

The Performance of the Saudi Arabian Press During the Gulf Conflict, 1990-1991

By

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

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Abstract

This thesis analyses the performance of the Saudi Arabian press during the Gulf Conflict of 1990-1991. It seeks (1) to present the opinions of Saudi media academics and journalists regarding the performance of the Saudi press during the Gulf conflict; (2) to analyse the content of the Saudi press in terms of the number of stories/ issues dealing with the Gulf conflict, the theme of these stories; the characteristics of the Saudi press and the agenda-setting capacity of the Saudi press before, during and after the liberation of Kuwait; (3) to look at Saudi journalists' actual perceptions of the ideal function of the press in time of war, and their views and level of satisfaction with the Saudi press's actual performance in its coverage of the Gulf conflict; and (4) to find out what factors influenced the Saudi press in its reporting of the conflict. An attempt is also made to examine the applicability of various media theories to the Saudi press.

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with media academics in all Saudi universities and with journalists in the Saudi press organisations. Content analysis of the Saudi press during the Gulf conflict was carried out, using a *constructed week* approach, for the periods before, during and after the liberation of Kuwait. *Confidence interval* and *Chi-square* analysis formulae were used in order to test the research hypotheses. A survey questionnaire was administered to journalists regarding ideal press functions in time of war and the actual performance of the Saudi press during the Gulf conflict.

The interviews with Saudi media academics and journalists revealed that the Saudi press role was largely reactive in nature, including little comment or analysis. This was because of the lack of information and political awareness in Saudi society as a whole, including amongst journalists. Even after the liberation of Kuwait, little changed in the Saudi press function, due to inadequate planning, lack of sufficiently trained and skilled journalists, and the continued constraints imposed by the press' relationship with the Saudi information policy.

The manifest content of the Saudi press revealed that it depended in its coverage of the Gulf conflict on foreign news sources such as Reuters, AFP, AP, UPI, and paid greater

attention to news stories originating outside Saudi Arabia such as from the USA, Western Europe, Asia and other Middle Eastern countries, and relied more on foreign personnel, specifically foreign government officials. Regarding the press agenda, political and military/defence movement news was regarded as most 'newsworthy' followed by crime, law and justice, economic and religious news relating to the Gulf conflict. The majority of news tended to be positive in tone and to support the UN resolutions in relation to the Iraqi regime. The leading articles, similarly were anti-Iraqi, and also attacked Iraq's allies such as Jordan, Sudan and Yemen.

The survey findings confirmed those of the interviews and content analysis, that the Saudi press depended on foreign sources in their conflict coverage. Those surveyed felt that the press had not fulfilled its ideal role because it was not informative enough, gave too little coverage and was not always trustworthy. The survey participants also felt that the Saudi press regulation should come from the press itself, rather than be imposed by an external body.

It is concluded that no single theory is sufficient to explain the performance of Saudi press during the Gulf conflict. The authoritarian model was only partially upheld; in other respects the press functioned more in line with the loyalty theory.

The findings indicated the importance of developing the Saudi press in terms of management and journalistic skills. Recommendations and suggestions are presented, both for the Saudi government, represented by Ministry of Information, and for Saudi press organisations, to improve and develop their functions into the next millennium.

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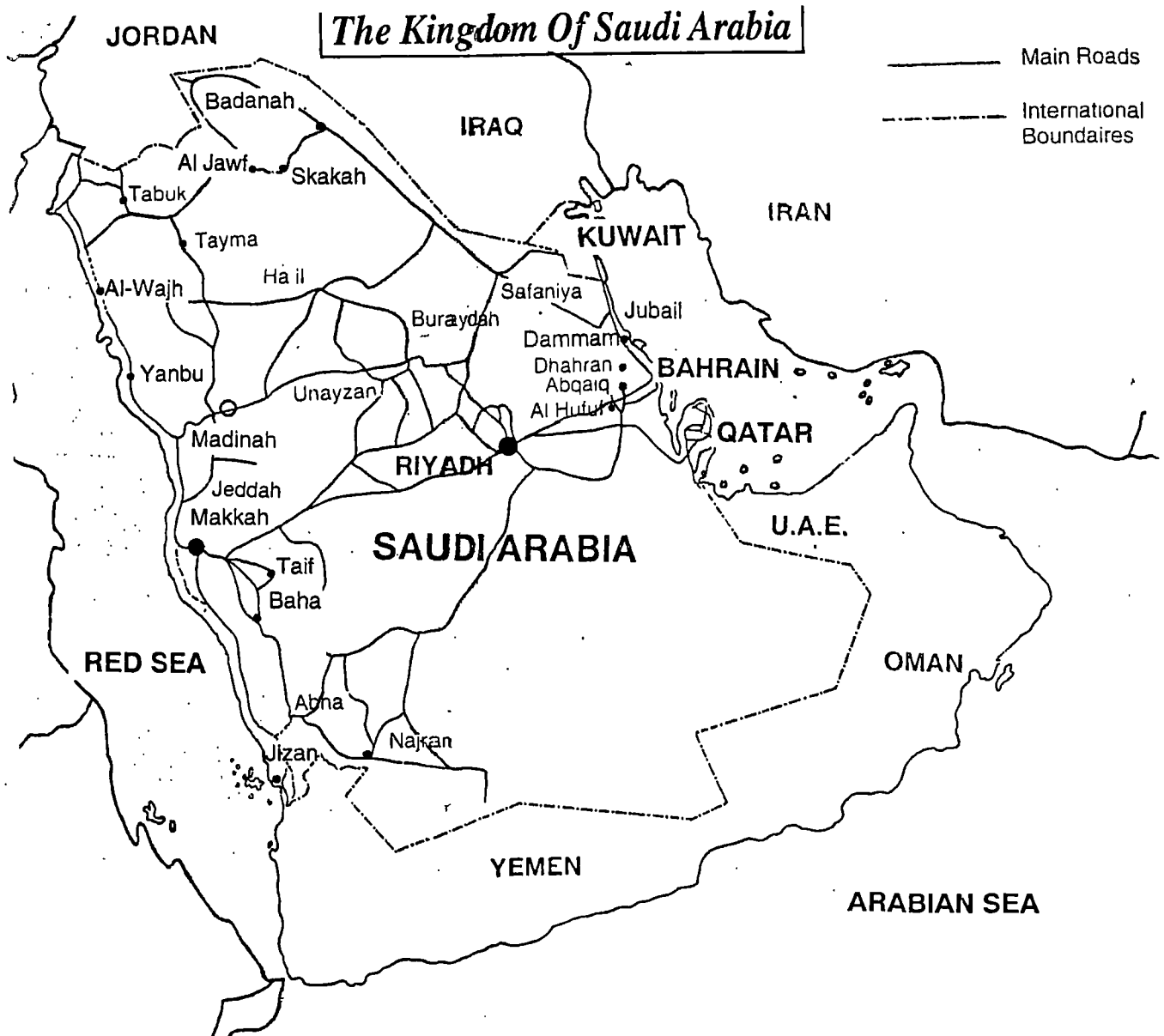
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Abbreviations Used

AFP	= Agence France Press
AP	= Associated Press
ARABSAT	= Arab satellite Communications Organisation
ARAMOC	= Arabian American Oil Company
BBC	= British Broadcasting Corporation
Bil	= <i>al-Bilad</i> [<i>The Country</i>] Newspaper
CNN	= Cable News Network
EC	= European Community
GCC	= Gulf Co-operation Council
Jaz	= <i>al-Jazeera</i> Newspaper
JIB	= Joint Information Bureau
Mad	= <i>al-Madina</i> Newspaper
MBC	= Middle East Broadcasting Corporation
Nad	= <i>al-Nadwa</i> Newspaper
NATO	= North Atlantic Treaty Organisation
OIC	= Organisation of Islamic Conferences
Oka	= <i>Okaz</i> Newspaper
PLO	= Palestinian Liberation Organisation
Riy	= <i>al-Riyadh</i> Newspaper
SA	= Saudi Arabia
SPA	= Saudi Press Agency
UAE	= United Arab Emirates
UK	= United Kingdom
UN	= United Nations
UPI	= United Press International
US	= United States
VOA	= Voice of America
Yau	= <i>al-Yaum</i> Newspaper

Dedication

**To the memory and the soul of my Great, Great, Grandfather, *Saad*,
who passed away (1650) in the south of the Peninsula (South of Saudi Arabia)
May God rest his soul peacefully in Heaven**



Source: Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Ministry of Information, Foreign Information (1996), Obeican Library.

Chapter 1

Introduction

1.1 Background to the Study

Usually, conflict between countries is caused by economic factors, imperialism, pursuit of vital interests or aspirations, territorial disputes, or disputes over resources including water (Anderson, 1996: 203-6). The causes of the 1990-1991 Gulf War, however appear to go beyond these. Several major factors caused the war. The Iraqi invasion of Kuwait led to more than thirty countries, led by the USA, gathering in Saudi Arabia to liberate Kuwait. The Iraqi regime commanded by Saddam Hussein desired to control the Arab world. LTG HRH Mete'b ibn Abdullah, the Deputy Chief of the Military of the Saudi National Guard and the Commander of King Khalid Military Academy, confirmed that "the invasion by Iraq to Kuwait was partly a logical proof of the motives and behaviour of the Iraqis and that the aim of the Iraqi party (the Ba'th Party) since its coming to power was to dominate the Arab nation under the slogan of a single socialist Arab state" (1990: 1). The Iraqi regime was in the final stage of producing nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction. Saddam is known to have used chemical weapons against Iran, and against the Kurds in Iraq, and was not trusted by the West or certain of the Gulf states; Iraq was seen as a serious threat to their interests. In his 1991 testimony before the US Senate, Milhollin, a director of the Wisconsin project on nuclear arms control, confirmed:

President Bush and his top military advisers have said that Iraq might produce a nuclear weapon within six months to a year . . . He [Bush] told US troops in Saudi Arabia on Thanksgiving that 'Every day that passes brings Saddam Hussein one step closer to realising his goal of a nuclear weapons arsenal and that is another reason, frankly, why our mission is marked by a real sense of urgency' (1991: 243).

Brockmann argues that there was "far more than merely oil involved in the war, that the competing trusts and cartels were fighting over everything from domination of the weapons industry to domination of the entertainment industry" (1992: 165).

In the early stages, the Saudi government had attempted to mediate to settle the differences between Iraq and Kuwait. A meeting was held on Tuesday, 1st August, 1990 in Jeddah, at which Crown Prince, Abdullah ibn Abdul Aziz Al-Saud mediated between Sheikh Saad Al-Abdullah Al-Sabah, the Kuwaiti Prince and Prime Minister Izzat Ibrahim, the representative of the Iraqi regime. The mediation failed, and the next day Iraqi forces spread all over Kuwait. The Iraqi invasion of Kuwait “began at 01.00 exactly on 2 August 1990. It eventually involved some 140,000 Iraqi troops and 1,811 tanks but was initially spearheaded by two Republican Guard armoured divisions- the Hammurabi and the Medina” (Freedman & Karsh, 1994: 67). The Iraqi invasion and occupation was condemned by the UN, the Council of the Arab League, the Organisation of Islamic Conference, Islamic Foreign Ministers in their 19th conference in Cairo, the European Community, the USA, EC Ministerial Council, and almost all the countries of the world.

Subsequently, the custodian of the two Holy Mosques, King Fahd ibn Abdul Aziz Al-Saud, on behalf of the Saudi government, announced that “Iraq had massed a big force near the Kingdom’s border” and welcomed “the participation of the brotherly Arab and friendly forces such as Egypt, Syria, UK, USA and other countries” (Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, 1991: 12-34). The King’s speech was a significant turning point in the situation in the Gulf region. It had been a difficult decision to allow foreign troops into the Islamic region, but the Saudi Ulama (religious scholars) had legitimised the move by giving it their support.

The Gulf conflict was unique in that it, “. . . under the aegis of the United Nations, brought together an extraordinary coalition of forces from the Christian and Muslim, capitalist and Marxist worlds” (Schott, 1994: 102). Initially, the coalition employed economic sanctions, in accordance with UN resolutions¹. By January 1991, however, the situation had escalated to a full-scale war.

The 42 days of the Gulf war consisted of three phases of air attacks. Lasting 38 days in total, followed by a four-day ground war, after which a cease-fire was declared by US

¹ For more details of the UN resolutions until Kuwait liberation, their dates and themes in relation to the Gulf conflict, see Appendix A.

President Bush. The allied coalition overran Kuwait and southern Iraq, killing thousands of Iraqis, destroying the Iraqi army and sending Saddam's Republican Guard into retreat. Peace terms were dictated by the coalition, and Kuwait was freed from the Iraqi occupation.

The aim of the coalition was for "clear objectives: a rapid war enabling little time for public protest to emerge; specific goals and war aims: no body bag counting and preferably, therefore, authority to control and restrict the media's involvement" (Taylor, 1992: 3). This assertion raises the question of the performance of the press, particularly the Saudi Arabian press,² in the conflict. The Saudi Arabian press coverage aimed to win over local and international public opinion and justify the Saudi government's decision and the United Nations' policies and resolutions (i.e. that Iraq should withdraw immediately and unconditionally from Kuwait) and the actions taken to restore international peace and security in the area.

The 1990-1991 Gulf conflict and war between the Coalition (including Saudi Arabia) and Iraq prompted close co-operation between the press and the government in Saudi Arabia. The Saudi press, in these circumstances, was expected to adhere to the official State ideology, which is based on the *Holy Quran* (the sacred scripture of Islam) and the *Shariah* (Islamic Law), implemented according to one of the accepted trends of law in Islam, the *Hanbali* school of thought (Al-Farsy, 1986: 76). The *Quran* itself is considered the constitution of the country and provides ethical values and guidance but it is implemented via the state's Judicial, Executive and Organisational authorities, all of which are headed by the King. In these circumstances, the government's involvement was seen as central to the conflict. Its policy, information and decisions, and communication technology, particularly the press, was used as an instrument to convince the public of the rightness of the Saudi policy. First, it succeeded in controlling effectively the flow of Saudi local news and information³. Saudi journalists, in their coverage of the conflict,

² By the Saudi Arabian Press is meant the Saudi Arabian National Daily Newspapers.

³ News, here, is defined as " 1) a report of a recent event, intelligence; information . . . 2) the presentation of a report on current events in a newspaper or other periodical or on radio or television" (Webster's Encyclopedic Unabridged Dictionary of the English Language, Gramercy Books, New York/Avent, New Jersey, 1989: 963).

relied on the Saudi Press Agency [SPA]. Shortly before Operation Desert Storm began, their access to the war zone was limited. Moreover, their reports were sent to the Joint Information Bureau [JIB] along with stories or news from briefings based on the command centres at Riyadh and Dhahran, or sometimes from daily briefings by the Saudi military. News obtained from the paper's own correspondents had to be approved by the paper's principal "gatekeeper", usually the Editor-in-Chief.

1.2 The Research Thesis

As this suggests, a high degree of government control was exercised over the supply of news and information to the Saudi Arabian press during the Gulf conflict. To begin with, the press remained silent, putting no pressure on state authorities regarding their handling of the conflict and refraining from criticism of other governments. After Iraq invaded and occupied Kuwait, the Saudi press and broadcasters had to get permission from the government to report the event, even though the event was hardly 'top secret'. The government wanted to be seen as central to the social structure and the press was to act as a gatekeeper of what Saudis should think about.

It might be assumed, then, that the function of the Saudi press system was in line with the *authoritarian press model*, whereby the press is "a servant of the state and responsible for much of its content to the power figures in charge of government at any given moment" (Siebert, Peterson & Schramm, 1963: 3). More details of this model will be given in Chapter 2.

If this model is, indeed, applicable to the Saudi press, then the following hypotheses would be expected to hold true:

- I a. Political and military/defence developments in the Gulf conflict would be more newsworthy than any other Gulf conflict news topics.
- b. For political and military developments in the Gulf conflict, the type of news would largely be domestic, rather than international and/or foreign.

