5 percent and no mention was made of the source of the material of 10 stories as Table 11 shows.

By examining the sources of the reading material one notices that the local news agency occupied the lead among the news agencies in the table with 15 news stories (or 55.6%) followed by International news agencies with seven stories (or 25.9%), then the Arab news agencies with 3 stories (or 11.1%) and then the rest of the local and regional news agencies and broadcasting organisations with two stories (or 7.4%).

This shows the heavy reliance of Saudi Television for its readable texts on the local news agency. This may be acceptable in the case of domestic news because the agency is the official source in the Kingdom but it is unacceptable in case of other news broadcast by International news agencies as shown on Table 11.

On the other hand only ten sources were acknowledged in case of the visual material. This is very small compared to the total number of news stories (153) i.e. only 6.5%. The most prominent news agencies for pictured material, Reuters and APTN, were mentioned in eight stories while the most important Arab television stations were Algeria and Yemen.

(B) Al-Jazeera Television

Table 12 shows the sources of news stories for Al-Jazeera station. Out of a total of 114 news stories, the source of the text material was quoted in 30 stories or in 26.3 % of the total whilst in case of visual material it was quoted in 8 stories alone.

Table 12 Source of the News Story - al-Jazeera Television

1-Sources of Written Texts		
Name of the Source	Number	Percentage
1- Local News Agencies	0	0.0
2- Arab News Agencies	12	40.0
3- International News Agencies	8	26.7
4- Others	10	33.3
Total	30	100.0
2- Sources of Visual Material		
Name of the Source	Number	Percentage
1-Arab Televisions	1	12.5
2-Televisions of other countries	0	0.0
3-Picture News Agencies	7	87.5
4- Others	0	0.0
Total	8	100.0

Examination of the sources of text material shows that the Arab news agencies occupy the top position among the known news agencies with 12 news stories (or 40.0% of the total stories). They were followed in second place by other local news agencies, regional news agencies and broadcasting organisations with 10 stories (or 33.3% of the total) while International agencies came third in ranking with eight stories (or 26.7% of the total). This shows that Al-Jazeera depends on a wide range of sources.

In the case of visual material, however, the total number of stories in which the source was mentioned was 8, the most important of which was the Reuters News Agency with 7 stories and the remaining story was from Algerian Television. This number is very low and accounts for only 7.3 % of the total number of news stories containing visual material.

(C) MBC

As Table 13 shows out of a total of 122 news stories shown on MBC 19 stories, or 15.6 % of them, came from known sources while the source of visual material was reported in 11 news stories.

Table 13 Source of the News Story - MBC Television

1-Sources of Written Texts		
Name of the Source	Number	Percentage
1- Local News Agencies	-	-
2- Arab News Agencies	5	26.3
3- International News Agencies	9	47.4
4- Others	5	26.3
Total	19	100.0
2- Sources of Visual Material		
Name of the Source	Number	Percentage
1-Arab Televisions	4	36.4
2-Televisions of other countries	-	-
3-Picture News Agencies	7	63.6
4- Others	-	-
Total	11	100.0

The table also shows the reliance of MBC on International news agencies as a source of its text material with 9 stories, or 7.4% of the total stories, coming from this source. Arab News Agencies and other sources made an equal contribution to the total number of stories on this channel each contributing five stories or 4.1% of the total.

Visual material on the other hand was reported in 11 stories with Reuters News Agency alone contributing seven of this total and the remain four stories were contributed by the Arab Television organisations especially

Algerian Television. Again this is a very small percentage of the total number of news stories of 115 stories on this channel.

(D) ANN Channel

The number of stories whose source was acknowledged on this channel was 9 stories or 9.3 % of the channel's total of 97 stories while the source of the visual material was quoted in only 6 stories.

Table 14 Source of the News Story - ANN Television

1-Sources of Written Texts		
Name of the Source	Number	Percentage
1- Local News Agencies	-	-
2- Arab News Agencies	1	11.1
3- International News Agencies	8	88.9
4- Others	-	-
Total	9	100.0
2- Sources of Visual Material		
Name of the Source	Number	Percentage
1-Arab Televisions	1	16.7
2-Televisions of other countries	-	-
3-Picture News Agencies	5	83.3
4- Others	-	-
Total	6	100.0

As Table 14 in the previous page shows this channel also depends heavily on International News Agencies as a source of its text material with a total of 8 stories or 88.9% of its material coming from this source alone. Arab News Agencies were quoted only once as a source of one news story.

The sources of the visual material were quoted in six stories of which five stories or 83.3 percent is from International News Agencies, while the

source of one story was Algeria Television. Again the total of six stories is very small compared to the channels total of 91 news stories. It represents only 6.6% of the total for the channel.

It is obvious, from watching the recorded contents of the news bulletins of the four stations, especially the material by the correspondents, that most of clips accompanying the reports of these reporters are the same as the material supplied by International News Agencies. The only additions, if any, are the personal interviews inside the report. This was particularly evident in one-way or another in the reports by Al-Jazeera and MBC stations.

5.8 The Duration of the News Story

There is a marked variability in the number of news stories shown on the four stations. For this reason the duration was classified into four groups as we mentioned in Chapter three (section 3.7.2.7). Table 15 shows the duration of news stories in the four stations.

Table 15 Duration of the News Stories in the Four Stations

	Saudi Television		Al-Jazeera		MBC		ANN	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Less than one minute	53	32.3	58	50.9	67	54.9	39	40.2
1-2 minutes	63	38.4	20	17.5	10	8.2	26	26.8
2-3 minutes	20	12.2	15	13.2	26	21.3	18	18.6
3 minutes and over	28	17.1	21	18.4	19	15.6	14	14.4
Total	164	100.0	114	100.0	122	100.0	97	100.0

From this table it can be seen that the total number of news stories shown by Saudi Television during the week under study was 164 stories 32.3 percent or 53 stories of a duration of less than one minute, 38.4 percent or 63

stories between 1-2 minutes (which had the highest concentration of news) and the rest, or 29.3 percent, (48 stories) of a duration of more than three minutes.

Al-Jazeera channel broadcast 114 news stories during a week of which 58 stories, or 50.9 percent, were of a duration of less than one minute each, which had the highest concentration of news, 35 stories, or 30.7 percent, were of duration of between 1-3 minutes, and 21 stories, or 18.4 percent, were of a duration of more than three minutes.

The total number of news stories shown by MBC during the same period was 122 news stories of which the number of stories with a duration of less than one minute was 67 stories, or 54.9 %, which represents the highest number of stories, those with a duration of 2-3 minutes were 26 stories (or 21.3%).

Finally, the total number of news stories shown by the ANN were 97 stories of which 39 stories or 40.2 percent were of a duration of less than one minute each, and in second place came news stories with a duration between 1-2 minutes with a total of 26 stories or 26.8 percent of the total. Stories with a duration of more than two minutes came in third place with a total 32 news stories.

In summary the four stations seem to deal with the length of the story in almost the same manner, in the case of news, whose duration is less than one minute. The fourth category however which contained stories with a duration of more than three minutes each seems to show a quite different picture. In this category Saudi Television has 28 stories of more than ten minutes duration. These stories were mostly in the form of pictures accompanied by music with a very short text. The same group in Al-Jazeera and MBC consists of a report

with some pictures plus analysis from inside the studio and direct links with reporters from locations. This indicates that each subject is treated using a different duration and many angles.

5.9 Types of Visual Material Accompanying News Stories

The types of visual material, which accompany the news stories on the four stations, are shown in Table 16.

Table 16 Types of Visual Material Accompanying the News Stories in the Four Channels

	Saudi Television		Al-Jazeera		MBC		ANN	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
1- Video	121	79.1	42	38.2	74	64.3	41	45.1
2- Photographs and slides	12	7.8	4	3.6	5	4.3	8	8.8
3-Maps	-	-	7	6.4	2	1.7	3	3.3
4-Cartoons	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
5-Illustrations	1	0.6	-	-	-	-	-	-
6-Text (writing)	5	3.3	3	2.7	5	4.3	18	19.8
7- A mixture	14	9.2	54	49.1	29	25.2	21	23.0
Total	153	100.0	110	100.0	115	99.8*	91	100.0

* Figures don't add up to 100 because of rounding.

Of the 164 news stories shown on Saudi Television 153 or 93.3% contained visual material. The most common type of visual material used is video material with 121 news stories, or 79.1%, using this type of material. This is followed in second place by the mixed group with 14 news stories or 9.2%, then came the photographic and slide material with 12 stories or 7.8% and finally the text material with 5 stories and illustrations with only one story. None of the stories used cartoons or maps as visual aids.

The total number of stories that contained visual material in Al-Jazeera channel was 110 stories or 96.5% of the total number of news stories shown on this channel. The mixed category was the most common type visual aid used on this channel with a total of 54 stories or 49.1% of the total. In second place came the video material with 42 stories or 38.2%, and then came the map with seven stories (6.4%), photographic pictures with four stories and text with three stories.

Out of one hundred and twenty two news stories shown on MBC one hundred and fifteen news stories or 94.3% were accompanied by visual material. Of this number video material was the most important form of aid accounting 74 stories (64.3%) and the mixture with for 29 stories (25.2%) while photographic and slide material together with text material came a joint third with five stories each or 4.3%. Then in the fourth place came the use of maps which appeared in two stories. No cartoons or illustrative material was used on this channel during the period under study.

Finally, the total number of news stories shown on ANN during the period under study was 97, of which 91 news stories or 93.8% were accompanied by visual material. The most common form of visual aid used in these stories were videos which accounted for 41 stories or 45.1% of the total visual material used on this channel. This was followed in second place by the mixed category with 21 stories or 23%, and in third place came the text material with 18 stories or 19.8 %. Photographic and slide material came in fourth place with eight stories and maps came last being used in three stories.

The analysis establishes that video material is by far the most important form of visual aid used in all the four channels. This is quite natural

as television news depends to a great extent on motion pictures (see chapter 2). The high use of the mixed category i.e. the use of more than one form of visual material in the news stories is especially noticeable in Al-Jazeera, MBC and ANN stations. This percentage decreases in the case of Saudi television. This highlights the importance of using more than one form of visual material in news stories as a factor in attracting viewers who prefer this style of presentation (see Chapter Four). For example one respondent (first group) who holds a Ph.D. degree in Media Studies, has said that:

The viewer can notice the effort spent on this aspect in the Al-Jazeera channel and the MBC where there is the accompanying music, the illustrative pictures, maps showing the area where the events had taken place, and there is constant movement of the cameras in the studio. All this makes the news interesting material.

5.10 The Main Character in the News Story in the Four Stations

As mentioned in chapter three (section 3.7.2.9) the main character in the news story denotes the individual featured as the news item or someone who is usually the centre of attraction. The main character in the news story was classified into six types:

- (1) The head of state: This means the highest figure in the state which include the King, the Queen, Head of States, Prime Ministers and the like.
- (2) Government officials such as the ministers, under-secretaries, ambassadors and the like.
- (3) Prominent figures in the private sector, which include company owners, company directors, etc.

- (4) Commoners such as inventors, or individuals who have undergone major or complex surgical operations, artists, athletes, etc.
- (5) Corporate bodies which refer to government institutions or groups without mentioning specific individuals such as announcements by ministries or departments, activities of environmental groups, etc.
- (6) Others which include any news or main character which does not fit in any one of the above categories.

Table 17 shows the leading character in news stories in the four stations.

Table 17 The Main Character in the News Story in the Four Channels

	Saudi Television		Al-Jazeera		MBC		ANN	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
1- Head of State	47	28.6	22	19.3	19	15.6	18	18.6
2- Government Officials	59	36.0	17	14.9	12	9.8	21	21.6
3-A Private Sector Officials	-	-	4	3.5	15	12.3	14	14.4
4-Commoners	18	11.0	19	16.7	23	18.8	11	11.3
5-Corporate Bodies	18	11.0	14	12.3	25	20.5	17	17.5
6-Others	22	13.4	38	33.3	28	23.0	16	16.5
Total	164	100.0	114	100.0	122	100.0	97	99.9*

* Figures don't add up to 100 because of rounding.

From this table it can be seen that government officials occupy the top position in the case of Saudi Television appearing in 59 stories or 36.0% of the total number of stories. This was followed in second place by the head of state of the category which appeared in 47 stories or 28.6% of the total news stories shown on this station. In third place came the category of others which featured in 22 stories or 13.4% of the total number of stories while commoners and corporate bodies came joint fourth each appearing in 18 stories or 11.0%. There was no mention of company officials in the private sector. This shows

the emphasis on the news of government officials and heads of state by Saudi Television.

In Al-Jazeera channel the category of others occupied top position appearing in 38 stories or 33.3% of the total news stories during the week under study. In second place came the category of head of state which appeared in 22 stories or 19.3% then came the commoners category which appeared in 19 stories or 16.7% followed closely by the category of government official which appeared in 17 stories or 14.9%. In fourth place came corporate bodies, which appeared in 14 of the news stories or 12.3% and finally came the category of company officials in the private sector with four stories or 3.5%. This analysis shows clearly that news stories in Al-Jazeera mainly concentrate on the event rather than the character, something which it shares with the MBC station. Table 17 in the previous page shows that the category of "others" tops the ranking in case of MBC which appeared in 28 stories or 23.0% of the total news stories shown by the channel. In second place came the category of corporate bodies with 25 stories or 20.5% followed by the category of commoners i.e. news of scientists, inventors, artists, etc. Those appeared in 23 stories or 18.8%, the category of head of states with 19 stories or (15.6%) then the category of company officials in the private sector with 15 stories (12.3 %) and finally the category of government official which appeared in 12 stories or 9.8 % of the total stories.

Finally like Saudi Television, the ANN station concentrates in its news stories on the stories of government officials and head of states which appeared in 21 and 18 stories respectively of the channel's total news stories of 97, i.e. they accounted for 21.6% and 18.6% of the total respectively. The category of

corporate bodies came in third place with 17 stories or 17.5% followed by the category of "others" which appeared in 16 stories or 16.5%. Company officials in the private sector came in fourth place with 14 stories (or 14.4%) and finally the category of commoners with 11 stories or 11.3%.

To sum up Al-Jazeera and MBC concentrate on subjects of a varied nature paying little or no attention to the characters involved and although ANN tries to follow the same path it does so with less vigour and like Saudi Television it concentrates in most cases on the characters in the news.

From the previous analysis it is clear that, like MBC, the news stories in Al-Jazeera channel concentrate on the event rather than the personalities. This can be clearly seen from Table 17 which shows that the number of news stories while make no reference to government officials or head of states are by far the largest accounting for 38 stories in Al-Jazeera and 28 in MBC. On the other hand, we see that the number of news stories making reference to the head of state and government officials are the largest category in Saudi Television and the ANN. Thus, the news bulletins in Al-Jazeera and MBC channels puts less emphasis on personalities and concentrates more on events. For example on Al-Jazeera and MBC the news bulletin on Tuesday 12/2/2000 featured a public demonstration in the Philippines against the presence of US military bases in Manila, the calls for the clearance of mines in the Yemen, and Kurdish demonstrations in Turkey. These are all examples of events not associated with a particular personality or specific figure. Saudi Television and ANN, on the other hand, concentrate on the activities of government officials, head of states and officials in the various sectors.

5.11. Conclusion

As we mentioned in previous chapters [chapters two & four] there are many things that affect the audience in rating the news, for example construction and reception of the news and the relationship between text and audience. This chapter attempted to give an analytical account of the main news bulletins of the four television stations in terms of the location of news stories, their subjects, sources and time duration as well as the accompanying material and the main character in these stories. The analysis has shown that the news of western countries occupies the leading position in the four stations (156 stories out of the total number of news stories of 497 i.e. 31.4%). This is a logical because these countries command huge influence in international affairs and global decision making. In addition these countries are the main source of news for the four stations i.e. Reuters and APTN, both Western based companies.

The percentage of Arabic news was also significant accounting for 125 stories or 25.2% of the total number of news items. This is also a logical outcome since one of the main aims of these stations is to serve the cause of the Arab nation. However, the lack of religious, cultural and development programmes is a cause for concern and perhaps needs to be addressed by having a more diverse programme of exchange between these countries and by moving away from the current emphasis on political and economic topics. The analysis has also shown the weakness and scarcity of religious stories in the four stations (10.0%). This may be attributed to the poor means of communications and exchange between the Islamic countries. It would be of benefit to all concerned countries if this problem is tackled by increasing the

number of correspondents in the Islamic countries which would in turn solve the problem of news exchanges between these countries.

The political, military, economic and sports news were among the most significant topics broadcast by the four stations with some variations in the news in the four channels in general and the Al-Jazeera and MBC in particular. The only difference lies in the style of presentation for while Al-Jazeera and MBC gives a comprehensive analysis, we find that the Saudi Television show the event as it is without any additions or analysis which weaken the style of presentation and drives viewers away from watching Saudi Television (see chapter four).

The quoting of the source of the news stories whether visual or in text form is very low in all the four stations and this is unacceptable. The quoting of sources of news stories adds authenticity to the stories.

As far as television visual material, the analysis has revealed that there is heavy dependence on video in the four stations, although Al-Jazeera, MBC and ANN use more than one means to attract viewers by creating a varied style of presentation. Moreover, Al-Jazeera and MBC, and to a lesser extent ANN, pay more attention to the news story than to the character whereas the Saudi Television concentrates on the character in the story than on the story itself.

In summary the following points have emerged from watching the contents of the news bulletins of the four stations:

- 1- It is clear from the above there are different policies from station to station regarding the stories in the news bulletins. For example all the four stations covered the situation in Chechnia, Northern Ireland, and Indonesia and the Middle East conflict. At the same time news about Iranian election,

Algerian violence, the situation inside Iraq and the news about the opposition parties in some Arab countries covered by Al-Jazeera, MBC and ANN was ignored by Saudi Television.

2- According to our interview sample news items in the other channels are allocated a specific time which usually does not exceed one minute for both reading the text and showing any accompanying picture, or two minutes if the news item was in the form of a report and if the interview with the specialise/analyst, as the case may be, is included, a single news item may exceed three or four minutes. This is in complete contrast with what happens on Saudi Television where one news item may take a long time. Thus, we find some news items may take more than twenty or even thirty minutes sometimes. During this period, as one of the respondent from the Saudi audience sample has pointed out:

The viewer loses touch with the news and occupies himself with something else. The shorter the duration of the news item, the more it is watched especially since the speed by which the events in one bulletin are read has become an enjoyable experience in a world characterised by speed.

3- It is clear that technical professionalism in news making from the bottom up is quite evident in Al-Jazeera, MBC and ANN stations and less so in case of Saudi Television. The lack of such aspects is evident in case of the Saudi local news which is presented using text only in a fashion similar to the radio or the papers. Unlike the radio or papers, television presentation in most cases requires heavy use of pictures to augment the text.

4- Another point to note is that there has been a noticeable effort in the three stations to produce good quality reports on Arab and international events whereas Saudi Television is sometimes content with

showing texts and pictures from international news agencies. Colourful reports enriched with a variety of voices in addition to good presenters are ingredients for success and attraction of viewers.

5- There is a lot of variation in the news agendas carried by the three stations [Al-Jazeera, MBC and ANN] in a different style and duration. It can also be seen from Table 4 chapter 5 (section 5.2.) that there are differences in the duration of the news bulletins in the three stations during the week. These variations as explained by those in charge of the news service in these stations are due to two main factors: (1) the volume of events during the particular day and the need to cover them, and (2) the particular programming conditions in each station during the week. The duration of the news bulletin is determined in the morning meeting on the basis of these two factors. In the case of Saudi Television and because there is no specified time for the bulletin, variations in the duration can be seen from Table 4 and this an advantage the Saudi Television must use to produce more news stories, especially domestic (not protocol) news. In the researcher's view fixing of the duration of the news bulletin is an important aspect because this will benefit the selection of the most important items in the news.

6- In addition to the news presenters, Al-Jazeera, MBC and ANN station use separate teams of sports presenters to present the sports news and economic news whereas in the case of Saudi Television only two news presenters present all the news including the sports and economic news.

7- On Saudi Television a single presenter does all the commentary on news stories, Al-Jazeera, MBC and stations use a number of voices involved to comment on the news stories. This is a very important point since a change in the presenter assists in news presentation.

8- There is no cohesion between the various elements of single news subjects on Saudi Television. For example, if we take the news bulletin of 12 February 2000 we see that there were news stories concerning the Algerian president at the beginning of the bulletin, then came some other news followed by more news about the Algerian president. This phenomenon is not noticed in the other three stations and this shows the importance of the editing and preparation of the news bulletin and its arrangement.

The analysis in this chapter has answered the second question in our study, i.e. to establish the television news agenda for the four channels. We will analyse the Saudi Television news department and each of these channels from various angles in the next chapter. Then we will expose the interview results and the views of those behind the news in these channels including the manager of the news section, the chief editors, news editors, newsreaders, and the director of the news. In the next chapter a comparison will be made between work technicalities in each channel and the philosophy of each administration on how to run the business as well as their future plans. This is in an effort to try and uncover the root cause of the problem of why the news service of the Saudi Television is so poor compared with the other channels who have succeeded in a short period of time in providing a good quality service.

CHAPTER SIX

TV News Administration & Employees in the Four Channels

Introduction

In this chapter we will highlight the interview results of the employees (20 in total) in the four stations. This was drawn from the news T V. managers, chief editors, editors, news presenters, and news directors. These were included in the study because not only are they the backbone of the work in news bulletins but also in order to have an idea of the nature of their work and conditions in each of the four stations before, during and after the production process. It was hoped also by carrying out this exercise to find out any similarities or dissimilarities in work practice in the four stations. It was hoped this would complement the work on the administration side and on the editorial policies in each of the four stations as revealed by the interviews with the managers of news stations in the four channels.

Interview results of the viewers of the Saudi Television news and the discussions presented in chapter [four] have revealed a general dissatisfaction with the quality of the Saudi Television news service compared to news services provided by satellite news channels. They have also shown that the poor quality of the news service on Saudi Television is not, as many interviewees have pointed out, a new problem but one that has plagued this service for quite a long time. This, if anything, strongly indicates a complete

lack of interest on the part of the authorities in the views of the Saudi viewers. More knowledge of the viewers' likes and dislikes lessen the chance for the media message to fail. In the previous chapter we also focused on the contents of the four channels news bulletins to find out the quality of production for each channel. And after completing this we must find out how the news bulletins are made.

As mentioned in chapter three, the third part in this study deals with the news department itself in the four stations. This chapter concentrates on the analysis of the present style of administration, the style of television news and future administrative needs in addition to the philosophy behind the production of daily news and the quality of workers employed by the news section. All this will be achieved by analysing the interviews carried out by the researcher during the field work in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, the State of Qatar and London with: (1) television news managers of Saudi Television, Al- Jazeera, MBC, and ANN channels, (2) chief editors, (3) editors, (4) newsreaders, and (5) news directors.

From the above one can see that we have followed a logical sequence in trying to identify the weakness of the television news service of Saudi Television and comparing it with the strong performance by the other three channels under investigation. By doing this, the researcher hopes to find some practical solutions to this problem which the Saudi viewer has faced both before and after the introduction of satellite broadcasting (Chapter Seven).

By closely monitoring the work in these four channels the researcher has established that each channel has set of policies concerning the quality of the news they broadcast which are observed by all employees. For example Saudi

Television observes a certain policy as regards items of news concerning certain countries or individuals. This may look quite natural, as mentioned earlier (see Chapter Four), but it is surprising that the MBC, Al-Jazeera and ANN channels are also subject to strict controls as regard these issues. For example, despite the statements made to the researcher by Al-Jazeera channel's administrators in Qatar claiming that their organisation is an independent entity and is not controlled by the media policy of the State of Qatar, these statements are false. It is very important to observe that these kind of things are different from one country to another country especially between the First world and the Arab world for example the BBC is controlled by British broadcasting policy but still operates as an independent entity. It is extremely unlikely that Al-Jazeera will deal with or broadcast any negative news about the Qatar government. Similarly, it is highly unlikely that the MBC, or ANN would broadcast any negative news against some Arabic countries or the Syrian Government.

The rest of the chapter will deal with each of these channels separately to give credence to this argument. In this section we will deal with the television news department as an administration responsible for delivering the news on Channel One of the Saudi Television which is the focus of the present study.

6.1. The Concept of Administration

The Latin origin of the word administration can be divided into two words: *Ad*, which means "to", and *ministrare* which means "serve", hence the word administration means to serve. Thus any one who works in administration tries his/her best to serve others or to provide a service. This constitutes the literal meaning of the word administration. The general meaning of the word however involves a certain element of co-operation and co-ordination between various human activities in order to achieve a specific objective. It is clear from this definition that the human factor is central to the administrative process in achieving co-operation between individuals collating their different activities. This is what gives administration its special character as a social and human activity on the one hand and as an economic and political process on the other. Thus, a good administration, according to this definition, is the one that makes the most efficient use of the available resources by creating the best environment in which the human factor can perform with the least sacrifices on its part (Darwish & Takla 1977, p.149). There are a number of factors which influence the effectiveness of an administration in an organisation. These factors get stronger and more influential if the administrative apparatus is similar in nature to that of the radio and television stations where the work is characterised by sensitivity and involves direct contact with the general public and other social groups and requires, in general, spontaneity of action and minimum or no bureaucracy. An organisation should lead to effective service not only on the part of the employees, but also from the perspective of the many beneficiaries of the service provided by the media apparatus. The organisation may be sound in the eyes of the administrators and the employees

but the wider public who are the beneficiaries of the service provided by the organisation may have a different perspective if the quality of media service is below their expectations. This is exactly what a study of the Saudi public demonstrates is the case as regards the news service of Saudi Television (see Chapter Four).

6.2. The News Service in Saudi Television

Since its establishment Saudi Television has been preoccupied with the preparation and delivery of daily news bulletins. Boyd (1972, pp.228-242) has mentioned that pre-recorded news bulletins were among the first programmes by the Saudi Television when it started its broadcast in 1965. This was not totally unexpected since news is regarded as one of the main duties performed by the media institutions. In addition, Saudi Television started operation as a public entity and was used to provide pictorial news about the country, the Arab world and other parts of the world to the Saudi viewer. Shobili (1971, pp.120-121) has pointed out that Saudi Television used to show a daily news bulletin at 10:00 PM and a news summary just before the close of service. This was before the broadcast became centralised from the Riyadh centre. The main television stations at that time, Al-Riyadh, Jeddah, and Dammam, worked jointly to receive the news agencies, Visnews and UPITN.

Saudi Television currently shows three news bulletins during its daily transmission service: the first at 3:00 PM local time, 12:00 Noon GMT, a main bulletin at 9:30 PM local time, 6:30 PM GMT, and the third and last bulletin at 12:30 PM local time, 9:30 PM GMT, 90% of which is a repeat of the earlier main news bulletins. This is in addition to news headlines at 11:00 AM, 12:30

PM and just before the closing down of service which begins at 10 AM and has no set closing time (Al-Hazza interview). At the end of 2001, Saudi Television broadcast a fourth news bulletin with no specific time table which is released after the magrib prayer from the holy city Mecca. In 1988 the Saudi Television began a new news programme by the name of 'Picture Newspaper' which later came to be known as the 'Regional News' and which deals mainly with domestic news and activities. This is in addition to another news programme called 'World Events in a Week' which gives a summary of news events in the week without any analysis or additions to what has already been given on news bulletins.

From the researcher's close monitoring and observation of news editing of Saudi Television and from watching the news itself, it is apparent that Saudi Television has followed a fixed sequence depending up on the location of the news events rather than the importance of the news item itself. This sequence begins with the showing of domestic news, followed by news concerning the Arab world, then the international news, the economic news, the sports news and finally the weather forecast. This sequence differs from the one which depends on the importance of the event irrespective of where the event takes place.

The news administration consists of the following sections:

1- The Arabic Section

This section is responsible for editing and preparing the four news bulletins on Channel One together with the news summaries. It consists of a montage section, the editorial section of the domestic news and the editorial section of international news. The editorial section of the domestic news deals

with both the domestic and international news of Saudi Arabia as well as the activities of Saudi's officials and their daily programmes. The editorial section on international news, on the other hand, is responsible for the editing of international news whether from the Arab world or the rest of the world.

2- The Foreign News Section

This section is responsible for the preparation of the news in English and French for broadcasting on Channel Two. This is in addition to news summaries broadcast and the English version of the 'Events of the World in a Week' programme.

3- The Montage Section

This is the section responsible for the montage [a picture or a piece of writing or music made from separate parts combined together] of the news and for the reception of domestic and international news from their original sources both inside and outside the country, which mean it receives the pictures from outside and records them on video cassettes and then edits them.

There are other sections attached to the news such as the tape library, the slides and illustrative materials sections and the news programmes section. During his presence in the news administration of Saudi Television the researcher noticed that the slide section lacks a lot of the basic equipment in this field and uses very primitive methods with no specialist or designated staff. The same applies to the news program section which exists in name only and has no staff. The total work force of the news administration in Saudi Television consists of seventy employees of whom thirty five employees are permanent staff and the rest are co-operators each receiving a fixed monthly remuneration of 3,500 Saudi Reyals (about 500 sterling pounds) (Al-Hazza Interview).

Finally there is the administrative section of television news which consists of two employees directly responsible to the manager of the news section. The work of this section is confined to despatching and receiving mail on such matters as filming requests and the execution of the directives of the Under Secretary or the Information Minister.

6.2.1. Editorial Policy of Saudi Television News

There are no written guidelines for news preparation or for checking the reliability of the news items. There are however, unwritten limits and restrictions which employees working in the news field of Saudi Television cannot ignore. These limits could be political, religious or social depending on the news item. The editorial policy depends on a self-observed code of conduct which observes state security by not broadcasting any material blasphemous of Islam or any other religion or any insult to any Arab or friendly nation. This is in addition to ensuring that news material shown on Saudi Television is honest and accurate (Al-Hazza interview).