- c. For political and military developments in the Gulf conflict, the tone of the news would generally be positive rather than negative.
- II. Within the Saudi press, individual newspapers would give similar levels of coverage to various themes which the news items presented.
- III. Saudi press coverage would rely more heavily in respect of Gulf conflict news on Saudi government officials than on other personnel.
- IV. The Saudi press would pay more attention to Gulf conflict news stories originating in the Saudi region, rather than those originating from other geographical locations.
- V. The Saudi press would depend heavily for their news presentations during the Gulf conflict on domestic sources, namely their own staff, the Saudi Press Agency (SPA) and Saudi government officials, rather than on other sources.
- VI. The tone of the leading articles of the Saudi press would be more positive than negative.

In fact, it may be doubted whether the Saudi Arabian press acted completely in accord with this model. It is therefore suggested that the authoritarian press model alone is too simplistic to describe the role played by the Saudi press. This is because information flow is affected by the three variables. These are: 1) hierarchy of nations; 2) cultural affinities and economic associations, and; 3) news and information conflicts (Hester, 1973: 242-3). The Saudi press, when tackling the Gulf conflict events, was directly affected by these variables. First, regarding national hierarchies of power, it must be recognised that in countries such as the USA and Western Europe there are powerful interest groups able to exert considerable influence in dealing with other nations, small or big. According to Iyengar & Kinder, they are commercial centres:

major trade posts in the colonial territories and the major capitals of the western Europe and north America [which] have always housed the majority of media and agency correspondents. It is the regular production of routine news from such news capitals, rather than the occasional production of news from 'news provinces', which draws the boundaries and shapes the contours of the news atlas (1987: 153-4).

News from the USA and Western Europe, in particular, dominated coverage of the Gulf conflict. It had always been as Vandijk noted, that “the United States, the most powerful country in the world both militarily and economically, got most attention in the wires of the agencies, two of which are American [AP and UPI]” (1988: 42). Although UPI was in decline by the early 1990s, another major American player had by then also entered the scene, namely CNN.

News coverage was also influenced by cultural affinities and economic associations between nations, for example between Saudi Arabia and Egypt or other Islamic countries such as Pakistan where religions, language, and certain aspects of lifestyles are the same or similar, encouraging news flow between these nations.

Another factor concerned the availability of news and information about the Gulf conflict. There is no doubt that with so many countries involved in the conflict, whether they supported or opposed the Iraqi aggression, the movement of news among nations would both shape and reflect thinking about the nature of the conflict. Since Saudi journalists were surrounded by the journalistic expertise and technology of CNN, the BBC and other international media, they would have no option but to ensure that they played their own part in the information flow.

In addition, other indirect variables, such as local journalists’ lack of skills and experience, communication facilities and the influence of government (information) policy⁴, created further difficulties for the Saudi press.

In this context, it is suggested that the Saudi press would depend more in its coverage and structuring of news more on external sources, namely Reuters, AFP, AP, and UPI sources rather than on domestic sources, such as their own staff and SPA. This could be because of the difficulty of getting government respondents, whether due to the lack of confidence between the authorities and journalists or because of the government system. If this was the case, it is logical to suppose that the Saudi press would pay no more attention to Gulf

⁴ See Appendix B, the Saudi Arabian Information Policy.

conflict news stories originating in the SA region than those originating from other geographical locations such as the UK and USA. Moreover, it would rely more heavily for Gulf conflict news on personnel other than SA government officials. As a result, political and military/defence developments would be regarded as more newsworthy than other Gulf news topics, and the type of news would largely be international and/or foreign rather than domestic. The occurrence of various themes would vary from one newspaper to another, but coverage would tend to be positive in tone and to favour the Saudi government and UN resolutions in relation to Iraq.

The leading articles of the Saudi press, which reflect editorial opinion and analysis separately, would focus predominantly on Saudi Arabia, the Arab World, the Allied Coalition, Iraq, anti-UN resolutions and economic and military issues, and those related to the conflict. The items on these themes would be more positive than negative in tone, largely directed at Iraqi government officials and increasingly positive after the liberation of Kuwait. So, journalists would have difficulty in dealing with the conflict objectively and independently and in maintaining a balance in carrying the news.

Thus, it is of interest to explore the performance of the Saudi press during the Gulf conflict, in the light of authoritarian press theory and other prevailing theories of press functions. This will enable us to assess the extent to which any such theory or combination of theories was applicable and to advance understanding, not only of the Saudi press role itself, but also of press-production more generally.

1.3 Aims of the Study

The aims of this study are: 1) To investigate qualitatively the opinions of Saudi media academics and journalists⁵ regarding the performance of the Saudi press during the Gulf conflict; 2) To analyse the content of the Saudi press in terms of the number of stories/

⁵ For the aim of this study, the definition used by Mukherjee of journalists is used: “ a ‘journalist’ is (a) a person who, on a regular or on a temporary basis, creates media news coverage, i.e., a correspondent, a photographer, a cameraperson, or a media technician, whose job consists of working with words, images, or sound destined for the printed press, radio, film, or television; or (b) a person whose regular occupation is the professional assistance of persons belonging to category (a) above” (Alleyne, 1997: 112).

issues dealing with the Gulf conflict, the theme of these stories, the characteristics of these newspapers, and the agenda-setting capacity of the Saudi press before, during and after the liberation of Kuwait; 3) To survey quantitatively Saudi journalists' perceptions of their function in time of war, and their level of satisfaction with the Saudi press's performance in its coverage of the Gulf conflict; and 4) To find out what factors influenced the performance of the Saudi press when reporting the conflict for example, whether religious, political or military restrictions were imposed on the press coverage of the conflict.

These aims can be translated into specific research questions:

- Q.1. What are the Saudi media academics and journalists' opinions toward the performance of the Saudi press during the Gulf conflict of 1990 - 1991?
- Q.2 a. Which main news topics were carried by the Saudi press, and why?
- b. What type of news (domestic, international or foreign) was carried by the Saudi press, and why?
- c. What was the tone of the main news topics carried by the Saudi press, and why?
- Q.3. What was the main theme of news items chosen, and their tone in the Saudi press, and why?
- Q.4. Which personnel did the Saudi press cover in each news item, and why?
- Q.5. To which geographically newsworthy locations did the Saudi press pay greater attention, and why?
- Q.6. On which news sources were the Saudi press dependent for their news presentation, and why?
- Q.7. What was the theme of the leading articles, what was their tone, and to whom were they directed, and why?
- Q.8. What are Saudi journalists' perceptions toward the Saudi press functions in time of war and their views and level of satisfaction with its performance in coverage of the Gulf conflict, and why?
- Q.9. Did any internal and/or external factors, such as religious, political, economic or geographic factors affect the amount and nature of coverage of the Gulf conflict by the Saudi press and, if so, why?

With these purposes and research questions in mind, the performance of the Saudi press during the Gulf conflict can be understood and evaluated, and recommendations made for better lines of communication between the Saudi government, press and society. Moreover, the outcome of the analysis will, it is hoped, lead to a testing and development of theory. An attempt will be made to assess the applicability of the authoritarian press theory and other theories (see Chapter 2) to the Saudi Arabian press and, should those theories prove inadequate, to suggest a new theory or model that better explains the performance of the Saudi press.

1.4 Importance of the Study

This study derives its importance from its originality, contribution to knowledge, and potential practical value as an input to future formulations of press policy in Saudi Arabia. Why is a study of press function and performance during the conflict necessary? Starck has argued that:

It would seem useful to study media function for two reasons, both of which are linked to change. First, there are the developing nations where basic communications policies are being formulated to assure that the media will carry out prescribed functions effectively in the given politico- socio- economic milieu. Second, there is the need in all societies for institutions to readjust constantly to a rapidly changing environment. In both instances, it would seem that the media would make some effort to take into account how their audiences feel about what function the media should be fulfilling, as opposed to what the functions 'were' or have been (1973: 145).

Saudi Arabia, as a heavily regulated Islamic State, provides an extremely fertile ground for communications researchers studying the performance of its press, including changes that could occur in conflict or wartime, since there is a strong link between the Saudi government's ideology and the press in view of the place it occupies in contemporary Saudi society. The Saudi press is in an influential position, given its sheer size, cultural and political weight, since it is controlled by government. It is thus of interest to know

how such an organisation operates, what factors affect it, what role it is intended to play, and how it can best perform that role.

The modern world is the scene of numerous political, economic and social conflicts, and we have economic blocks at the international level, i.e. a block of producing countries and a block of consuming countries. There is a new drive towards trade liberalisation. The General Agreement on Trade and Tariffs (GATT) has opened the door increased for co-operation, exchanged opportunities, as epitomised by the World Trade Organisation (WTO) for small countries an extension of international trade beyond the advanced countries. As a result, even the advanced countries have started to fear competition from East Asia, especially, the five tigers (Malaysia, Singapore, South Korea, Taiwan, and Hong Kong). In the face of new groupings, nations must make use of emerging opportunities, especially in the aftermath of the Cold War and the prospect of the New World Order. It is true that there are still political struggles in the world but we still need a greater understanding and a comprehensive strategy for how to deal with these changes. The world is increasingly globalized and interdependent. Thus the press as an instrument, inside and outside Saudi Arabia, needs to be prepared to present and treat issues, especially political issues, more critically, i.e. to determine whether or not the evidence available justifies the conclusions that are drawn from it.

The press is an important intermediary between the decision-makers and the public and it may both reflect and help to shape the relationship between them. The question arises as we enter a new century, what is to be the relationship between Saudi people and government, and where does the press fit into relationship? This study will contribute to debate on this issue and aspires to help in finding some solutions (see Chapter 7, recommendations of the study).

By shedding light on how the Saudi press performed in covering the Gulf conflict, this study will analyse the validity of press theory and other ideas raised by communications scholars in relation to the role of the press in society.

The performance of the Saudi press during the Gulf conflict has not been studied previously. It is hoped, therefore, that this study will provide a foundation for other studies, not only of the Saudi Media (press, radio and television) but also in the wider area of media, culture and society.

1.5 Limitations of the Study

Any exploratory study related to the Saudi Arabian press is likely to face some difficulties, especially as no such study has been done before. The major reasons for that are Saudi researchers' lack of confidence in studying such a sensitive issue, lack of experience and difficulty in gaining access to information and material.

In addition, any research project encounters limitations of scope which must be born in mind when interpreting the study outlines. The first limitation concerns the study of population. The research samples were drawn from the Saudi media academics in all Saudi Universities, journalists on the seven national daily newspapers and other Saudi journalists who were recommended by both the Saudi media academics and journalists. The former were selected due to the fact they were senior figures and the latter were closer to the reality of what was happening in relation to the press during the Gulf conflict. Moreover, it was this second group who constructed the news. The rationale of this choice of target group is explained fully in Chapter 3. Their opinions, presented in Chapter 4, give us a general picture of the Saudi press environment.

For the quantitative survey of opinions of the Saudi press function in time of war, and satisfaction with its performance in its coverage of the Gulf conflict, only Saudi journalists were selected, as they were considered to be the group best placed to express their own understanding of the journalist's task, and to distinguish between idea and reality in this regard. This survey group was limited in two respects. The first limitation was with regard to the interest groups represented. For political and cultural reasons, it would be difficult to include government or military personnel in such a study, while constraints of time and resources prevented a survey of the general public. Public opinion analysis and

polls are virtually unknown in Saudi Arabia. The sample was also limited by gender, in that the researcher was not given access to female journalists for interview, not were any of the questionnaire responses received from women. This may be attributable to the cultural norms of Saudi society.

The second limitation of this study concerns the analysis of the content of the Saudi press. Such analysis was confined to only three Saudi national daily newspapers, namely, *al-Riyadh*, *Okaz* and *al-Yaum* (see p.22). In addition, only the first pages of news and information, together with the editorial pages of each of these papers, were selected. Inevitably, therefore, potentially interesting and relevant news or information from other pages that they may have appeared on other pages were excluded. This decision was made because of the limited time available. It may be argued, however, that the front pages and leader articles would be representative of the main events covered and attitudes expressed in the newspapers. Moreover, the detailed coding of item themes (see Chapter 5) helped to overcome this limitation.

However, one important note is that the researcher himself was the only coder in this study. This might be considered one of the limitations of the study, but the argument here is that the researcher followed the two steps recommended by Wimmer & Dominick (1983); namely, he defined category boundaries, and then he conducted a pilot study. Thus, the researcher believes that no other coder was necessary.

The last limitation was that the study did not consider the effect of the performance of the Saudi Arabian press on Saudi citizens. The simple fact was that this study aimed to explore attitudes and behaviour, not cause and effect. Moreover, given the difficulty of surveying specialists in communications from the media colleges and departments in Saudi Universities, it would be even more difficult to obtain valid responses from the general public. In a society where the mass media are relatively new, people lack media awareness, and researchers are commonly mistrusted. Nevertheless, some inferences can be drawn from the opinions expressed by academics and journalists, and from the content of Saudi press.

Overall, it is not felt that the inevitable limitations of this study invalidates the data obtained. The methods and organisation of this study may be considered an appropriate way of serving the study objectives.

1.6 Saudi Arabia: A brief Overview

Saudi Arabia lies in the Southwest part of Asia, with an area of about 865,000 square miles, and is bordered by the Arabian Gulf and the Red Sea. The population of Saudi Arabia is 16,929,294; 72.7% is Saudi and 27.3% non-Saudi, and the official language is Arabic (Saudi Arabia Ministry of Economic and Financial Consumer Report, 1993: 34).

Modern Saudi Arabia was founded by King Abdul Aziz ibn Abdul Rahman Al-Saud in 1932. Its nomadic people's love for land developed a strong sense of independence within the Arabian peninsula after the advent of Islam in the 7th century brought various tribes and clans under one religion (Saudi Arabia; History, 1989: 1).

Saudi Arabia is an Islamic state. The government constitution is based on the *Holy Quran* and Sunna (the traditions of the Prophet Mohammed). "A Council of Ministers, together with the King, form the Executive and Legislative branches of government. There are 20 government Ministries, and several other government agencies and departments" (Saudi Arabia; Facts and Figures, 1985: 4).

In order to understand the performance of the Saudi press during the Gulf conflict, it must be viewed in the context of the Saudi Arabian government system, society and mass media in general. This section provides background information on those issues.

1.6.1 The Saudi Arabian Government System

The Saudi Government system encompassing the nature, its goals and responsibilities of the State, as well as the relationship between the ruler and citizens, consists of three

branches: the Council of Ministers, the Legal and Judicial structure and the Consultative Council.

1.6.1.1 The Council of Ministers

The Council of Ministers established by King Abdul Aziz ibn Abdul Rahman Al-Saud in 1953, is headed by the King as the Prime Minister. Its other members are the Crown Prince who is the Deputy Prime Minister, the Second Deputy Prime Minister and Cabinet Ministers (Saudi Arabian Information Centre, 1996: 77). The Council is responsible for drafting and overseeing the implementation of the internal, external, financial, economic, educational and defence policies, and general affairs of the state. It meets weekly, presided over by the King or one of his deputies (Saudi Arabian Information Centre, 1996: 77).

New bylaws were introduced for the Council of Ministers system in 1992. These explain that the purpose of the state is to ensure the security and rights of all citizens and residents. They also emphasise the importance of the family as the nucleus of Saudi society, particularly in teaching its members to adhere to Islamic values (Saudi Arabian Information Centre, 1996: 83).

In defining the relationship between the ruler and the people, the system emphasises that all Saudi citizens are equal before God and in their concern for the well-being, security, dignity and progress of their nation. They also have equality before the law (Saudi Arabian Information Centre, 1996: 83).

For administrative purposes, the country is divided into 13 provinces, each of which has its own Provincial Council, whose role is to deliberate on the needs of their respective provinces, work on the development budget, scrutinise future development plans, and monitor ongoing projects (Saudi Arabian Information Centre, 1996: 83). The Governor and Vice-Governor of each province act as chairman and vice-chairman of their Provincial Council. Each Council is composed of a minimum of 10 private citizens who are experienced in their respective fields. As of 1993, the 13 Provincial Councils in the

country contained a total of 201 members. Each Council has specialised committees to deal with various issues of interest to the province. Reports issued by the Provincial Councils are submitted to the Minister of the Interior and passed on to the appropriate government ministries and agencies for consideration (Saudi Arabian Information Centre, 1996: 104).

The Saudi Government occupies a very important position in the Middle East, as a balance between the various radical Arab States, moderate Arab States, the US, and Europe. It has used its economic and political aid to develop good relations with Syria and Iraq (before its invasion of Kuwait), and it maintains ties with the USA and European countries which secure their interests. It counters the military and strategic pressures from its neighbours, and neutralises or coopts radical leaders. Because of its importance to US and Western interests, no state can pose a direct threat to it without reasonable assurance that the West will react (Cordesman, 1987: 238).

1.6.1.2 Legal & Judicial Structure

Saudi Arabia has an extensive legal structure. The judicial system is based on the *Shariah*. In 1928, King Abdul Aziz decreed the organisation of the court system and the procedures to be followed. As the country developed, the Judicial system was developed through subsequent decrees in 1936 and 1952 for the Civil Procedures Rules, in 1955 for the establishment of the Board of Grievances, and in 1970 for the formation of the Ministry of Justice (Saudi Arabian Information Centre, 1996: 107).

Today, the Ministry of Justice administers the *Shariah* legal system through the *Shariah Courts*. At the trial level are the General Courts, or Courts of First Instance. Decisions by these courts can be appealed to the appellate and, finally, the High *Shariah* Court. The next level is the Appeals Court. Disputes arising from codified regulations are handled by the Board of Grievances or by special courts. Examples are the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs' Supreme Committee for the Settlement of Labour Disputes and the

Ministry of Commerce's Commercial Disputes Settlement Committee (Saudi Arabian Information Centre, 1996: 107).

The decisions of these courts can be appealed to the office of the King or the Crown Prince. They will turn the appeal over to the legal office of the Council of Ministers. A decision by the Council of Ministers, signed by the King, is final. The revitalisation of Saudi Arabia's political system reflects the nation's adaptability to modern development without compromising its religious and cultural value (Saudi Arabian Information Centre, 1996: 107).

According to Moliver & Abbondante:

Supporting the close connection between religions and secular life is the unification of the religious and secular leaders. In Saudi Arabia, the king is more than a king. He not only sets down the law government the country but he also presides over adherence to the Moslem religion. The King is really a combination of president and pope⁶. There is no separation of church⁷ and state in Saudi Arabia. The church is the State and vice versa (1980:11).

To put it another way, "the religious authority gives legitimacy to the political power, and the political power is in itself a form of religious prestige, for it is through this power that the ruler maintains the conditions in which the *Sharia* may flourish" (Looney, 1982: 21).

1.6.1.3 The Consultative Council (Majlis Al- Shoura)

The primary function of the *Majlis Al-Shoura* is to advise the King on issues of importance to the nation, in line with a long tradition of consultation with learned and experienced citizens, which has its roots in Islam. The late King Abdul Aziz, who established the first Consultative Council in the mid-1920s, explained: "We have to follow what is stated in the

⁶ 'Pope' is used here in the general sense of 'head of the religious Establishment'.

⁷ 'Church' refers not to any particular building or religious sect, but to the Religious Establishment. In Saudi Arabia, it would mean the King, the Religious scholars, and all official bodies responsible for implementing the Sharia.

Holy Quran and the Sunnah in implementation of Allah's orders to consult others on the affairs of the moment" (Saudi Arabian Information Centre, 1996: 88).

Since the mid 1920s until 1992, the consultative Council did not function and all regulations, decisions, policy and social affairs were issued through the Council of Ministers. In order to enhance its efficiency, King Fahd restructured the consultation system in 1992. In its present form, the Council consists of a chairman and 90 members appointed by the King for a four-year renewable term. Its members represent the spectrum of Saudi society. King Fahd personally inaugurated the first session of the new Council on December 29, 1993.

In fact, the change was to a large extent a response to political pressures stimulated by the Gulf War. The ambassador of Saudi Arabia to the United Kingdom, Dr Al-Gosaibi, said that around 400 enlightened people and businessmen drafted a request to King Fahd for the establishment of a Consultative Council and for greater public freedom. The ambassador clarified that behind their inquiry was a broader concern to make all local and foreign policy decisions subject to a committee of approval. Even before receiving the letter however, the King announced in November, 1991 that after the crisis ended, he would issue a statement on the role of the monarchy and on the establishment and function of a consultative Council (1992: 181).

The Council discusses regulations, domestic and international issues, and all other matters of public interest. It can ask government officials to attend key meetings and request access to government documents. Reports and recommendations made by the Council are forwarded directly to the King.

One of the Council's first actions was to form eight specialised committees, namely: Educational, Cultural and Information Affairs, Health and Social Affairs, Foreign Affairs, Security Affairs, Organisation and Administration, Islamic Affairs, Economic and Financial Affairs and Services and Public Utilities. "This system aims at upgrading the level of administrative work and development in all parts of the Kingdom. It also aims at the

preservation of security and order, and the rights of citizens and their freedom within the framework of the Islamic Shariah” (Saudi Arabian Information Centre, 1996: 88).

1.6.2 Saudi Arabian Society

From the above discussion of the Saudi Arabian government system, it will be apparent that the government and Islamic principle permeate all aspects of social life. Thus, Saudi society is influenced by a range of religious, political, economic and cultural factors. “The Saudi Arabian society has Arab and Muslim roots stretching back thousands of years. From its land, Makkah, the Holy City, Prophet Mohammed emerged and spread. It is a homogeneous society bound by the Islamic religion and the Arabic language. This society is ruled by ancient traditions and ethics derived from Islam, and Arabian morals and behaviour such as truthfulness and neighbourliness” (Ministry of Information, Undated: 5).

The link between government policy and religion has existed ever since the first alliance between Mohammed ibn Saud and Imam Mohammed ibn Abdul Wahhab, which continued to progress until King Abdul Aziz recaptured Riyadh in January 1902 (Iqbal, 1986: 11), a vital step in his goal to restore the Islamic faith of the Arabian Peninsula tribes and join them into one cohesive nation known as Saudi Arabia.

In the early years, much of the Saudi population was nomadic or semi-nomadic. According to O’Sullivan they were

essentially herders of camels, goats and sheep, while settled people were farmers, craftsmen and traders. The nomads brought the animal products of the desert to the settlements, where they exchanged them for food stuffs and other necessities: dates, rice, wheat, clothing, manufactured goods and firearms. The settled people relied on their nomadic allies for transport and alliances in war time (1993: 35).

The sending out of religious teachers among the tribes to teach them more of Islam resulted in major changes in Saudi society, particularly in the north and the centre of Saudi Arabia. This also helped to establish the nation’s stability. Another major change was the

merging of Bedouin communities from their isolated desert hamlets into the national community of the country, enabling them to participate in its activities and development programmes (Zamakhshari, 1994: 47, 49-50).

Other influences were the discovery and exploitation of oil which led to the entry of Western companies (the Arabian American Oil Company [ARAMCO] introduced the country's first TV station); the number of foreign visitors on pilgrimage to Makkah, and the international trade which Saudi Arabia enjoyed by virtue of its position at the cross-roads between Europe, Asia and Africa.

The rise in the price of oil in the 1970s brought huge wealth which enabled the government to implement comprehensive socio-economic development plans. The 5-year Development plans implemented between 1970 and 1995 created a solid infrastructure and witnessed remarkable development in health, education, travel, trade, and mass communication. "All these brought new ideas and influences to the country which are completely alien to its society and its history" (Al-Harithi, 1983: 96).

Throughout the development plans, the Saudi authorities made it clear that one of their fundamental goals was "to maintain the religious and moral values of Islam" (Ministry of Planning, 1979: 53). At the same time, the five development plans relied heavily on foreign manpower, who could offer greater experience and skill than indigenous workers at less cost. This brought new social influences into the country. As the Saudi education system expanded, creating a skilled Saudi work force, this problem was addressed by measures "to increase the rate at which non-Saudi are being replaced by Saudi nationals ('Saudiisation')" (Saudi Arabia Information Centre, 1990: 30).

With these changes taking place, Saudi Arabia has faced tremendous social upheaval. Socio-economic development has had an enormous impact on the lifestyle of the traditional Saudi society. Indeed, as Elmusa observed: "Saudi has been transformed, over the last three decades, from a traditional society to one in which life is textured by imported consumer goods; the bedouin encampment, tent, mud house and camel have yielded to the city, cement house, high-rise building, dishwasher, television set, satellite

[dishes], car, computer-controlled equipment at work and all the trappings that modern technology can supply” (1997: 345). In addition, the internet service has recently been made available to certain academic institutions and military organisations and is soon to be available easily to the population as a whole. This communication revolution will open a new era for Saudis, in which foreign values may be a major challenge.

As Paul (1984) highlights, one impact of oil on Saudi society has been an increase in the number of intellectuals who have been able to pursue their education abroad, e.g. in the UK, USA and other developed countries, where liberalism, individualism and personalism are the dominant social motives. On their return, they must accommodate themselves to a society whose dominant motivations are very different, where group loyalties are traditional and where nepotism is almost a virtue. This is likely sooner or later to cause conflict between these two groups, affecting the nation’s stability.

Another factor is the new mobility of labour. It used to be common that each individual must follow in the context of family and tribal cohesion, the network of area loyalties, the hierarchical chain of control and the generalised understanding of the individual’s right and duties in society. For example, the son of a pearl-diver would be expected to become a pearl-diver, the son of a merchant worked unquestioning in his father’s shop, though in the South of Saudi Arabia the sons of a man who was a peddler or salesman would feel a sense of social stigma. Today, most people, including those who would formerly have opposed this kind of work, like to be involved in buying and selling, and society now approves these occupations. Indeed, nowadays, the Saudi young set off in all directions. But there is another, external pressure which is the large community of foreign workers. These, as of 1999, numbered some 5-6 million, according to an official source at the Ministry of Planning (personal communication with the researcher).

There has also been a revolution of communications in the broad sense. The state authority can no longer use the mass media to reinforce the traditional political or cultural system, as Saudis increasingly tune in to foreign broadcasts such as BBC, CNN, VOA and the media of neighbouring Arabic states. As of 1984, one-third of the population of two cities in Saudi Arabia regularly tuned in to foreign broadcasts. The proportion will be

greater now, so the effect on the thinking of the listeners or watchers cannot be negligible and is barely open to control. Those who are less educated may be influenced by neighbours' propaganda, e.g. from Iraq or Iran (pp. 189-91).

The point is that the speed with which these developments are taking place is so rapid that it is difficult for people to keep pace with changes in society and adjust their conceptions of individual's role within it.

1.6.3 Mass Media in Saudi Arabia

As mentioned earlier in relation to Saudi society, the mass media cannot be viewed separately from the influence of either government policy and religious aspects.

1.6.3.1 Saudi Press⁸

The first Saudi newspaper, *Umm al-Qura*, was issued in Makkah, the religious capital, on 12th December 1924, on a weekly basis. It is an official publication, which publishes "government treaties, royal decrees, Council notices, concession agreements and releases of the Directorate General of Broadcasting, Press and Publications" (Shobaili, 1971: 57). During the period between 1924 and 1963, the Saudi press gave "individuals limited internal news, information, or events and some religious and social literature" (The Arabian Publication House for Encyclopaedias, Undated: 194).

Approved by the Council of Ministers resolution no. 600, dated 9th January 1964, a Royal decree no. (62) granted approval to the National Press Agencies Act "to enable new

⁸ For information related to the history of the mass media in the country before Saudi rule in 1924, see Said Al-Harithi (1983). *The Mass Media in Saudi Arabia: Present Concept, Functions, Barriers and Selected Strategy for effective use in Nation-Building and Social Awareness*, Ohio State University. Unpublished PhD. Also see Abdul rahman Shobaili (1980), *A History and Analytical Study of Broadcasting and Press in Saudi Arabia*, Doctoral Dissertation, Ohio State University.

people to read about their country, add more readers to the national press and increase the distribution rate” (The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, 1993: 23-27). It also helped to expand news and information from abroad. New offices were opened inside and outside Saudi Arabia particularly in the Arab region. The national press received financial support from the Saudi government. Due to economic problems, particularly since 1991, the Saudi press is now more dependent on advertisements. Indeed, it now devotes more space to advertisements than to news or information. For example in July, 1999, *al-Riyadh* newspaper devoted, according to the researcher’s analysis,⁹ more than 60% of its space each day to advertisements, followed by *Okaz* with 53% and *al-Yaum* with 50%.

The Saudi Arabia Ministry of Municipalities and Rural Affairs of Saudi Arabia in its publication explains that “there are 154 Arabic language newspapers and magazines available in the Kingdom, of which 141 are published in the Arab world and 13 are published outside the Arab world” (undated: 273).

There are seven national daily newspapers: *al-Bilad*, *al-Jazeera*, *Okaz*, *al-Medina*, *al-Nadwah*, *al-Riyadh*, and *al-Yaum*. There is one evening newspaper, *Al-Masaeyah*, and three English newspapers, *Arab News*, *Saudi Gazette*, and *Riyadh Daily*. For more data about these daily newspapers see Table 1.1.

Table 1.1 Names of the Saudi National Daily Newspapers, Their Location, Date First Published, and Circulation Figures *

Name of Newspapers	Date published & location	Circulation
<i>al-Madinah</i> [Madina]	1962/1382(H) (West of SA)	47.000
<i>al-Nadwah</i> [The forum]	1963/1383(H) (West of SA)	35.000
<i>al-Bilad</i> [The Country]	1964/1383(H) (West of SA)	65.000
<i>al-Riyadh</i> [Riyadh]	1965/1385(H) (Centre of SA)	140.000
<i>Okaz</i>	1968/1384(H) (West of SA)	90.000
<i>al-Jazeera</i> [The Peninsula]	1972/1392(H) (Centre of SA)	90.000
<i>al-Yaum</i> [Today]	1972/1392(H) (East of SA)	40.000
<i>al-Watani</i> [Homeland]**	(South of SA)	

* Data taken from Al Yusaf, K, A (1986, March) Saudi Press: History and Development. *Almajalla Alarabiyah* (101) and from Rampal, K. R (1994) Mass Media in the Middle East, *Comprehensive Handbook*, Edited by Yahya. R. Kamalipour and Hamid Mowlana. Greenwood Press: Westport, Connecticut, London. P. 246.

** This newspaper has been authorised by the King and it is currently in the process of establishment (*al-Jazeera* newspaper, March 12, 1998, No. 9296, P. 4).

⁹ The analysis was done by using a constructed week approach (see Chapter 3, section 3.2.1 for details).

Al-Darrab claimed that newspapers, “since they are privately owned, make a profit. However, besides their own income, the newspapers receive some financial support from the government, who buys and distributes copies of the papers” (1983: 25).

There are also many magazines: weekly magazines, such as *al-Yamamah* Magazine; monthly magazines, such as *The National Guard Magazine*; and bimonthly magazines and quarterly magazines, such as *The King Khalid Military Academy Quarterly*.

Since illiteracy is comparatively high, as Al-Darrab noted, “newspapers and magazines do not play quite as significant a role in communication as do the broadcasting media. For example, the circulation of the Riyadh daily paper is only about 40,000 in the city with a population of over 700,000” (1983: 27). Nowadays, the circulation of the Riyadh daily paper is about 140,000 in a city whose population is estimated to be over 2,000,000.

1.6.3.2 Saudi Broadcasting

Broadcasting, in the form of radio and television has expanded and developed considerably in Saudi Arabia since 1948, when two radio stations in the city of Jeddah and Riyadh began transmitting (The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, 1993: 105). Currently there are six radio stations: The General programme, The Second programme, The Nida Ul-Islam Radio (Voice of Islam), The radio of the *Holy Quran*, European Programme (in English and France languages), and the Special Directed Programme (directed to different Islamic regions in Asia and Africa in ten oriental languages, e.g., Urdu, Indonesian, Persian, Turkish). The aim is to inform, educate and the gain reactions of Saudis and to spread Islamic teachings and thought inside Saudi Arabia and outside (Al-Harithi, 1998: 100-108).

TV began in 1965 with a single channel in Arabic, followed by a second channel in English (with news in French) in 1983. Both channels have carried advertising since 1986 (The Arabian Publishing House For Encyclopaedias, undated: 201). The aim is to inform,

publish information and educate the public on their national heritage and encourage moral values and principles derived from the Sharia Law.

ARAMCO started television transmission in Dhahran in 1957 in two languages, English and Arabic. When the Saudi government built a station in Dammam in 1970, ARAMCO ceased all Arabic-language transmissions but continued to transmit English -language mostly US -programmes. The station is designated as Channel 3 and never identified as being run by ARAMCO. Channel 3 was a significant source of information for the coalition armed forces during the Kuwait operation. Indeed, the Saudi government requested it to increase its transmissions in English to provide entertainment for the troops. The station, however, is censored by the ARAMCO public relations department to ensure all programmes conform to Saudi cultural standards (Boyd, 1995: 211).