The news programme give greater emphasis to domestic (protocol) government news, with the news of the King coming at the top of the news bulletins, followed by those of the heir to the throne, then the official announcements and the Royal decrees. Then the news of the emirs and ministers in strict hierarchical order, then the news of the Arab world followed by international news and so on. No concession is given to any dissenting voice on government policy and any issue on which the government has no specific stand on has to be passed first by the Under Secretary or the Minister of Information himself.

6.2.2. News Sources

(1) Local News Agency

The domestic news on Saudi Television is produced by relying heavily on written texts supplied by the Saudi News Agency and filmed material supplied by all television centres in the Kingdom. These two components are edited for television broadcast to match the video picture with text.

2- International News Agencies

Saudi Television has a working relationship with a number of well-known news agencies in the world. These agencies supply Saudi Television with daily news reports from around the world, 24 hours a day seven days a week. These agencies include Reuters and APTN and its former constituents APTV and WTN. In addition Saudi Television receives three daily news parcels from the Arab States Broadcasting Union (ASBU) plus Eurovision parcels. These agencies provide hourly cover of world news from around the globe and transmit both Arabic and English news, which is dealt with Saudi Television on the basis of their importance provided that it does not contradict any media policy in the Kingdom. Texts [scripts] are received from many agencies such as the French News Agency and the Arab and Gulf News Agencies.

6.2.3. Employees' Selection Procedures

An academic qualification is a basic requirement in news work and as far as Saudi Television news is concerned about 90% of the employees are graduates of media departments of one of the Saudi universities. The reason for the academic requirement is of their better knowledge compared to others due

to a lack of these qualifications. These employees all receive two-months training in news work when they first join the news section to gain necessary experience. There is a minor attempt to provide up to date training for these employees in the latest advances in editing and producing news. They receive only 3-4 weeks training at the Arab Training Centre in Syria which is too short a period for these employees to learn the necessary skills especially given the lack of resources available at the centre. Moreover, as almost 90% of these employees speak little or no English they have no chance of receiving training abroad in Europe or the United States. (Al-Hazza interview)

6.2.4 The Daily Routine of News Production

The work on news begins daily at 8:00 AM in the morning with the arrival of the news editors. One news editor is responsible for the section dealing with domestic news and the other is responsible for the work on international Arabic and foreign news. During the morning session news summaries at 11:00 AM and 1:30 PM are prepared in addition to the first main news at 3:00 PM. The researcher has observed during his presence in the editorial hall that the work on news is carried out in a routine way. The editor of the domestic news section wait the news of the day that comes from the Saudi News Agencies by fax or telex. The editor of the international news section matches the script of the news received from the news agencies with the pictures [about the events of the news stories] without adding any extra touches to make them more exciting or easy to follow on screen. Another important aspect, noticed by the researcher, was the absence of a morning briefing, a routine practice in almost all television stations around the world

including MBC, Al-Jazeera, and ANN. These briefings, which are usually attended by news directors, chief editors, and editors, discuss the theme of the news of the particular day and listen to any new suggestions on how to cover the news and the arrangement of news items in the bulletin in the order of their importance.

The evening news work follows the same routine as the morning session. In the researcher's view the role of the employees in the news section is minor, which merely involves matching script with pictures without any creative work. The news manager indicates that expectation for this lies in the media policy. However, having consulted the policy statement on media, the researcher's view is that the problem lies in the editorial policy and its administration and not in the media policy as there is nothing in the media policy preventing the editors from creativity or doing an excellent job. It is apparent when we completed a content analysis of the news items on the four channels under consideration [see chapter five] The news featured on these four channels is more or less the same and the difference lies in the editing style and innovation in analysis, and linking and interpreting of the events, carried out by the other channels something which Saudi Television lacks

6.2.5. Future Plans

There are human, technical and material obstacles to implementing future plans envisaged by the television news administration. More employees are needed and more support from the official governments to do the job in a proper way. In the short term however there are plans to increase the number of

correspondents on foreign soil to ensure wider coverage. There are also some plans to link correspondents live with the studio from the news sites and to subscribe to additional news agencies. (Al-Hazza interview).

In the final chapter seven (section 7.3) the researcher will highlight some comments about the all four channels after his visit and interviews the news makers.

The above discussion has covered a number of issues concerning news management and administration on Saudi Television and brings us on to a discussion of the situation in the other three channels.

6.3. Al-Jazeera Channel

Planning is essential for everything in life in order to achieve the goals and objectives we set for ourselves. It is also the guiding principle that defines the work plan in various activities and governs its progress. Without planning things are left to chance and work becomes unproductive by using planning it is possible to achieve work objectives which employees can understand and value. This increases the workers' acceptance of the task in hand and increases their productivity. According to Vayul planning in fact means the forecast of what the future is going to be like and being prepared for that future (Darwish & Takla 1977, pp.271-277).

The above brief introduction about planning is necessary before dealing with Al-Jazeera Channel in Qatar which despite achieving huge successes at present, is also planning, throughout, for the future. Al-Jazeera Channel came into existence by a decree from the Emir on 8th of February 1996

as an independent Qatari public institution with headquarters in Doha, the capital city of the State of Qatar.

The birth of this station came after Sheikh Hamad Bin Khalifa Al-Thani overthrew his father Sheikh Khalifa Al-Thani in a bloodless coup. One of the new ruler's first actions, to portray himself as the moderniser of Qatar, was to abolish the Ministry of Information, which was responsible for media censorship and allow women to participate in politics (Al-Tamimi interview).

Al-Jazeera started its service as the first independent Arabic news channel broadcasting initially for six hours a day, which increased to nine hours and then twelve hours by 1997 and finally by the beginning of February 1999, was extended to a 24 hours operation. The channel broadcasts its service on digital satellite to all the Middle East, North Africa, Europe and North and South America. It started with a budget of \$140 million for five years with the intention that it becomes self-sufficient by the end of the year 2001 from the sale of its programmes and advertising time. The station however struggled to attract advertisers owing to the political nature of its programmes which resulted in other Arab states withdrawing their ambassadors from Qatar in protest at the programmes with initial interviews with forces opposed to these countries. These countries included Egypt, Libya, Kuwait and Jordan with the latter closing down the station's office in Jordan for a considerable time (Al-Tamimi interview)

The Arab States Broadcasting Union in Tunisia also suspended the channel's membership on the pretence that the officials of the station did not observe the media constitution which demands non-interference by the media

in the internal affairs of any Arab member state and request to refrain from insulting such states in any shape or form.

Furthermore, the station became a target for criticism by some media professionals with some individuals accusing it of stirring up problems among Arab countries while others went so far as to accuse it of being sympathetic to Israel or funded by Israel. All these criticisms were aired openly during live broadcasts by the station with callers calling in and throwing accusations of all sorts at the station (some of these accusations were made by some of the guests of 'The Opposite Direction' programme which was broadcast live 7:30 PM on Tuesday 24 May, 2000).

People in charge of the station argue that the station represents a unique media project in the Arab media which for a long time has been crippled by censorship and rigid state policies. The Arab viewer has therefore for a long time been denied access to the facts and from what goes around him in the Arab world and the world at large. The past four or five years Al-Jazeera periodically have come under pressure from different Arab countries at different times. During the Afghanistan war (October 2001) Al-Jazeera came under pressure from Washington, which seriously and openly criticized Al-Jazeera. In his words the chairman of the board of Al-Jazeera Hamad bin Thamer try to explain that:

We've heard the remarks from American Secretary of State Colin Powell and also, when I was in the United States recently, from other officials and from Congress. We've explained the line we follow at Al-Jazeera which is a degree of freedom. Al-Jazeera was accused in the beginning of being a channel financed by Iraq or by Saddam Hussein when we covered events in Iraq. When we reported on the Israeli elections and when we ran interviews with Ehud Barak and Shimon Peres, Al-Jazeera was immediately accused of being financed by the Mossad. Also when we reported on events or

issues within the United States from our office in Washington we were accused of being financed by the CIA. We're used to these remarks or accusations at Al-Jazeera. We're now hearing remarks from the American administration on our coverage of recent events, and I think we're evenhanded in our reporting on these events. Our basic views are of exclusive and quality news reporting.

I think Al-Jazeera will continue in this same manner, presenting various opinions, which it has followed since its beginning, especially since in a few weeks we will mark our fifth anniversary, and this is an occasion when Al-Jazeera can celebrate the preserving of our news strategy which is 'Al-Ra'i wa al-Ra'i Akher' - "one opinion and another" - meaning to get both sides of a story. (*Transnational Broadcasting Studies* 2001, pp.1-2).

From another side Al-Jazeera manager Mohammed Al-Ali-Madi made his statement about Washington criticism of Al-Jazeera:

This time it's an official announcement through the White House that Al-Jazeera should be toned down. It's strange that this is coming from America, which supports freedom of speech and freedom of media. If we weren't in Afghanistan, how would our news be balanced - we would cover only the US and Allied position, and cover Pakistan. But we also cover the other sides, that of Afghanistan and Al-Qaeda. If we weren't in Afghanistan, we wouldn't have that.

I think the question right now is why the Americans are criticizing Al-Jazeera. Right now the media in America knows that in this event they aren't there, and I think it come to from jealous. They know there's another ear, the war of information. The information we obtain and put on air is the news. If the Bin Laden tapes went to another network, they'd put them on air as soon as they received them.

We will not change our policy, but will continue the same way of working as a professional channel. When we get material, we view it and decide if it's suitable to air it. We've had a lot of statements come to Al-Jazeera that we think are not newsworthy, and we don't put them on the air. We try to present accurate and correct information, and find the right people to talk to us on air. We'll continue the same way. And in the United States, they may take the tape, view it, and put in on air anyway. (Schleifer & Sullivan 2001, Internet, p.2)

Al-Jazeera traces events and gathers its news and broadcast it live from locations using its network of correspondents, offices abroad and interview by

telephone from around the world. It relies on its own resources without depending on traditional news sources such as international news agencies.

Al-Jazeera channel programmes, which are financed by advertising, deal with the main global issues and those of interest to the Arab viewer and deliver them uncensored, with full participation by the viewers by fax or telephone, especially on sensitive issues which no other Arab channel has dared to tackle or discuss. These programmes also give fair representation to all view points and offer complete freedom according to the principle 'Opinion and the Other Opinion' - which mean you tell your views and liase with the others for their views (Al-Tammimi interview).

Al-Jazeera Channel has 350 employees of whom 100 are editors and technicians and 30 correspondents. The channel has offices in Washington, London, Baghdad, Cairo, Tehran, Amman, and Moscow. It consists of 10 sections the most important of which is the news section which will be discussed in greater detail later in this chapter. Other sections include: programme and foreign relations section, production, marketing, programmes, news exchanges, the library, the computer, engineering, and the administrative and Finance sections.

Many of Al-Jazeera broadcasts feature political debates, commentary, and use a free and daring style, something that has never been available to the Arab viewer before as we mentioned in chapter one (section 1.5). The viewer is furthermore now able to participate through live links to these programmes. The format of these programmes resembles in some respects the broadcasting style of BBC which relies on analysis, facts and discussion of different points of view even those which contradict company policy. This is particularly the

case since most of the hosts of these programmes are former BBC journalists.

The most important of these programmes are:

1- More than One Opinion

A live roundtable discussion with live satellite links with guest speakers, exploring all points of view on specific political, economic, scientific and literary issues.

2- The Opposite Direction

This is another roundtable discussion programme, which attempts to create an environment in which opposing points of view can be debated live without censorship. The programme tries to create a new culture of communication by encouraging dialogue and tolerance of different points of opinion. It calls on viewers to settle their political, social disputes etc. through constructive dialogue. Furthermore, the programme presenter makes it a point that his guests possess truly opposing opinions on the given subject discussed on the live two-hour weekly show. It is this character of the programme that caused the Qatari government a lot of embarrassment with friendly Arab countries and caused dismay among Arab media personalities

3- Without Frontiers

Fashioned on similar lines to *'More Than One Opinion'* and *'The Opposite Direction'*, this is again another controversial programme that discusses freely political, economic, Islamic, legal, and literary issues live without censorship or restrictions. This is in addition to a variety of programmes on culture, documentaries and women's' issues.

The preceding information summarises in some detail some of the administrative aspects of Al-Jazeera Channel, its establishment and the quality

of its programmes. The following section discusses the administration of the news section in Al-Jazeera channel, its various departments, editorial policy, sources of news and the daily work routine in the section. This discussion is based on information collected by the researcher during fieldwork and his personal observations of the work in the editorial room as well as the information provided by the manager of news during the researcher's interview with him on 9th February 2000.

6.3.1. Al-Jazeera News

Since Al-Jazeera is a news channel broadcasting news, documentaries and roundtable discussions, the news section is one of the most important sections in the channel's set up. The editorial room of the channel prepares 24 main news bulletins, news summaries and a number of other news programmes such as '*Al-Jazeera This Morning*', '*Al-Jazeera Mid-day*' and '*Today's Harvest*'. The duration of each of these programmes is 65 minutes.

The labour force of the news section is made up of 70 employees and includes editors, correspondent's editors, hosts, chief editors, news producers, assistant producers, directors, newscasters, and technicians. The news section also has a tape library, electronic montage, a graphics section and a data bank to feed the news programmes and other programmes with the required information. (Njam interview)

6.3.2 The Editorial Policy of Al-Jazeera

Since news compilation is a group activity, the response to a new item of news or event would be firstly, to call a meeting at which the manager of the

news, the chief editor in charge and the editors are present to discuss the item from all its angles, and decide how to cover it. Thus, the decision is taken from within the editorial room without waiting for permission from a superior. This is the correct procedure in news work; which requires quick decision and speed of action.

There is absolute freedom in dealing with all items of news which mean they can deal with all news. There are consultations on dubious items from untrustworthy sources especially if the item is reported by one source that means a policy checking the news is accurate. In this case the opinion of the Director General of the Channel is sought to authorise transmission of the item in question. If an item of news from the Arab world is as important as an international one, priority is given to the item of news from the Arab world based on news values. For example, if both governments in France and Egypt resign on the same day, priority is given to the resignation of the Egyptian government in the news bulletin and so on. There are further strict conditions to ensure the accuracy of news items before broadcasting them on the air. It is thus a requirement that every news item should come from at least two or more sources, before being considered for broadcasting. Alternatively the accuracy of a news item is verified through someone with direct knowledge of it by editorial team. Notwithstanding these checks a news item from a single source may exceptionally be transmitted in certain circumstances, in order to avoid problems or if the item cannot be ignored (Njam interview).

The duration of news items in news bulletins follows a set procedure. For example, the duration of a news text alone is 30 seconds, a news item containing a slide 25 seconds and news item containing text and video picture

not more than 40 seconds and reports with pictures between 2-4 minutes depending on the subject and the guest and there is no fixed duration in case of important news.

In the words of manager of the news the margin of freedom enjoyed by any media institution is a measure of the success or failure of that institution. This is in addition to the high skills of its employees and the use of modern technological means. All these aspects make work enjoyable and successful.

6.3.3. News Sources

Al-Jazeera Channel depends on a network of correspondents in more than 26 countries in the world in addition to international news agencies such as Reuters, APTN and the French, Qatar, and Middle East News Agencies and ArabSat services. It also depends on announcements, press reports, and comments of interest groups, officials, correspondents, journalists and specialist observers. In most cases the news section works hard to ensure the accuracy of the news items and expands its details of the item through telephone calls or through satellite links with the parties involved to explore the different angles. There are some news items which come to the station by fax from governments, humanitarian organisations, or the United Nations informing officials in the administration of the news of events that either have taken place or will take place in the future.

6.3.4 Employees' Selection Procedures

One of the basic requirements for employment in the news section of Al-Jazeera Channel is that applicants should have a good command of the

English language and the ability to translate from English to Arabic without any difficulty. English being an international language, thus any information and can easily be available and the communication around the world will become simple. In addition to experience in the news field, high editing skills, initiative, creativity and good public relations skills are required. The latter is necessary because employees are expected, through their contacts with the outside world, to expand news items or events from their contacts with people linked to the news items. All individuals who wish to work in this field must have these skills and must be willing to co-operate with other employees in the line of their work. The researcher has observed during his short visit to the editorial room the high level of knowledge of their duties common to all employees of this section. All members follow a strict regime with all individuals working together as a team.

6.3.5. The Daily Routine of News Production

The daily agenda is drawn with future plans in mind. There is a planning unit attached to editing whose work begins by setting a three months agenda of expected events all over the world such as the American elections. Then the correspondents and other news sources are asked to monitor these events over a month or two to see how they develop. On the other hand, there are the current events which are more frequent occurring on an almost daily basis, which are covered by correspondents immediately through their news sources. In this way, items to be discussed in the morning meeting will be known in advance by the person in charge of the planning unit who keeps abreast of events as they unfold. The news producer, on the other hand, has full

information of what is going to happen in the next 12 hours and what has actually happened in the past 12 hours. This information forms the basis of the discussion of the day ahead and how to keep the Manager of the news, the chief editor in charge of the news bulletin and the editors informed of events of the day.

The researcher has noticed during his visit to the editorial room that every news bulletin producer is in charge of production for six hours daily while the chief editor on the day is responsible for all news broadcasts during the day. The researcher also noticed that news items are selected and put in the news list in order of their importance irrespective of who is behind them and they assess the importance of a news item after discussion together as a teamwork in the morning meeting. There is also a daily evaluation of the work which is carried out in the morning meetings at the start of the day to put down the work agenda and another meeting in the afternoon for the editorial staff to set the agenda for the second half of the day. This is in addition to an evaluation meeting to discuss what has been broadcast during the first half of the day at 5:00 PM and in the following morning the news work for the night is discussed and so on. These meetings enable the news team to look at different ways of presenting each news item in the bulletin and to look at each item from a different angle in later bulletins. In this way the viewer will not see the same news items repeated but will see a new style of presentation and a fresh look at the same material.

6.3.6. Future Plans

The research department is responsible for studying viewers' opinions and tastes and has designed questionnaires in collaboration with officials from the news section for this purpose. The completed questionnaires are used as a basis for development and improvement in the quality of service provided by the channel (Njam interview). Some of the most important future plans which include: (i) improving the efficiency of the employees, (ii) expanding the area of coverage to reach new areas, (iii) improving the general format of news bulletins, developing of technological infrastructure, and increasing the number of news programmes under the control of the news directorate by producing a number of specialist current affairs programmes such as:

- (1) The Weekly File.
- (2) Hot Point.
- (3) Top Secret.
- (4) Al-Jazeera Reporters.
- (5) Press Mirror.
- (6) Between the Lines.

6.4. MBC Channel

Like Al-Jazeera channel, MBC adopts planning to achieve its present and future goals. The idea of the channel was conceived in the early 1980s. It came into being through a Saudi investor. The planning phase of the channel and initial studies took some six years, and broadcasting and technical trials took a further three years. The station opened officially on 18 September 1991

from its headquarters in London with an initial staff of 250 or so. The staff was experienced in television work. Roughly one third of the staff are Arabs. The channel has offices in 18 cities in the world. MBC is a private channel operating under license from the British Independent Television Commission (ITC) and is financed by income from advertisements. The main aim of the channel is twofold. Firstly to provide a good Arabic television service for all Arabs covering all news and events in the Arab world. For example, MBC wants to make it possible for a viewer in Jordan to know what is happening in Mauritania and so on. Secondly to provide Arab viewers living abroad, in Britain and France for example, with coverage of events in their native countries (Chanim interview).

The Executive Director of the channel claims that MBC adopts a daring style and provides diverse coverage of Arab and international events from an Arab point of view.

The news service represents the main element of MBC broadcasting followed by entertainment programmes, sports, women's and children's programmes. The channel has a system for monitoring the daily performance of its programmes excluding the news programmes. Performance is evaluated on a monthly basis by researchers especially in relation to the nature, type and wishes of viewers.

London was chosen as the headquarters of the station for number of reasons the most important of which is the lack of constraints and freedom of expression. This is in addition to the fact that London has a strong reputation as a media centre.

The researcher has however noticed that despite the fact that the channel has no links to media policy operated by any country, there exists a specific policy designed by the channel's staff to govern work procedures and how to co-operate with individuals or countries especially in the news field.

6.4.1. MBC News Administration

The news administration is regarded one of the most important sections in the station and it employs about ninety staff consisting of chief reporters, news producers, directors, broadcasters, editors and technicians. All news staff, of whom 90 per cent have university degrees and 10 per cent of them are Ph.Ds., are highly experienced in journalistic work. The channel's administration consists of a number of sections including editing, montage, video and tape library, an information centre (which is used in programming), production, graphics and foreign planning which is attached to the news administration and its role is to co-ordinate the work of correspondents and coverage by news the director and the chief editor. [Chanim interview)

6.4.2. The Editorial Policy of MBC

Work in MBC is carried out in accordance with a set plan, observed by all employees. News items likely to be of interest to the viewer are carefully considered by the station after verifying their source. The station has a limited freedom to choose from a wide variety of news and this is usually done in the morning meeting which is attended by the director of news, the chief editor in charge of bulletins, the producer and the editors. This meeting sets the work agenda taking into consideration the religious, cultural and political interests of

the viewers (Chanim interview). Nevertheless, the researcher has noticed during his visit to the station, that when selecting news for inclusion in the bulletin, a compromise is always made between viewers' interests and the underlying policy governing the work of the station for example if there is a event in some Arabic countries they will show this story to the station viewers, but the way in which this event is covered will underly the governing policy of the station. Hence, despite the margin of freedom enjoyed by the news administration, the final decision on what should and should not be transmitted comes, in some cases, from officials at the very top of the station's administration.

6.4.3. News Sources

The station depends on Reuters, the German News Agency, the Associated Press and UPI News Agency as sources for news texts and on Reuters Pictures for television pictures. It also relies on its correspondents in more than 18 cities (the major capital cities in the world) whose work is coordinated through the external planning administration.

6.4.4. Employees' Selection Procedures

Before joining MBC employees are subjected to stringent selection procedures. It is a pre-condition of employment with the station that every candidate should have a good command of the English language and experience in television work. This is because work in television is different from work on a newspaper or on radio because production for television is highly complex and requires special skills. (Chanim interview)

6.4.5. The Daily Routine of News Production

The method used to set the work agenda in MBC differs from that in Al-Jazeera. The agenda in MBC is set daily during the morning meeting which is attended by the news manager, the chief editor in charge, the news producer and the editors. The meeting discusses how to set the agenda on the basis of the news available from the sources mentioned above. The emphasis during these meetings which the researcher has attended is on those news items which likely to interest viewers. Viewers' wishes and tastes form the basis of the agenda provided that the news item is suitable for transmission as a television news item. Some news items are added to the list in the bulletin very hurriedly in the orders of may be accompanied the owner of the station who is also director

There is no daily evaluation of the day's work and no specific method is followed for this purpose. At present the officials of the station watch the news carefully and immediately convey their remarks to the person in charge of the bulletin. During its 24 hours of broadcasting (which started on May 2000) the station transmits three main bulletins, the duration of each one of them is half an hour and includes political, economic and sports news as well as various other news items. This is in addition to a number of news briefs the duration of each one of them is between 3-5 minutes.

6.4.6. Future Plans

One of the most important priorities in this regard was the changing of the style of news presentation, which was the result of the administrative shake up in news administration. In the past the style of news broadcasting was just present many stories with reports. For example they presented ten stories from

different countries around the world without providing more detail or analysis inside the studio. This change involved a shift from the American leadership style of the news administration to a British leadership style under the command of Mr Steve Clark who introduced major qualitative changes in the way the news was presented as well as altering the content. Three main bulletins are produced each having its own special staff and male and female presenters. The 6 PM news has been redesigned and transformed into a discussion programme. This is in addition to changes to the news studio by adding guests' reception to fit the new image. As a result of the introduction of this new style by the new British administration MBC news have become very similar to the news on British Television, especially Channel Four news which concentrates on two or three items in the news bulletin. These items are then extensively covered using recorded reports and live reports from correspondents from the scene of events in addition to the views of analysts and commentators inside the studio.

This concludes this comprehensive look at MBC which was the first Arab channel to open an office in Israel to bring live coverage of events there to replace previous pictured news from international sources. The following section discusses the last channel under study: the ANN channel.

6.5 ANN Channel

The Arab News Network (ANN) started broadcasting from its studios in London on 18 May 1997 as a private company licensed by the ITC. It is operated by Dr. Sawmar Al-Assad, the nephew of the late Syrian President Hafez Al-Assad and was financed by him and a group of Arab investors in the beginning. This station does not have any links with any organisation or government and its main goal is to broadcast news and provide analysis of contemporary issues in an objective and independent way. The total initial cost of establishing the station was 20 million dollars which was intended to cover only five years operating cost with the intention that the station would thereafter become self-sufficient, relying on consumer revenue to finance its news and programme activity. Beside its 24 hours news service the station broadcasts a number of cultural and documentary programmes. (Mazraani interview)

The total labour force of the station is 90 staff distributed among the various technical, administrative, news, public relations, and marketing sections and all of them are of Arab origin living in Britain and holding university degrees. The station has more than 25 correspondents in most parts of the world.

London was chosen as the headquarters of the station to avoid governmental control and censorship in the Arab countries and because of the advanced media facilities available in the UK. The main aim of establishing the station, as cited by its officials, is to serve Arab individuals inside and outside the Arab world and to make them aware of what is taking place around the world in terms of events and issues in general and Arab issues in particular.

The station has no written policy statement to guide its employees in the various departments but the directives of the board of directors take precedence and discreetly direct the station in the desired direction. During his visit to the station and from his personal observations of daily work in the station, the researcher has noticed that the policy of keeping away from trouble by not causing anger to anyone and maintaining a good relationship with all groups and individuals is the basic policy line that is the guiding work ethic in the station (for example the station ignores news stories such as human rights which have a negative view from some Arab countries e.g. Syria and Lebanon). The station pays attention to the wishes of its viewers by hiring specialised consumer research companies to conduct regular viewers' surveys on its behalf in addition to the work of its own public relations and marketing sections. The station also conducts regular evaluation of its work especially in the programme field.

6.5.1. The News Department

The news department forms the core of ANN broadcasting and employs 32 workers consisting of chief editors, producers, the news presenters, editors and technicians all of whom are highly qualified and have vast experience in the field of television. The department consists of a number of sections such as the editorial section, montage, the library, the information centre, the production section, graphics and illustrations. There is also a special section for co-ordinating the work of correspondents and for making satellite bookings. (Mazraani interview)

6.5.2. The Editorial Policy of ANN

As we mentioned above there is no written policy to guide the work of the employees and for this reason we find that the editorial policy gives priority to Arab issues and news from authentic sources as identified in the morning meeting of employees of the news section, including the manager of the news, the chief editor in charge, and the editors, which puts the agenda in its final form.

The researcher has noticed after attending the morning meeting that the importance and priority attached to individual news items in the bulletin reflects the chief editor's personal view after the consent of the news manager but if a dispute arises, permission must be sought from the director of the station as to whether to broadcast the item or not. Moreover, the station adopts a non-confrontational policy in its news. It tries to broadcast those news items, which provoke no hostility to it, and hence the freedom given to its employees to choose news items seems rather limited.

6.5.3. News Sources

In addition to the news and reports from the station's own correspondents, the station depends for almost 85 per cent of its news on international picture news agencies which include Reuters and the Associated Press.

6.5.4. Employees' Selection Procedures

In addition to experience in television work, employees of ANN must have good knowledge of the English language and must be neutral in putting

across the issues for discussion and in editing the news. The station's undeclared policy forces every employee to follow the directives of the superiors in the station even if that contradicts their personal views on how to deal with specific issues or events.

6.5.5. The Daily Routine in News Production

Unlike Al-Jazeera which uses a three months forecast to set the daily work agenda, ANN, like MBC, sets its work agenda during the same day in the presence of the news manager, the chief editor in charge, and the rest of the news team including the editors, the producer and the news presenters. The station broadcasts five bulletins per day the duration of each one of them is half an hour and each includes political news, other news items and economic and sports news. This is in addition to a news summary every hour 24 hours a day. Each work shift consists of five editors and the chief editor in charge of the news during that shift.

As mentioned above the importance and priority given to each item in the news depends on the judgement and evaluation of the chief editor after obtaining the consent of the manager of the news and if there is a disagreement, the final say lies in the hands of the director of the station. The editorial team tries its best not to anger any Arab state by ignoring any item in the news that might raise criticism or anger against the station.

While a rudimentary system for evaluating the programmes exists, the author did not notice any evaluation of the first news bulletin which mean the second bulletin is the exact repeat of the first news bulletin. As a consequence there is some repetition in the various bulletins. This is similar to the situation

in Saudi Television but differs greatly from the situation in Al-Jazeera and MBC which both change their style of presentation on a regular basis. For example the same story on Al-Jazeera and MBC is presented in the first early evening bulletin and in the second bulletin in a different way by adding some pictures or text while in Saudi TV and ANN no change occurs. This is despite the fact that MBC lacks any set procedure for evaluating its daily work.

In addition to the main news bulletins and news summaries, there is also a daily live bulletin in the form of a fifty-minute round table programme to discuss the main news headlines with a guest taking part in the analysis and giving his/her personal views. This is in addition to reports by correspondents from around the world.

6.5.6. Future Plans

The basic goal ANN officials try to achieve is to make their channel lead all other satellite channels by providing excellent news and programmes service. To achieve this goal the channel plans to improve both the content and style of presentation. This in addition to trying to keep pace with technological development in the field in terms of new equipment and so on. Financially, the station aims to become self sufficient by attracting more advertisement and selling its own produced programmes. There are also plans to produce more live discussion programmes in all topics of interest to its viewers. (Mazraani interview)

The above discussion provides a comprehensive coverage of the four channels under study in addition to information on their editorial policies, and the daily work routines of their news sections. This discussion is based on the

information gathered by the researcher during his field visits to Saudi Arabia, Qatar, and London during the period 15 January - 15 March 2000.

6.6. Face to Face Personal Interviews with Employees in the Four Channels

In this section the results of interviews with employees of the news sections in the four channels, including the chief editors, the editors, news presenters, and the directors, are discussed. This group, which consists of sixteen employees, was chosen because its members form the hub of the news production process in all the four stations and the aim of conducting these interviews with them was to shed some light on the environment in which they work both before and after news broadcasts. It was also hoped that this effort would unveil any similarities and differences in working conditions in the four stations.