Video tapes are available and popular with the public, due to the rise in living standards and purchasing power, as well as interest in the various programmes which are produced by the national information companies or programmes coming from abroad. The Ministry of Information has set special regulations for video shops; all recordings must abide by the Islamic values maintained by Saudi society. In 1992 there were 700 commercial shops dealing in the sale and exchange of video tapes (The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, 1993: 105 - 6). It is estimated that by 1983 there were 540,000 VCRs (Rampal, 1994: 252). Nowadays, there would be slightly more VCRs in Saudi Arabia, because more people have satellite dishes; Zamakhshari in 1994 found that 63% of Saudi parents had a video recorder (1994: 171).

Neither a motion picture production industry nor cable television exist in Saudi Arabia but satellite T.V. is available. Before Iraq invaded Kuwait, it was rare to see dishes on Saudi houses. A few rich people or government officials had then, but they were hidden from public view, at the backs of their houses. During the Iraqi invasion, the import and manufacture of dishes was not banned, and their popularity became noticeably more widespread during and after the Gulf War of 1991. However, "following a ban on the import and manufacture of dishes, issued in March 1994, the Interior Ministry announced on 28 June 1995 that all satellite dishes must be removed within one month. Failure to

comply with the law would result in fines totalling \$130,000 and terms of imprisonment. Pressure from the senior Ulama concerned at the erosion of core Islamic precepts may have played some part in the decision” (Jones, 1995: 40). Although it is now illegal to have satellite dishes, it is estimated that from 3 to 6 percent of Saudi homes retain them (Rampal, 1994: 251). Those who still have them try to hide them as they did before the Iraqi invasion, and although it is not possible to buy a new dish, it is easy for people to watch satellite programmes by sharing with a neighbour who already has one. Although the official ban on satellite T.V. was issued to placate the conservative elements in society, enforcement is lax.

Consequently, “Saudis receive television broadcasts from Arab states, including a common Pan-Arab service, via the ARABSAT (Arab Satellite Communications Organisation), in addition to STAR TV from Hong Kong and channels from Turkey, Russia, and Western Europe. STAR TV offers Cable News Network (CNN), BBC (British Broadcasting Corporation) Asia . . .” (Rampal, 1994: 251).

The opposition to satellite T.V. among the religious conservatives stems from their fear that through this medium, Saudi people will be exposed to undesirable Western influences which will lead to a weakening of religious and moral values. “The religious leaders have been especially concerned about the depiction of women in Western and even Egyptian films, that is liable to arouse sexual excitement. Other objections to films include references to Christianity and Judaism, alcoholic beverages, inappropriately attired women, kissing, sex, and excessive violence” (Rampal, 1994 : 253).

1.6.3.3 Saudi Information Policy

The Saudi press is subject to the Information Policy set by the government. The Supreme Council for Information was established in accordance with the Royal decree no 2022/8, dated 12/9/1401(1980):

[It] serves as the planning and supervisory body which makes the policies for information development. The purpose of the council is to prepare a clear media policy based on the sharia law. The policy must . . . assist them in developing their programmes and evaluating their output. The Council also prepares laws and regulations which control the media activities (The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, 1993: 121).

Saudi information policy was authorised by the Council of Ministers, in decision nos. 78 (dated 14-5. 1400, AH¹⁰) and 82, (dated 4-6, 1402 AH) and must conform to the precepts and aims of Islam. Therefore the main objective is to raise the intellectual, cultural and spiritual awareness of Saudis so that the principles of Islam may be disseminated and asserted through understanding and conviction. The policy, which is comprised of comprehensive articles, covering on religious, political, social, cultural and educational aspects, is considered as a significant part of the state's general policy (The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, 1993: 185-6). Appendix B explains these thirty articles.

Regarding the relationship between the government and the press, Najjar pointed out that, "each newspaper is run by a government-appointed private group consisting of people with experience in journalism. Although the newspapers are not directly controlled by the government, they usually support government policies . . . [and] critical writings in newspapers influence the thinking of the government" (1979: i-ii).

Moreover, a source of indirect government control over the press is the fact that "Under the press regulation, the Director General and the Editor-in-Chief of each establishment must be approved by the Ministry of Information" (Al-Harithi, 1983: 185).

Another example is that, according to Article 12A of the publishing regulations "the Ministry of Information is authorised to censor all imported printed materials. The press can be considered the secondary channel [radio and TV are first] in disseminating government's new ideologies and policies" (Shobaili, 1971: 95-95).

¹⁰ (AH) stands for Anno Hegirae (hegira being the latinized form of Hijrah). The hegira is the migration of the Prophet Muhammed from Makkah to al- Madinah, which took place on 16 July 622 CE. Saudi Arabia Information Center, (1990), The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Stacey International, London & New Jersey, p. 9.

A more direct form of control is exercised through the Saudi Press Agency which in 1971 began operating under the administration of the Ministry of Information. Its role is “. . . to issue news bulletins and pamphlets in the Kingdom and abroad” (Al-Darrab, 1983: 23). Thus, government bodies send out official press releases to the Saudi Press Agency, which in turn ensures that these are published in the newspapers.

However, this relationship between the government and press, according to Shobaili,

is a result of political and social conditions. First, was the political atmosphere during the last decade. The middle eastern area was living in a political ferment, fumbling between west and east with growing extreme leftist ideologies. Propaganda campaigns clashed against each other amidst that atmosphere. Change of governments, Coups d'etat and revolutions characterized the dictionary of social scene. Saudi Arabia, the new emerging country, busy with its internal development programmes, did not want to hurl itself into that violent upheaval (1971: 95-96).

Generally speaking, unlike the system in the United Kingdom, both press and broadcasting are administered by the Ministry of Information and cannot be separated from the Islamic religion and Saudi culture which shape most of the news and programmes' contents. In addition, the Saudi mass media position is strongly linked with the government authority and with the Saudi power structure.

In sum, the above description about the Saudi government, society and mass media gives us a general idea how all these elements work together. Strong links with past tradition, with Arab culture and Islam regulate every aspect of Saudi life and shape Saudis' perceptions of the modern world. Such influences were certainly apparent in the way the Saudi press responded to the Gulf conflict of 1990-1991.

Chapter 2

The Performance of the Press: Theory and Practice

In the post-war period, technological advances have made possible the almost instantaneous flow of information world-wide. As the speed and scope of information flows increase, policy-makers, journalists and social scientists are forced to recognise the important role of the press in international affairs and in crisis situations. Some writers believe that “improving the quality and quantity of information flow between countries and regions could contribute, to some extent, to a decrease in world tensions” (Babbili, 1986: 363). As decreasing the world tensions is the politicians’ task, the press remains an important instrument to achieve their mission. Thus, politicians recognise the importance of public opinion. In times of tension, particularly during war time, the press, therefore, is “a means to achieve political influence . . . [and] mobilise political support” (Wolfsfeld, 1997: 2). It is important to realise that “news is vastly different in nature from continent to continent, from country to country, and even from news medium to news medium within any country” (Ostgaard, 1965: 52). Such differences in the content and style of news presentation depend on a complex interplay of factors, including the political and cultural environment, journalists’ role in message-making, and ethical and professional values in relation to objectivity and newsworthiness.

This chapter attempts to present in a summary form the most significant influential social and political dimensions which affect the performance of the press. The general theoretical work presented in this chapter is divided into seven major sections. The first discusses the four theories of the press namely, authoritarian theory, libertarian theory, social responsibility theory and the soviet-communist theory. The aim is to understand the control and operation of the press throughout the world from various ideological perspectives. The second section presents the Arab media systems, namely, the mobilisation press, the loyalist press and diverse press. The aim is to understand how the press is controlled and operated in the Arab world, and to identify within which system the Saudi press can be classified. The third section presents three mass media theories,

namely, the Bullet theory, the agenda-setting function of mass media theory and the Spiral of Silence theory. The aim is to challenge what Lowery and DeFleur call “speculation, accusation, and undocumented conclusions” (1988: 17) in the study of the performance of the Saudi press during the Gulf conflict. The fourth, fifth and sixth sections discuss several elements in relation to the government, press and journalists’ work, namely, the communication process formulae, the function of mass media, objective journalism, and the significance of news (news values and its ideology value). The aim is to explain the nature of journalistic and press activity, the relationship between government and journalists, and journalistic values in relation to the presentation of news and information. The last section presents a brief background to the study in relation to the media in the Gulf war. The aim is to look at the performance of press and broadcasting during this particular war and the perceptions of individuals in relation to the press, government and public.

Taken together, it is believed that significant and influential social scientific studies that will be discussed in this chapter can be grouped and related to each other to constitute a theoretical framework for understanding the performance of the Saudi press during the Gulf conflict of 1990-1991 and its relationship with the Saudi government. This task is a complex one, due to the large diversity of viewpoints among prominent scholars in the field of communication studies.

2.1 Four Theories of the Press

Throughout the world, the press are engaged in a constant struggle to remain as independent as possible from state control and political interests. One significant reason is that the press today has a great influence over government, particularly executive decisions. Observers such as Eldridge, Kitzinger & Williams see the press as “acting as agencies of social control, in the hands of established authority or a dominant class, and used to manage and manipulate the emergence of mass opinion and mass democracy to serve their ends” (1997: 12). To understand the way in which media control and press systems operate throughout the world, it is important to explore Siebert, Peterson & Schramm’s work in this field, Four Theories of the Press (1956). They identified four

main theories of the media (newspapers, radio and television) which, they argued, have largely determined what kind of press the Western World has. The four basic philosophical theories that apply to press systems throughout the world can be summarised as follows:

2.1.1 The Authoritarian Theory

The oldest of the four theories was first conceived by Plato who was convinced that:

[T]he nature of man, including his material interests and selfish passions, would tend to degrade government from an aristocracy to timocracy, to oligarchy, to democracy, and finally to tyranny [In addition, he] conceived the ideal society as one in which the state established and enforced the unity of political and cultural goals. That idea meant rigorous control of opinion and discussion (Siebert, Peterson & Schramm, 1956: 12).

The authoritarian press theory, developed in 16th and 17th century England and subsequently adopted and practised in many parts of the world, is based on the idea that the role of the press is to serve the state and its government. The government, therefore, has the sole right to use the media, irrespective whether it is owned by private or public organisations. It controls the media by government patents, guilds, licensing and sometimes censorship. The media are not allowed to criticise the political apparatus, officials in power, or other friendly governments (Siebert, Peterson & Schramm, 1956: 7). Information on government is treated in the same way as discussion of government policies. Authoritarian states have tended not to publish information about the issues and arguments presented at meetings of the central advisory body. Decisions are not made public unless they require general public compliance or support. Even general assemblies are secretive, and discussion the proceedings outside the walls of the meeting place is often punished (Siebert, Peterson & Schramm, 1956: 27).

Thus, the press role is simply to report news and information, but to offer no interpretation or analysis unless it is in line the government policy; it should present the readership with the government policy agenda as facts that are to be accepted; the press should represent

the government to the public, rather than the reverse, and so can exert pressure on the government's behalf. Public opinion that is in opposition to the government will be suppressed. Finally the press is expected to influence the public in the way desired by the government. It is not considered part of the press's role to raise public awareness or question government actions (Siebert, Peterson & Schramm, 1956: 27). In sum, the press under this theory functions as a propaganda instrument and as a publicity arm of the government. The government is the sole arbiter of political policy and social affairs; public participation is non-existent and opposition is not tolerated. Not only this, but the government policy dictates the press agenda.

As extreme example of this authoritarian model is Hitler's Germany, where the propaganda minister, Goebbels "was recognised as a master of his trade by those who fought and by those who acclaimed the Nazi State" (Doob, 1950: 419). Likewise, with Hitler and Mussolini: "Both their published statements and their actions indicate a continuation in a perverted way from the doctrines of authoritarianism, and their treatment of the mass media was entirely consistent with the basic principle of absolutism" (Siebert, Peterson & Schramm, 1956: 15).

In other contemporary authoritarian regimes such as Libya, Cuba and China, journalists become an instrument in the hand of government rather than an important source of information or a watchdog which acts on behalf of the public to ensure the government works in the national interest. Indeed, during the Gulf conflict, the allied coalition reverted to authoritarian practices. A good example was the establishing of the 'pool system' where "journalists were formed into Media Reporting Teams (MRTs). The Americans were to be supervised by censors from the Public Affairs (PAO) and the British by the MoD's public relations officers (PROs)" (Taylor, 1992: 51). More information about the pool system is given in Chapters 4, 5 and 6.

2.1.2 The Libertarian Theory

Libertarian theory emerged during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. The "principles of libertarian philosophy are based on the answers to questions about the nature

of man, the nature of society and man's relation to it, and the nature of knowledge and of truth" (Siebert, Peterson & Schramm, 1956: 40). John Milton wrote that "a majestic argument for intellectual freedom in the libertarian tradition It was for its time a powerful argument against authoritarian control" (Siebert, Peterson & Schramm, 1956: 44). Basic to Milton's argument was the belief that men are capable of rationally distinguishing between right and wrong, good and bad. To exercise this skill man should have full access to the ideas and thoughts of other men. Milton wanted serious minded thinkers to be free from government censorship to air their views and opinions openly and honestly. On similar lines, John Stuart Mill formulated the idea of freedom of expression by presenting four basic propositions. He argued that:

if we silence an opinion, for all we know, we are silencing truth. Secondly, a wrong opinion may contain a grain of truth necessary for finding the whole truth. Third, even if the commonly accepted opinion is the whole truth, the public tends to hold it not on rational grounds but as a prejudice unless it is forced to defend it. Lastly, unless the commonly held opinion is contested from time to time, it loses its vitality and its effect on conduct and character (Siebert, Peterson & Schramm, 1956: 46).

Connected to Mill's emphasis, Thomas Jefferson, as a political figure, concluded that "the principal function of government is to establish and maintain a framework within which the individual could pursue his own ends. The function of the press is to participate in the education of the individual and at the same time to guard against deviations by government from its original purpose"(Siebert, Peterson & Schramm, 1956: 47).

The libertarian theory is supposedly applicable to western society, though this is open to question in that a small group of people control the media and their communication facilities. This situation was one of the major arguments of the former Soviet Union in 1948 at the Geneva Conference on Freedom of Information. It argued that "true freedom of information could not exist as long as western media were controlled by 'a small group of capitalists', while the United States called for a totally unrestrained flow of information" (Ayish, 1992: 491). However, under liberal regimes such as the UK, the USA and France, journalists become the principal source of news and information and a watchdog of government for the public.

2.1.3 The Social Responsibility Theory

This theory mostly relates to changes in the technological, industrial and social order, which brought a gradual shift away from pure libertarianism, and in its place began to emerge what has been called the social responsibility theory of the press. In the United States of America the Commission on the Freedom of the Press after World War II did a great deal toward making social responsibility an essential part of its tenets. The significant functions of the press, under social responsibility theory are: “servicing the political system by providing information, discussion, and debate on public affairs . . . [and] enlightening the public so as to make it capable of self-government [and] safeguarding the right of the individual by serving as a watchdog against government; . . .” (Siebert, Peterson & Schramm, 1956: 74).

However, until the 1980s, the fact is that government in the field of communication became a restrictive regulatory and participating agency. Siebert argues that governments tried to withhold certain communication content from their citizens by proposing plans for their mass communication, particularly broadcasting. The aim is to bring forward the need for the government to guide the public in the way it believes is appropriate to the nation’s security and interest. This necessitates the grading and labelling of information distributed by private media (1972: 219- 226).

With this role of government in mind, on the other hand, journalists under the social responsibility model believe that they should be objective and independent in dealing with news and information gathered, and present it to citizens with as little bias as possible. In addition, they assume that readers are not sufficiently informed, so journalists need more space to interpret the issues for them in the way they believe it is reliable and accurate. Moreover, they rely on the freedom of press, whereby they have the right of access to government policy to ensure the press does its job as a watchdog and at the same time to enhance the two-way communication between the government and public that would influence general policy.

The attitudes of those involved in a political conflict are shaped or reinforced by the selection of news content and the way it is presented. During the Gulf conflict, for

example, the press played a major role in the formation and expression of public opinion: suggesting legislation, supporting the liberation of Kuwait, exposing Iraqi crimes and rewarding approved actions with favourable publicity. By representing the people, it promoted the interests of the coalition. This argument is highly relevant in times of conflict. So, there is a relationship between the government and its press, whereby each has the duty to serve the public in a conflict such as the Gulf conflict.

2.1.4 The Soviet-Communist Theory

The former Soviet Communist Theory was developed in the Soviet Union, “although it has links with the authoritarian systems practised by Nazi Germany and Mussolini’s regime. The theory is based on Marxist-Leninist-Stalinist thought, with a mixture of Hegel and 19th century Russian thinking” (Siebert, Peterson & Schramm, 1956: 15). The purpose of mass media control for national unity or the party in power is to contribute to the success and continuance of the Soviet Socialist system, but more particularly to the dictatorship of the party (or proletariat). The communist press theory is dying a slow death, due to the collapse of the USSR. However, remnants survive in communist countries such as China and Cuba. As Andrei Vyshinsky stated, “Marxism tries to be ‘all-embracing’; it ‘contemplates . . . totally’; it ‘eliminates subjectivism . . . in choosing . . . ideas; it tries to reveal the common roots of ‘all ideas and all different tendencies’” (cited in Siebert, Peterson & Schramm, 1956: 106-107). Mass communications in relation to the authority theory are used

instrumentally . . . that is, as an instrument of the state and the party. They are closely integrated with other instruments of state power and the Party influence. They are used as instruments of unity within the state and the Party. They are used as instruments of state and Party “revelation”. They are used almost exclusively as instruments of propaganda and agitation. They are characterised by a strictly enforced responsibility (Siebert, Peterson & Schramm, 1956: 121).

With the decline of communism and the end of the Cold War, public opinion in Eastern Europe has been organised on a massive scale for freedom and social life has changed and become materially oriented. In this situation, the theories of press today fall under one of

three general movements: “market, Marxist and advancing” (Altschull, 1995: 418). All, Altschull said, “are systemic - they include elements of the political structure and environments, economic forces, and the paymasters of the press but also the other ingredients of life, both public and private” (1995: 426-427). Altschull examines the three movements in terms of three arguments: (1) articles of faith, (2) purposes of journalism and (3) views on press freedom. Each represents a general standard in the way that journalists should work.

By *articles of faith*, what is meant is that the press is a unifying and not a divisive force. The press is an agent of beneficial social change, based on a two-way exchange between journalists and readers. The *purposes of journalism* are perceived as being “to serve truth. To be socially responsible. To educate politically and culturally. To serve the people by seeking, in partnership with government, change for beneficial purposes, [and] to serve as an instrument of peace” (Altschull, 1995: 429). The third and final argument of the movements of the press in terms of *press freedom* is that “a free press means freedom of conscience for journalists. Press freedom is less important than the viability of the nation. A national press policy is needed to provide legal safeguards for freedom” (Altschull, 1995:435).

The relationship of these theories with other theories explored later in this chapter, and their significance for this study, will be analysed in the conclusion to the chapter. At this point, however, it is worth noting that the press theories and arguments as described above only dealt with the directive aspects of the democratic, communist and the third world ideology and how the state manipulates or uses the social influence exerted by a public communication campaign. This researcher considers these theories as the guidelines and standard policy for any press organisation. One reason is that the theories seem to be a basis of regulation and law. For journalists, this is like a written agreement between the state and press. In the communist and developing countries, there is an information policy for journalists, which they must abide by, whereas in the western world there is no written policy for journalists to follow, except self-regulation based on social responsibility.

The main point that emerges from these different theories is that “the press always takes on the form and coloration of the social and political structures within which it operates”

(Siebert, Peterson & Schramm, 1956: 1). Second, the theories describe how the media should operate in advanced countries such as the USA and UK where the freedom of speech and freedom of the press are protected. How far this objective applies today is a matter of debate, and especially when a State is involved in conflict, as in the case of the Gulf conflict and war in 1990-1991. This will be considered later in this chapter. However, since the focus of this study is Saudi Arabia, it is necessary, in order to fit the Saudi press into this theoretical framework, to have some understanding of Arab media systems in general, as this might shed light on relevant factors related to the nature of the state or the role of journalists in serving the public.

2.2 The Arab Media Systems

Rugh (1979) considered the cultural, political and economic realities that shape the content of media in the Arab World. He presents a topology of the Arab media systems by grouping the media into three fundamental categories or 'subtypes', namely, the Mobilization Press, the Loyalist Press and the Diverse Press.

2.2.1 The Mobilisation Press

The mobilisation press is distinguished by the journalist's behaviour and political conditions by which the press is affected in tackling issues and events. This group includes countries such as Algeria, Egypt, Iraq, Libya, Sudan, Syria, and the Yemen (Rugh, 1979: 32-33). In these countries, three press characteristics can be identified. First, it does not "criticize the basic policies of the national government. The government's foreign policies are particularly unassailable, but the major lines of domestic policy too, are never attacked Politically important issues are not treated from various angles but are presented from the one point of view which is acceptable to the government" (Rugh, 1979: 35). Sanctity of leaders is another characteristic, so that "negative information about the character, behaviour, or personal lives of the top rulers does not find its way into print, no matter how well known by the newsmen or even the public" (Rugh, 1979: 35). Finally, "there is no significant diversity on important political issues among the press. Its editorials and

news stories on political issues or related to government issues tend to be strikingly similar to the government action. The point is that the language and tone of news stories is “to help mobilize great campaigns launched by the regime against some obstacle to economic development or against a foreign enemy” (Rugh, 1979: 35).

In relation to the political conditions, the major element is that, “a small, aggressive ruling group [e.g., the Iraqi Ba’th regime] is in authority, effectively in control of all important levers of power. It faces no genuine organised opposition and allows no challenger to its authority to speak out publicly on the domestic scene” (Rugh, 1979: 36). According to Rugh, the mobilisation type of press is to some extent the result of a strong ruling elite (usually a single political party) which sees itself as being at the forefront of some campaign and seeks to involve actively all sectors of the population (1979: 37). Under these conditions, Rugh writes:

These are strong incentives for journalists to support the regime and its policies, at least on issues about which the regime is sensitive. Without an organized opposition party or group, there is no public criticism of the regime to report in the newspaper column, and the psychological atmosphere makes it very difficult for the newspaper columnist independently to voice criticism of the government (1979: 36).

Primarily, the state controls the press via appointments to key editorial positions, namely the Editor-in-Chief, the censorship process, and ownership of the national news services which are used as an important source of policy guidance, all to ensure the loyalty of the press so it will reflect the government’s position rather than public interest.

2.2.2 The Loyalist Press

The Loyalist Press is “consistently loyal to and supportive of the regime in power despite being privately owned” (Rugh, 1979: 71). Such countries, for example, in this category are Bahrain, Jordan, Saudi Arabia, Tunisia, Qatar, and the United Arab Emirates. The content of news and political matters bear similarities to those of the mobilisation press. The loyalist press avoids questioning the political policies of the rulers, or attacking key political personnel. Leading articles and other commentaries, in essence, uphold the

official line. The actions and policies of the leadership are, if not actively supported, at least passively accepted. Government influence on press content is even greater and more direct in times of national emergency, when the leaders call for the newspapers' loyal support in the national interest (Rugh, 1979: 74, 79, 85). Such pressures were brought to bear on the Saudi press in the Gulf conflict, both before and after the liberation of Kuwait.

2.2.3 The Diverse Press

Where a diverse press exists, more freedom and diversity of opinion and news is possible than under of the mobilisation or loyalist press types. Lebanon is today the clearest example of this type of press system (Rugh, 1979: 89). Kuwait, and Morocco have also developed the diverse press although they have some of the loyalist press characteristics of the loyalist press. However, although these three countries have more freedom and diversity of opinion than other Arab states, there are important differences among these three systems. Whereas in Lebanon, the press is normally self-regulating and subject to little government constraint, the media in Kuwait and Morocco are more strictly controlled. Even they, however, have some scope for freedom and diversity which is made possible by a degree of openness and tolerance of diverse opinions within the political system (Rugh, 1979: 111-112).

This discussion of the three systems of Arab media has illustrated the way difference in political systems from one country to another are reflected in different levels of press diversity and freedom. It has been suggested here that the Saudi Arabia press is an example of the Loyalist press. Whether this is so, or whether the Saudi press has elements of more than one type, will emerge from the analysis presented in subsequent chapters.

2.3 Mass Media Theories

Having discussed the press theories and the Arab media systems, it seems necessary to draw attention to three significant theories used in the communication studies.

2.3.1 The Bullet Theory

The “bullet theory” or “hypodermic - needle theory” as DeFleur and Ball-Rokeach, 1982, (cited in Severin and Tankard, 1992: 247) called it has been recognised by a number of scholars, who trace it to the apparent power of propaganda during the World War II. According to Severin and Tankard, “It was a popular view in the years prior to World War II, when many people shared a fear that a Hitler-style demagogue could rise to power in the United States through the force of mass communication” (1992: 247). Lowery and DeFleur explain what they term the magic bullet theory of media effects. According to this theory the media send messages to society at large. These messages are perceived in more or less the same way by everyone and have a strong impact on people’s feelings and attitudes, leading them to respond in a somewhat uniform manner. Thus this theory views mass communication as powerful, uniform, and direct in its effects (1988: 21-22).

This impact is ascribed to the absence of counter acting social controls from other sources, such as commonly-held customs and traditions (Lowery & DeFleur, 1988: 22). According to the “bullet theory”, the press message has a direct influence and impact on an individuals’ ‘brain’. As Lasswell explains, it is assumed that

whoever controls the material instruments of communication can imprint upon the passive mind of the audience images that protect the material relationships then prevailing or in prospect. Thus propaganda [white, or black or grey] is viewed as an activity, low in material cost, by means of which the receptivities created by material contradictions can be made politically effective (1965: 540).

This theory, indeed, can be linked with what was discussed previously in relation to the communist theory, in that the aim is “to maximize the power at home and abroad of ruling

individuals and groups of . . . state [by] the management of mass communication for power purposes” (Lasswell, 1965: 537-8).

This theory is, however, challenged today. With the improving technology that facilitates communication, other forces are driving the change in all directions to all continents, and have contributed to the emergence of a new society which could be termed the information society. It can be argued that the media cannot completely affect individuals or change their behaviour, but rather reinforces the attitudes they already hold. One main reason is that every individual is different in the way he or she organises beliefs, attitudes, values, and needs, or experiences gratification. These differences are the product of past experience (Lowey & DeFleur, 1988: 33). Taylor comments on the current lack of any satisfactory model showing that the media influence human behaviour (1997: 6).

Lowery and DeFleur question the accuracy of the bullet theory, arguing that media influence is not uniform, powerful or direct but is mediated by individuals’ social interactions (1988: 24). Certainly, in developed countries, there are many different interest groups (for example trade unions, business) which influence political decisions and policy. In relation to the Gulf conflict, the bullet theory would imply that press information be derived wholly from government sources and that there would be conscious use of the press, by government, to direct public opinion towards the conflict. Whether this was, in fact, the case, we shall examine in subsequent chapters. A more moderate view of the power of the press is provided by the agenda-setting theory of the press, whereby the press may be seen, not so much as a passive tool of government, but as an opinion leader and, possibly, a mediator between government and people.

2.3.2 The Agenda - Setting Function of Mass Media

An early study of the agenda-setting function of the mass media was conducted (1972) by McCombs and Shaw, who explained the agenda setting function of the mass media in the 1968 presidential campaign. Their work drew on Cohen’s note “that the press may not be successful much of the time in telling people what to think, but is stunningly successful in telling its readers what to think about” (1963:13). An agenda, therefore, is defined “as a

set of issues that are communicated in a hierarchy of importance at a point in time” (Dearing & Rogers, 1996: 2). An agenda in political terms is “a general set of political controversies that will be viewed at any point in time as falling within the range of legitimate concerns meriting the attention of the policy” (Dearing & Rogers, 1996: 2). Both politicians and journalists may contribute in setting that agenda.

A study of trends in the public agenda from 1954-1994 suggested that over the period in question, the agenda has become more diverse and volatile. Whereas at one time, one or two overriding issues dominated the public agenda, now there are many competing issues and voices (McCombs & HuaZhu, 1995: 517). Because of the agenda-setting influence of the mass media, politicians are anxious to manipulate the media, such that both media and public agenda reflect the government policy agenda. As Franklin commented:

Parties try to influence media campaign coverage in one of four ways. First, they try to set the election news agenda so that media attention is focused on issues which are favourable to them. Secondly, parties try to structure their contacts with broadcasters to allow them some control over politicians’ media appearances, i.e. parties negotiate ‘rules of engagement’. Thirdly, parties coach their politicians in media presentation skills to guarantee political messages are communicated as effectively as possible. Fourthly, if all the above fail and parties believe that a particular broadcast presents them in an unfavourable light, they complain (1994: 143-144).

The point here is that, in line with the authority theory of the press, government goals take precedence during conflict and war, i.e. the Saudi press will tell people what to think about or what to think. But, will the press set the agenda for the Saudi political campaign, influencing attitudes toward political issues? Later chapters will examine whether the policy of the Saudi press (and, indeed, that of the coalition) in coverage of conflict and war was linked to the political and military policy. Where such is the case, the public agenda would be likely to change from one where the press agenda influences the political campaign or policy, to one where the government policy agenda sets the press agenda, in line with what Franklin has argued.

2. 3.3 The Spiral of Silence Theory

The original article discussing the spiral of silence theory was published by Noelle-Neumann in the Spring 1974 edition of the *Journal of Communication*. Noelle-Neumann noted in her study that “a leading German research institute has found evidence to support Tocqueville’s view: more frightened of isolation than of committing an error, they [individuals] joined the masses even though they did not agree with them” (1974: 43). Noelle-Neumann illustrated the influence of the press on public opinion with reference to “the pressure brought to bear on householders in a neighbourhood to shovel the snow from their sidewalks”. She took this to demonstrate that social conventions, customs, and norms are, among the ‘situations’ and proposals of significance with which a large number of people express agreement or disagreement in their public lives (1974: 13). A clear explanation of this theory is given by Severin and Tankard. They explain that public opinion is influenced by the combined effect of three characteristics of mass communication: its cumulation, ubiquity, and consonance. By consonance is meant the consistent perspective of an event presented by different newspapers and other media. The effect of such a unified stance is to overcome selective exposure, since there are no alternative messages from which readers or viewers may select. The impression is thus created that most people look at the issue in the way that is presented by the mass media (1992: 252-253).

Severin & Tankard, referring to Noelle-Neumann, draw attention to the important role of the mass media as the main source to which most people look to find the trend of public opinion. The spiral of silence is affected by the media in three ways by influencing people’s impressions as to what is the dominant opinion on an issue; by influencing people’s ideas about which opinions are becoming more widespread and by shaping people’s feelings about which opinions they can safely utter in public without risking isolation or ostracism (1992: 253). Did these three mechanisms operate in relation to the Saudi press, since all Saudi newspapers followed a single information policy? The answer to this question will emerge from the final content analysis of the Saudi newspapers and our interpretation of this content (see Chapter 7).

2.4 Communication Process Formulae & Function of Press

Having considered various theories about what the press might be expected to do, and why, we now need to consider how it performs its role beginning with the mechanism of communication itself.

2.4.1 Communication Process Formulae

The elements of the communication process can be understood, first, in relation to two relevant formulae. McQuail & Windahl (1993: 13-14) cited the Lasswell formula and Braddock's extension of Lasswell's formula. They explained that Lasswell's formula asked five questions to be answered. These are: Who? (communicator); says what? (message); by which channel? (medium); to whom? (receiver) and with what effect? (effect). Braddock, on the other hand, has extended the Lasswell formula by adding two elements: under what circumstances? and for what purpose?

These two formulae show a typical view of the communication process "as starting with a source who has ideas or information to transmit to an audience. The ideas are transformed into messages or a set of symbols, and are then transmitted to a receiver through a medium or a combination of media" (Agunga, 1990: 141).