6.6.1. The Chief Editors

The chief editor has overall responsibility for the news during his shift. He is also responsible for choosing the news items to be included in the bulletin and the duration of each item as well as the position each item occupies in the bulletin. In other words he is responsible for the final checking and arrangement of the various news items in the bulletin by adding or deleting what he thinks is right.

The first question to the chief editors was, how the daily decisions are taken about the news agenda? The chief television news editor in the Saudi Television replied:

As far as the arrangement of the news is concerned we follow a fixed procedure. Our main source of domestic news is the Saudi News Agency which supplies us with the texts of the domestic news and our role at this stage is to see that the texts conform to the video pictures only. On the other hand, in case of international news our sources are international news agencies and only those news items which comply with the Saudi media policy are included in the bulletins. In case of any problem, however, concerning a particular news item, we contact the Under Secretary of the Ministry.

The chief editor of the news section in Al-Jazeera channel said that:

The morning meeting, which is attended by the news manager, the chief editor, the producer and the chief of the planning unit, is the first step in setting the daily agenda and how to put the agenda into practice. Decisions, except in very rare cases, are taken without consulting the superiors in the station. Foreign correspondents are briefed on how to cover the issues and guests taking part in the discussion and analysis of the news items are informed in advance; all as teamwork.

On the other hand, the reply of the chief editor of the news in MBC was:

The daily work agenda are set in the morning meeting by examining the texts and pictures received from news agencies for the day. A discussion then follows on how to co-ordinate the coverage of these news by correspondents abroad. News from the British Isles are left to the editors to cover with most of the decisions concerning the priorities of individual items of news being made during the morning meeting.

The answer of the ANN chief editor was:

Events of each day are dealt with during the morning meeting which takes place in the news department. During this meeting all the material that has arrived from the news agencies is discussed together with the style of coverage of these news by correspondents or analysts. The manager of the news department or the chief editor distributes the workload among the editors.

From the answers of the chief editors in the four stations above one can see that the method of setting the daily agenda of the daily news is fairly

similar in three stations. The only difference perhaps is that Al-Jazeera channel has a planning unit to forecast events three months in advance. For this reason we find that most of the production by these stations done inside these stations is reports using sometimes the text and video picture received from the news agencies and sometimes stories are prepared by the international correspondents (see chapter five, section 5.3).

In contrast we find that the setting of the agenda in the Saudi Television differs a great deal from these three stations. To start with there is no morning meeting in Saudi Television and the work agenda are set according to a fixed procedure which governs the work of television editors both as regards the domestic and the international news.

The chief editors in the four stations were then asked about the standards that guide the news agenda. The chief editor of the Saudi Television news said in response to this question:

There are no specific standards as far as the content of the news is concerned but there is a fixed order putting news items into queue. The news starts with the activities of the King, then the activities of the next to the throne, then the news of the Emirs according to a list available in the news room (appendix A), then the news of the ministers, then the news of the Arab world followed by international news. Urgent and important news can be inserted before the news of the Arab world but not before the domestic news.

The chief editor of Al-Jazeera in reply to the same question was that:

The level of importance of the news item is what determines whether it should or should not be included in the bulletin. In addition the news item must be suitable as a television news item as much as possible. We do our best to include the news items which we think are of interest to the largest number of viewers.

The reply of the chief editor of MBC was:

What interest the viewer is the basis of the agenda consequently what makes an item top the news items is its importance and we give priority to the news of the Arab world.

Finally, the reply of the ANN chief editor was:

News items, whether international news or news from the Arab world, qualify for inclusion in news bulletins on the basis of their importance because the viewer watches a news bulletin to see the most important news from around the world.

From the above answers it is clear that in setting its daily work agenda Saudi Television gives priority to where the event takes place and not its importance. In case of Al-Jazeera, MBC, and ANN, on the other hand, the importance of the event is the basis of the selection and inclusion in the news bulletin and this is common practice in most televisions stations around the world.

The third and last question to the chief editors was how much freedom does the news department have in deciding how to cover events? The chief editor of the Saudi Television replied by saying:

To a large extent the degree of freedom in our work is in the hands of the superiors and by agreeing to include a particular news item or not and I mean by this the Under Secretary who is given the news list for him to pick what should be included in the bulletin be it domestic news, Arab news or international news.

The chief editor of Al-Jazeera said:

The space of freedom in choosing the contents of the news bulletins is big and it's mainly exercised during the morning meeting which is usually attended by the work team. During this meeting the work agenda for the day are set with complete freedom and very rarely the director of the channel is consulted on these matters.

The MBC chief editor said:

There is some freedom in choosing the news items but we must follow the policy of the station as laid down by the superiors of the station. In most cases they are consulted as regards the content of the news.

The answer of the chief editor of ANN was:

Because of the conciliatory stand of the station, the content of the news is closely checked by the officials in the station represented by the stations' director and because of this the margin of freedom I have is conditional upon their acceptance of the news content.

From these answers it is clear that the margin of freedom is larger in Al-Jazeera than Saudi Television, MBC and ANN. The margin of freedom in these three stations depends on whether the superiors of these stations agree to what has been suggested to them or not. In the following section we discuss the answers of the editors in the four stations to three questions.

6.6.2 The Editors

By the term editors we mean news editors whose role is to edit the news and prepare it for television broadcasting and who might also work as correspondents to collect information and news from their original sources and sometimes present them live from the scene of events. The first question we asked this group was, What are your daily responsibilities in the news room? and the following were the answers we received from this question.

The Saudi Television editor said:

We use a shift system in our work. For example I start work in the morning by consulting the domestic news arriving from the Saudi News Agency for the day and make sure that the text corresponds to the picture whereas my other colleague traces international news from picture agencies. The chief editor is

also among our group and he shows the news to the news manager. Personally I do not have any chance to use my talent or add anything to the news especially the domestic news because there are restrictions and we follow a particular routine in our work.

The editor of Al-Jazeera station replied by saying:

The news items I am going to edit, follow and present are determined and discussed in the morning meeting. I start by collecting the available information including text, pictures and what has been earmarked for analysis or commentary. The next step is to co-ordinate with the correspondents on the scene through the foreign communication department.

The MBC editor said:

My work combines my role as editor and as a correspondent at the same time. After I decide what news I am going to prepare during the morning meeting, I consult the available texts and pictures of the event and I may make use of the archive if there is a need to do so. During my work as a correspondent, on the other hand, I cover the news from the scene and I have complete freedom in choosing the style of presentation of the news I am covering or adding any illustrations and explanatory diagrams whenever possible.

The editor of ANN replied by saying:

My role starts when I am assigned the news item I am going to cover by the chief editor in the morning meeting. I start by collecting information from the news agencies whether text material or pictures and then myself and the chief editor put together the main framework of presentation and so on.

From the above answers it is clear that the daily work of the editor of Saudi Television news is carried out according to a fixed routine and this makes news preparation rather inflexible in contrast to the three other channels where the editor assumes a greater role in the preparation of the news. In other words, the editors' work in the other channels is more varied in its content by adding pictures, illustrations or more analysis to the news.

The second question to the editors was, why did you choose to work in television and in particular the news department? The answer of the editors of Al-Jazeera, MBC and ANN to this question was more or less similar. They all said that they chose to work in the news because they love journalistic work because, in the words of one of them, it is a continuously changing work and each day's work is different from the previous one. In contrast the Saudi editor, pointed out that the ministry in charge of employing university graduates (Ministry of Civil Service) sent him to work in the Ministry of Information and in particular television news and for this reason he accepted this type of work as a job and not for the love of it.

The third and final question to the editors was; did you have any training in television news work? The Saudi editor has pointed out:

This aspect is neglected in Saudi Television. There are regular training courses in the Arab countries but the standard of these courses is very weak in terms of content and resources. As far as the European and American training courses however knowledge of the English language stand as barrier hindering Saudi editors from taking up these courses. Since my enrolment in Saudi Television ten years ago, I did not go on any training course except once in Syria and I did not make any use of that chance.

The editors of MBC, Al-Jazeera and ANN have all confirmed that they had been on both theoretical and practical training courses a number of times before joining their stations. They added that their close contact with the British experience in the past has given them more knowledge and more qualifications in this field. This is in addition to the presence of British staff working side by side with them in these stations, especially in MBC

6.6.3. The Presenters

The third group of interviewees was the news presenters who were also asked three questions. By news presenter here we mean the newsreaders who present the news after it has been prepared and passed by the editorial committee. One would expect the presenters in four stations to have the necessary qualities for the job including good pronunciation, good voice and good appearance.

The first question we asked the presenters was to describe their role in the newscast. The newsreader of the Saudi Television replied by saying:

the role of the newsreader in Saudi Television is confined to the casting of the news bulletin without taking part in the preparation of its content.

He also added that:

the participation of the newsreader in the preparation of the news helps the reader a great deal and increases his/her ability to do his/her work more effectively.

A female newsreader in Al-Jazeera station said:

I am a newsreader and the newsreader in Al-Jazeera station is not just a reader but also a discussant with full knowledge of what is around him. I do not take part in the preparation of the news but I take part in live interviews with guests during the news bulletin. As a result I talk to the news producer and the coordinator of interviews.

The MBC female news presenter replied by saying:

My work really starts before I come to the television centre by reading the morning papers, watching television and listening to the radio. This is just to be aware of what had happened and what might happen and thus I have reasonably good idea of what is going to be discussed in the morning meeting. After that I consult the various news agencies.

She went on and added:

My role is not just news reading but I participate in the preparation of the news bulletin and prepare the questions I would be asking the guests during interviews if there is a need to do so and to collaborate with the chief editor on this.

The ANN newsreader said that his role is confined to reading the news bulletin but he has full knowledge of the contents of the bulletin by observing the editorial team during his presence in the station.

From the above answers it is clear that the newscasters in Al-Jazeera and MBC play a significant role in the production of the news by making positive contributions. In this respect, they take part in live interviews and talk to the news producer to consult the various news agencies and prepare the questions for the guests. On the other hand, although the role of the ANN newsreader is less, it is more positive. This is in sharp contrast to the role of the newsreader in Saudi Television whose role is confined to reading the news only without taking any part in the production of the news.

The second question we asked the group was, how different is the news presentation between males and females presenters? All the participants have insisted that there are no significant differences between male and female presenters in presenting the news. The most important thing is that the presenter must have the basic qualities for the job including command of the language, a deep clear voice and good appearance. Nevertheless two female presenters from Al-Jazeera and MBC have said that the beautiful faces of female presenters may attract more audiences to watch the news.

The third and final question to the group was, do you think the news contents gratify the news audience? The presenter of the news on Saudi

Television has said he is quite satisfied with what he presents to the viewers, although he sometimes worries about the fact that the news bulletins are needlessly long. He added:

I think the duration of television news item must be very short so that the viewer can receive the information in a better way. The text of news items in Saudi Television are sometimes long and they are accompanied by short video pictures while at other times the items consist of short texts and long pictures.

One of Al-Jazeera's women newsreaders pointed out that:

The main concern should be with what the viewer wants and this forms the basis of the news content. Consequently, for us as a news work team there is total satisfaction with whatever we present.

A female presenter from MBC answered the question by saying:

We do not produce the news and it is imposed on us. News presentation in the station tries keep pace with media development in a neutral way but in an honest way and with an eye on details. Thus, in my point of view what we offer is convincing to the viewer.

The ANN presenter said:

The policy of the station is based on what the viewer wants to know and see but, nevertheless some news are not shown because of the station's policy. I am satisfied with what we offer.

In the earlier days, when television had just branched off from radio, anchors were just considered newsreaders: people who had a handsome face, a nice voice, and who would simply read the news bulletins prepared by others. Their hairstyle, make-up and clothing would identify them as concerned and serious, well educated and middle-class citizens. This is basically still the case, but the set-up has changed. It turned out to be important that they have

authority, credibility, that they should be presented as fully-fledged journalists who have themselves played a key role in gathering the news.

6.6.4. The Show Directors

The last group interviewed by the researcher was the show directors in the four stations. These are the people responsible for all the technical aspects in the production of the various news items and all the elements used in the news presentation according to the text in front of him/her, his/her innovative touches, clever use of the studio cameras and so on. The first question the researcher asked this group was: describe your role in the news cast? The Saudi Television news director replied by saying that his main job is to match the written text with the accompanying picture. This is in addition to the preparation of slides which accompany the news and the preparation of the studio before the scheduled time of the news. After the news has started the live broadcast work begins. He added:

My work really is more of an executive nature than of production and I cannot interfere by changing what is written in news texts.

The news director in Al-Jazeera said, news production at present time is mainly confined to the control of the studio during the news bulletin in technical matters. He added:

My role is to present the news in a good technical manner by employing all modern technological means of production at hand to attract the viewer. This is in addition to putting my views forward when the scenario of the item is laid down.

The news director of the MBC said that:

My role is to bring to prominence all the elements of the bulletin on the air including text, pictures, reports and interviews in an attractive way. All this is done in co-ordination with the editorial committee

during the preparation of the bulletin. After that we produce it directly on the air with the rest of the technical team in studio.

The director of ANN said that:

My role begins when the editorial team starts preparing the news and who participate by putting across his ideas as to how to produce the news in an attractive way.

The second and last question we asked this group, is the most advanced technology used in the channel for the production of the news cast. The four directors agreed that the technical equipment available in the four channels is adequate for the production of television news and it is all modern equipment

The director of Saudi Television news however has raised an important point

He said:

Yes, we have modern equipment but the problem lies in that we lack knowledge of all the parts. This is due to lack of training on how to use this equipment and as a result our usage of this equipment does not exceed 10 % of its capacity.

6.7. Conclusions

From the above discussion and from the researcher's own observations there are clearly some defects in the production process and in the organisational and editorial aspects of news in Saudi Television. There are also problems concerning employees' efficiency and there is an urgent need for employees' training to improve their capacity to produce a high quality product taking into consideration government support to the present administration and the huge technical resources available to it.

By contrast it emerged from the interviews that the most important elements for success in the other channels are associated with good

management, availability of highly experienced staff in addition to vital experience from British staff in the field of news management and production.

On the other hand, the findings in this chapter together with those in Chapters Four and Five have satisfied the objectives of the research. However, there remain the important question of how can Saudi Television provide a better service to its viewers in the light of the intensive competition from the other channels in the much-varied service they provide. This question will be dealt within the next and final chapter when we present the suggestions and the recommendations, which are hoped to achieve this objective which will be the final part in this study.

CHAPTER SEVEN

The Main Results and Recommendation

Introduction

The discussion in Chapter Six has revealed how the four television stations under study are administered and the methods they have adopted in their editorial work. This was achieved by observing the actual work in these stations and from interviews and information gathered during fieldwork. We have also identified the weak points in the administration and style of production of news bulletins on Saudi Television. This was reflected in viewers' dissatisfaction with the quality of service on Saudi Television and the praise and admiration of the quality material presented on the other three channels.

The study has four main objectives: firstly to explore the views and impressions of Saudi viewers about the quality of the news service on Channel One of Saudi Television and the three other satellite Arabic Channels Al-Jazeera, MBC and ANN. This objective was investigated in Chapter Four which includes the results of the interviews.

The second objective of the study was to examine the agenda of the four stations in addition to the management, administrative structures and future strategies of the four stations. The results of this investigation are detailed in Chapters Five and Six.

The third objective was to discover the main factors and weaknesses behind the poor quality of the news service on Saudi Television. This was

achieved by conducting an analysis of the contents of the news bulletins and through data obtained from the fieldwork which forms the bulk of discussions in Chapters Four, Five and Six.

The fourth and final objective of the study was to try to find possible solutions to the current problems of Saudi Television and to make it competitive with other satellite channels and ensured a service that meets the demands and aspirations of Saudi viewers. This is covered in this chapter which outlines suggested improvements and possible solutions. The writer firmly believes that these suggestions and recommendations would help to achieve this goal and would in turn help to solve the problem of the poor news service on Saudi Television.

This section summarises the main results arising from the literature review and the field study as well as those of the content analysis of the news bulletins. The section also contains the researcher's recommendations as to the way forward.

7.1. Results of the Literature Review

1- Rapid development in communications technology especially in the field of direct television broadcasting has contributed towards achieving a global communications system. Events are now covered live as they unfold. An example of this is the live coverage of the Second Gulf War by CNN which has been described by some commentators as the television war. Thus, the definition of the news has changed from an account of events that took place in the past to an account of events actually taking place or unfolding

2- With rapid development in satellite communication, the Internet, satellite television broadcasting, etc. this age can be best described as the information age and this has widened choice to all factions in society both young and old, male or female. These choices are quite diverse and include politics, sports, science, economics, etc. Consequently competition between the various providers to attract viewers is intense. This competition has benefited the viewer.

3- The presence of a large number of satellite channels however has created a number of economic and social problems for families with each member in the family wanting to watch his/or her favourite programme or channel, sometimes creating clashes.

4- The spread of satellite broadcasting has created fear in all countries in the world. This is in part cultural and part ideological or social. Again the solution to this reaction varies from one country to another. An obvious solution lies in improving the quality of national broadcasts.

5- Media officials must acknowledge that in the present age of direct broadcasting satellites viewers have complete freedom to watch what they choose. It is therefore important to ascertain what the viewers want or prefer through research.

6- The philosophy behind the news varies between countries (see chapter two) depending on the prevailing socio-political regime. For people in the west for example news may mean everything new that arouses their interest and has some bearing on private and public issues or on their relation with society and the best news is that arouses the interest of the largest number of people. In Third World countries, on the other hand, news is seen as a

nationalist source in the development process. This shows the huge difference between the two philosophies since whereas western societies stress choices and viewers' interest as basic parameters in the news process, what is important in Third World countries (e.g. Egypt and Jordan) is government propaganda.

7- Most if not of all the media, which has dealt with news in general or television news in particular, have concentrated on the needs of the viewers as consumers of the media message. Mass consumption of one type of news is considered a success and vice versa lack of consumption is an indication of failure of the given medium to reach its audience. The real problem in Third World countries however is that little attention is given to discovering the needs of consumers. This contrasts sharply with the situation in the developed countries where such needs and preferences are taken very seriously. Even in the case of satellite stations, the subject of this study, which use foreign expertise a considerable effort is spent on research to ascertain public opinion and tastes.

8- The few studies conducted before the arrival of satellite broadcasting all agree that the Saudi viewer was dissatisfied with the news service of Saudi Television and that all aspects of this service needed to be reviewed and improved. The results of this study, which comes after the spread of satellite television in the Kingdom, also confirm this finding. However the viewer now has many alternatives in the form of other services from abroad. This is a very serious problem which could have some serious consequences for the Saudi media, especially Saudi Television, and could lead to lack of communication between this medium and the public.

9- In the age of intense competition between the private and public sectors in television, the pressure for change by the public has increased because government controlled stations are very weak in the perception of the demands of the general public and cannot compete with private stations.

10-There are no differences in the production methods or the administrative, technological, editorial or technical aspects of the news sector between the public and private sectors. The main difference lies in the style and work method inside these sections under the different regimes (see Chapter Five and Six).

7.2. Results of Content Analysis

1- There is no fixed time duration for news bulletins on Saudi Television. The news bulletin may in one instance last 29 minutes and in another up to 83 minutes. This is a bad as it may cause problems in daily programming and news bulletin scheduling.

2- News bulletins in Al-Jazeera, MBC, and ANN have a fixed duration and do not usually exceeds 15-30 minutes duration. This helps to maintain tight control without restricting variations in the number of news stories in each news bulletin.

3- News of western countries occupies the major part of the news bulletins in the four stations. This is natural for a number of reasons, the most notable of which is the heavy reliance of these stations on international news agencies for the supply of their news stories. In addition western countries,

especially the US, Britain, and France are major political powers in the world arena and host many international events.

4- Domestic (home countries) correspondents in Al-Jazeera, MBC and ANN channels frequently undertake coverage of local news whereas in Saudi Television has no local correspondents. Saudi Television therefore depends on reports produced by the editor of the local News Agency, whose job is to supply the text to the television, radio and newspapers with such news and this is not the right way to present the news on television

5- News from around the Arab world occupies the second position in ranking in the four stations. This again is understandable since promotion of Arab affairs and the linking of Arab nationals living abroad with events taking place in their native countries or in the Arab world in general is one of the main aims of establishing these stations (see Chapter Six).

6- The content analysis has shown that there are few items of Islamic news on Saudi Television and ANN. This is mainly due to two reasons: firstly, weak bilateral news exchanges between Islamic countries and secondly, these two stations have no correspondents in most of the Islamic countries. On the other hand, there are a reasonable number of Islamic news items in Al-Jazeera and MBC channels because they have correspondents in most of the Islamic world.

7- The coverage of news from the Third World and Eastern countries is about the same in all the four stations but represents a small percentage of the total coverage. This is because, unlike western countries, Third World and Eastern countries lack the necessary resources to disseminate news and events on a continuous basis.

8- Political, economic, military, and sports news occupies the largest share of news bulletins in the four stations with all other social aspects being covered almost equally by the bulletins of the four stations.

9- Despite similarities in the subjects discussed in the four stations there are differences in the style of presentation between Saudi Television and the other three channels. Events in Al-Jazeera, MBC and ANN channels are usually analysed and explained inside the studio assisted by live links with correspondents on location. Events on Saudi Television, on the other hand, are shown as they are in the form of text and video pictures without any additions or alterations. Consequently, viewers will switch to the channels with the best news style. This is an important factor in attracting viewers and improving ratings.

10-The source of scientific news and news of inventions, as is to be expected, is the west because of the high level of development countries in the west have achieved.

11-Most of the clips that accompany video reports in all stations are more or less similar because they rely on the same source. Al-Jazeera and MBC however try to differentiate themselves by getting their correspondents to carry out additional special reports and interviews with the people featured and this makes their service more attractive.

12-The duration of the news stories are more or less similar in the four stations but there is a tendency in Saudi Television to use a long music interval after the text which may sometime be as long as ten minutes. Moreover, the news stories in Al-Jazeera, MBC and ANN consist of a video report plus analysis from inside the studio together with a live report by the correspondent

at a certain scene. This gives an indication of how these stations deal with subjects they show to producers. They deal with each subject from many angles and in greater depth.

13-There is an extensive use of video material in news stories in the four stations. This is to be expected because television news to a large extent depends on the use of moving pictures. Al-Jazeera, MBC, and ANN use more than one form, i.e. video, slides, graphics, maps, and text, in news stories. There is less use of these methods in Saudi Television despite the fact that the more varied presentation attracts viewers.

14-Al-Jazeera and MBC concentrate on events in their news stories and to a limited extent on the characters involved whereas in the case of Saudi Television and ANN the opposite is true, i.e. there is greater emphasis on the characters involved rather than on the events.

15-In addition to the presenters of political news Al-Jazeera, MBC and ANN stations use separate presenters to present sports and economic news. This system is used in most television stations in the world but it was noticed in the case of Saudi Television that all news is presented by the same two presenters.

16-News is read by more than one presenter in Al-Jazeera, MBC and ANN channels meaning that the event pictures along with other explanatory voices. This is a very important aspect in the style of presentation. In the case of Saudi Television the two presenters in charge of news bulletin read these stories.

17-There is no linkage between the running orders of news subjects in Saudi Television. The bulletin may start for example with news stories

concerning a particular person or subject and next the bulletin may deal with news of a totally different person or subject and then go back to the first subject and so on. This practice is an indication of bad preparation of the news bulletin and its arrangement in a logical order. In case of the other channels any subject is dealt with only once and in the right place and this indicates good preparation and arrangement of news items.

18-Unlike the simple and attractive studio decor of the news room of the three channels, the news studio in Saudi Television is dull and unattractive. As mentioned earlier (see Chapter Four, section 4.2.5.) studio decor is an important factor in attracting viewers.

19-Al-Jazeera, MBC, and ANN channels use a fast news production style with professional use of technical resources inside the studio. Presentation in the case of Saudi Television is routine. This reflects lack of experience among the employees of Saudi Television, who lack training and contact with foreign experience in this field.

7.3. Results of the Interviews

In this section, the researcher summarized the important points made by Saudi viewers about the news service of Saudi TV and the other three channels after visiting and interviewing the news makers in the news department of all four channels.

A. Views and Opinions of Saudi Viewers

In this exercise interviews were conducted with the aim of collecting information concerning the views and opinions of Saudi viewers about the quality of the news service of Saudi Television, and Al- Jazeera, MBC and ANN channels.

1- The answers given by the interviewees were not highly diverse. Most said that they watch Saudi Television infrequently with no commonly shared programmes. More importantly all interviewees were highly critical of the quality of the news service on Saudi Television, but were full of praise and admiration of the service provided by the other three channels.

2- Interviewees have said that the only reason they watch Saudi Television news is because they want to keep in touch with current domestic news as international news is presented better on the other satellite channels.

3- Despite the presence of a large number of news presenters on Saudi Television, the work of only two presenters, Majid al-Shible and Ghalib Kamil, is described as outstanding by viewers because in their view these two presenters possess the qualities necessary in a television news presenter.

4- Interviewees have said that more information should be given about individual news stories on Saudi Television and demanded that the current practice of presenting the news in a vague manner should be stopped.

5- Saudi viewers prefer to watch other satellite channels, especially those specialising in news services, rather than Saudi Television which they described as weak and monotonous.

6- The main criticisms raised by the interviewees concerning the news service of Saudi Television have concentrated on the style of presentation, production, editing quality, lack of analysis of news content and the presence of too much domestic (protocol) news in the bulletins. A comparison was also drawn between what is presented on Saudi Television and that of the other three channels under study (see Chapter Four).

B. Comments about Saudi Television

The follow-up comments from the detailed description of Saudi Television news administration and from the researcher's observations of the actual running and editing of the daily news during field work needs attention:

- 1- Notwithstanding the importance of this, there is a lack of specialist research officers to study viewers' points of view.
- 2- There is further a lack of a text library or information bank for more information to supplement daily events and news programmes
- 3- There are no morning briefings to set the agenda for news bulletins
- 4- No system exists to determine the duration of each news item
- 5- No evaluation is carried out of news work on a daily, weekly or even monthly basis.

- 6- The management lacks a specialist cadre of skilled editors and analysts of economic and sports issues.
- 7- New independent administrations are needed to co-ordinate and follow up the work of foreign correspondents, a responsibility shouldered at present by the editor of international news.
- 8- There is a lack of clear and well-defined plans to improve the skills of news employees by giving them the opportunity to attend training courses in European countries and the United States. This reflects a general lack and understanding of comprehensive future planning of the requirements of the work needs and the needs of the news staff.
- 9- There is a complete absence of political, economic, environmental, military.etc, analysts on Saudi Television news.
- 10-There are no domestic news correspondents to cover domestic news and to eliminate the present dependence on Saudi News Agency editors.
- 11-There is no teamwork to cover the news as a group. Such teams usually on the TV consist of a news presenter, who is in most cases also the editor, a cameraman and a producer.
- 12-At present news editors lack the incentive to innovate and are stuck in a monotonous daily routine because they lack material and non-material incentives to do so.
- 13-No use is made of the telephone as an important means of communication to arrange interviews or take reports about current

events both inside and outside the Kingdom despite the availability of such service to the editorial teams.

14-Despite differences in local and foreign media messages, Saudi Television still delivers its message as though it is addressing a local audience only notwithstanding the fact that it now reaches both Arab and non-Arab audiences abroad via satellite.

C. Comments about Al-Jazeera Channel

- (1) Employees of this station use planning as a tool by which to achieve present and future goals of the station. This planning is the main force behind the recent successes of the channel.
- (2) Unlimited freedom is given to all employees and this promotes free thinking and encourages innovation.
- (3) All employees are highly skilled in the area of their work. Further they are in close contact with British, French and American experience and benefit from it.
- (4) The unique style adopted of dealing with events and issues by this channel is uncommon in the Arab world and is what has made the channel so popular among Arab viewers, even though this has sometimes strained relations between the State of Qatar and some of the Arab and non-Arab countries.
- (5) The research department puts great emphasis on researching viewer's opinions and tastes which indicates a good understanding by the officials of this channel, of the importance of this aspect [see appendix B].

- (6) The presence of specialist cadres in every aspect of news production has helped the integration of all aspects of the work. There are for example specialists in politics, economics, sports, sociology, etc.
- (7) There is an economic bulletin prepared by a London-based team which is broadcast live twice a day. This is in addition to summaries of important business and financial news which form part of the news bulletins. These cover developments in shares, crude oil prices, and the exchange rates of leading currencies in the world.
- (8) There are nine sports news bulletins everyday plus a weekly sports programme that discusses sporting issues with specialists in the field.
- (9) The duration of news items in news bulletins follows a set procedure. For example, the duration of a news text alone is 30 seconds, a news item containing a slide 25 seconds and news item containing text and video picture not more than 40 seconds and reports with video pictures between 2-4 minutes depending on the subject and the presence of a guest and there is no fixed duration in case of important news.
- (10) The station has a news exchange section consisting of eight correspondents who deal with correspondence and co-ordinate the coverage of news stories, fixed as mentioned earlier by the manager of the news, the chief editor and the producer in the morning briefing.

(11) The news style follows the British style of presentation and this has forced many television stations in the region, such as Abu-Dhabi and Kuwait, for example, to change their style of presentation.

D. Comments about MBC Channel

(1) What viewers want tops the list of priorities at MBC responding to research done by the marketing department.

(2) Employees, especially those, who work in the field of news, are highly skilled in television work due to their contact with experts from the British media.

(3) There are specialists in every field at MBC and hence the work goes smoothly without any confusion.

(4) News programmes are becoming smaller because, as pointed out by the executive director of the station, the material gain from these programmes is small in addition to sensitivities and fear that problems may crop up because these programmes are usually transmitted live.

(5) The station broadcasts separate economic and sports bulletins prepared by specialists in these fields.