McQuail, with a similar framework, elaborated on the elements of the communication process by identifying a set of questions and comments as follows: "Who communicates to whom? (source and receivers); why communicate? (function and purposes); how does communication take place? (channels, language, codes); what about? (content, references, types of information) and what are the consequences of communication (intended or unintended)" (1987: 7).

This study will attempt to answer such questions (with the exception of the last, which would require longitudinal studies and raises difficulties of access to appropriate samples, as well as measurement of attitudes) in relation to the messages conveyed by the Saudi press during the Gulf conflict. Sources, receivers, channels and content may appear

relatively straightforward to define and identify. In order to identify the functions of the communication messages, however, it is helpful to have a theoretical framework or list of recognised communication functions, onto which the content of the Saudi press can be mapped.

2.4.2 Function of the Press

Media structure and performance play an increasingly significant role in shaping public opinion and international relations. As a result, the media is considered as a major collective source of information and images that operate at two levels:

At the personal level, [the media] provide a link to the larger society and at least indirect connections to other human beings, and in varying degree a sense of connectedness and solidarity At the political level, the media play a central role in the working of democracies . . . the creation of a 'public sphere,' meaning all the places and forums where issues of importance to a political community are discussed and debated, and where information is presented that is essential to citizen participation in community life" (Herman & McChesney, 1997: 2-3).

The notion of message at these two levels is, however, a rather complex one. A message can be misinterpreted unless it produces a meaning that an audience can understand and interpret. Any communicator is involved in the encoding of messages which "is at the core of symbolic interaction between people" (Combs, 1981: 45-46). Combs further elaborates that:

Mind, self, and society all emerge in symbolic communication between people. Mind is the process of acquiring the ability to use and actually using symbols. The self arises, develops, and is transformed in ongoing social interaction. Society is a cauldron of communication activity. Mind, self, and society are all communication processes and not structures. The social objects of the world are not 'things' but rather communication processes, symbolic entities which change over time through interaction and thus new definitions of the situation and the objects of the situation (1981: 46).

McGuigan also argues that press messages “circulate in a semiotic landscape which structures meaning in terms of difference, opposition, dialogue, [and] asymmetry. Their boundaries are drawn between inside and out, home and foreign The journalist, then, is not really in command of the meaning- making process” (1997: 252).

Human beings convey and transmit messages through symbols derived from past experiences and mutual interactions. Those symbols, however, can be the source of many communication problems. Misunderstanding of such symbols can lead to misapprehension. Accurate communication requires the sharing of significant symbols, presupposes shared knowledge, language, culture, religion etc. According to Franklin “Media messages are the results of complex interaction between media and content and readers who bring distinctive interpretative framework to the coding process which reflect the particularities of their social and cultural backgrounds and experiences” (1994: 225). This highlights the need for communicators to be able to adopt an integrated, unifying perspective towards all the messages they receive and transmit. Examining each message individually may lead to a distorted perception. It is necessary to look for the message behind the message, and to recognise that news is not about single items of information, but about the way information is packaged.

From these arguments, two elements emerge. First, the journalist in creating effective messages should understand that the communication process is a matter of symbolic interaction between people. Second, the journalist should, in formulating his/her messages, ideally be in command of the “meaning-making process”. But the fact is that journalists, particularly during a conflict or war, are too busy to take command of the meaning-making process. In practice, journalists are reduced to reporting news in conformity with the information policy issued by the government or agreed upon professional standards.

There is, however, a form of “gatekeeper”, or self-regulation, which enables the journalist to select messages that come to him/her along the chain of news. Nevertheless, the functions of the press should satisfy the audiences’ needs. These functions are as follows:

1. **Information:** providing information about events and conditions in society and the world; indicating relations of power; facilitating innovation, adaptation and progress.
2. **Correlation:** explaining, interpreting and commenting on the meaning of events and information; providing support for established authority and norms; socializing co-ordinating separate activities; consensus building; setting orders of priority and signalling relative status.
3. **Continuity:** expressing the dominant culture and recognizing subcultures and new cultural developments; forging and maintaining communality of values.
4. **Entertainment:** providing amusement, diversion and the means of relaxation; reducing social tension.
5. **Mobilization:** campaigning for societal objectives in the sphere of politics, war, economy development, work and sometimes religion (Lasswell 1948, Wright 1960 & Mendelsohn, 1966 cited in McQuail, 1994: 79).

The reason for presenting these five functions is to examine whether or not one or more of them were performed by the Saudi press during the Gulf conflict, and how Saudi journalists believe the Saudi press performed in war time (see Chapter 6).

Laswell, Braddock and McQuail 's formulae, together with the five broad functions of the mass communication in society presented above, provide a framework for identifying and understanding the distinct pattern and character of the process of news presentation as well as the functions and position of Saudi press coverage during the Gulf conflict. To conduct such an analysis, it is necessary to make a judgement about the quality of communication events. This involves examining to what extent their news or message is relevant to the conflict and where it has positive or negative connotations, so as to achieve an attitude shift. We also need to ascertain whether the news selection is appropriate for the intended readers and whether the news/subjects presented are newsworthy and have credibility. Regarding the latter point, it would be appropriate to take into account journalistic values, relating to objectivity and significance of news.

2.5 Objective Journalism

There is a wide expectation that journalists in liberal democracies will conform to three principles identified as constituting 'objective journalism'. These are as follows:

Independence. Journalists should be independent of political commitments and free of outside pressures, including pressures from government and other political actors, advertisers, and the news organisation itself as an institution with economic and political interests.

Objectivity. The journalist's basic task is to present 'the facts' to tell what happened, not to pass judgement on it. Opinion should be clearly separated from the presentation of the news.

Balance. News coverage of any political controversy should be impartial, representing without favour the positions of all the contending parties" (Hallin, 1986: 68).

The need for journalists to be independent, objective and balanced may be accepted in the most advanced countries, where the freedom of expression and of the press, as well as the questioning of government, are regarded as legitimate. But such views are likely to be opposed by Communist and Third World countries where the press is expected to serve the political system, primarily by manipulating the public in such a way that the government achieve its goals, rather than informing the public so they can judge the situation according to their individual interests. Journalists can only report and present news reliably and adequately if they are free from government restriction.

In short, 'objective journalism' requires more freedom and less restriction. This ideal is based on professional standards or journalists' responsibility. However, these "have often led to news productions that contradict the interests of the network managers and the power structure to which they and their corporations belong . . . [moreover] these codes may lead them to broadcast or [present] news that criticises existing practices, politics, and even institutions within the society" (Kellner, 1990: 118).

As a result, two aspects should be recognised as constituting the significance of news, namely, the news value and its ideological value (Hall, 1981: 231). But, before discussing the significance of news, it is important to consider the nature of 'newspaper journalism'. Tracey suggested that "the highest standard of professional performance occurred when the reporter presented the reader with all sides of an issue (though there were usually only two) presented all the 'facts' and allowed the reader to decide what these facts meant" (1977: 22). But the fact is that in a conflict situation, such as war, the readers are more passive rather than active, waiting for news from both press and government. And such

information is not always forthcoming. Governments may choose to withhold certain information. Because of this journalists are less able to present the truth. Thus, journalists' ability to conform to the three rules of objective journalism discussed above is constrained, according to Golding & Elliott, by the following factors. First, newspaper journalism is normally subject to law and its operations and structures are defined in legislation. Legal regulations have to be translated into routine practice. Second, newspaper journalism must accept the strict distinction between fact and comment to which it has to adhere because of its "dominant public presence, monopoly, close relationship with government and constitutional position" (1979: 32). In an attempt to achieve this, new standards of impartiality and balance were adopted and fact and comment were differentiated organisationally by the separating of 'news' and 'current affairs'.

The press is profoundly influenced by the political process in many ways. Those who have political power are able to exert power, directly or indirectly, over the media; the media perspective on conflict and other events is inevitably influenced by the prevailing political culture; antagonists manipulate the manner of operation of the political decisions. Moreover, it is in the nature of the media that they are normally reactive, rather than proactive. Their role is not to initiate events themselves, but to report, comment on and interpret events initiated by others (Wolfsfeld, 1997: 3).

One of the major factors affecting the nature of news coverage, however, is the "changes from within journalism itself", such as the trend towards freelancing. Franklin elaborated on this theme as follows:

The disadvantages for journalists seem clear. First, for most freelancers the rewards are extremely poor The second . . . some newspapers breach copyright and behave unethically in their dealings with freelanceis Third, freelance work is accompanied by considerable job insecurity; this in truth favours compliance with managerial requirements with the obvious consequences for editorial independence. Fourth, freelance work transfers the burden of capital costs necessary for journalistic production from management to the individual journalist Finally, the freelance life is solitary, lacking the companionship of colleagues and semi-detached from the professional culture of journalism Journalism will be characterised by a continued expansion of freelancing; contracts will become the norm and staff jobs a rarity (Franklin, 1997: 54-57).

Hence two major institutions which play a significant impact on society are the state and the press, and indeed both often complain about each other. But to what extent do they need each other to perform their respective functions?

There is conflict indeed of who controls the news media agenda or public agenda, the state or the press. If it is the state, then the function of the press as a watchman is compromised. The government would be free from public accountability and the press would either have limited access to vital information about the workings of government or possibly be used by the government. It is obvious that the relationship between the state and the press depends on the established state ideology.

So, who controls the news media agenda or public agenda, the state or the press, is a topic of major debate. In truth, governments of all convictions have always tried to influence the press, in both 'democratic' and authoritarian regimes, particularly during conflict or war time. Wolfsfeld said:

The political process has a major impact on the press because political power can usually be translated into power over the news media, because the political culture of a society has a major influence on how the news media cover conflicts, because the news media are much more likely to react to political events than to initiate them, because realities often determine how antagonists use the news media to achieve political goals, and because political decisions have a major influence on who owns the media and how they operate (1997: 3).

Thus, the conditions in which journalists today have to operate are as follows:

1. The changing managerial and occupational practices;
2. Journalists take refuge in the concept of "objectivity";
3. Journalists are considered by some observers as 'spies';
4. Media thrive on conflict rather than conflict resolution, that is why diplomacy is not normally high on their agenda; and
5. Foreign policy issues which the media seize upon are invariably infinitely more complex than the media can ever possibly convey in the time and space available to them (Taylor, 1997: 121-143).

Factors that contribute to these conditions include social, economic and political pressures. However, we cannot ignore that the media also attempt to control the public agenda as the government does. So the power of the media, therefore, is related to its ownership and control structure and to environmental constraints operating not only on the media industries themselves but on the wider society. There are, however, particular groups and individuals who play a key role in shaping the form and content of media messages: major newspaper owners such as Rupert Murdoch; managers of large broadcasting corporations such as the BBC, press editors; journalists, feature writers and producers. The small number of the “media moguls” and the high level of vertical integration within the industry present a real challenge to the freedom of communication on which democracy depends (Eldridge, Kitzinger & Williams, 1997: 31, 43-44).

So as Cohen said, reporters hold two sets of perception of the role of the press. From one perspective, the reporter plays a neutral role, conveying information which is used by others to set policy; from another, the reporter is an active participant in shaping policy. In this respect, the press finds itself playing a variety of roles. These roles are:

The press as *informer*: The press is a neutral provider of factual information, so people can form their own conclusions about issues.

The press as *interpreter*: This role is based on a perception that people cannot understand the news unless its significance is explicitly pointed out to them. Thus, interpretation is an essential part of reporting.

The press as *an instrument of government*: Governments use the press to disseminate their messages, while journalists are under pressure to report “obvious” news.

The press as *representative of the public*: The man or woman in the street does not have the opportunities available to reporters to interrogate officials. In this sense, the press are mediators between the public and officials, and may act as the voice of public opinion.

The press as *critic of government*: Journalists expect to monitor and speak out against arbitrariness in government foreign policy-making positions and practices.

The press as *an advocate of policy*: Journalists’ criticism of government policy is a forerunner to the recommendation of an alternative. This role is played, in particular, by independent reporters and analysts (Cohen, 1963: 22-40).

An alternative is a symbiotic relationship between press and government, each benefiting from the other, for, while the press, through access to government, obtains the most complete information possible on a topic already covered, the government gains favourable coverage for its actions and policies. In this situation, the value attached to objectivity in press coverage implies that the government should provide sufficient information to enable the press to present an accurate story. On the other hand, the government believe that the press's privileged access to government records confers on it a responsibility to inform public opinion. Thus, both the government and press are participants in policy-making. Whilst the government makes policy by the way it tackles issues and presents itself, the press influences policy by the way it brings government actions and intentions to the notice of the public and, in turn, provides feedback from the public to the government (Martin, 1981: 31,43-44).

2.6 The Significance of News

The knowledge and consideration of the significance of news is imperative to successful press communication. Newspapers seek to inform and entertain the public, and editors consciously select for coverage those events and ideas which they feel will interest and attract the readership. So, an important question is, what factors could affect journalists' work in this respect? Two significant aspects of news, namely, news values and ideological values dominate journalists' work (Hall, 1981: 227).

2.6.1 News Values

The first factor which affects the pattern of coverage of events is 'news value', a concept which is regarded as "composed of some of the major criteria by which information about events is gathered, selected and published" (Hartmann & Husband, 1981: 290). Such criteria have been suggested by Galting and Ruge (see Figure 2.1, p. 52). The news value "consists of the professional ideology of news - the common-sense understanding as to what constitutes the news in the newspaper discourse" (Hall, 1981: 231).

Figure 2.1 Galtung and Ruge's criteria that must be satisfied for an event to become news¹

Conditions	Explanation
1. Frequency or Timing	Frequency is the time-span needed for an event to unfold itself and acquire meaning. The more similar the frequency of the event is to the frequency of the news medium, the more likely that it will be recorded as news. A daily newspaper will report the whole battle, not each individual death within it; the inauguration of a new dam, not its ongoing construction.
2. Threshold	An event must have a certain magnitude before it is considered worth reporting.
3. Unambiguity	The clearer the meaning of the event, the more probably will it become news.
4. Meaningfulness	Meaningfulness- this can be subdivided into 'cultural proximity', which implies, for example, that Islamic or oriental events are less likely to be reported in the West than those in Europe or America, and 'relevance' which means that anything impinging on the news gatherers' home culture is likely to be reported.
5. Consonance	The existence of the a mental 'pre-image' or expectation, for unless there is some previous knowledge or expectation, the event will not readily register in the mind.
6. Unexpectedness	This is linked with consonance, in that if the event has crossed the threshold of consonance then the more unpredictable, rare or unexpected it is, the stronger its prospects of being reported.
7. Continuity	The 'running story' which, once established, will continue to run.
8. Composition	The demand of news editors and programme editors for a mixed diet, to entertain and hold the audience.
9. Reference to elite nations	The more an event concerns the USA, the Russia or another leading nation, the stronger the interest in it.
10. Reference to elite people	Kings, presidium members, trade union leaders, TV personalities and others who are easily photographed.
11. Reference to persons	People as individuals, whether used to 'personify' a force or institution or because an event can be attributed to them as named individuals.
12. Reference to something negative	The more negative the consequences of the event, the more probable that it will become a news item.

¹ The data in this Figure have been adapted from Journal of Peace Research, V2, p.70, by Johan Galtung and Mart Holmboe Ruge (1965) & from News, Newspapers and Television, pp. 6-7, by Alastair Hetherington, 1985.

The news is in fact audience-oriented and according to Ostgaard, journalists should consider three significant factors that can influence the content of the news message and the necessity of making the news 'newsworthy' or 'interesting' or 'palatable' to the audience. These are: 1) news should not be too complex; 2) readers should be able to identify with the news ; and 3) news should be exciting. A story must also pass these three tests to pass through what is called 'the news barrier' (Ostgaard, 1965: 45). However, the reality is that journalists in their selecting what is to be news often use vague, shorthand terms to explain or describe complex events, issues and regions (Alleyne, 1997: 5). Franklin detects a change in journalists' judgements since the late 1980s as to what is newsworthy to be presented to the public. He comments on a tendency in both print and broadcast media to

a retreat from investigative journalism and the reporting of hard news to the preferred territory of 'softer' or 'lighter' stories. Journalism's editorial priorities have changed . . . the worlds of sport or the royal family are judged more "newsworthy" than the reporting of significant issues and events of international consequence. Traditional news values have been undermined by new values; 'infotainment' is rampant (1997: 4).