(6) There is no regular in-service training for employees because of the presence of more experienced British staff especially on technical matters and in the field of production

(7) Despite the fact that the officials in the station insist it operates an open mind and no interference policy in the style of presentation or discussion of the issues adopted by the station, nevertheless from the researcher's observations there is a tendency to try not to anger anybody whether

individuals or states especially, for example as regards all the news stories about some Arab countries like Egypt.

(8) Despite the presence of the station's headquarters in London, the city of freedom, the workers at MBC are under the watchful eye of the channel's superiors and there is self control exercised by most individuals in the news section and the stipulations of government editorial policy. All this impacts on the style of presentation of the station, especially about some Arab countries news.

(9) There are standard durations for each news item in the bulletin. If the news item does not contain video pictures it is 15-17 seconds long but if it contains pictures it is between 20-25 seconds. A news report, on the other hand, is two and a half minutes and if the report includes an interview it is about three minutes and so on.

(10) The station is facing financial difficulties and this has forced the management to make a large number of employees redundant. In addition they have decided to move the station headquarters in April 2002 to the United Arab Emirates, which has established free media zones to allow the private sector to establish radio and television compounds or journalistic establishments without any censorship or interference from the Government.

E. Comments about ANN Channel

1- Satisfying the viewers' demands is at the top of the agenda in this station either by identifying consumers' preferences through consumers' satisfaction research conducted by specialist companies on behalf of the station or by the station's public relations and marketing sections.

2- The station's policy of not provoking anyone's anger has made the station a peaceful station with no room for plurality of opinion or opinion and counter opinion as is the case in Al-Jazeera channel.

3- All the station's employees have good experience in television work which they gained from contact with experienced British staff either in the system of education or in the field of work.

4- The station is surviving on very few financial resources and new sources of finances must be found if the station is to survive in future.

5- A noticeable effort is put in the programming field, especially the news, as reflected in the high number of bulletins and summaries broadcasts by the station. In addition to news bulletins, summaries and economic and sports news, the station broadcasts nine other daily and weekly news programmes.

6- Employees have limited freedom in choosing news items as the final decision rests with the board of managers represented by the Director General of the station.

7- The system used in determining the duration of news items in the bulletin is similar to the one used in Al-Jazeera and MBC and differs from the one adopted by Saudi Television.

F. Comments about the News Makers in all Four Channels

The researcher drew the following conclusions during his visit to the four stations and from his observations of the production of the news bulletins in each channel.

1- The managers of the news in the four stations are holders of high degrees from Europe and the United States and they have wide practical experience.

- 2- The chief editors in Al-Jazeera and MBC and to some extent ANN play an important role in the style of presentation of the news bulletins in contrast to the Saudi chief editor who plays a very minor role in news presentation despite the fact that there are no obstacles impeding him from playing a greater role. The reason is the lack of experience and systematic staff development.
- 3- News editors in Al-Jazeera, MBC and ANN decide the number of news items each will prepare and edit in a single bulletin and these usually do not exceed two news items whereas the news editor in Saudi Television sometimes edits all the items in the news bulletin. This may be attributed to the absence of the morning meeting to distribute the workload among members of the news team in Saudi Television. This is in addition to the traditional editing style of the news items on Saudi Television, which consist of only matching text with the video picture.
- 4- News presenters of Al-Jazeera, MBC and ANN participate in the production process of the news by taking part in editing or in interviews with guests and analysts. They come to the studio before the scheduled time for the news bulletin, whereas the presenter of the Saudi Television arrives only half an hour before the scheduled news time and during this time he reads the news which has been prepared for him without taking any part in its production.
- 5- News directors in Al-Jazeera, MBC and ANN come early to the news room and follow the progress of the work and suggest ways of covering the news either during the morning meeting or two hours

before the scheduled news time. The news director in Saudi Television on the other hand comes to the news room half an hour before the news bulletin.

- 6- Employees working in television news in Saudi Television have highlighted their need for advanced training courses in addition to material and moral support. The researcher has noticed that there is a lack of enthusiasm and willingness to progress and as a result employees carry out their duties routinely. This was reflected on the style of presentation of the news which falls short of the expectations of the viewers (see Chapter Four).
- 7- When there is coverage of a local event in the area of the station the work group in Al-Jazeera, MBC and ANN consists of a cameraman, the director, the editor/correspondent or presenter/editor. The coverage of the same event in Saudi Television will be carried out by the cameraman only.

Having pointed out the comments about all four channels we can emphasise the following points:

- 1- Work in Al-Jazeera, MBC and ANN is conducted in an organised fashion and with a team spirit starting with the morning meeting of the editorial board, whereas work on Saudi Television is conducted on an individual basis by domestic and international news editors. The organisational skills possessed by employees of the other three channels are gained from the presence of experienced staff in the work place and from a deep understanding by the management team of the media process. The lack of such experience in

Saudi Television is due to the fact that the importance of the media and its role has been realised only after the second Gulf Crisis in 1991.

2- Despite the margin of freedom enjoyed by workers in Al-Jazeera, there are certain policies which workers in the four channels must observe when dealing with certain items of news.

3- Saudi Television news service suffers from a number of administrative, editorial and technical shortcomings which in the researcher's view are behind the weak news service of Saudi television (see Chapter Six)

4- What the viewer wants is considered a priority in Al-Jazeera, MBC and ANN channels and as such it receives great attention from officials in these stations. As a result specialised departments have been formed in these channels to deal with viewers' interests in addition to research to explore this important aspect. Saudi Television lacks such orientation despite the importance of these issues.

5- It was noticed that during the period from 15/03/2000, which is the date the field work by the researcher ended, and the beginning of the year 2001, Al-Jazeera, MBC, and ANN channels have carried out a major overhaul of their news services which covered all aspects of news. On the other hand, Saudi Television has remained unchanged in terms of the quality or format of its news service.

By exposing the main findings of the literature review, field studies and results of content analysis of the news bulletins in the four stations, the first objective of the study has been achieved. Moreover, the views and suggestions of the interviewees about the quality of the news service in the four stations have answered the first research question concerning the views of these groups

about the quality of news service in the four stations. Also the groups of interviewees have proved the first hypothesis of the research which states that viewers generally prefer to watch news on Al-Jazeera, MBC and ANN channels and they are dissatisfied with the quality of service on Saudi Television. The results have also confirmed the incorrectness of the second hypothesis that says Saudi viewers would prefer female news presenters to male presenters (see chapter four).

Analysis in Chapter Five is devoted to a content analysis of news bulletins in the four stations. In addition to examining the management, administrative structures and future strategies of the four stations in Chapter Six, the second objective of the study has been achieved and has answered the second and the third research questions. The answers given by news managers and chief editors during the interviews in the four stations have proved the correctness of the third hypothesis, which postulates that the measures used in determining news priorities in Saudi Television are different from those in other three stations. The source of the event determines priority in Saudi Television and not the importance of the event, as is the case in the other three stations.

Moreover, the study has proved the correctness of the fourth hypothesis, which assumes that technical facilities in Saudi Television are comparable with those in the other stations. All news directors in the four stations have lent support to this argument. The writer's own observations of daily work in the news room of each of the four stations and the answers given by the chief editors, editors, presenters and news directors in the four station have proved the fifth hypothesis of this thesis which postulates that the skills of employees

of Saudi Television are lower than those of their counterparts in the other three stations. Saudi Television employees lack these skills, training and contact with experienced television staff from abroad.

The sixth and the last hypothesis of the research which assumes that like Al-Jazeera, MBC and ANN channels which are subject to influence, Saudi media policy plays a significant role in determining news items shown on Saudi Television, has been proved to be true. This is because, just as Saudi media policy plays a major role in determining news items shown on television, the other three channels too have a hidden policy agenda which control what is shown on their screens. In brief all the stations are subject to some constraint. But it seems that there is a considerable difference in the degree of constraint. Al-Jazeera seems to have much more latitude than the other stations. The results of the field study, [Chapters Four, Five and Six] have achieved the third objective of the study, which has revealed the main factors and weaknesses behind the poor quality of the news service on Saudi Television.

Hence, one may classify the causes of the prevailing shortages and weaknesses in Saudi Television (Channel One) news service into factors related to:-

1. Elements and stages of news service production in Saudi Television,
2. News service management,
3. Employees of the news service sector.

7.4. Suggestions and Recommendations

It is important to point out here that the above three factors behind the weakness of the news service of Saudi Television are closely associated with the overall performance of the Ministry of Information and the High Council for the Media which are supposed to contribute more to the development of the news service of Saudi Television. Consequently, it is appropriate to put forward some suggestions to officials in the Ministry of Information and the High Council for the Media in the hope that these suggestions may contribute to the development of media work in general and television news in particular.

1- Officials in the Ministry of Information and the High Council for the Media must work hard to develop all aspects of the media and to draw attention to the importance of the media and its role in the present age especially given the massive changes that have taken place in Saudi society since 1991, as a result of the spread of satellite broadcasting and an increase in the use of the Internet. These have increased the level of awareness among the Saudi population and changed their views on a number of local and international issues.

2- The media process in the country must not be subjected to the financial and management routines that prevail in most of the other institutions, organisations and government departments because of the huge differences between the nature of the work in the media and the other administrative and financial institutions in the country.

3- They must keep pace with the rapid and huge development in communications technology and make use of the fruits of this development as much as possible.

4- Saudi Television must pay attention to training especially in the operation and maintenance of modern electronic equipment and develop the ability of trainees in such a way as to make the maximum use of the technical aspects of these modern equipment.

5- A specialised media institute for theoretical and practical training should be established and it should make use of local and international experts in the media field.

6- The work of the media departments in Saudi universities and other media organisations in the country must be coordinated and students of media studies in the two last years of their university education must be appointed to the various types of media as a form of training in order to gain experience before they graduate from their universities.

7- A remunerative and rewarding financial and administrative system for employees working in the media in general and those working in television in particular must be designed to provide the necessary incentives to staff to stay in their current jobs and not be forced to migrate to alternative employment. Such a scheme would preserve talent and high skills within the television field and would allow smooth promotion within the television industry (the Egyptian experience provides a good example in this case).

8- A special cadre of people working in the media sector similar to the one in operation in the health sector must be created in order to create job security; this would lead to higher productivity.

9- An independent directorate for the news with vast financial and administrative independence should be established on lines similar to that in

operation in Kuwait, where the formation of such a directorate has greatly enhanced the performance of Kuwaiti television.

10-Earnest efforts should be made to make use of international expertise in the media field, especially British and American expertise, in training or education inside the country or by recruiting expatriates to work in the media sector specially in television (MBC provides a good example in this case where experienced British staff work side by with staff from the Arab countries and contribute to the success of this station.)

11-It is vitally important to adopt international scientific standards in news bulletin production and to give people in charge of news production a margin of freedom to deliver what they believe is suitable without jeopardising the safety and security of the country. Priorities in news must be left to those working in the news production e.g. the assassination of a president anywhere in the world is more important to the viewer than the inauguration of a new local building.

12-Any misconceptions held by those in charge of news bulletins should be removed and the importance of creating trust in the news explained to them, this may play a role in advancing certain policies.

13-Those in charge of the news must be kept well informed with the latest government policy especially during crisis, because this would lessen the dangers and make those in charge of the news aware of the issues that are regarded of local and international importance.

14-A policy of openness and of talking directly to the people must be adopted. High government officials should be encouraged to give their views and opinions on camera instead of putting them in writing to the representative

of the local news agency. Direct contact is much more influential than indirect messages.

15-The media must be given a margin of freedom to show both the negative and positive aspects pertaining to all issues, as this forms the basis for fighting the ills in society and hence enabling its progress and development in the right way.

It is hoped that these suggestions and recommendations to the officials in the Ministry of Information and the High Council for the Media will help in the improvement and development of the media in general and the television industry in particular.

Recommendations to television administrators and those in charge of the news service can be summarised as follows:-

- 1- To adopt a proper structured style in various stages of news production as mentioned in detail earlier in this thesis (see Chapter Two).
- 2- To hold a daily morning meeting of the editorial board to set the daily agenda of the news bulletins.
- 3-To establish an information data bank to enrich information on daily events, to be used in other programmes.
- 4- To pay more attention to viewers' opinions by establishing a specialised section to research viewers' opinion on the news on a regular basis
- 5- To recruit professional editors in the fields of economics and sports and thus promote good economic and sports bulletins.
- 6- To recruit professional analysts in a number of subjects either as permanent staff or co-opted on a part-time basis to provide full analysis of

military issues, political issues, economic issues, etc. Use can be made in this respect of the staff of the Saudi universities.

7- To recruit local correspondents to cover domestic events and not to depend completely on the presenter inside the studio because live coverage from the location of the event is more effective than coverage from the studio.

8- To establish a separate section for supervising and monitoring the work of foreign correspondents and to co-ordinate with them on how to cover events.

9- To establish a separate section for creative research and innovation. The responsibility of members of this section should be to come up with new ideas on how to cover events. Most European and American companies and institutions have similar sections to help them gain the competitive edge (Komo television news in Seattle in the US for example has a similar section whose main job is to develop new ideas and ways of covering events.)

10-To work towards linking government departments with the news administration, e.g. the local news agency, to know the news stories before hand and hence to cover them in a proper way.

11-To try to stop the complete dependence on the local news agency in the coverage of domestic events and to rely instead on the television editor in this regard.

12-To select editors, presenters and directors carefully and to give them extensive specialist training and improve their command of the English language.

13-To draw a distinction must be made between a piece of news and an advert as viewers want to listen to the news not adverts.

14-To ensure that news bulletins are not confined to positive aspects of the news only. Negative aspects should also be aired and analysed in such way as to serve viewers' interests.

15-To make the wording of the news more attractive by presenting it in the form of news stories accompanied by analysis from inside the studio with direct links to local correspondents from the location of the events.

16-To set up task forces consisting of editors, cameramen, producers and presenters and put them in charge of news coverage

17-To allow news director and presenters to take a more positive part in the production of the bulletins by involving themselves in the editing or follow up of the process from the very early morning, these efforts will be positively reflected in the bulletin.

18-To present news in a clear language and at a level that suits the education level and awareness of all viewers. Moreover the background to a news items should be given whenever that is necessary.

19-To acknowledge that the responsibility for the television service is not confined to news only, but goes beyond that to include the explanation of what the news means, i.e. its background effects and future implications. This can be achieved through current affairs programmes and other news programme. These are vital and should be featured on Saudi Television.

20-To encourage management to improve the technical aspects of news coverage by selecting the elements of the news and organising them with the objective of raising the standard of the news service on the one hand and to make it suitable for exchange with the outside world on the other hand

21-To introduce an incentive scheme to encourage editors to be more creative and inventive and to excel the work of their competitors. The news field is one of the most complicated fields and it is a fast changing and an influential tool.

22-To make use of the experiences of neighbouring countries and of how they developed their news services to high standards in a short space of time (e.g. Abu Dhabi, Kuwait, and Qatar) and in a way that suits social changes in the Gulf region.

23-To formulate a clear plan for training employees on a regular basis and to improve their technical skills by sending them to study in specialist media institutions in Europe and the US. These countries are witnessing huge and fast improvements in the field of communications and have a wealth of experience.

24-To make as much use as possible of the available technical facilities in order to improve the quality of the news service e.g. telephones mobiles can be used to obtain comments from officials on current events and matters of interest to viewers.

The above represent the general recommendations to improve the news service of Saudi Television. What follows is an overview of how to present an ideal news bulletin on Saudi Television at the present time, i.e. given the present constraints and shortcomings, and making use of information obtained from both the literature review and the field studies. The suggestion includes format and content of the news bulletin as follows:-

(A) Aspects Related to the Format of the News Bulletins

(1) The present style of presentation must be changed, the present traditional formats must be abandoned and only the favourite news presenters should be allowed to present the news bulletins.

(2) More able and photogenic faces must be recruited to present the news.

(3) The production must be simple but innovative and more attractive.

(4) More attention must be paid to the use of illustrations and other aids such as drawings, maps, etc. in the news bulletins.

(5) The present decor of the news studio (2001-2002) must be changed and more attention paid to lighting inside the studio.

(6) The sources of news must be increased.

(7) Correspondents should be stationed on location both inside and outside the country to ensure wide coverage.

(8) Efforts must be concentrated on the production of two bulletins, one for domestic news and the other for international news (as in the Lebanese station LBC).

(9) The present style of news writing and preparation must be radically changed.

(10) The news bulletins should have a fixed time duration.

(B) Aspects Related to the Content of the News Bulletins

(1) To include more analysis and background to the news.

(2) To have fewer official news items in the bulletins (protocol news).

(3) To follow events through live coverage.

(4) To arrange the news items according to their importance

- (5) To be less sensitive in covering news.
- (6) To pay more attention to text to make it more concise and diversified by moving from a news story, for example, to an analysis from inside the studio, to a report from a correspondent on location, etc.
- (7) To pay more attention to humanitarian news both from inside and outside the kingdom.
- (8) To pay more attention to sports and economic news.

The above discussion falls within the limits set out in the fourth objective of the study whose aim was to find the best solutions to help Saudi Television to improve its service and increase its competitive position in relation to other satellites news channels in the region and this answers the fourth research question.

By drawing this section to a close we have achieved the four aims of the study and answered all the research questions and tested all the hypothesis we set out to achieve from the field study and the content analysis of the news bulletins of the four stations under study.

Finally the researcher hopes that the results and solutions proposed in this study will be a catalyst in developing the news service of Saudi Television and making it a more attractive and better service.

INTERVIEWS

- (1) Manager of the News Department, Abdulrahman Al-Hazza in Saudi T.V. Riyadh 25 January 2000.
- (2) Deputy Director General of Al-Jazeera Channel, Issa Al-Tamimi, in Qatar, 9 February 2000*.
- (3) Manager of the News Section Salah-Njam on Al-Jazeera, Qatar, 9 February 2000.
- (4) Executive Director of the MBC station and its Chief Editor, Bier Ghanim, London, 25 February, 2000.
- (5) Manager of the News Section Qasim Mazraani on ANN Channel, London, 30 February 2000.
- (6) Chief Editor in the Saudi Television, Mjray Al-Ghtany, Riyadh in Saudi TV, 26 January 2000.
- (7) Chief Editor in the news section in Al-Jazeera, Alfred Asfore, Qatar, 10 February 2000.
- (8) Chief Editor of the News in the MBC, Hamdin Al-Grgaoy, London, 27 February 2000.
- (9) Chief Editor of the News in the ANN, Wafike Cansoi, London, 30 February 2000.
- (10) Editor of the News in the Saudi Television, Mohammed Babker, Riyadh in Saudi TV, 29 January 2000.
- (11) Editor of the News in Al-Jazeera, Ayman Jadh, Qatar, 10 February 2000.

(12) Editor of the News in MBC, Ahmad Al-Crashy, London, 28 February 2000.

(13) Editor of the News in ANN, Sadh Al-Dosry, London, 1 March 2000.

(14) Presenter of the News in Saudi Television, Kald Al-Baty, Riyadh in Saudi TV, 30 January 2000.

(15) Presenter of the News in Al-Jazeera, Aymin Banorh, Qatar, 10 February 2000.

(16) Presenter of the News in MBC, Fatimah Bin Hohoe, London, 29 February 2000

(17) Presenter of the News in ANN, Ahmed Yacin, London, 2 March 2000.

(18) News Director in the Saudi Television, Abdullah Al-Ateg, Riyadh, 30 January 2000.

(19) News Director in Al-Jazeera, Jasmi Al-Mtoh, Qatar, 11 February 2000.

(20) News Director in MBC, Najle Fyns, London, 29 February 2000

(21) News Director in ANN, Nabel Yasin, London, 2 March 2000.

** No. 2 The Deputy Director General of Al-Jazeera Channel Issa Al-Tamimi is not included in the list of 20 persons which the researcher decided to interview as newsmakers as mentioned in chapter six. But because of the nature of the information provided by him, some part of his conversation is included in chapter six.*

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APPENDIX A

Appendix A

A Chronological list of the Names of the Sons of King
Abdal-Aziz Arranged According their Ages

Fahd Bin Abd al-Aziz
Abdullah Bin Abd al-Aziz
Bandar Bin Abd al-Aziz
Musa^cad Bin Abd al-Aziz
Mish^cal Bin Abd al-Aziz
Sultan Bin Abd al-Aziz
Abd al-Rahman Bin Abd al-Aziz
Mut^cab Bin Abd al-Aziz
Talal Bin Abd al-Aziz
Mishari Bin Abd al-Aziz
Badr Bin Abd al-Aziz
Turki Bin Abd al-Aziz
Nawaf Bin Abd al-Aziz
Nayif Bin Abd al-Aziz
Fawaz Bin Abd al-Aziz
Salman Bin Abd al-Aziz
Majid Bin Abd al-Aziz
Mamdooh Bin Abd al-Aziz
Abd al-'Ilah Bin Abd al-Aziz
Sutam Bin Abd al-Aziz
Ahmad Bin Abd al-Aziz
Abd al-Majeed Bin Abd al-Aziz
Mushhoor Bin Abd al-Aziz
Hazlool Bin Abd al-Aziz
Miqrin Bin Abd al-Aziz

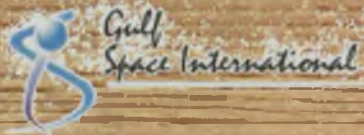
APPENDIX B

1 to 35.



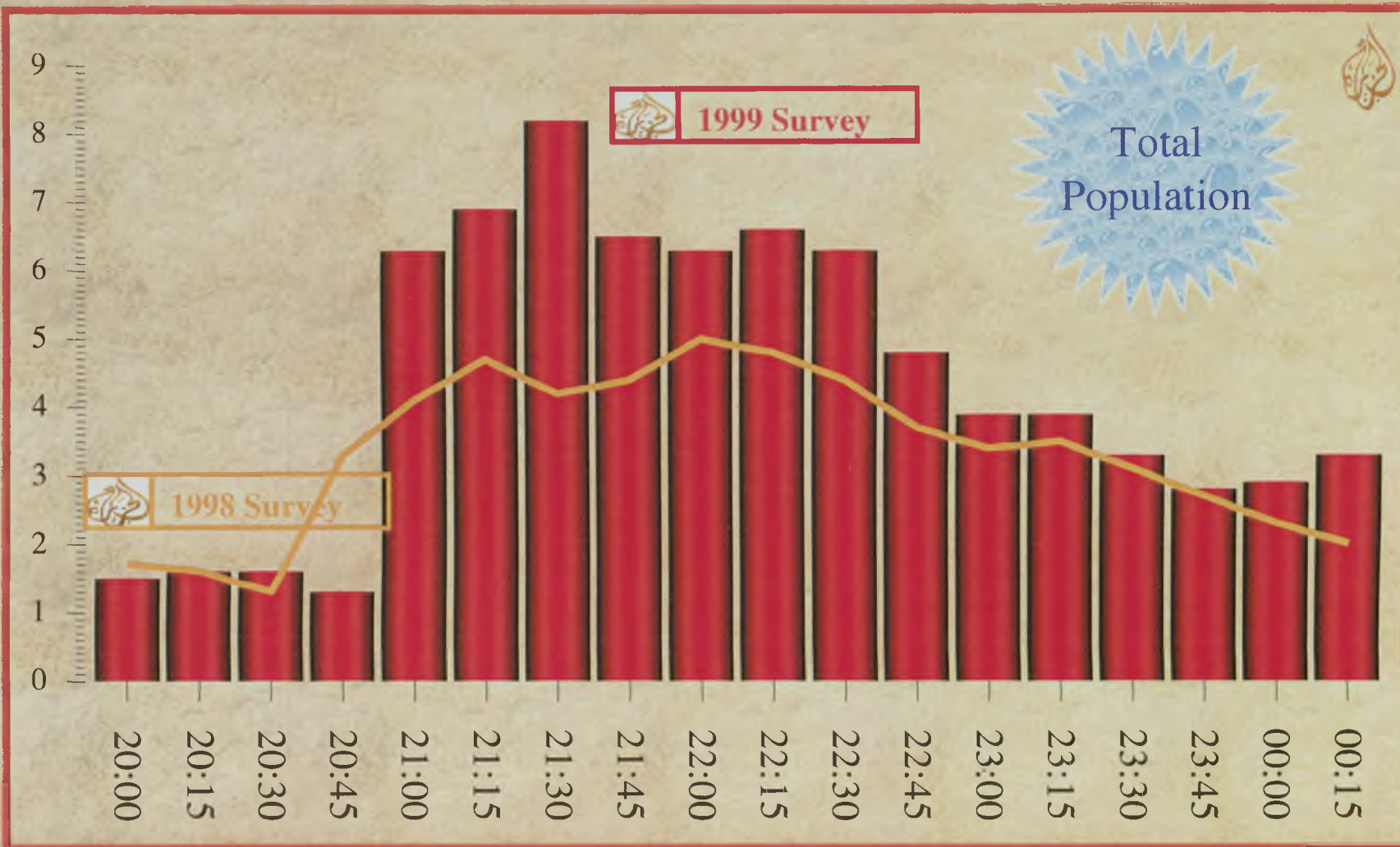
A glance to growing audiences of

Al Jazeera Satellite Channel



A glance to growing audiences of Al Jazeera Satellite Channel

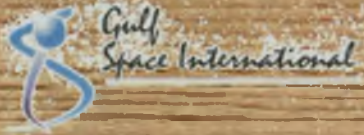
Total Population Reach, Last Survey Vs Latest Survey
@ Frequency Level 7 by 15 Minutes Saudi Local Time Segments



Source: PARC_SEAS (Schedule Evaluation & Analysis System)

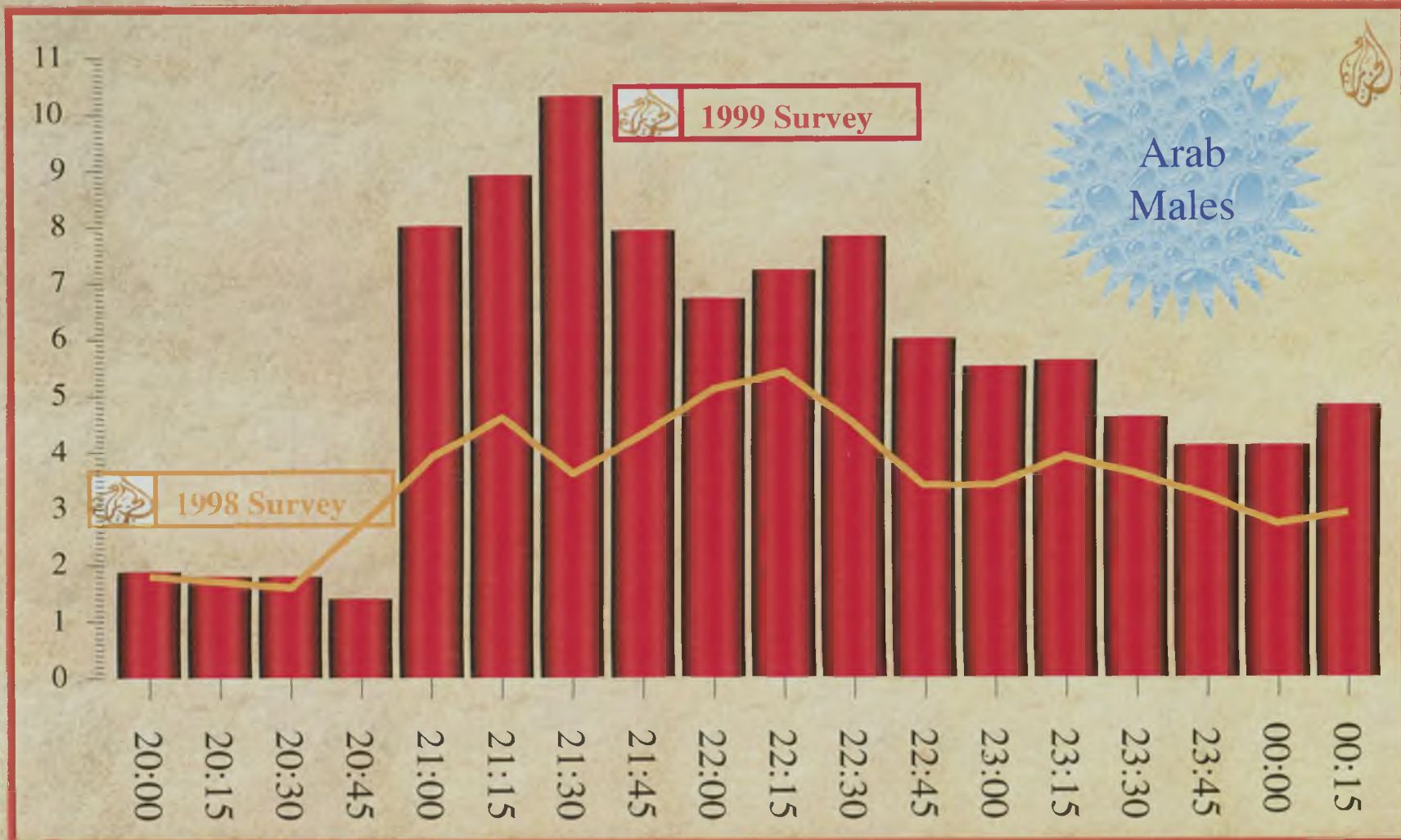
*Saudi TV Update May 1999 Vs Saudi TV & Radio Survey Jan 99

Urban Comparison



A glance to growing audiences of Al Jazeera Satellite Channel

Arab Males Reach, Last Survey Vs Latest Survey
@ Frequency Level 7 by 15 Minutes Saudi Local Time Segments



Source: PARC_SEAS (Schedule Evaluation & Analysis System)

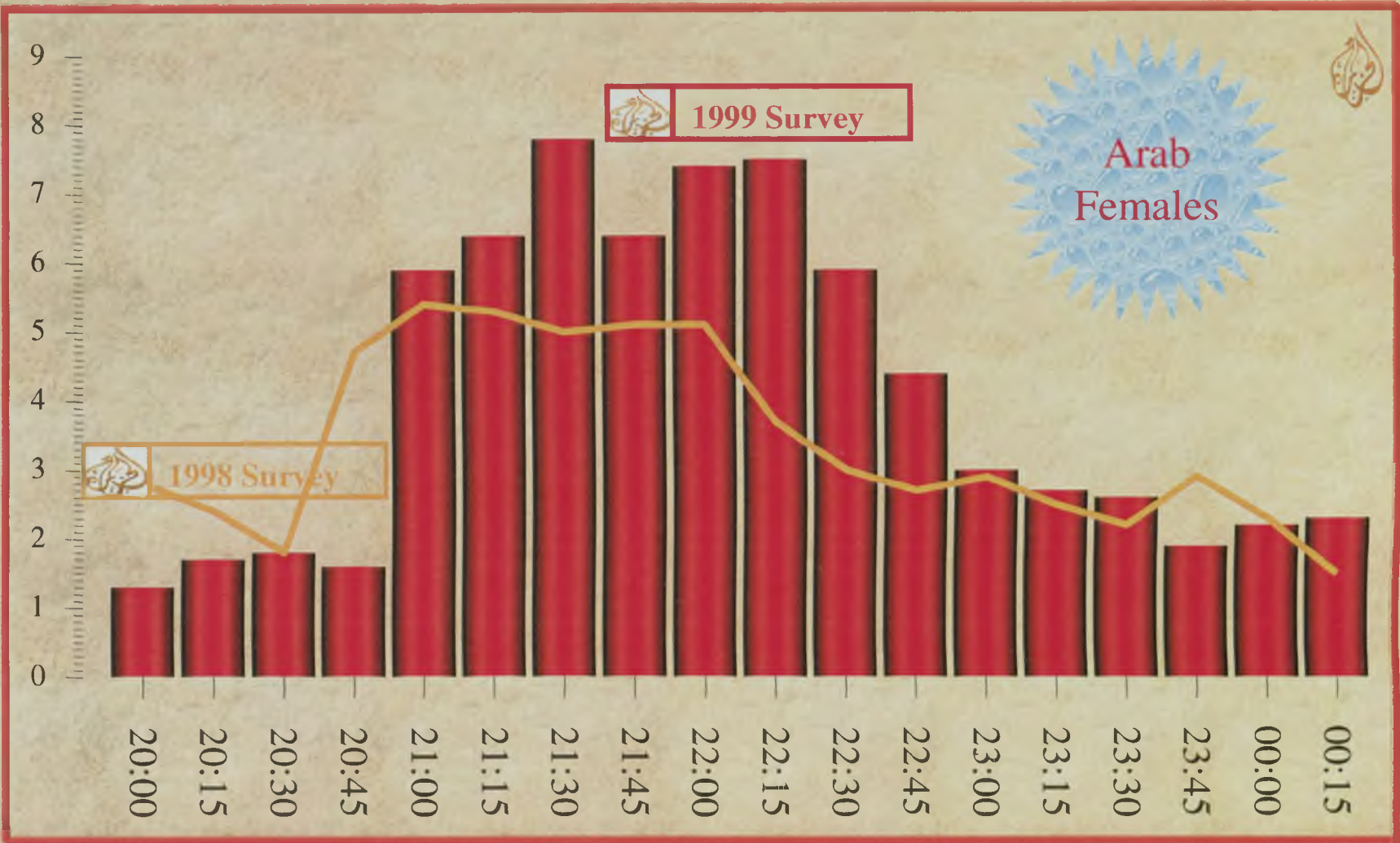
*Saudi TV Update May 1999 Vs Saudi TV & Radio Survey Jan 99

Urban Comparison



A glance to growing audiences of Al Jazeera Satellite Channel

Arab Females Reach, Last Survey Vs Latest Survey
@ Frequency Level 7 by 15 Minutes Saudi Local Time Segments



Source: PARC_SEAS (Schedule Evaluation & Analysis System)

*Saudi TV Update May 1999 Vs Saudi TV & Radio Survey Jan 99

Urban Comparison



Reaching Arab Males in Saudi Arabia
Average Day Per Week

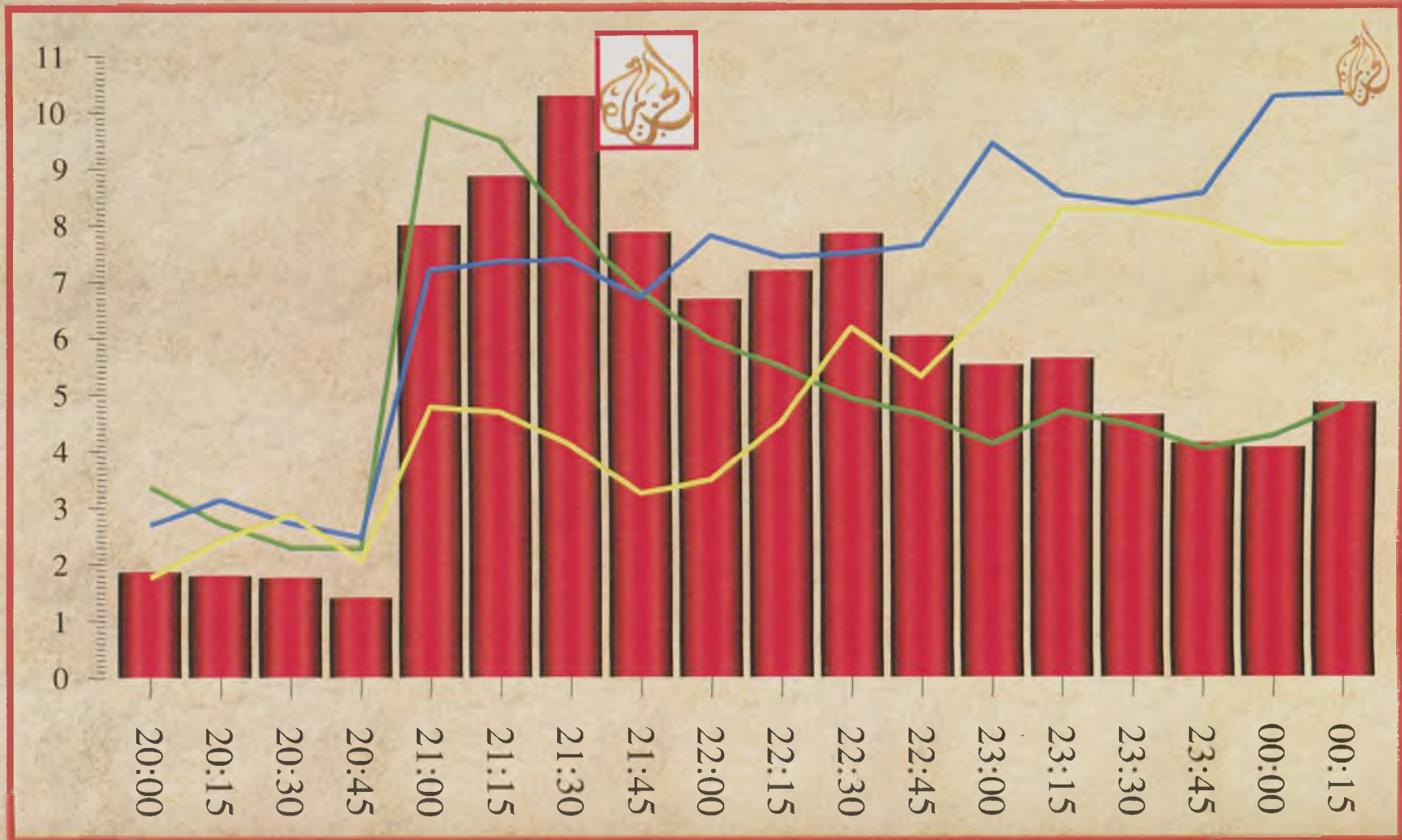
By 15 Minutes Saudi Local Time Segments
Source: Saudi TV Update_May 1999



Top Ranking Satellite TV Channels

Reaching Arab Males Residing in Saudi Urban Centers
Reach Evaluation @ Frequency Level 7 by 15 Minutes Saudi Local-Time Segments

Average Day Per Week



Source: PARC SEAS (Schedule Evaluation & Analysis System)
Saudi TV Update May 1999

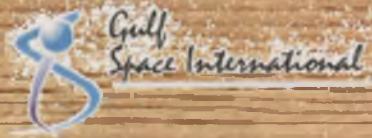
LEGEND →





Reaching Arab Males in Saudi Arabia
Across Days of the Week

By 15 Minutes Saudi Local Time Segments
Source: Saudi TV Update_May 1999



Top Ranking Satellite TV Channels

Reaching Arab Males Residing in Saudi Urban Centers

Reach Evaluation @ Frequency Level 7 by 15 Minutes Saudi Local Time Segments

Saturday

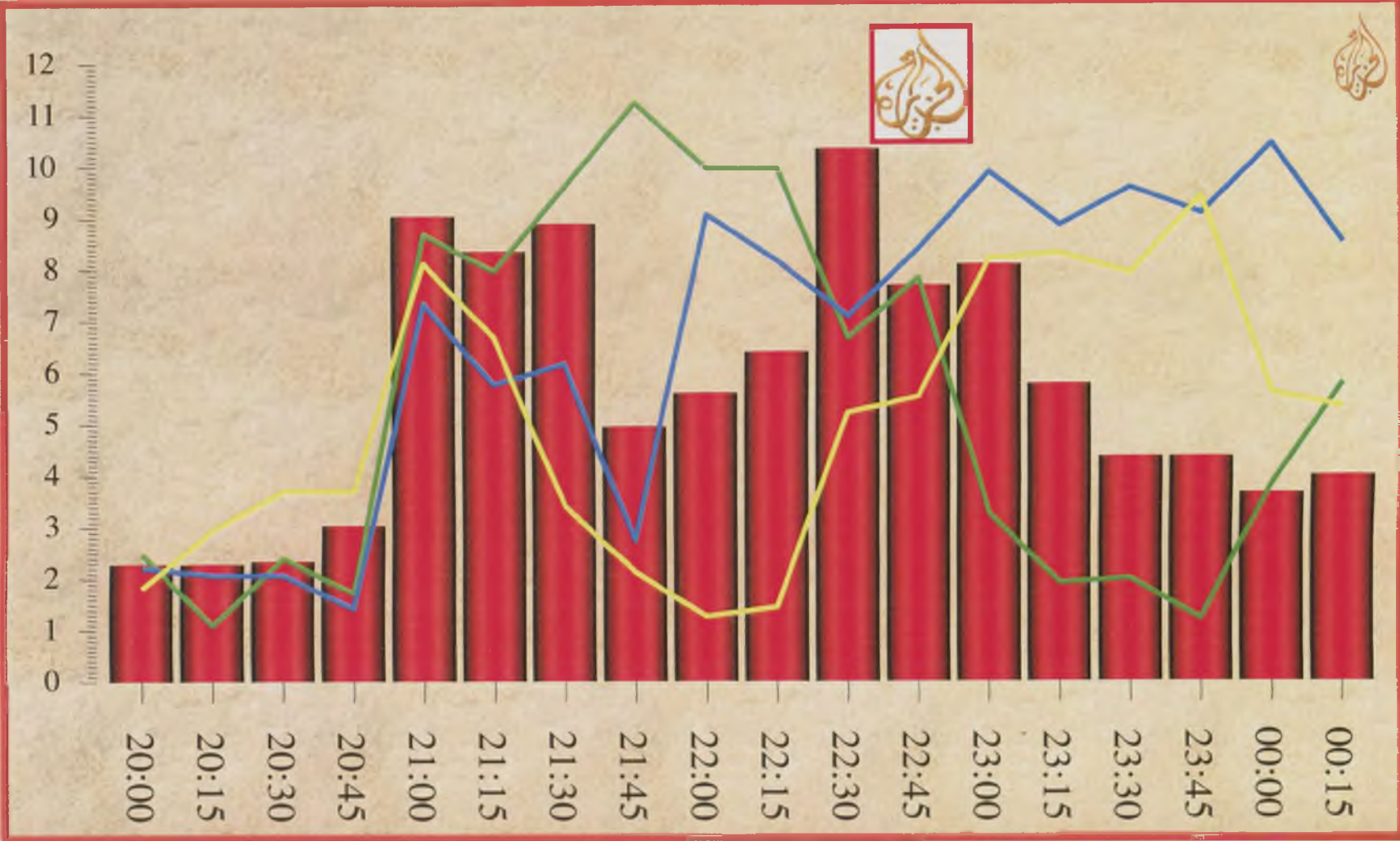


SPORTS DIALOGUE
Click on to review

“Sports Dialogue” is a weekly program extensively concentrating on the Arab & International Sports and the relevant issues.

The program hosts in each of its episodes one or more sports intellectual(s) to comment on the various sports activities & happenings.

*Presented “Live”
by Ayman Jadah,
Every Saturday at
18:05 GMT*



Source: PARC_SEAS (Schedule Evaluation & Analysis System)
Saudi TV Update May 1999

LEGEND →





Top Ranking Satellite TV Channels

Reaching Arab Males Residing in Saudi Urban Centers

Reach Evaluation @ Frequency Level: 7 by 15 Minutes Saudi Local Time Segments

Sunday



RELIGION & LIFE

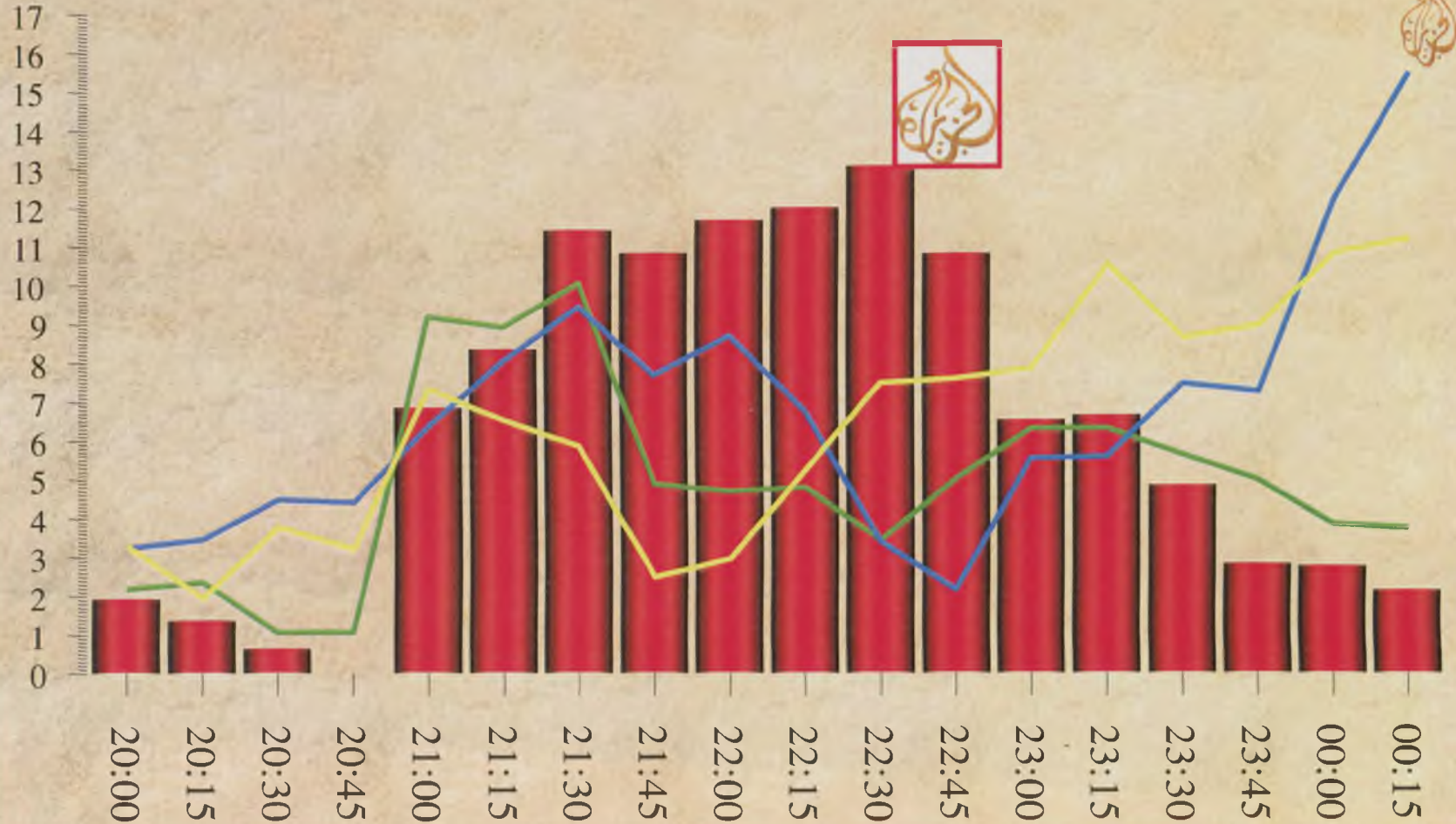
Click on to review

“Religion & Life”

broadcasts Social Issues and the New Developments ..from an Islamic point of view, concentrating on specific matters affecting Muslim’s and their life.

The program hosts Islamic Scholars, Intellectuals and Experts from all over the world.

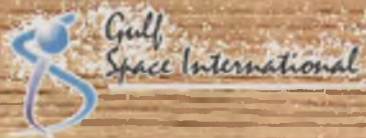
Presented “Live” by Maher Abdallah, Every Sunday at 18:05 GMT



Source: PARC_SEAS (Schedule Evaluation & Analysis System)
Saudi TV Update May 1999

LEGEND →





Top Ranking Satellite TV Channels

Reaching Arab Males Residing in Saudi Urban Centers

Reach Evaluation @ Frequency Level 7 by 15 Minutes Saudi Local Time Segments

Monday



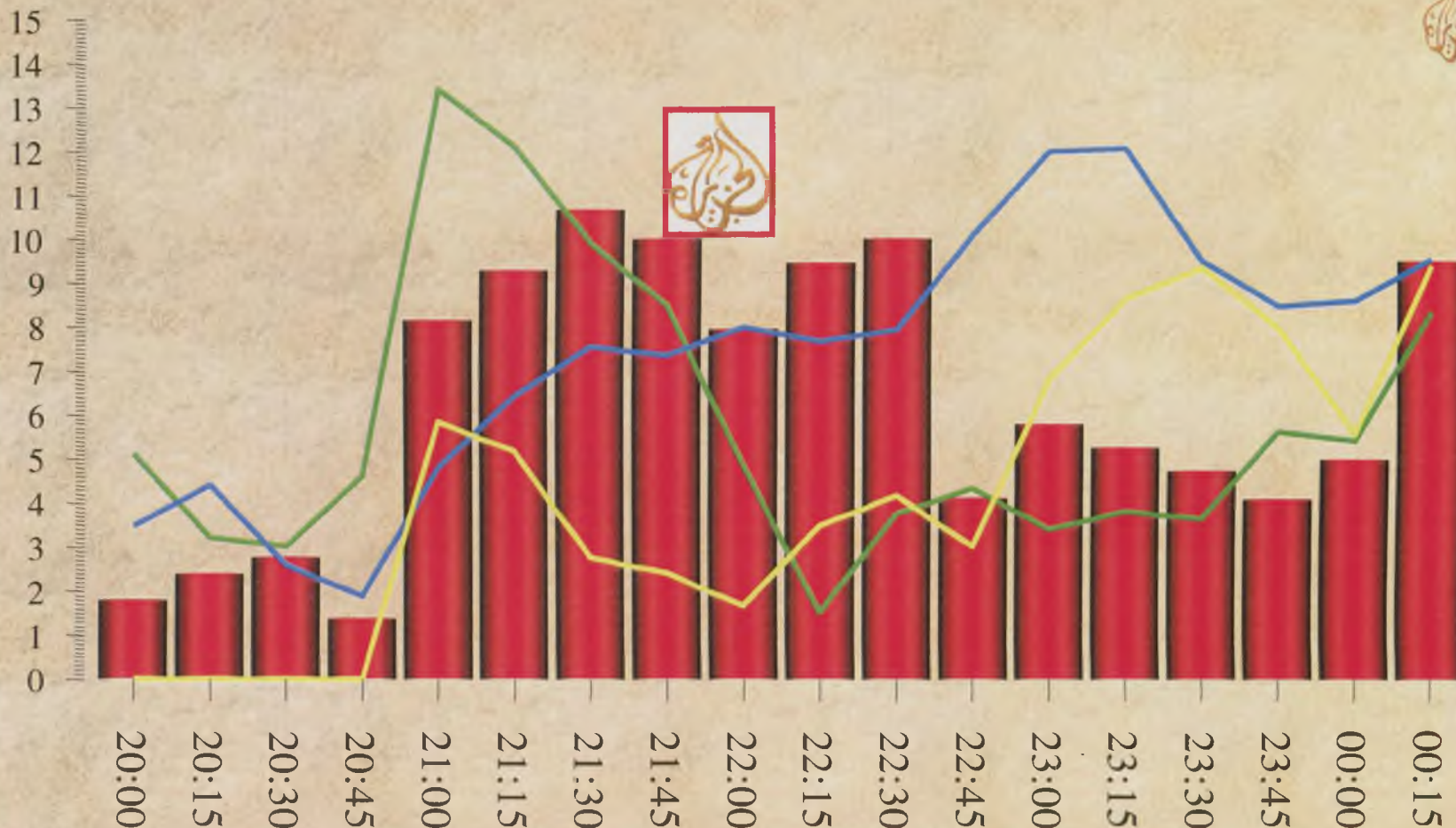
MORE THAN ONE OPINION

[Click on to review](#)

“More than one Opinion” is a controversial platform to variety of opinions and different views on Political/ Economic/ Social/ Scientific & Cultural Issues.

The program hosts personalities concerned with Arab and International Issues which are discussed freely without reservation.

Presented “Live” by Sami Haddad, Every Monday at 18:05 GMT



Source: PARC_SEAS (Schedule Evaluation & Analysis System)
Saudi TV Update May 1999

LEGEND →





Top Ranking Satellite TV Channels

Reaching Arab Males Residing in Saudi Urban Centers
Reach Evaluation @ Frequency Level_7 by 15 Minutes Saudi Local Time Segments

Tuesday

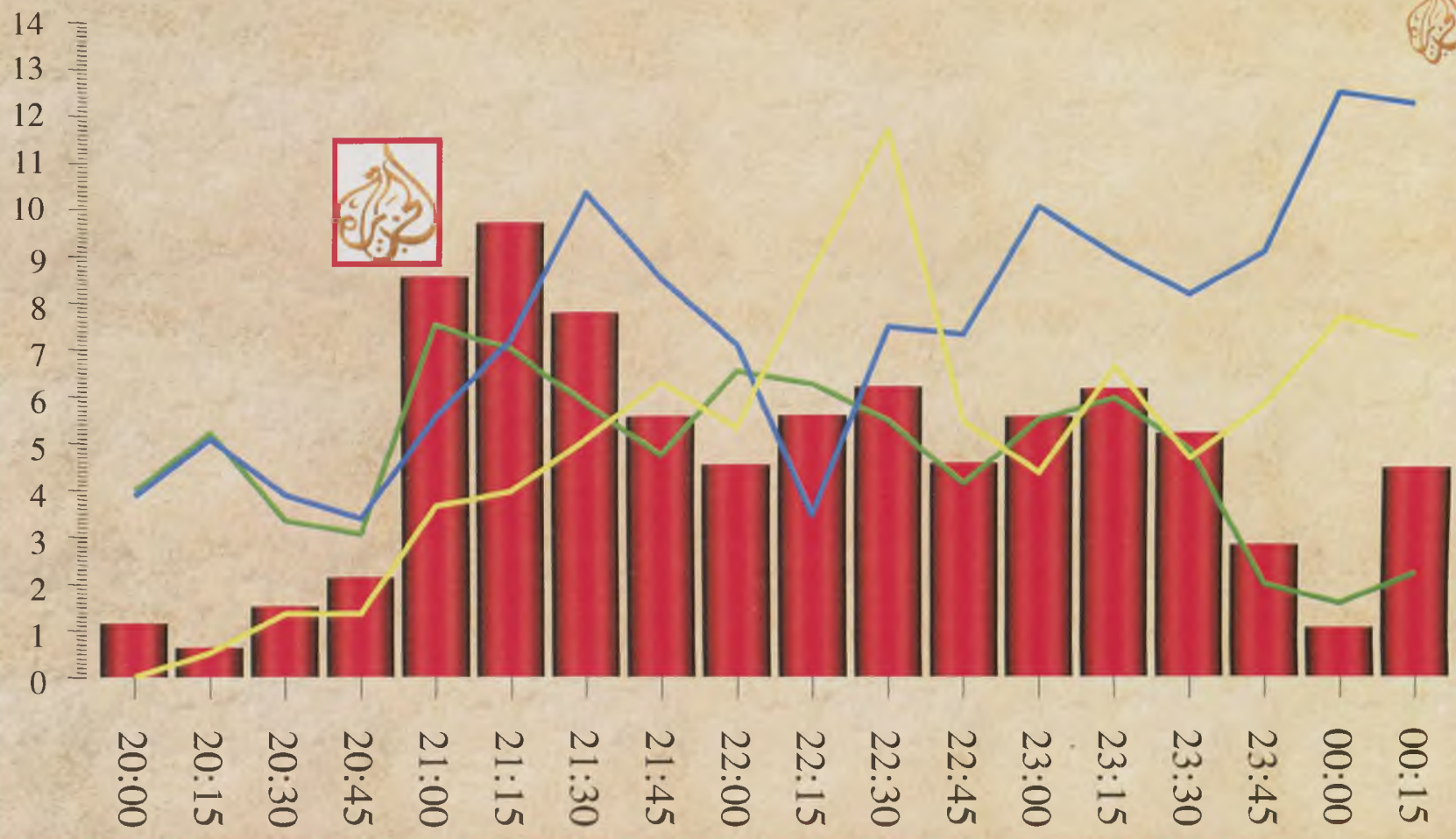


OPPOSITE DIRECTION
Click on to review

“Opposite Direction” is a new successful experience in the Arab Televised Media & believed to be the most Controversial Live Show in the region.

The program hosts two opposing figures who embark to defend their viewpoints and answer questions posed by viewers.

*Presented “Live”
by Faisal Al-Qassemi,
Every Tuesday at
18:05 GMT*



Source: PARC_SEAS (Schedule Evaluation & Analysis System)
Saudi TV Update May 1999

LEGEND →





Top Ranking Satellite TV Channels

Reaching Arab Males Residing in Saudi Urban Centers
Reach Evaluation @ Frequency Level_7 by 15 Minutes Saudi Local Time Segments

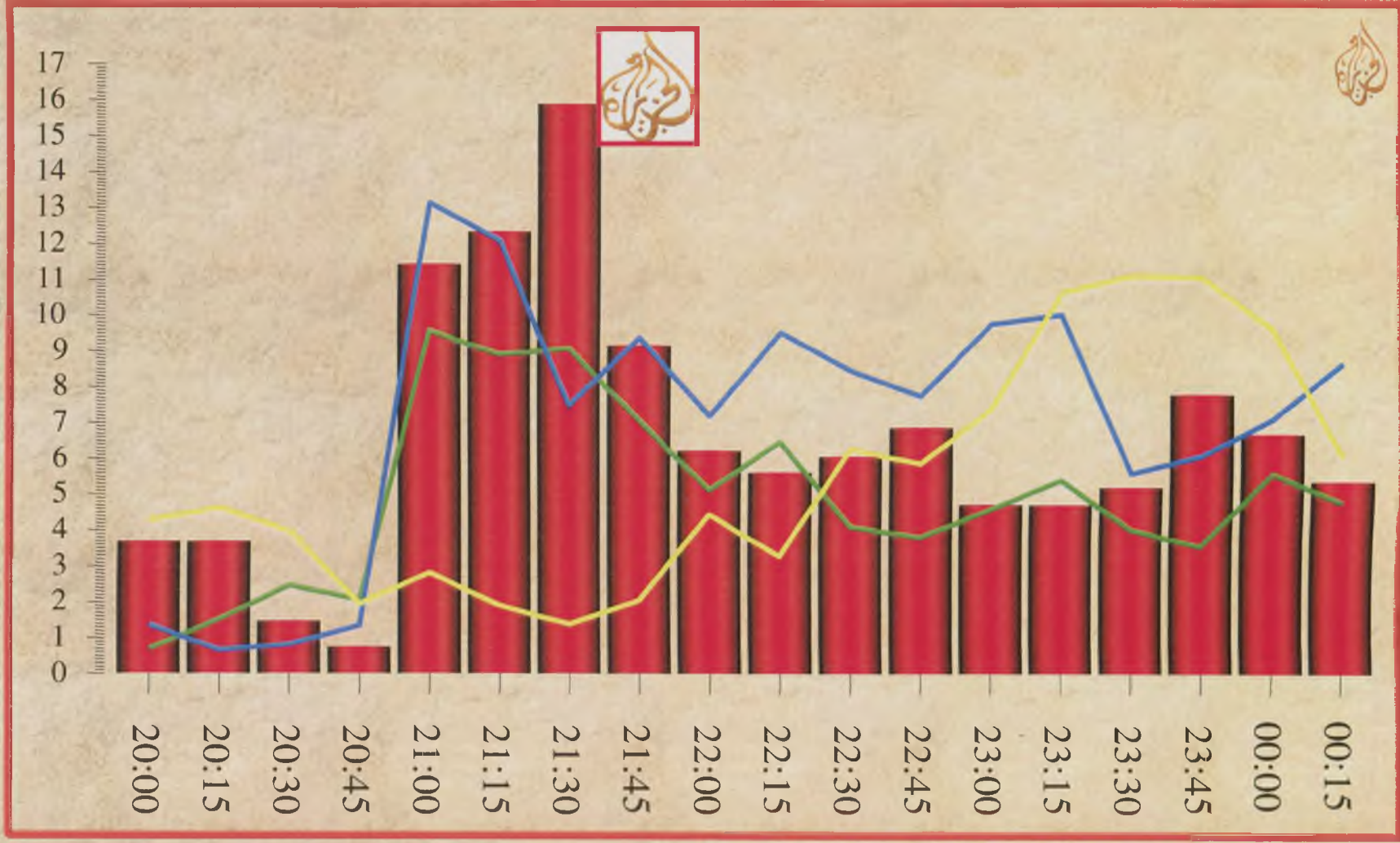
Wednesday



“No Frontiers” is an another renown controversial program on JSC, extensively focusing on current affairs interested to the Arab audiences.