The significant issue at stake in relation to news values and Franklin's arguments is: when does an event become news? According to Galtung & Ruge in their classic study, an event becomes news if it satisfies the twelve conditions that can be read in Figure 2.1 (1965: 64-65).

The conditions and their explanations presented in the figure "could apply to some extent throughout the world press" (Hetherington, 1985: 7). Hetherington proposes, more simply, that journalists, consciously or unconsciously, "generally base their choice and treatment of news on two criteria: (1) what is the political, social, economic, [religious, particularly in the Muslim nations], and human importance of the event? And (2) will it interest, excite and entertain our audience?" (1985: 21).

The first criterion that Hetherington believes affects a journalist's judgement or choice and treatment of news is the political or economic importance of the event. The state as a participating agency takes priority in all nations and affects all issues since its task is to

work for the public. It “can assume three distinct roles. The state can limit the elements that permit freedom of expression, as well as restrain expressions it finds offensive or threatening; it can encourage an environment within which freedom of expression can flourish, within the boundaries of serving the state’s own interest, and it can use the media to promote its own goals and interests” (Brasch & Ulloth, 1986: xii). In most Third World countries, government authorities, or censors, determine what is in the best interest of the people. In communist countries, direct influence through ownership of the press ensures control and direction along party lines and government goals (Martin & Chaudhary, 1983: 3).

The second criterion, interest, is vital. In determining this, the final arbiter of what should be published, in the Western media, is the Editor-in-Chief or editorial panel (Martin & Chaudhary, 1983: 3).

In practice, in deciding what will interest and excite readers, the Editor-in-Chief will apply criteria such as those of Galtung and Ruge, cited in Figure 2.1, for example, reference to elite persons, unexpectedness, and so on. In countries where the government exercises more control over the media, ‘interest’ in Hetherington’s terms is a less relevant criterion for news selection. The question in such situations is not so much what will be interesting to readers, as what the government feels it is necessary, desirable or beneficial for them to be told.

2.6.2 The Ideological Value of News

Ideological values that influence the news, another important aspect of press communication, “consist of the elaboration of the story in terms of its connoted themes and interpretations . . . [which] belong to the discourse of the newspaper, to newsmen as a professional group, to the institutional apparatuses of news-making” (Hall, 1981: 231). Often the primary aim of the press is to reflect local society by reporting and presenting the facts, i.e. it is a common press aim to serve both the government and public. In doing so, the members of the press may be aware that “ideological news values belong to the realm of moral- political discourse in the society as such. Ideological themes will be influenced

in different ways according to the particular construction which each newspapers selects” (Hall, 1981: 231).

This, in turn, will depend on the newspaper’s policy, political orientation, style of presentation, tradition and image (Hall, 1981: 231). An example can be found in Strobel’s comments on media coverage of events in Somalia in the summer and autumn of 1992. The media did not present sensationalised coverage of the many deaths and the plight of the refugees, pushing the US government towards intervention, but focused instead on diplomatic efforts and statements by members of Congress and relief groups (1997: 141).

Another important issue that should be addressed in relation to ideological value is the determination of a few factors that make events newsworthy. Hartmann & Husband distinguished two kinds of characteristics:

First, conflict, threat and deviancy all make news . . . conflict is the stuff of news just as it is the stuff of drama and literature. Material that can be couched in terms of conflict or threat therefore makes better ‘news’ than that which cannot . . . [Second is the] ability to be interpreted within a familiar framework or in terms of existing which may images, stereotypes and exceptions may originate in the general culture, or they may originate in the news [events] itself and pass from these into the culture (1981: 294-5).

For this reason, those involved in politics are accustomed to monitor the press, closely as a reflection of public response to their performance. If they perceive that they are getting too little coverage, they will court publicity to bring their actions and ideas to the public notice. If coverage is excessively negative, they may perceive a need to change their policy or present it differently (Wolfsfeld, 1997: 64). For example, during the Gulf conflict, President Bush was advised to give whatever information he could, in a rapid, aggressive manner (Hiebert, 1991: 110). One basic implication here is that political actors often control their messages by establishing internal censorship. But by the same token, the specific contribution of political debate is difficult to locate outside the press. For example, particularly during the diplomatic handling of the Gulf conflict, in the different attempts to reach a peaceful settlement, governments, specifically the allied coalition, relied on the media to get their messages across to both Saddam Hussein and the public all

over the world in general. Once the war started on 17 January, 1991, however, some conflict arose between government and media. The next section of this chapter tackles several issues in relation to the press function and its performance during war time, with reference to the Gulf war, by way of background to this study. The discussion encompasses such issues as the way that the public, as well as journalists, look at the media during a war and the relationship between the media people and military authorities in gathering news and information to be presented to the public.

2.7 Studies Related to the Gulf War and the Media

Having understood the four press theories, Arab media systems, and the function and communication process as well as key issues in journalistic practice, let us now look at several studies related specifically to the media during the Gulf war. No specific study, to my knowledge, has dealt with the performance of the Saudi press during the Gulf conflict, though the following three studies dealing with the media during the Gulf war are relevant to this study.

2.7.1 Public Perception of war Coverage in the USA

FitzSimon looked at America public perceptions and opinions in relation to the US media's Gulf War coverage spanning the period between August 2, 1990 and March 10, 1991. The study was conducted by nine of America's leading polling organisations. The majority of questions centred on the following nine categories: press ratings, news sources, censorship issues, manipulation of media for propaganda, how closely respondents are following the news, respect for the press, emotional response to war coverage, bias issues, and others (which do not fit any of the first eight categories) (1991: 86-87).

The principal findings were as follows:

- The news coverage of the war was generally well perceived by respondents;
- Americans relied mainly on television for Gulf War news;
- Although the networks were generally well perceived, CNN was considered to have

performed best;

- Overall, there was a high level of support for military censorship of the media during the conflict;
- Many respondents accepted the possibility that news may have been censored by the Iraqi military, but were keen to hear it nevertheless. Others thought the press had done well in not conceding too many propaganda opportunities;
- Most respondents had followed news of the crisis quite closely, but were less interested in the aftermath, with the exception of the homecoming of the first American forces;
- A two-thirds majority of respondents believed that media coverage of the conflict had been objective and unbiased.

The favourable perception of US media coverage of the Gulf conflict can be attributed in part to the way the US prepared the media and public, psychologically, for war. American broadcasting and newspapers reports prior to the Iraqi invasion gave clear warning of the conflict that was to come. For example “on April 5, [1990] after Saddam threatened to ‘scorch half of Israel’, if it attacked Iraq, the *New York Times* columnist A. M. Rosenthal compared Saddam Hussein to Hitler The *Washington Post*’s Jim Hoagl similarly on July 5, described Saddam’s threat against Israel as an ‘airborne version of Hitler’s ovens’. . . . In short, the Saddam - Hitler’s analogy was quite well established before the invasion of Kuwait. Thus, American public support for the president’s policy was not sympathy or identification with Kuwait but antipathy toward Saddam Hussein” (Dorman & Livingston, 1994: 70-71). The campaign, Dorman & Livingston added, “was narrowed to a single message designed to reinforce the Saddam - as - enemy sentiment”(1994: 72).

The other significant finding concerns the approval of military censorship. This attitude may, perhaps, be related to the Vietnam experience, when they did not wish to see coverage of the deaths of young Americans in battle. This perception can be contrasted with that of the British public, most of whom believed that the media should report battles in detail, including the deaths of those who, in the public perception, honourably sacrificed their lives for the public good. Perceptions of the Gulf War coverage will be considered further later.

2.7.2 Television and the Gulf War in the UK

Morrison, focusing on a new approach to understanding and judgement of the war, conducted a survey to explore what British viewers considered the role of television ought to be in covering the war, paying particular attention to the images and information transmitted during the Gulf War. Morrison's study revealed that the majority of viewers saw television as their principal source of news about the Gulf War - with radio second, and the printed press third. Viewers also placed great trust, in terms of accurate reporting, in the four main television channels (BBC 1, BBC 2, ITV and C 4) as well as in CNN and Sky. They believed that these channels performed well, especially BBC 1, considering its news to be very accurate. However, there were complaints levelled against television, mainly that it was repetitive, and that too much time was devoted to the war (complaints against the press centred on it not being informative enough, and too repetitive) (1992: 1-28).

The issue of censorship, which the media were highly concerned about in order to increase the credibility of the news to their viewers, is another major point. The degree of restriction placed on journalists by the coalition forces was seen as much less stringent than that imposed on journalists in Iraq. Consequently, there was a higher level of trust placed in reports originating from the coalition front. The functions of the media in relation to society can be measured by its relationship with the government, and its legal system. Both the media and the government have the same level of legality exercising their privileges and enacting laws. Press and broadcasting should work independently and the government should not suppress free expression. However, the government has the right to ensure that the media interprets the law correctly. This is based, ideally, on social responsibility, and making sure that the public has the access to all information that does not compromise the security of the nation. But, what if the political or military authorities asked journalists deliberately to report false material to the public?

Morrison's study found that viewers totally disagreed with the media peddling false information. They felt that, at the very least, the truth should be broadcast once the war was over, but that false information could be used if it saved the lives of British troops. An example of this would be "if the army asked a British journalist to give out a false

report to confuse the enemy, thus saving a lot of British lives . . . 14% of viewers thought that journalists should refuse to give out false information where as 64% wished for the truth to be presented once the war was over” (p. 25).

In terms of reporting negative events, the majority of viewers, according to Morrison, agreed that :

1. Evidence of mistreatment of Iraqi prisoners of war by British troops would be reported while the war is going on.
2. If a British journalist was asked to under-report the number of coalition planes shot down for the state of morale, though the true figure was given in Baghdad radio he should report the true figure.
3. If a British journalist discovered that other coalition forces, rather than the enemy, were responsible for certain coalition casualties, he has an obligation to report it while the war is going on.
4. A mistake by the Commanders, adversely affecting the course of the war, should be reported while the war is going on (1992: 28).

This study was notable for its detailed exploration of perceptions of the presentation of four events which received wide media coverage during the Gulf war, namely: the bombing of a bunker in Baghdad, in which large numbers of civilians had been sheltering; the parading on Iraqi television of captured coalition pilots; the surrender of the Iraqi troops; and the scenes of Iraqi troops on the Basra road, who, in retreat from Kuwait, had been subject to coalition air attacks (p. 23).

The majority of viewers agreed that television had the right to show these specific events but “those who felt it was wrong to show these items on television concentrated either on the potential risk of upsetting people . . . or upon the perceived propaganda and negative morale impact of the coverage. In the case of the captured coalition pilots, the concern was that relatives of the airmen shown would be upset” (p. 24). It is, therefore, obvious that people do not like to see pictures of injury or death on their TV screens. Morrison’s study reveals that the majority of viewers accepted that television should report battle with details of Iraqi and British casualties, for the reason that the news presented should be as

accurate as possible. Viewers, on the other hand, did not accept that showing the conflict, and the subsequent casualties, was a good thing, reasoning that it would upset the relatives of the dead and injured, and that they did not like to see dead bodies on TV.

2.7.3 Perceptions of American Mass Media Correspondents in Saudi Arabia during the 1990 Gulf Crisis

The last study is that of Al-Jahlan, who looked at the perceptions of American mass media correspondents in Saudi Arabia during the Gulf crisis. One of Al-Jahlan's objectives was to examine this in relation to the role of the Saudi government and the United States Military in restricting their journalistic activities. Respondents were asked to respond, on a scale of "1" for the most negative to "5" for the most positive attitude, to a number of issues. The survey revealed several interesting perceptions.

In terms of Saudi control of reporters, the following items received the highest rate of agreement from the survey participants:

(a) Saudi Arabia's control and censorship of foreign reporters during the Gulf Crisis was perceived as less than that of many other Third World countries, with 5.9% strongly agreeing and general agreement from 41.6%;

(b) Foreign reporters being able to interview and quote "people on the street" without any censorship received strong agreement from 9.9% of the respondents, while 40.6% agreed generally.

The items which received the lowest rate of agreement included (a) some reports being altered or cancelled by the Saudi censors, with only 1.0% strongly agreeing and the same percentage generally agreeing; (b) reporters having to pass through official Saudi censorship, with only 3.0% strongly agreeing and 5.9% agreeing; (c) reports on non-military issues having to pass through official Saudi censorship, with only 3.0% strongly agreeing and 5.0% agreeing.

Regarding the United States Military control of reporters, the following items received the highest rate of agreement from the survey participants:

(a) The United States military in Saudi Arabia controlled and censored military news more than Saudi officials did; this received strong agreement from 35.6% of the respondents and general agreement from 40.6%;

(b) Censorship and control of reporters by the United States military officials in Saudi Arabia hampered the flow of information about the Gulf Crisis; 34.7% of the respondents strongly agreed with this, while 41.6% agreed;

(c) Foreign correspondents were able to interview more American personnel than Saudi personnel with 13.9% strongly agreeing and 46.5% agreeing.

The overall analysis of the data indicates a relatively favourable attitude in relation to Saudi control of foreign reporters during the Gulf Crisis. Al-Jahlan concluded his results by suggesting that “a minority of respondents agreed that the United States military control of reporters hampered the flow of information during the 1990 Gulf Crisis; a majority agreed that the United States military controlled reporters and news more than did the Saudi officials; and a majority agreed that military issues were censored by the United States military” (1993: 118).

The three studies reported above have some features in common. All employed a systematic methodological approach by way of a standardised question and answer format (continuum ranking, Likert scale, open-end question inventories and checklists). A shared quantitative approach attempted to find out the respondents’ perceptions and levels of satisfaction. Both FitzSimmon’s and Morrison’s studies centred on the audience rather than journalists, as was the case with Al-Jahlan. All the studies examined democratic systems over Islamic ones. Despite this difference in context, these studies contributed in informing the researcher’s thinking about ways of eliciting, required for this study, and all three studies were drawn on in the design of the research instruments.

Summary

This chapter has laid a theoretical framework for the present study, by exploring the political and social influences on press performance, the components of that performance

in terms of elements that make up the communication process, and ethical and professional values that affect how the press selects and presents material.

We began with four theories which depict a variety of relationships between the press and government. The situation in Saudi Arabia cannot be characterised as either libertarian or Soviet communist, but to what extent do either the authoritarian theory or the social responsibility theory explain the role of the Saudi government vis -a- vis the press? If the authoritarian theory applies, we would expect to see the Saudi press in the Gulf conflict adhering very strictly to an official government line, with no room for questioning, criticism or interpretation. If, on the other hand, social responsibility theory applies, we might expect to see a little more flexibility and freedom for the Saudi press, though it might still largely confine itself to a government line if it were persuaded that the national interest was at stake.

Either explanation, but especially the latter, would be consistent with the classification of Arab media, according to which the Saudi press has been categorised as loyalist -privately owned and so ostensibly not government controlled, but nevertheless concerned primarily to present a supportive, uncritical view of the government and its policies. It will be interesting, however, to investigate to what extent the Saudi press was used to perform a mobilisation function during the Gulf conflict, as such a function is generally more consistent with the authoritarian press theory.

Also presented were three theories of press function whose interest and significance for the present study lies in their implications of political behaviours which might be reflected in the content of the Saudi press during the Gulf conflict. If the Saudi government views the press as a "magic bullet", we would expect to find, particularly under an authoritarian theory, evidence of conscious and deliberate exploitation of the press to carry propaganda; the press, in such a case, might be characterised as a "mobilisation press". Under the "agenda-setting theory" of the press, the government influence would be more subtle, but it is recognised that politicians, aware of the success of the press in "telling people what to think about" make conscious efforts to manipulate it. Under this theory, then, we might expect to find the Saudi press setting the agenda of public opinion; but under the influence of press loyalism and authoritarian and/or social responsibility model, the agenda that is

“set” will actually be that of the government or some other powerful establishment group such as the religious leadership or the military.

One mechanism through which this may take place is explained by the ‘spiral of silence theory’. If the press presents only one perspective on events, people (in this study, Saudi journalists, for example,) who hold a different view will feel increasingly isolated and will tend to keep quiet to hide their “deviance”. Thus, gradually, dissenting opinions are suppressed.

An understanding of the communication process formulae (section 2.4) leads us to analyse the content of the Saudi press during the Gulf conflict in terms of a series of questions: who conveys what message, to whom, about what, under what circumstances, and for what purpose? We recognise, moreover, that the content and tone of such coverage will reflect the degree to which Saudi journalists uphold the professional value of objective reporting (or, perhaps, the outcome of a conflict between that standard and the calls of loyalism and social responsibility or the exertion of authoritarian pressure). It will also reflect certain values and beliefs with regard to what is “newsworthy” and why.