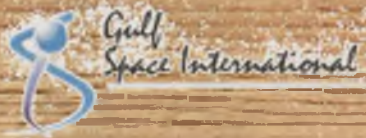
The program hosts Politicians, Party Leaders, Intellectuals, Experts & Islamic Scholars.

Presented “Live” by Ahmed Mansoor, Every Wednesday at 18:05 GMT



Source: PARC_SEAS (Schedule Evaluation & Analysis System)
Saudi TV Update_May 1999

LEGEND → JSC LBC FUTURE



Top Ranking Satellite TV Channels

Reaching Arab Males Residing in Saudi Urban Centers

Reach Evaluation @ Frequency Level 7 by 15 Minutes Saudi Local Time Segments

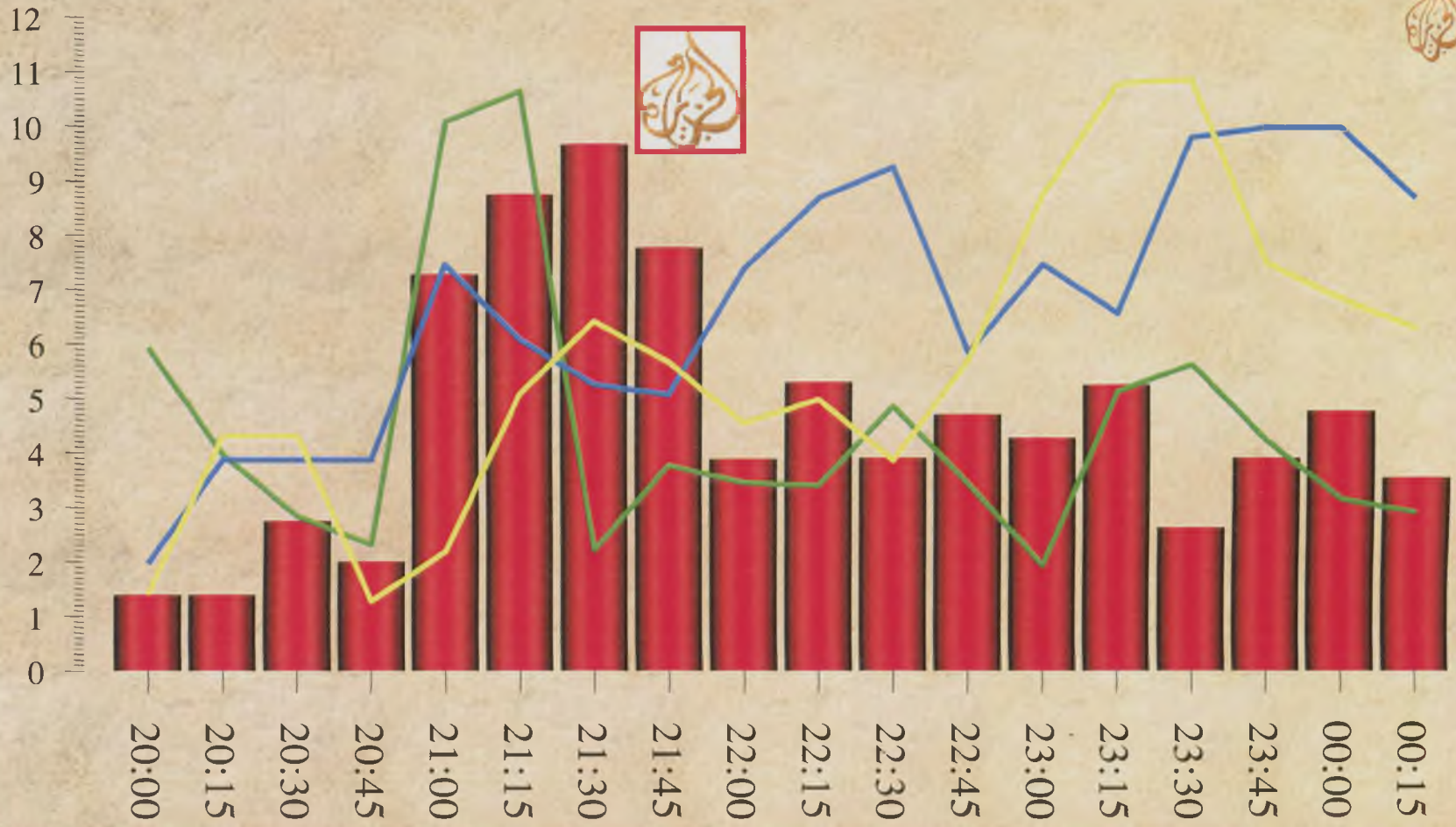
Thursday



STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL
Click on to review

“Strictly Confidential” is a very interesting program. Each of its episodes are always shocking & unexpected. It deals with Sensitive Controversial Social, Political & Ethical Issues that are mostly avoided by the media in the region.

Presented by Yusri Fudah, Every Thursday at 18:35 GMT



Source: PARC_SEAS (Schedule Evaluation & Analysis System)
Saudi TV Update May 1999





Top Ranking Satellite TV Channels

Reaching Arab Males Residing in Saudi Urban Centers
Reach Evaluation @ Frequency Level 7 by 15 Minutes Saudi Local Time Segments

Friday

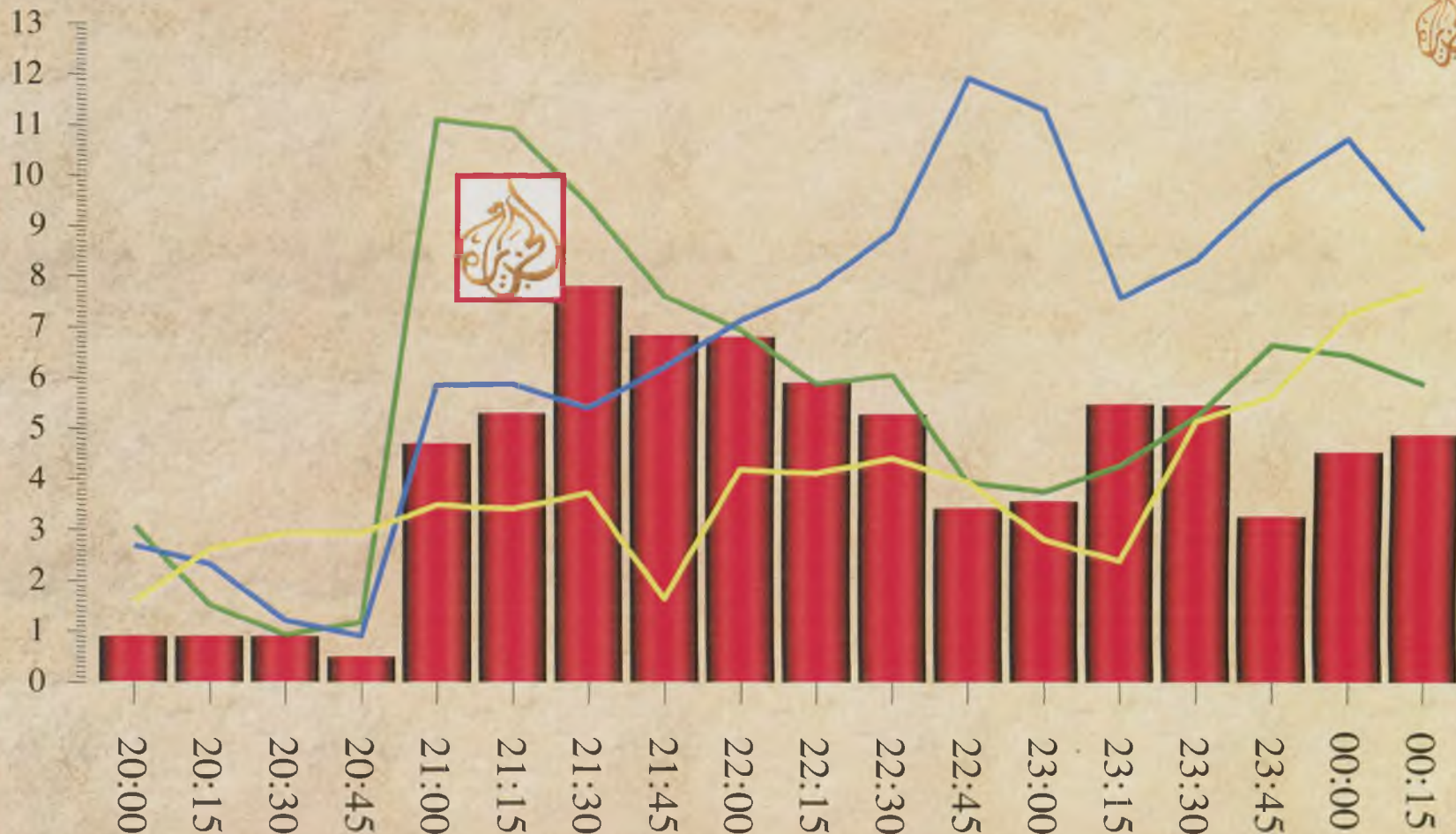


MORE THAN ONE OPINION
Click on to review

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The program hosts personalities concerned with Arab and Int'l Issues which are discussed freely without reservation.

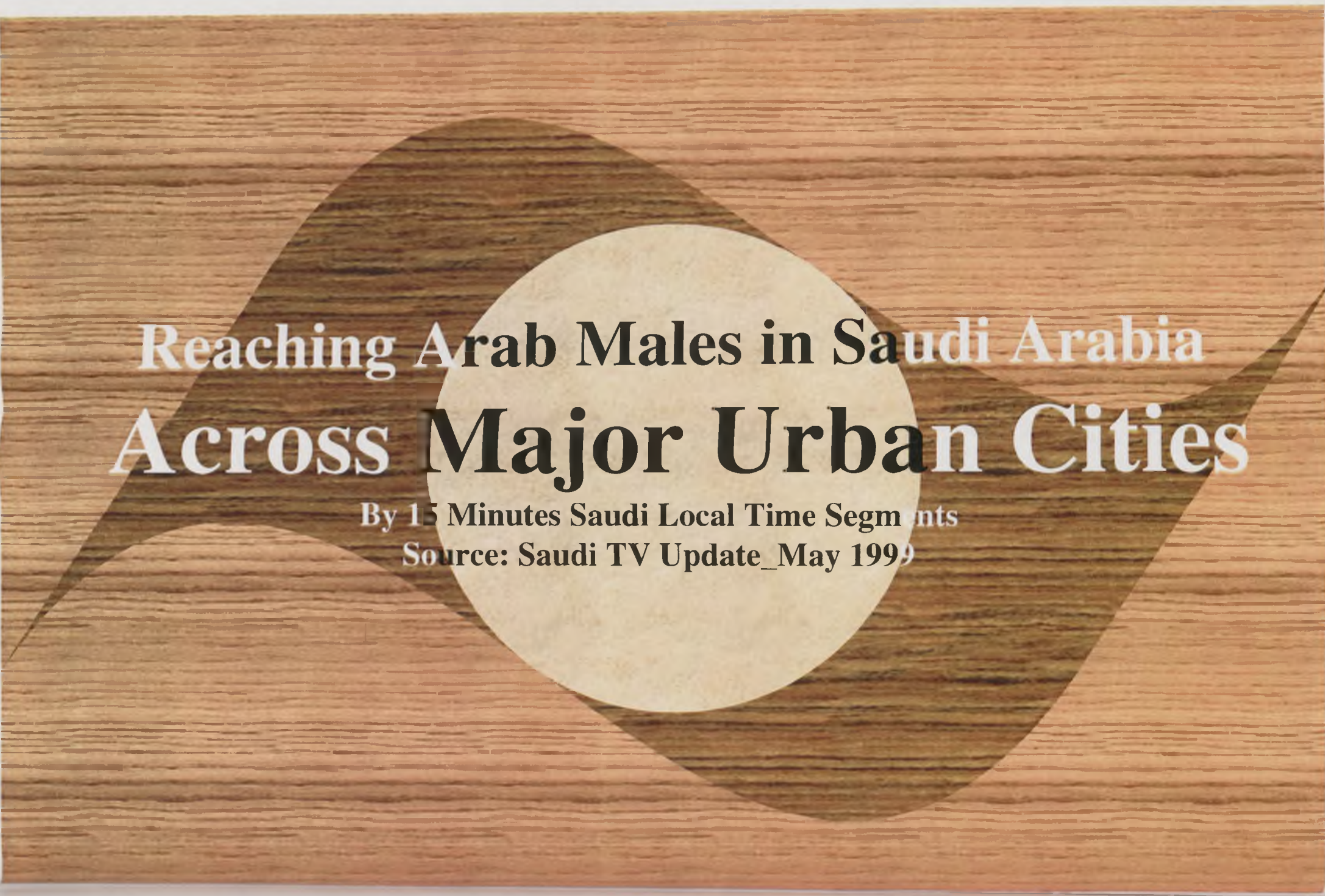
*Presented “Live”
by Sami Haddad,
Every Monday at
18:05 GMT*



Source: PARC_SEAS (Schedule Evaluation & Analysis System)
Saudi TV Update May 1999

LEGEND →





Reaching Arab Males in Saudi Arabia
Across Major Urban Cities

By 15 Minutes Saudi Local Time Segments

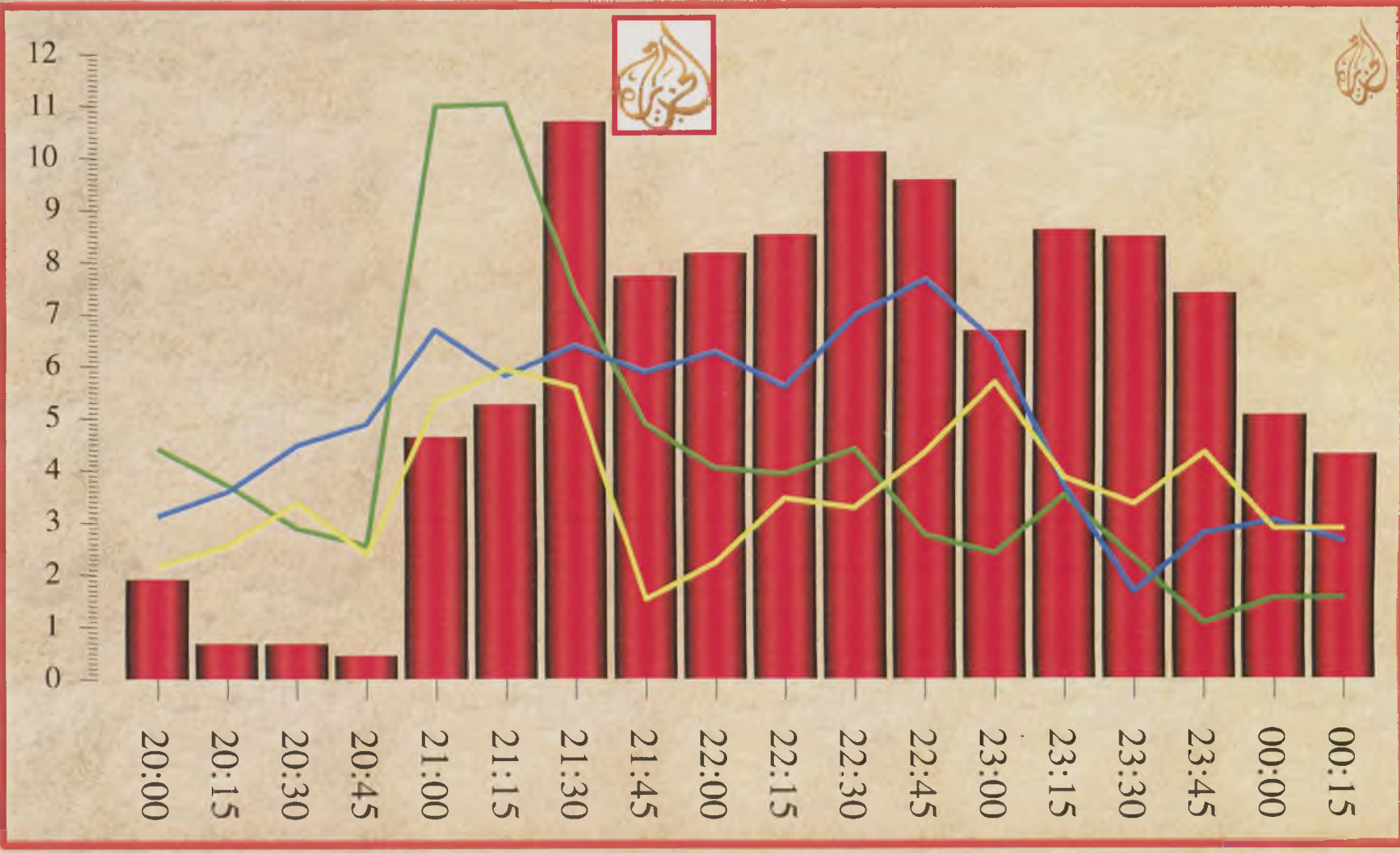
Source: Saudi TV Update_May 1999



Top Ranking Satellite TV Channels

Reaching Arab Males Residing in Saudi Urban Centers
Reach Evaluation @ Frequency Level 7 by 15 Minutes Saudi Local Time Segments

Dammam /Khobar (Eastern Province)



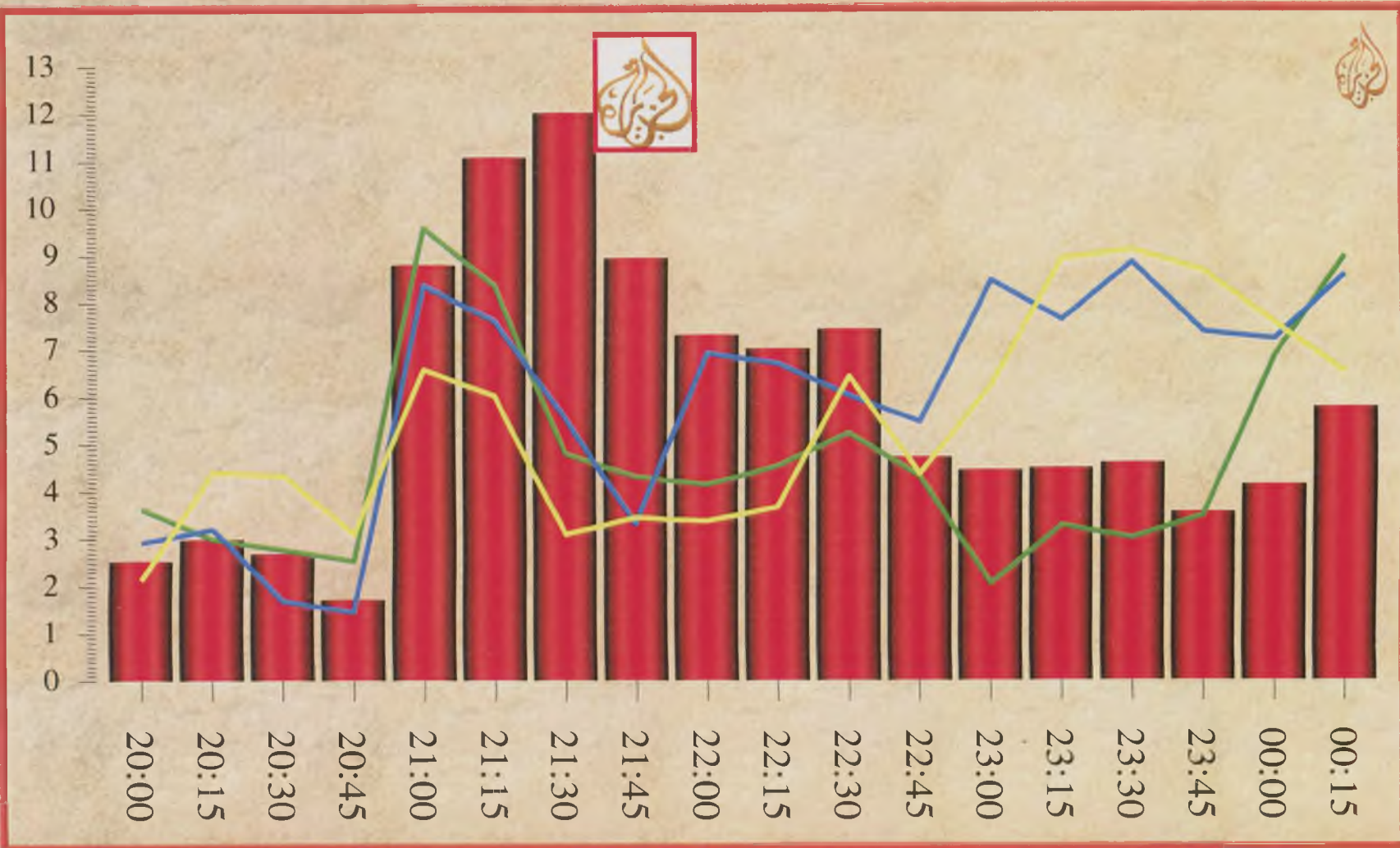


Top Ranking Satellite TV Channels

Reaching Arab Males Residing in Saudi Urban Centers

Reach Evaluation @ Frequency Level 7 by 15 Minutes Saudi Local Time Segments

Jeddah (Western Province)



Source: PARC_SEAS (Schedule Evaluation & Analysis System)
Saudi TV Update_May 1999

LEGEND →





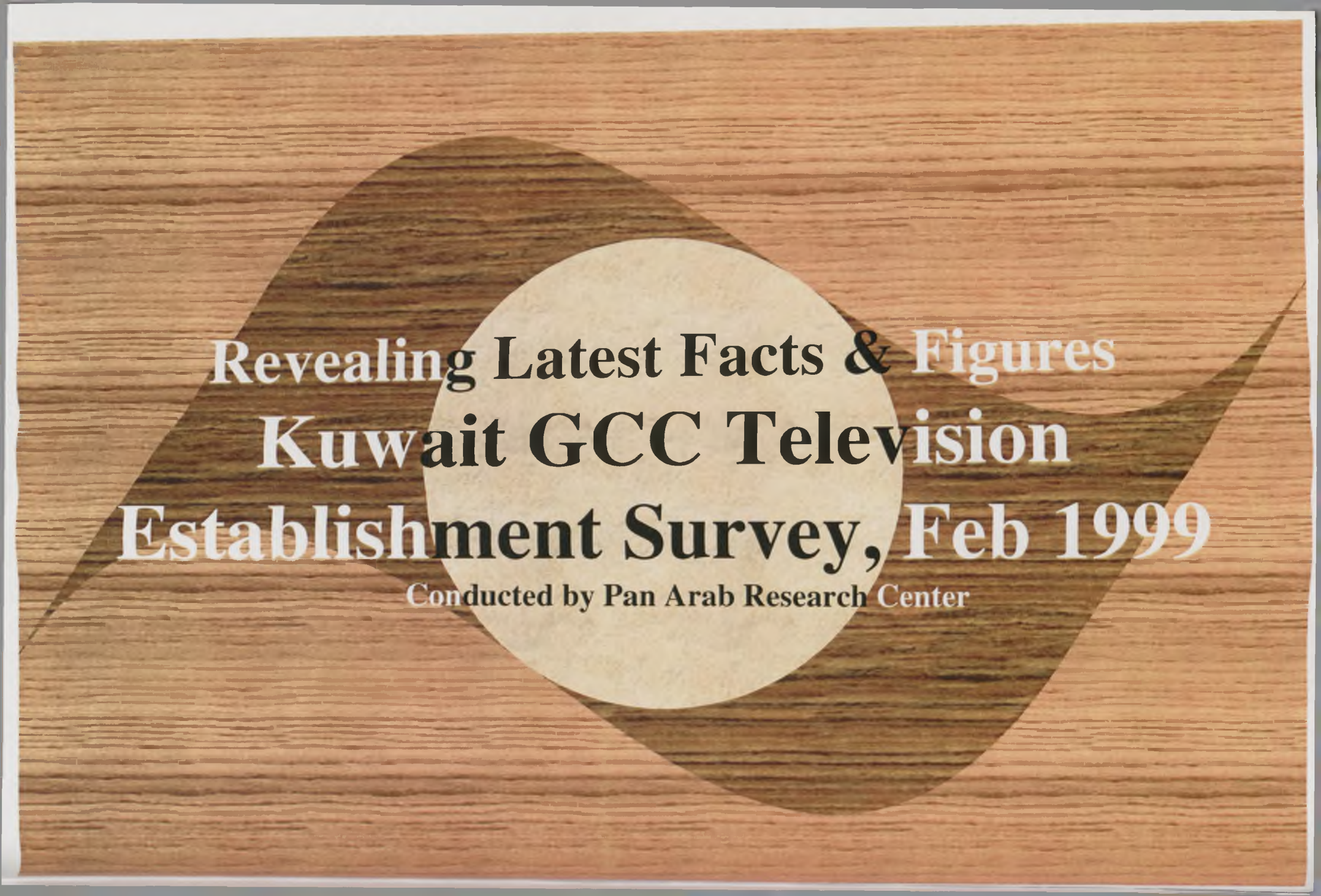
Top Ranking Satellite TV Channels

Reaching Arab Males Residing in Saudi Urban Centers

Reach Evaluation @ Frequency Level 7 by 15 Minutes Saudi Local Time Segments

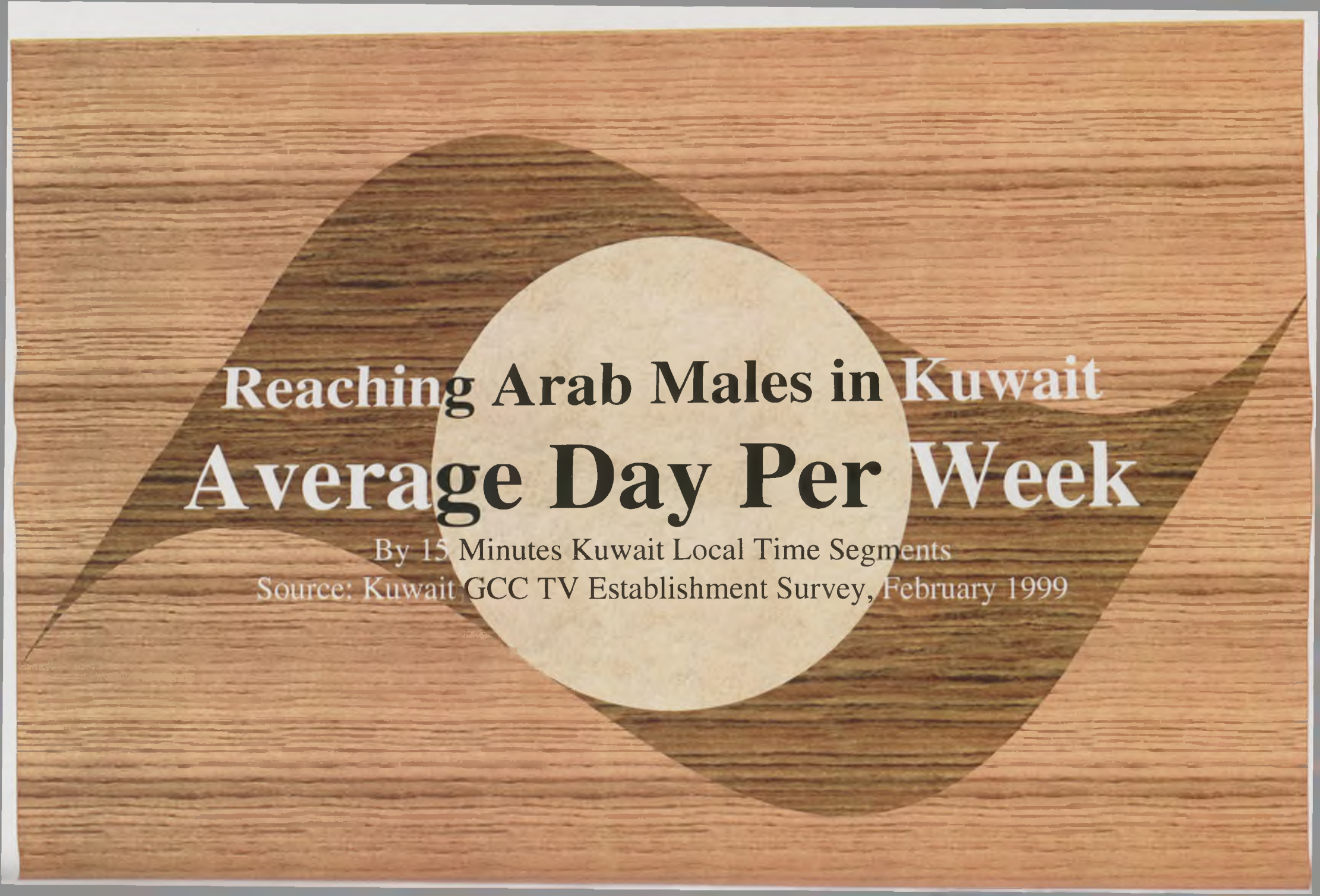
Riyadh (Central Region)





Revealing Latest Facts & Figures
Kuwait GCC Television
Establishment Survey, Feb 1999

Conducted by Pan Arab Research Center



Reaching Arab Males in Kuwait
Average Day Per Week

By 15 Minutes Kuwait Local Time Segments

Source: Kuwait GCC TV Establishment Survey, February 1999

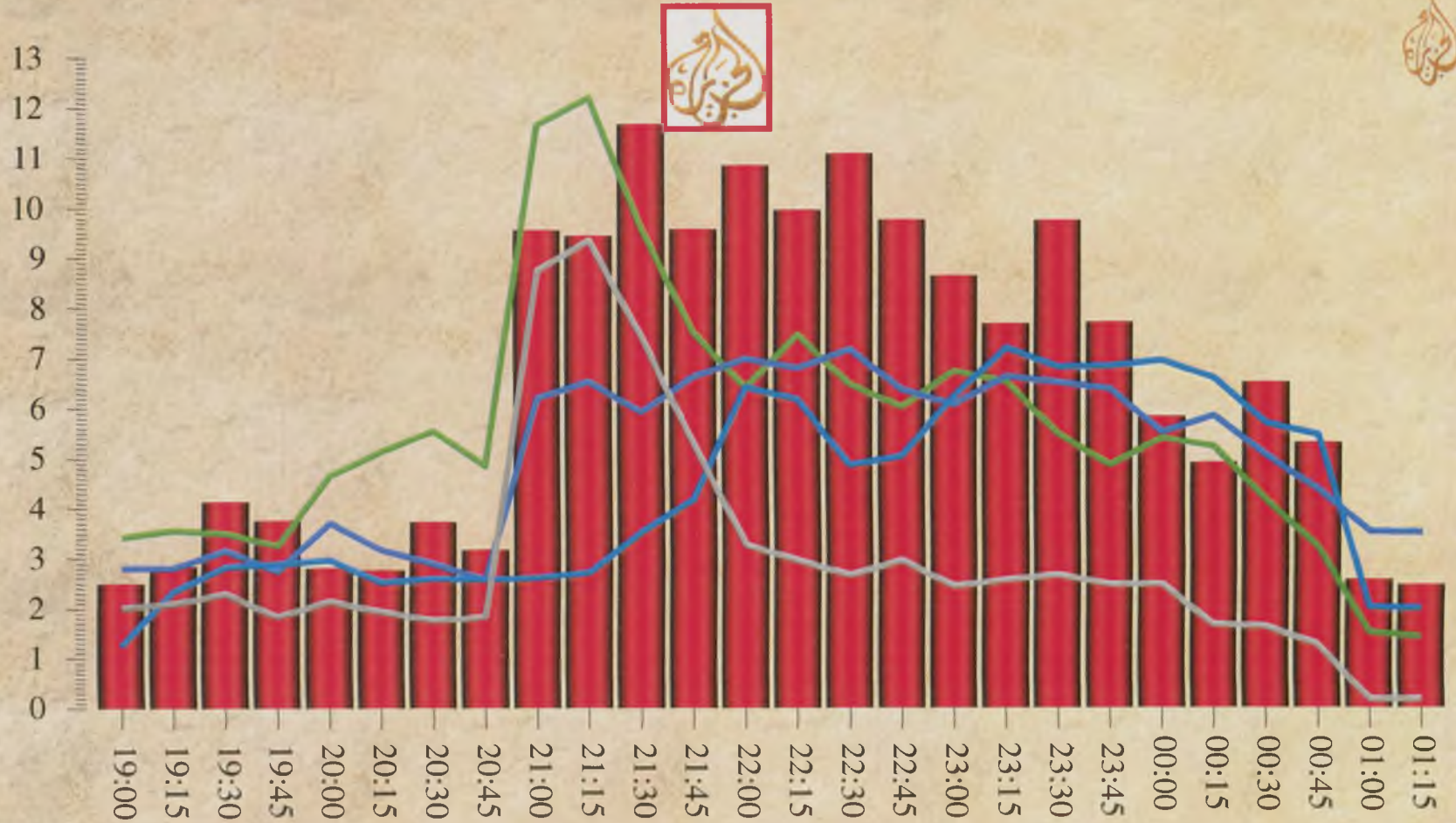


Top Ranking Satellite TV Channels

Reaching Arab Males Residing in Kuwait

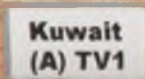
Reach Evaluation @ Frequency Level 7 by 15 Minutes Kuwait Local Time Segments

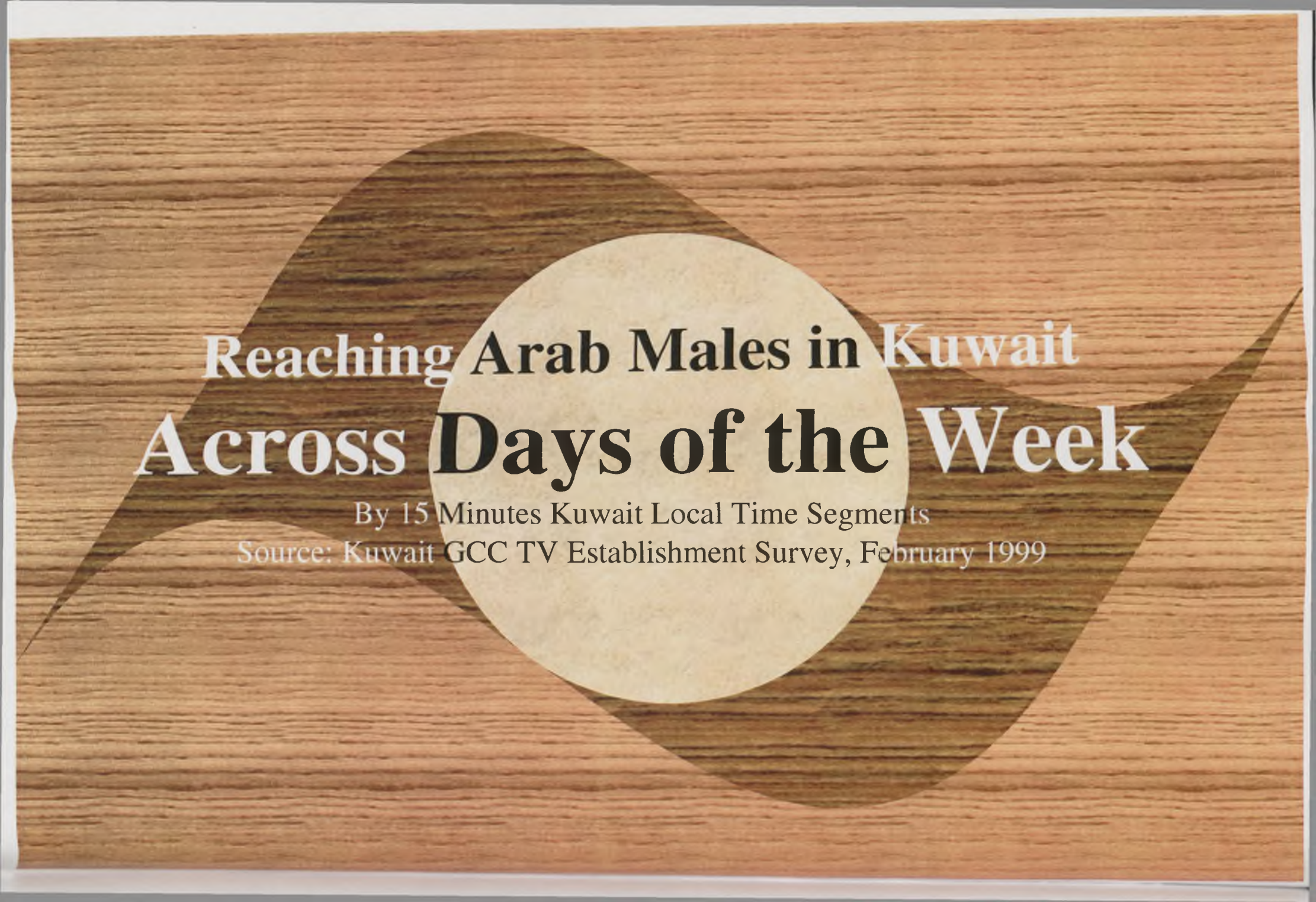
Average Day Per Week



Source: PARC SEAS (Schedule Evaluation & Analysis System)
Kuwait GCC TV Establishment Survey, Feb 1999

LEGEND

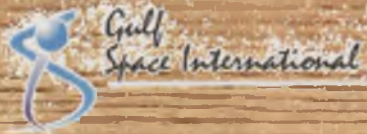




Reaching Arab Males in Kuwait
Across Days of the Week

By 15 Minutes Kuwait Local Time Segments

Source: Kuwait GCC TV Establishment Survey, February 1999



Top Ranking Satellite TV Channels

Reaching Arab Males Residing in Kuwait

Reach Evaluation @ Frequency Level 7 by 15 Minutes Kuwait Local Time Segments

Saturday



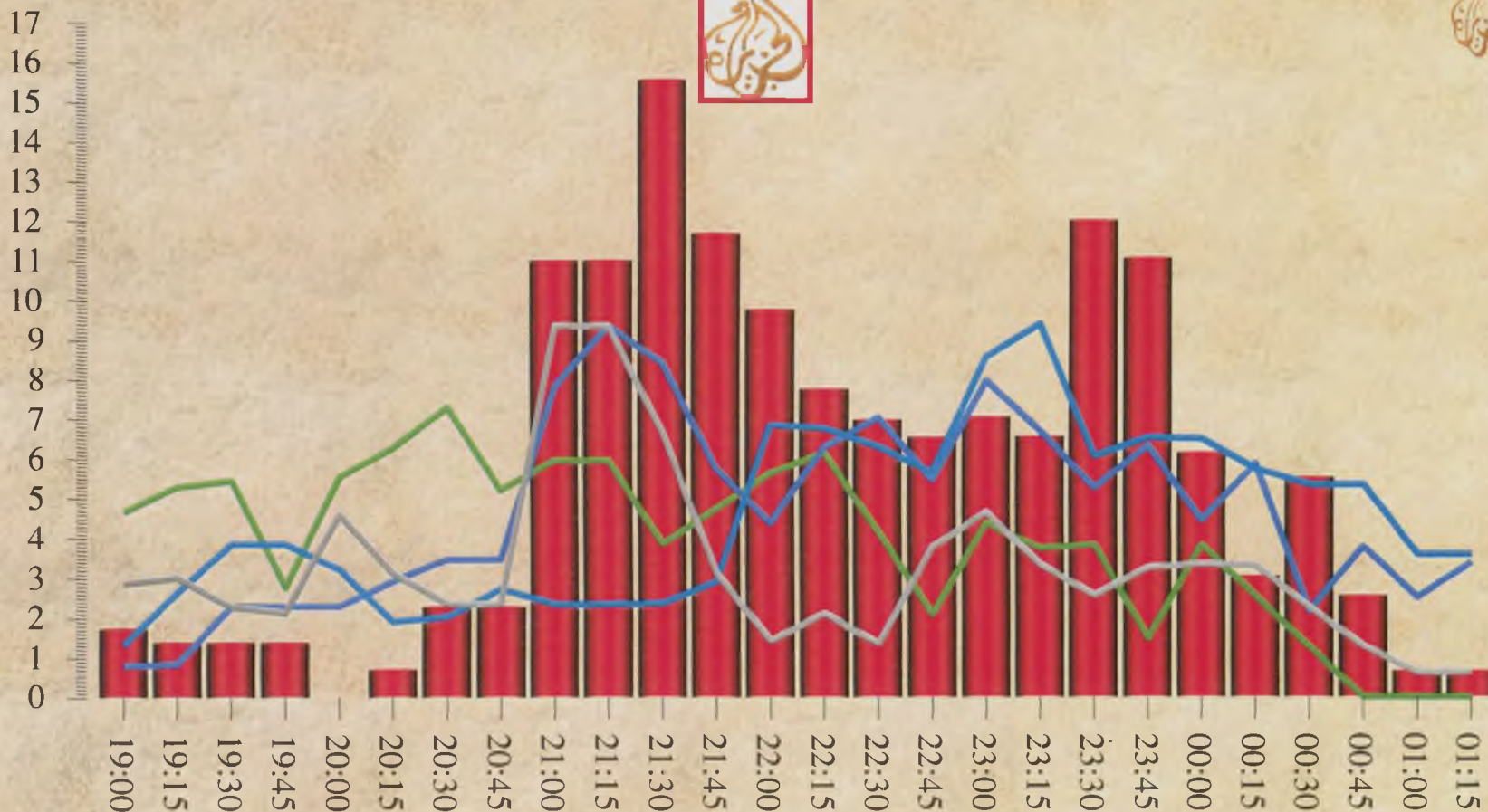
SPORTS DIALOGUE

[Click on to review](#)

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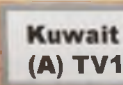
The program hosts in each of its episodes one or more sports intellectual(s) to comment on the various sports activities & happenings.

Presented “Live” by Ayman Jadah, Every Saturday at



Source: PARC_SEAS (Schedule Evaluation & Analysis System)
Kuwait GCC TV Establishment Survey, Feb 1999

LEGEND





Top Ranking Satellite TV Channels

Reaching Arab Males Residing in Kuwait

Reach Evaluation @ Frequency Level 7 by 15 Minutes Kuwait Local Time Segments

Sunday

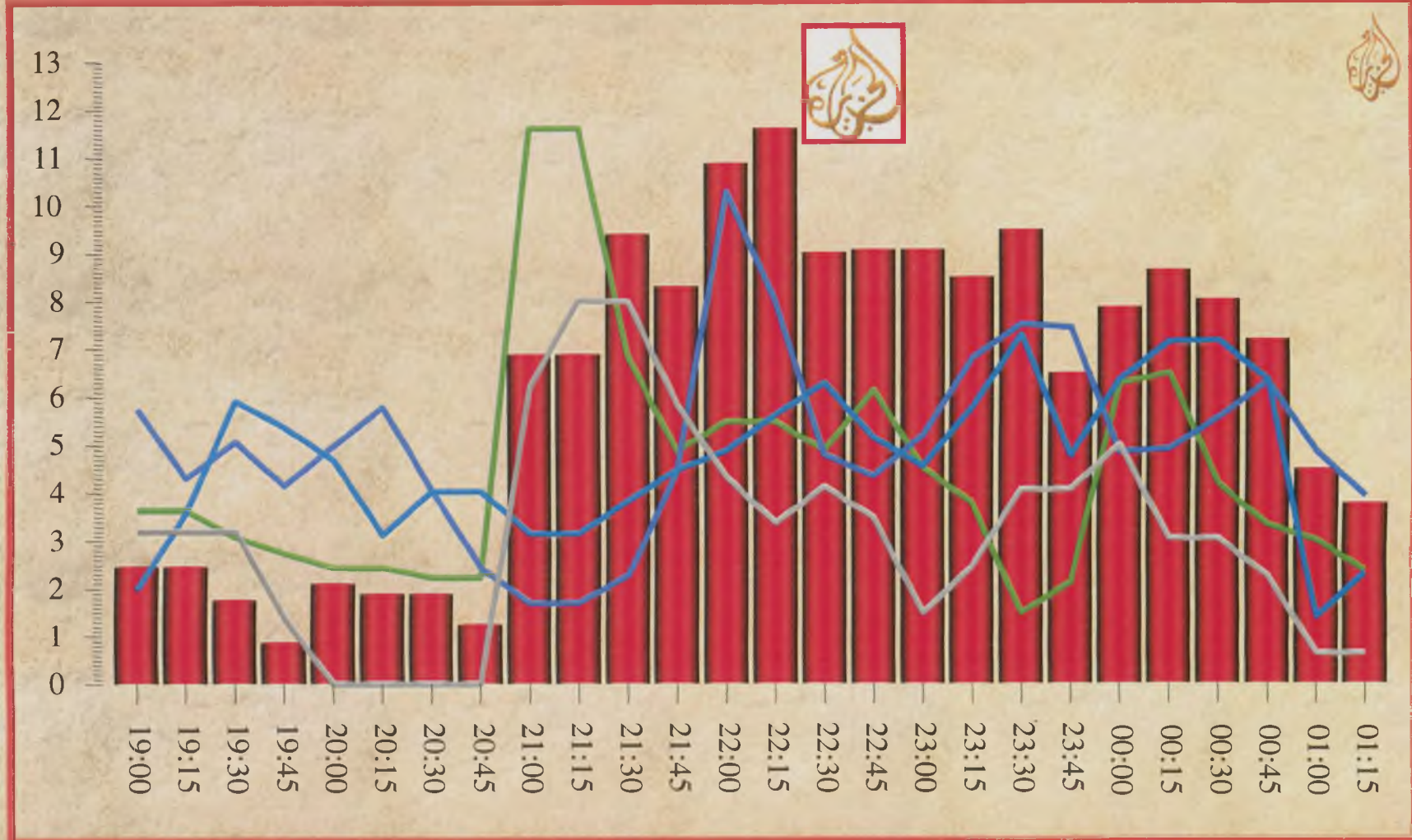


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Presented “Live” by Maher Abdallah, Every Sunday at 18:05 GMT



Source: PARC_SEAS (Schedule Evaluation & Analysis System) Kuwait GCC TV Establishment Survey, Feb 1999

LEGEND →



Top Ranking Satellite TV Channels

Reaching Arab Males Residing in Kuwait

Reach Evaluation @ Frequency Level 7 by 15 Minutes Kuwait Local Time Segments

Monday



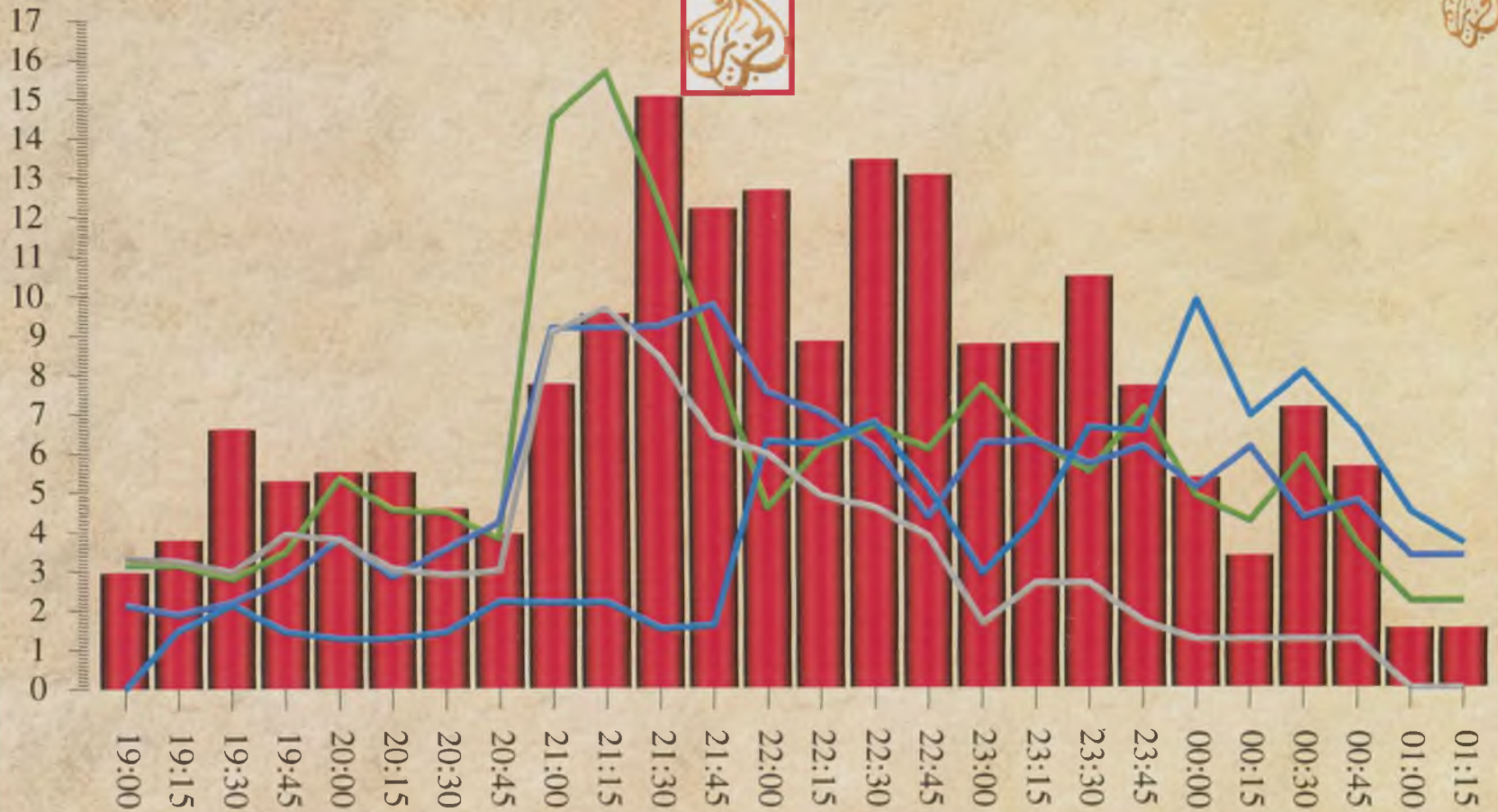
MORE THAN ONE OPINION

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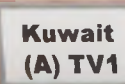
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Presented “Live” by Sami Haddad; Every Monday at 18:05 GMT



Source: PARC_SEAS (Schedule Evaluation & Analysis System)
Kuwait GCC TV Establishment Survey, Feb 1999

LEGEND





Top Ranking Satellite TV Channels

Reaching Arab Males Residing in Kuwait

Reach Evaluation @ Frequency Level 7 by 15 Minutes Kuwait Local Time Segments

Tuesday



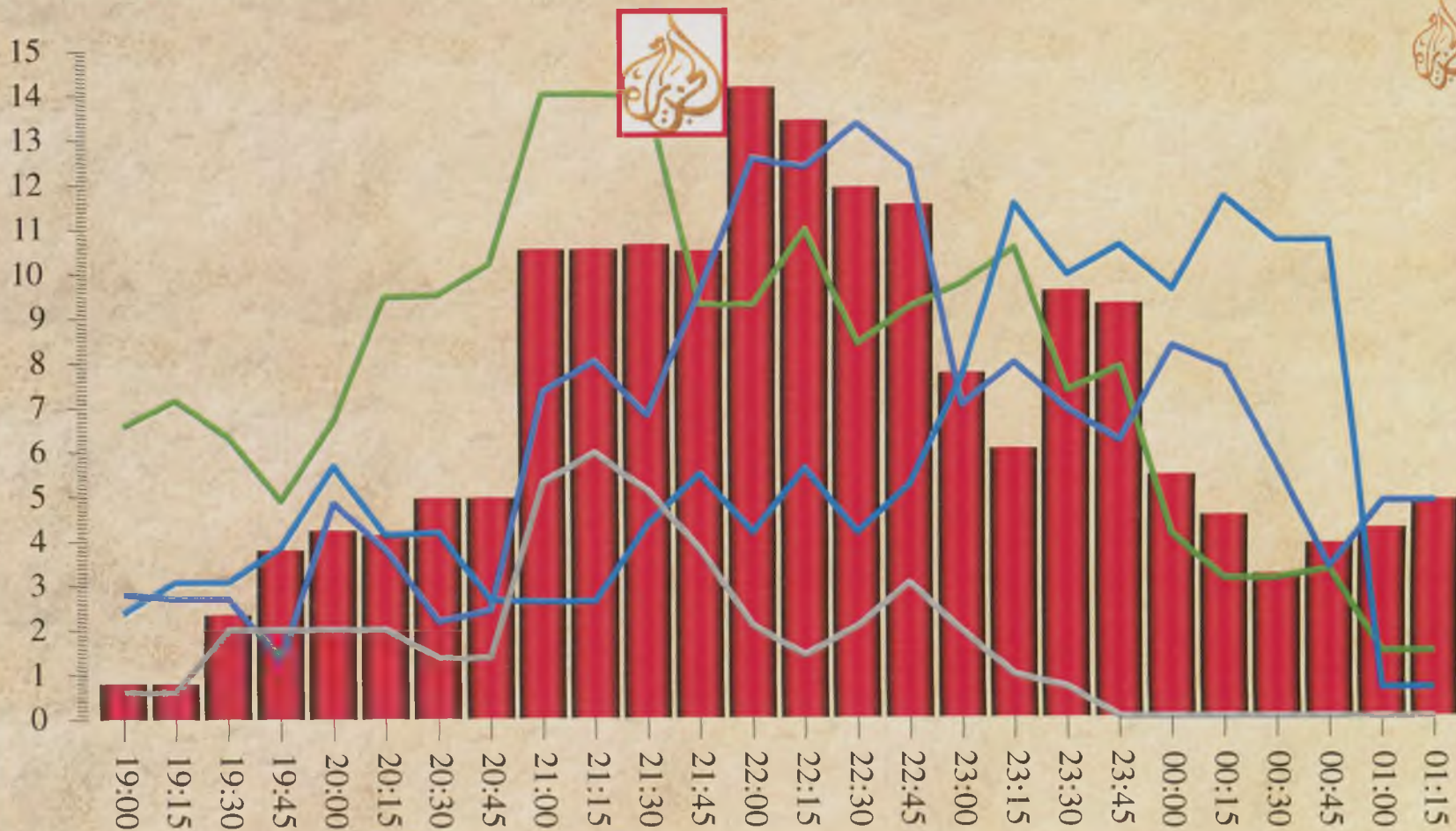
OPPOSITE DIRECTION

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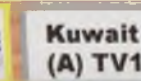
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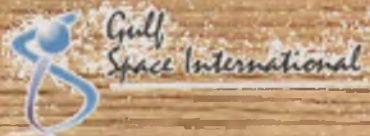
Presented “Live” by Eaisal Al Qassemi, Every Tuesday at 18:05 GMT



Source: PARC SEAS (Schedule Evaluation & Analysis System)
Kuwait GCC TV Establishment Survey, Feb 1999

LEGEND →





Top Ranking Satellite TV Channels

Reaching Arab Males Residing in Kuwait

Reach Evaluation @ Frequency Level 7 by 15 Minutes Kuwait Local Time Segments

Wednesday



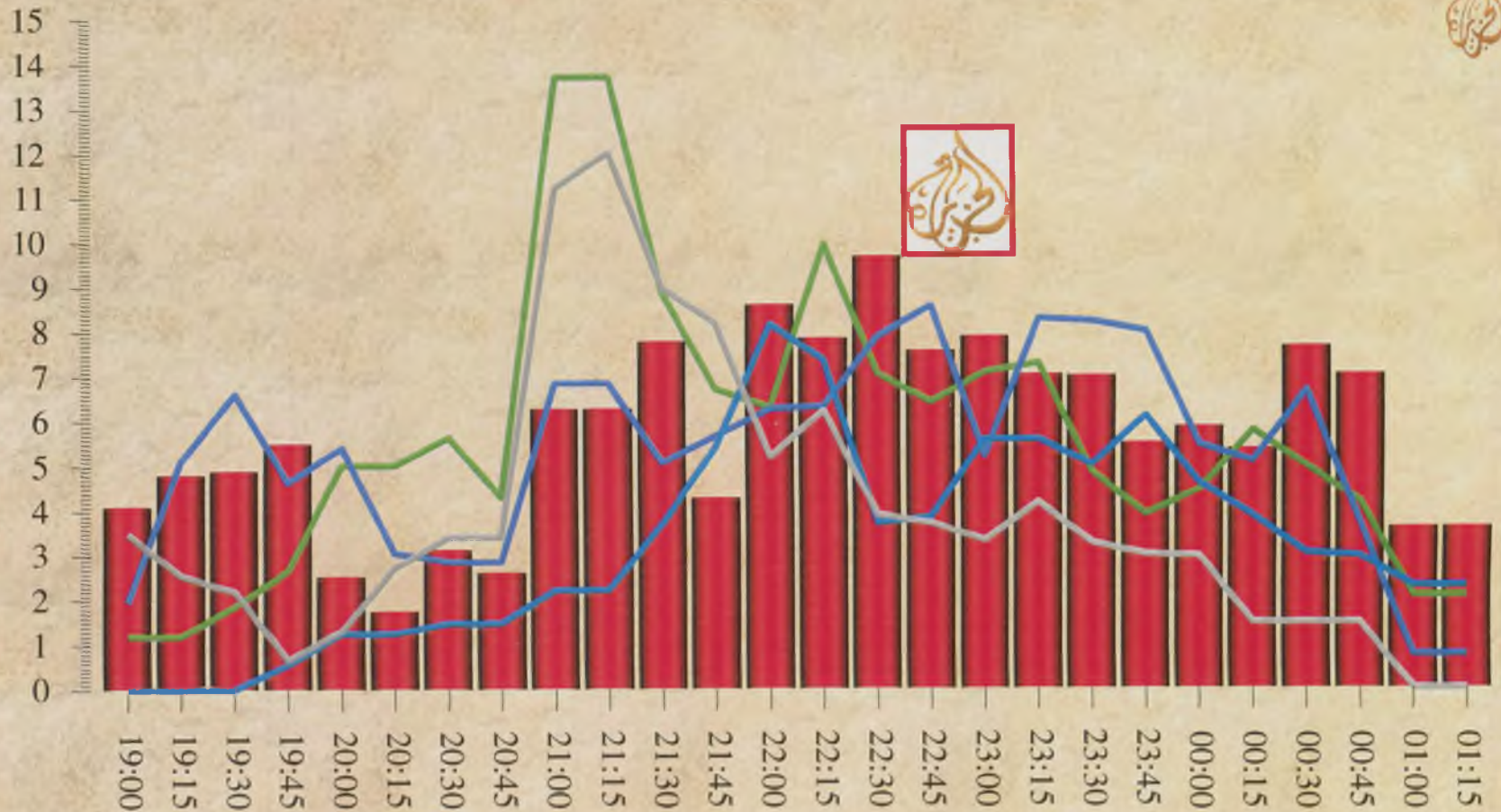
NO FRONTIERS

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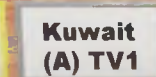
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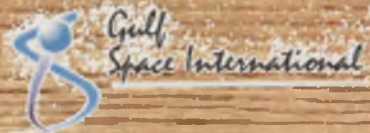
Presented “Live” by Ahmed Mansoor, Every Wednesday at 18:05 GMT



Source: PARC_SEAS (Schedule Evaluation & Analysis System)
Kuwait GCC TV Establishment Survey, Feb 1999

LEGEND →





Top Ranking Satellite TV Channels

Reaching Arab Males Residing in Kuwait

Reach Evaluation @ Frequency Level 7 by 15 Minutes Kuwait Local Time Segments

Thursday

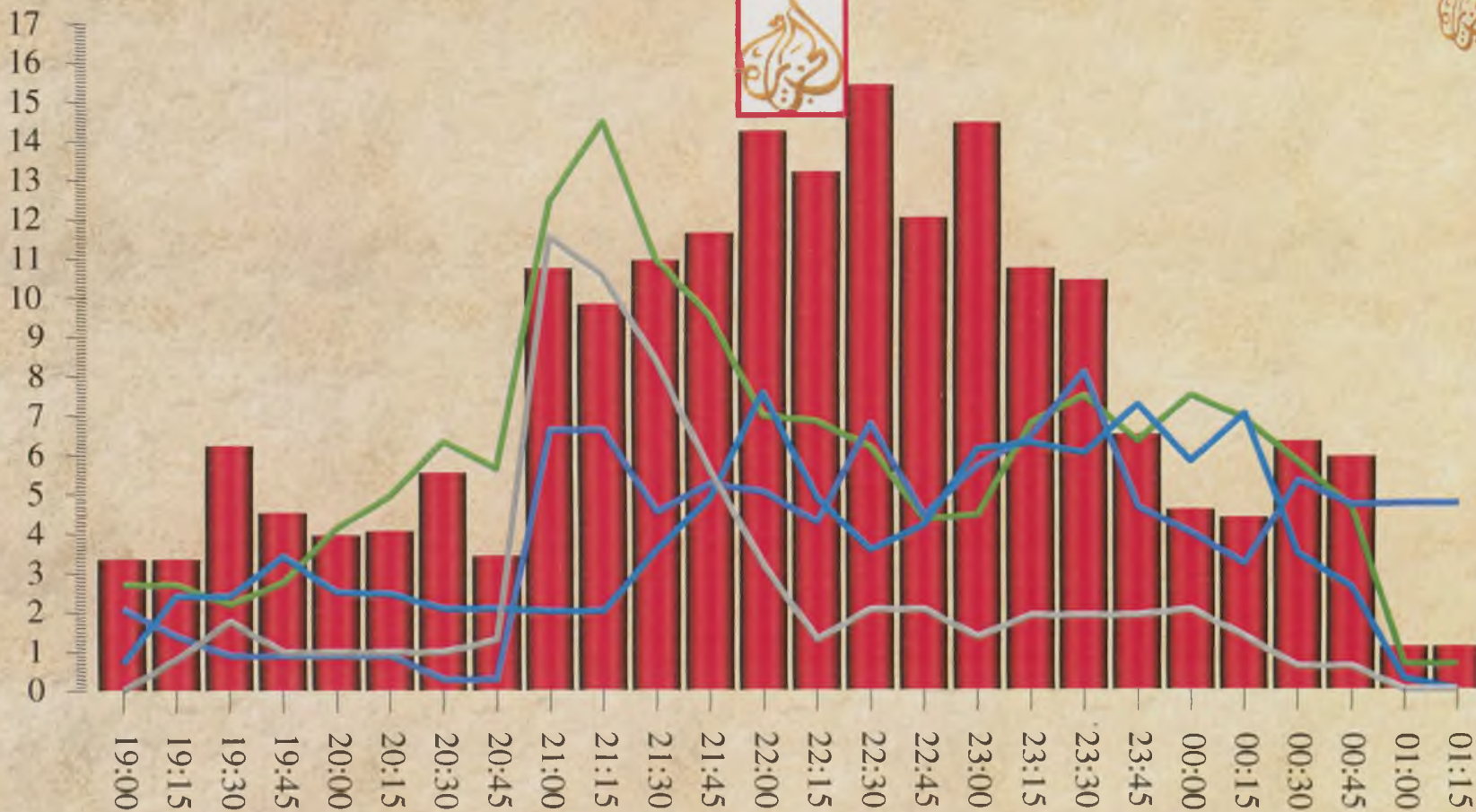


STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL
Click on to review

“Strictly Confidential” is a very interesting program. Each of its episodes are always shocking & unexpected. It deals with Sensitive Controversial Social, Political & Ethical Issues that are mostly avoided by the media in the region.

The program deals in each of its episode with a specific issue and looks for the causes of the problems and how they can be resolved.

Presented “Live”
by Yusri Fudah,
Every Thursday at
18:35 GMT



Source: PARC_SEAS (Schedule Evaluation & Analysis System)
Kuwait GCC TV Establishment Survey, Feb 1999

LEGEND



Kuwait (A) TV1



Top Ranking Satellite TV Channels

Reaching Arab Males Residing in Kuwait

Reach Evaluation @ Frequency Level 7 by 15 Minutes Kuwait Local Time Segments

Friday



44171-4383010 هاتف للمصارف
44171-4787007 فاكس مركز المصارف

MORE THAN ONE OPINION

[Click on to review](#)

“More than one Opinion” is a controversial platform to variety of opinions and different views on Political/ Economic/ Social/ Scientific & Cultural Issues.

The program hosts personalities concerned with Arab and Int'l Issues which are discussed freely without reservation.

On Friday ...it's a different Issue on the same platform of Monday

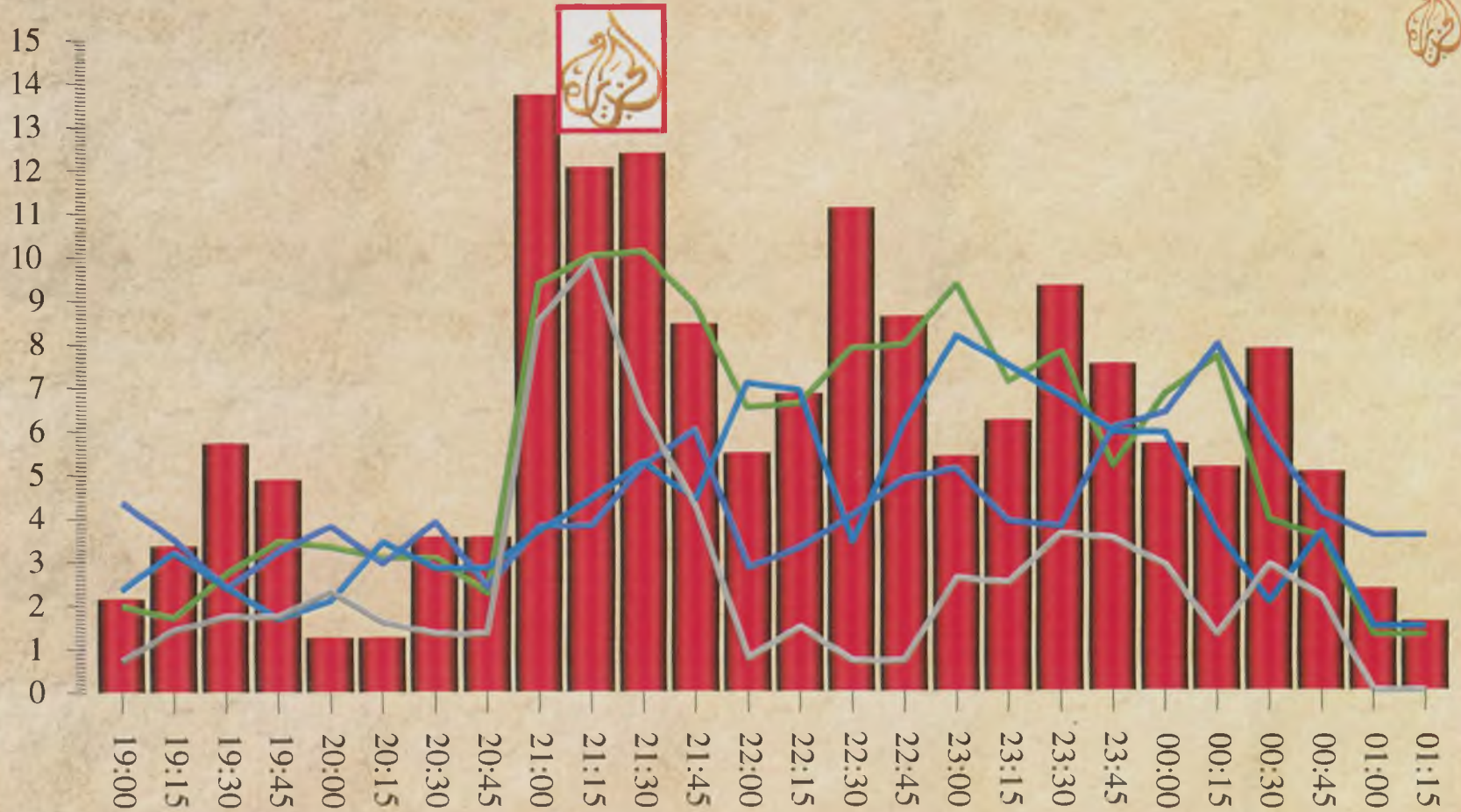
with different hosts.

Presented “Live”

by Sami Haddad,

Every Monday at

18:05 GMT



Source: PARC SEAS (Schedule Evaluation & Analysis System)
Kuwait GCC TV Establishment Survey, Feb 1999

LEGEND



Kuwait (A) TV1



Reaching Arab Males in Kuwait
Across all Cities in Kuwait

By 15 Minutes Kuwait Local Time Segments

Source: Kuwait GCC TV Establishment Survey February 1999

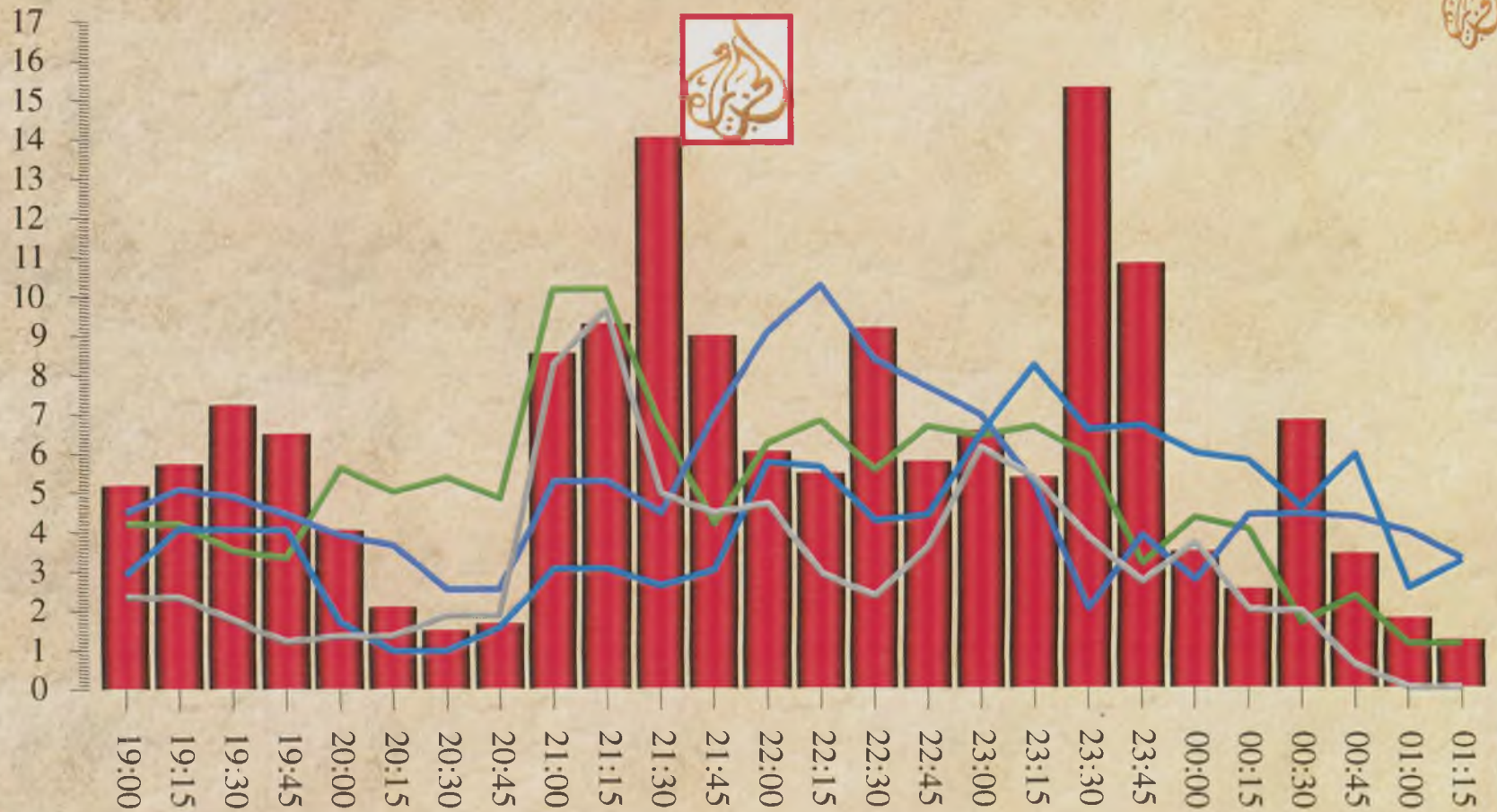


Top Ranking Satellite TV Channels

Reaching Arab Males Residing in Kuwait

Reach Evaluation @ Frequency Level 7 by 15 Minutes Kuwait Local Time Segments

Al Kuwait



Source: PARC_SEAS (Schedule Evaluation & Analysis System)
Kuwait GCC TV Establishment Survey, Feb 1999

LEGEND



Kuwait (A) TV1

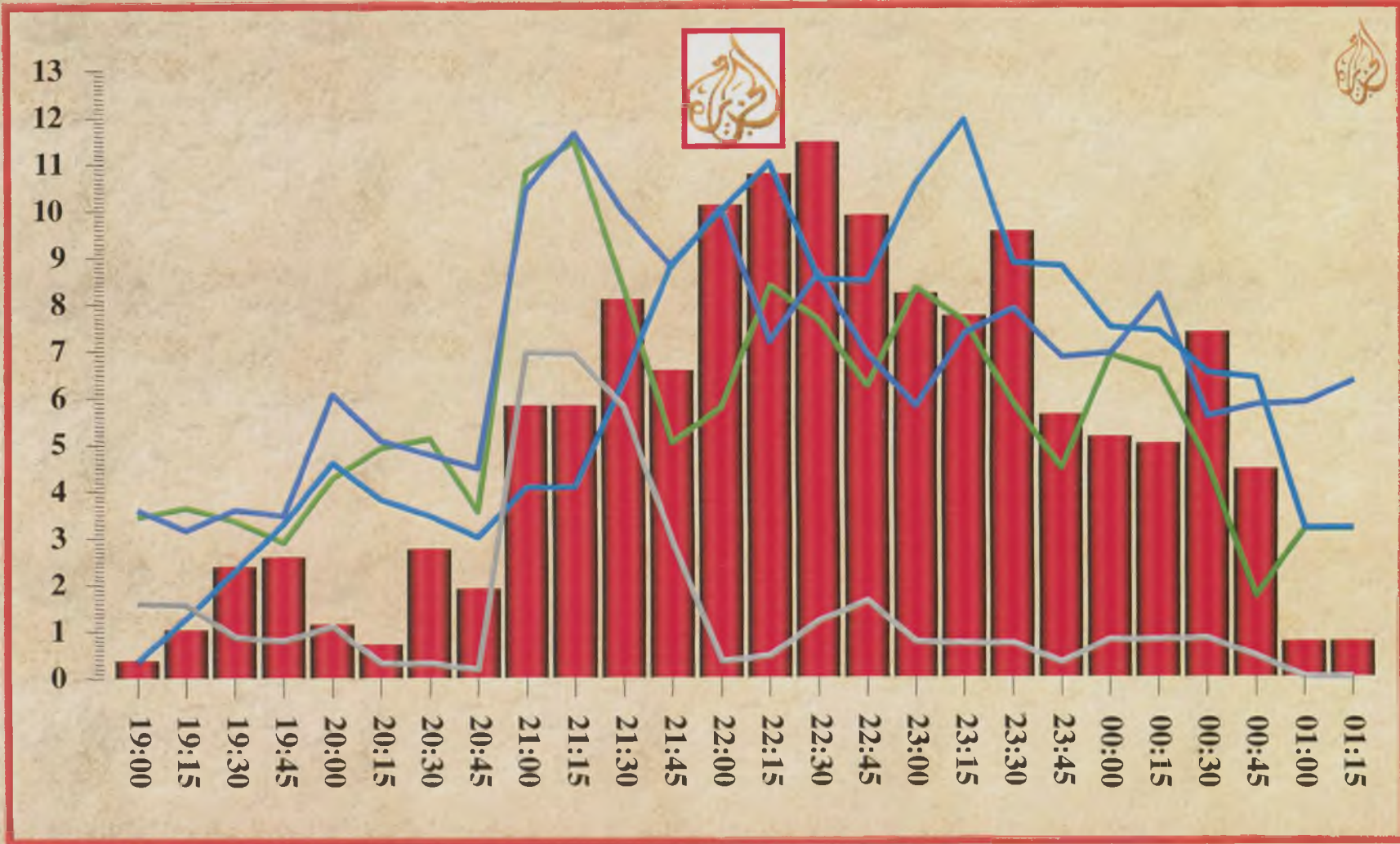


Top Ranking Satellite TV Channels

Reaching Arab Males Residing in Kuwait

Reach Evaluation @ Frequency Level 7 by 15 Minutes Kuwait Local Time Segments

Hawalli



Source: PARC_SEAS (Schedule Evaluation & Analysis System)
Kuwait GCC TV Establishment Survey, Feb 1999

LEGEND →

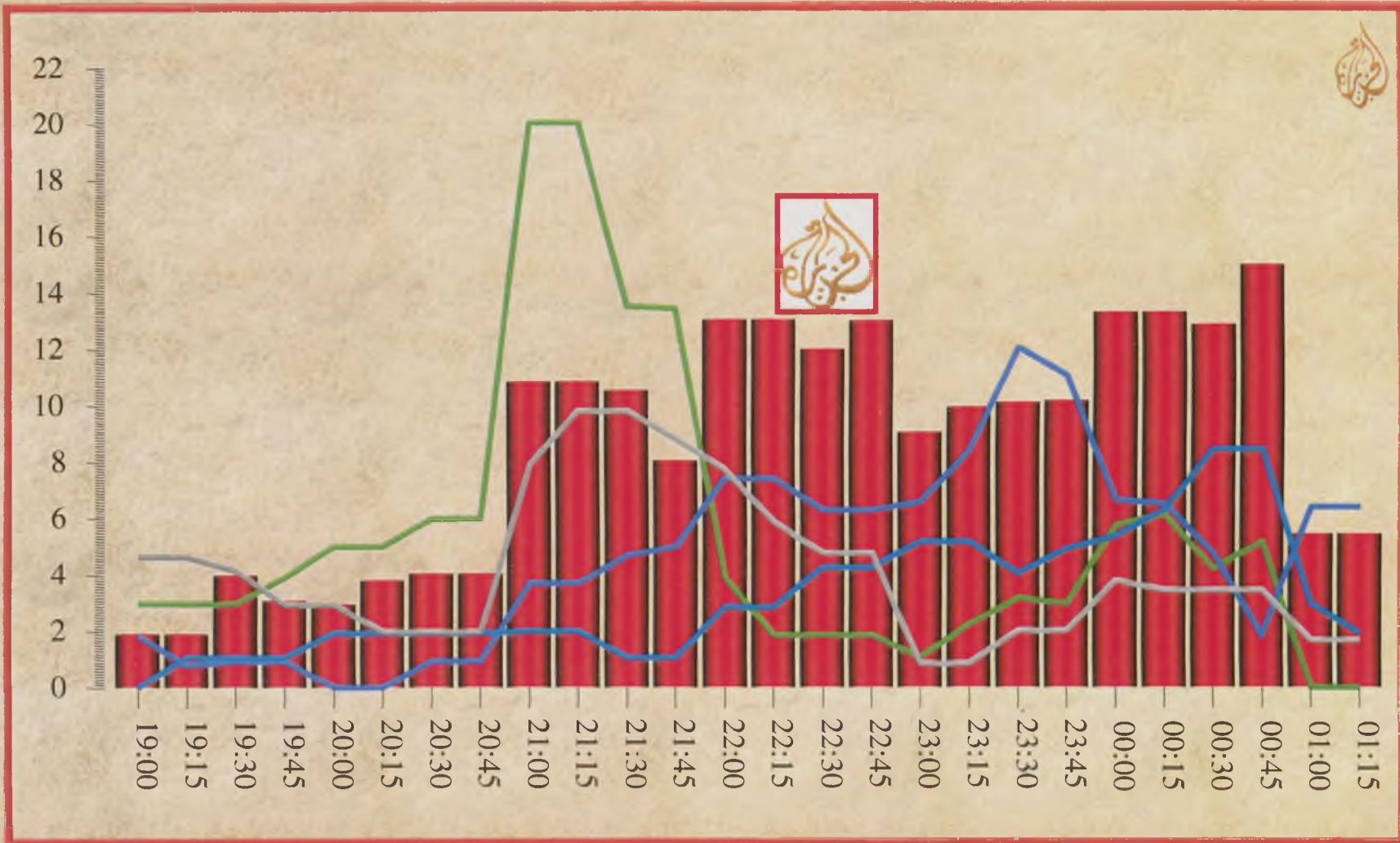


Top Ranking Satellite TV Channels

Reaching Arab Males Residing in Kuwait

Reach Evaluation @ Frequency Level 7 by 15 Minutes Kuwait Local Time Segments

Jahra



Source: PARC_SEAS (Schedule Evaluation & Analysis System)
Kuwait GCC TV Establishment Survey, Feb 1999

LEGEND →

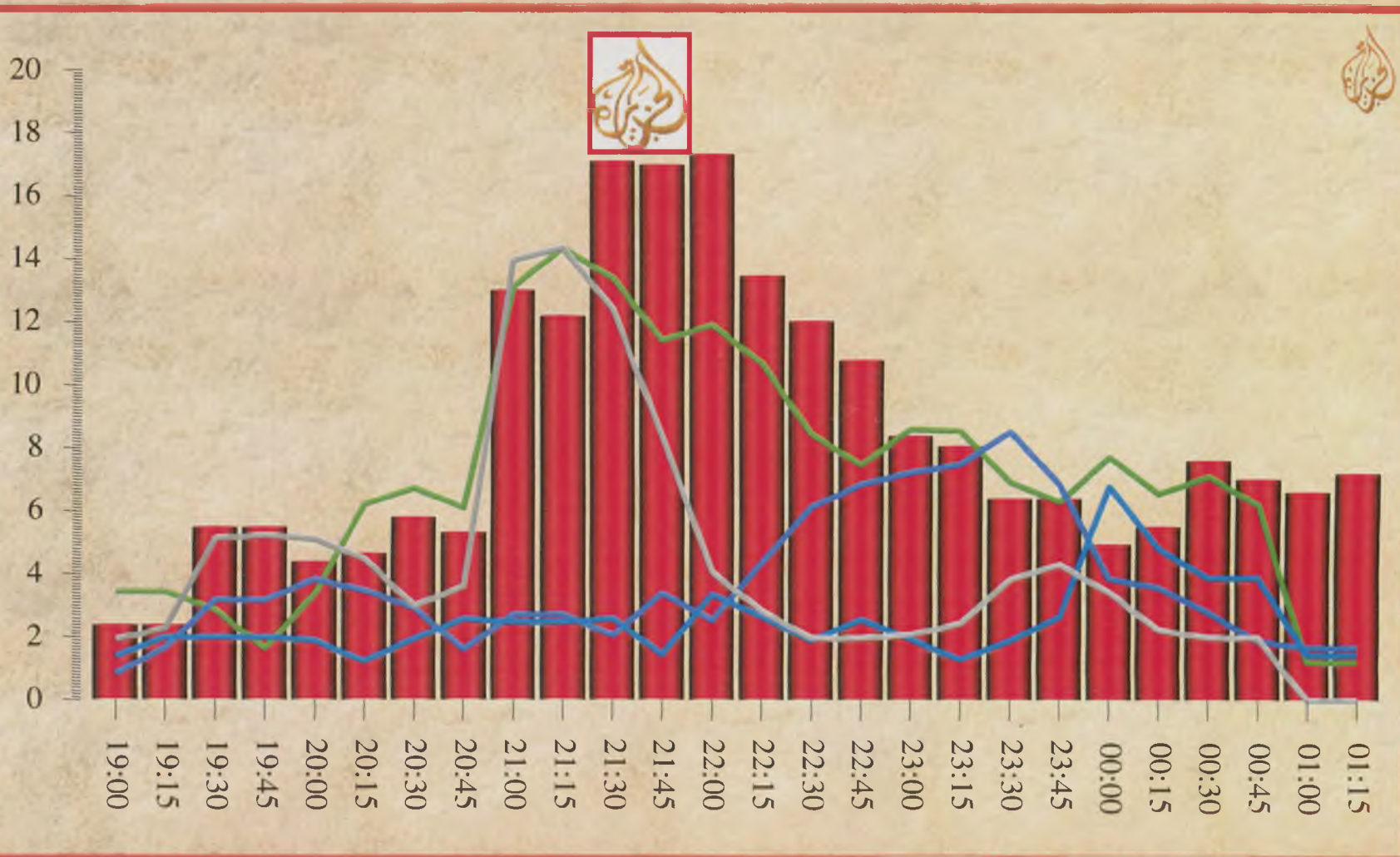


Top Ranking Satellite TV Channels

Reaching Arab Males Residing in Kuwait

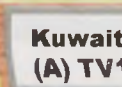
Reach Evaluation @ Frequency Level 7 by 15 Minutes Kuwait Local Time Segments

Ahmadi



Source: PARC_SEAS (Schedule Evaluation & Analysis System)
Kuwait GCC TV Establishment Survey, Feb 1999

LEGEND



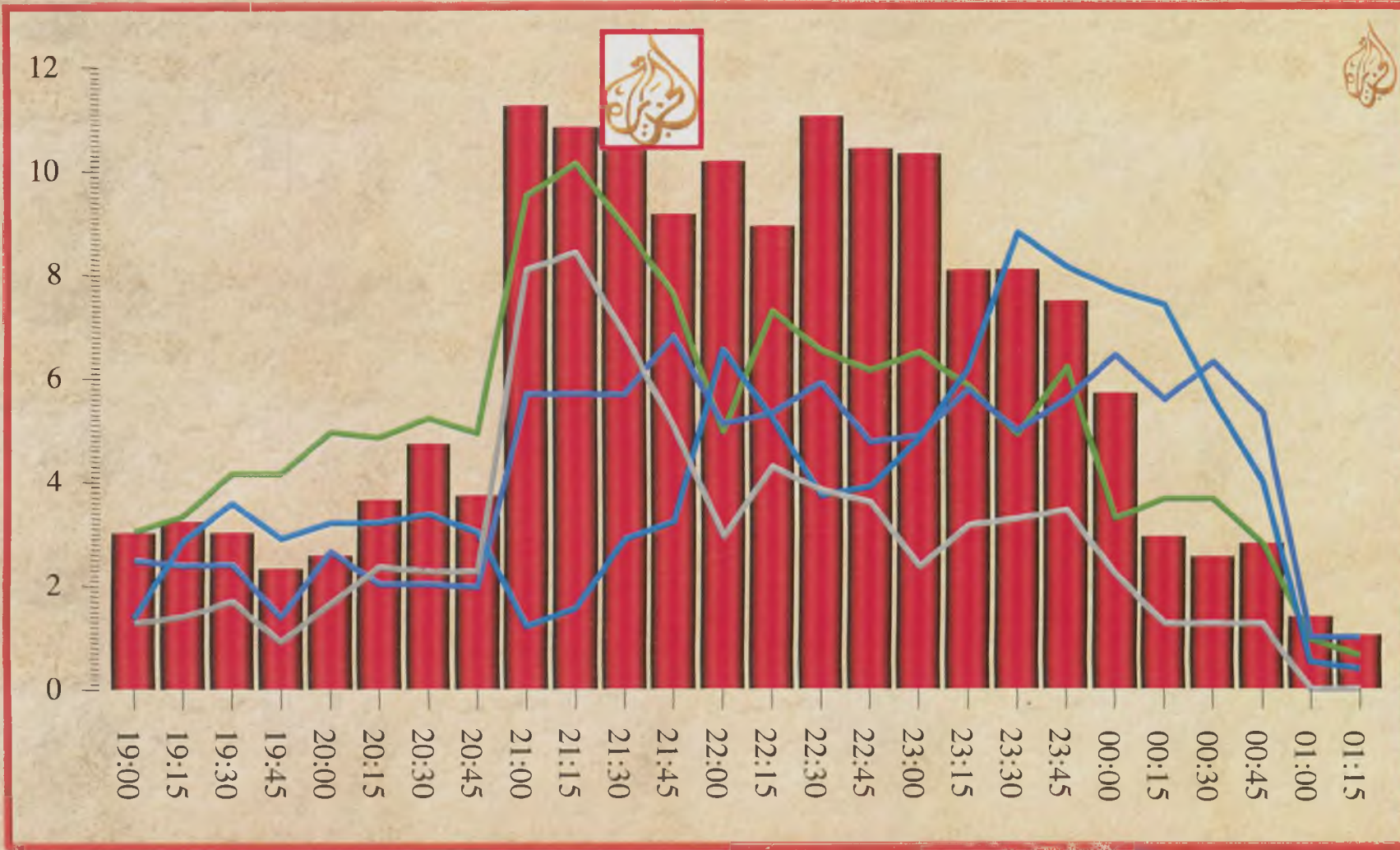


Top Ranking Satellite TV Channels

Reaching Arab Males Residing in Kuwait

Reach Evaluation @ Frequency Level 7 by 15 Minutes Kuwait Local Time Segments

Farwaniya



Source: PARC_SEAS (Schedule Evaluation & Analysis System)
Kuwait GCC TV Establishment Survey, Feb 1999

LEGEND