Chapter 3

Methodology

To fulfil the aims of this thesis and to validate the research hypotheses and questions presented in Chapter 1, three research methodologies were used, namely, interviews with the Saudi media academics and journalists, content analysis of the Saudi press, and survey questionnaires administered to the Saudi journalists. Each of these methodologies is discussed in the following pages.

3.1 Interview Method

In order to answer research question No. 1, that is, to find out Saudi media academics' and journalists' opinions toward the performance of the Saudi press during the Gulf conflict, interviews were used. An interview is defined in Webster's Encyclopaedic Unabridged Dictionary of the English Language, as: "a conversation or meeting in which a writer or reporter asks questions of a person or persons from whom material is sought for a newspaper story, television broadcast, etc" (1989: 745).

Regarding format, "The most common type of interviewing is individual, face- to- face verbal interchange, but it can also take the form of face- to- face group interviewing, mailed or self-administered questionnaires, and telephone surveys" (Fontana & Frey, 1994: 361).

In this study, form of face- to- face interviews were conducted in a field trip to Saudi Arabia from 15th February -5th May 1997. We used the "semi - structured" approach in which "... a limited subject is probed in depth without a fixed order" (Smith & Manning, 1982: 99).

Academics' opinions in the Saudi universities specialising in communication studies were sought because they represent a group whose knowledge is respected by the Saudi government and society alike. They prepare students for subsequent employment in the Ministry of Information as well as in the Saudi press organisations. They also act as consultants to various public and private organisations. In these capacities, they can be expected to have experience not only of media theories but also of the policy issues affecting the communication media in Saudi Arabia. Journalists, for their part, are regarded as an important source of opinion, because they are directly involved in news production and responsible for what goes into the Saudi press day by day. It is they who have to tread the fine line between the government policy agenda and the press agenda, and who are most directly affected by any interference in news stories.

3.1.1 Participants:

Three different groups were contacted.

Group One. Media academics in all media colleges and departments in all Saudi Arabian universities. There is one media college called Media and Call College, located in the Imam Mohammed ibn Saud Islamic University; there are three communications departments, in the Art College, King Saud University, in King Abdul Aziz University and in Umm al-Qura University. Academics selected for the study all had a Ph.D. in Journalism and Broadcasting.

Group Two. Saudis journalists (editors, reporters, correspondents) in all seven Saudi Arabian national daily newspapers (*al-Madinah*, *al-Nadwah*, *al-Bilad*, *al-Riyadh*, *Okaz*, *al-Jazeera*, and *al-Yaum*).

Group three. Other important Saudis individuals working in the Saudi media such as Saudi television or similar organisations.

As a result, a total of 24 personnel were chosen as the population of the study: 10 media academics , 9 journalists and 5 other media-related personnel. The selection of the sample was based on the suggestions made by the directors of each of the media colleges and departments in Saudi universities or by the Editor-in-Chief or the managing editor of editors of Saudi newspapers. Other personnel were nominated by one or more of the media academics or journalists interviewed. However, for the convenience of the study, we put the opinion of such individuals under the journalists section for the reason that those personnel were involved in some capacity with journalism, rather than teaching at the universities.

3.1.2 Interview Procedure

Questions were formulated to obtain a critical analysis of the performance of the Saudi press from the participants. Questions were framed so as to draw on participants knowledge of the major institutions in Saudi Arabian society-police, politics, military and press. They were asked in open-ended form, so that interviewees could express themselves freely in response¹.

In conducting the interviews, three important aspects of setting up the interviewer-respondent interaction were considered: the purpose and reason for the interview was explained to each participant; a cordial relationship between the researcher and participants was established to encourage their co-operation in answering the questions accurately and completely. Finally the researcher emphasised the importance of the respondent's contribution and how seriously the task was to be taken (Fowler & Mangione, 1990: 55-56). The interviews was held in their places of work and on average lasted 45 minutes.

To facilitate a free exchange of ideas with participants, the interviews were tape- recorded with their permission. So the researcher was freed from note taking, and interruptions to the flow of interviews were avoided. In addition terms with multiple meaning were

¹ For details of the questions asked, see Appendix C .

avoided and ambiguity was eliminated to ensure that every question meant the same for each participant. All interviews were conducted in Arabic, the native language of the participants, except in the case of one respondent who preferred to answer in English.

After the interviews, the discussions were transcribed by the researcher, who then summarised each interviewee's responses in English. These translations were checked by a native English speaker, to make sure that the respondents' statements were clear and understandable.

The resulting of qualitative data are presented in Chapter 4.

3.2 Content Analysis Method

In order to test hypotheses I-VI and answer research questions 2-7, a content analysis is essential. Content analysis is defined by one author as, "a research technique for the objective, systematic and quantitative description of the manifest content of communication" (Berelson, 1952: 18). The main requirements of such an analysis are that it should be objective, systematic and quantitative, as explained by Wimmer and Dominick. Being systematic implies that the sample selection must follow proper procedures, which allow for each item equality of opportunity for inclusion in the analytical process. At the same time, all content under consideration must be treated in the same fashion. Objectivity comes through any results gained being easily replicated by future researchers. Quantitativeness depends on how careful is the researcher's reporting, so that his/her findings, and their interpretation and analysis, facilitate further use (1983: 138-139).

Content analysis is concerned with manifest content, which Patterson, quoting Reed, H. Black and Edwin O. Harroldsen define as ". . . mean[ing] what is said or printed, not what is between the lines" (1984: 36). A conceptual framework for content analysis, which should be considered as a scientific approach, should include the following: "the data as communicated to the analyst, the context of the data, how the analyst's knowledge

partitions his reality, the target of a content analysis, inference as the basic intellectual task [and] validity as the ultimate criteria of success” (Krippendorff, 1980: 25-26).

With this in mind, the framework of this study is intended to serve three purposes: perspective, analytical, and methodological. To provide perspective, that is, to aid conceptualisation, the design of the practical content analysis for Saudi press during the Gulf conflict needs to be presented. The framework is analytical, in the sense that it facilitates the critical examination of content analysis results obtained by this researcher’s interpretation, which is discussed in chapter 7; and methodological, in the sense that it directs the growth and systematic improvement of the method of content analysis which is used in this study and is discussed below.

Together, consideration of the definitions and requirements of content analysis and the above framework provided an efficient way of investigating the content of the Saudi press and gave this study reliability and validity, as will be explained in greater detail below.

Evidence of the application of the definition of content analysis within the above framework is presented through the sampling, research categories and measurement, all of which are again discussed in the following pages. In order to interpret accurately the inferences and tasks of the Krippendorff model, one should keep in mind the “location of the variable [category] portion of the context of available data The target [therefore] is what the analyst will want to know about” (Krippendorff: 27). What this research is trying to establish is clearly stated in the Chapter 1, which sets out the aims of the study, along with the research hypotheses and questions. In order to make the necessary inferences, it is also necessary to have a “logical bridge between available data and the uncertain target in their context” (Krippendorff: 27). In this study an uncertain target, for example, might be the Saudi Arabian government or other governments in their political handling of the conflict, more specifically, or the nature of the relationships between the Saudi Arabia government and the press during the conflict.

3.2.1 Sampling

The sample for content analysis of Saudi press is drawn from the three major Saudi Arabia national daily newspapers, namely, *al-Riyadh (Riy)*, *Okaz (Oka)*, and *al-Yaum (Yau)*. The papers were selected because of: their size of circulation and stratified geographic distribution. *Al-Riyadh* is distributed in Riyadh the political centre of the country. *Okaz* is centred on the area of the 'Sacred Shrines', while *al-Yaum* is distributed in Dammam, an area close to the battle front and a vital port. *Al-Yaum* is the only daily newspaper issued in the eastern zone of the country. For more details of the names of all the Saudi national daily newspapers, their locations, the date they began publication, and their circulation, see Chapter 1, Table 1.1.

Before drawing up the sample for the content analysis, the time frame of the study was decided upon. It extended from 2 July, 1990 to 30 March, 1991, a period covering the 30 days prior to Iraq's invasion and occupation of Kuwait, to 30 days after the liberation of Kuwait (see Table 3.1).

Table 3.1 The Time Frame of the Study

Period	Time
1. Before Iraq's invasion of Kuwait	2 July, 1990 - 1 August, 1990
2. Iraqi invasion and occupation of Kuwait	2 August, 1990 - 16 January, 1991
3. The liberation of Kuwait	17 January, 1991 - 28 February, 1991
4. After the liberation of Kuwait	1 March, 1991 - 30 March, 1991

However, each of these periods was characterised by different levels of coverage as follows:

The First Period: 2 July, 1990 to 1 August, 1990.

The first period relates to the thirty days leading up to the invasion, which is an important starting point for the entire analytical process. There should be a logical connection between items appearing in this period and those appearing in the other three periods of analysis. Since the Gulf conflict was perceived as external political threat to Saudi Arabia,

it should be an important issue in both the Saudi policy as well as the Saudi press agenda. For more data in this regard, see Chapters 4, 5 and 7.

The Second Period: 2 August, 1990 to 16 January, 1991.

The second period includes the coverage by the Saudi press of Iraq's invasion and occupation of Kuwait, including religious and diplomatic debates, and resolutions in favour of Kuwait and the Allied coalition. This period also contained the peace movement's demonstrations in Saudi Arabia and other countries such as the UK, USA and Egypt, which were generally non-violent and good-humoured character.

The Third Period: 17 January, 1991 to 28 February, 1991.

The third period, covers the liberation period which began when Allied aircraft and cruise missiles struck Iraq, and the subsequent ground war, and ended with Iraq's agreement to meet with the US to discuss cease-fire terms.

The Fourth Period: 1 March, 1991 to 30 March, 1991.

The fourth and the last period follows the liberation of Kuwait. It is a good rounding off point. One should note, compared with the findings of the above three periods, a difference in the Saudi press performance after the liberation of Kuwait. Has there been a change in relation to the Gulf conflict in presenting news and information?

However, the general assumptions are that: first, there was a strong shift in the Saudi press treatment of the main news topics, and the conflict, during each period because of the United Nations' resolutions pertaining to the conflict. Second, it is expected that, through each period of study, the Saudi press covered the very broad aspects of the Gulf conflict such as factors leading up to the conflict in the region, why Saddam invaded Kuwait and the level of casualties. Also of interest is the language used and the role of the Saudi press in reporting the events, since we observed that the Arab media after the war between Israel and Arab in 1963 lost their credibility when the Arab states were defeated by Israel.

This would be reflected in the choice of material, the themes that were emphasised, the links that were made between these and the final conclusions that were drawn. Finally, it can be argued that the coverage would reveal the attitude of the Saudi government and press, towards Iraq's invasion of Kuwait and the conflict as a whole, and also reveal the Saudi government's policy and Saudi press agenda in relation to the Gulf conflict. All these assumptions were identified in the light of the Saudi press content presented in Chapter 5 and interpretation in Chapter 7.

For sampling purposes, it was not the aim to spend a lot of time analysing all issues appearing throughout the period of the study. Instead, we employed the *constructed week* approach, in estimating population parameters for all three newspapers. 'Constructed week' sampling "assur[es] that all days of the week are represented in the sample" (Lacy, Robinson & Riffe, 1995: 395). Use of the 'constructed week' approach, according to Jones and Carter ". . . will yield news - hole estimates which are close enough to a hand - measured 'real' figure for nearly all content analysis purposes . . ." (1959: 399).

The value of the constructed week sample for content analysis is that it is ". . . more efficient than pure random or consecutive day sampling . . . For a population of six months of editions, one constructed week was as efficient as four [and] two constructed weeks would allow reliable estimates of local stories in a year's worth of newspaper entire issues . . ." (Riffe, Aust & Lacy, 1993: 135).

As a result, a constructed week sample for each period was selected. Thus, the first week of each period was chosen, regardless of whether it started in the beginning or the middle of the month. One exception to this was that, all days in the third period were analysed, in order to reflect as fully as possible developments in the war. Table 3.2 lists the days of the week, and the months for which newspaper issues were chosen for analysis.

Table 3.2 Dates of Newspapers Covered by the Study

First period: before Iraq's invasion of Kuwait: Mon 2, Tue 3, Wed 4, Thur 5, Fri 6, Sat 7, Sun 8, July, 1990. (7 days)
Second period: The Invasion and Occupation of Kuwait: Thur 2, Fri 3, Sat 4, Sun 5, Mon 6, Tue 7, Wed 8, August, 1990. Sun 2, Mon 3, Tue 4, Wed 5, Thur 6, Fri 7, Sat 8, September, 1990. Tue, 2, Wed 3, Thur 4, Fri 5, Sat 6, Sun 7, Mon 8, October, 1990. Fri 2, Sat 3, Sun 4, Mon 5, Tue 6, Wed 7, Thur 8, November, 1990. Sun, 2, Mon 3, Tue 4, Wed 5, Thur 6, Fri 7, Sat 8, December, 1990. Wed 2, Thur 3, Fri 4, Sat 5, Sun 6, Mon 7, Tue 8, January, 1991. (42 days)
Third period: The Liberation: Wed 17 January to Thur 28, February, 1991 (43 days).
Fourth Period: After the War: Fri 1, Sat 2, Sun 3, Mon 4, Tue 5, Wed 6, Thur 7, March, 1991. (7 days)

The front page is “important because most readers glance at it first, since it is on the counter of shops and kiosks” (Hetherington, 1985 :152). It is common for the front page in Saudi newspapers to contain the ‘leader’ article, which expresses the newspaper’s editorial opinion; this is the case for *al-Riyadh* and *al-Yaum*, whereas *Okaz*’s leader is inside the paper.

Issues of each of the surveyed newspapers were drawn systematically for the chosen dates and the front page and leading article of each was analysed. Thus, for each of the newspapers under study, 99 issues, that is 99 front pages and 99 leading articles were analysed. In total, 297 issues of the three Saudi press were analysed. In the analysis, all items, and non advertising material that appeared on these newspapers’ front pages were recorded in the study, classified under one of the seven categories discussed in the next sub-section. No attention was paid to the actual amount of space devoted to each story or to headline size. Cartoons and pictures, if they were clearly associated with a particular article or editorial, were included in the coding for the overall story. If not, they were treated as separate items and coded under one of the seven categories (see p. 73).

3.2.2 Research Categories

When constructing categories for analysis, newspaper material was categorised on the basis of a reformulated and expanded version of categories used by Stevenson, et al., (1990: 197-9). The categories and their definitions were as follows:

Category A: *Main news topics*. The main news topics were political, military/ defence, economic, social service, crime/law/justice, sport, education, ecology/environment, natural disasters/accident, religion, multi-issues and others (see Appendix D for definitions specifications).

Category B: *Type of news*. The types of news selected were classified into the three following categories: domestic, international (involving Saudi Arabia and a foreign country regardless of its geographical location) and foreign (with no reference to Saudi Arabia).

Category C: *Tone of main news topic*. The tone of the main news topics was classified as positive or negative, the judgement being based on whether the news topic and tone were favourable or unfavourable to the UN resolutions. Thus, items which focused only on Iraq's aggression and lack of co-operation with the international community were classed as negative in tone. On the other hand, items which highlighted and supported the policies and actions of Saudi Arabia and the allied coalition to resolve the situation, whether diplomatically or militarily, were classed as positive.

Category D: *Theme of news item and leading articles*. The theme is the main subject or idea in a piece of writing. The themes of news items and leading articles were also classified as positive or negative and were judged, based on each item's tone, as either favourable or unfavourable to the UN resolution, on the same basis as explained above.

Category E: *Personnel*. The personnel referred to the government of Saudi Arabia, Yemen, Sudan, Iraq, Libya, Jordan, PLO, Eastern Europe, Western Europe, North America, Latin America, Africa, Asia/Pacific, the Middle East, Multi-region and the Allied

Coalition. In addition, individual or institutional (domestic, international, and foreign), multi region and unidentifiable personnel categories were used.

Category F: *Geographical Locations*. The following geographic locations were identified: Saudi Arabia, which is separated (for the purpose of this study) from the Middle East as a district entity, Eastern Europe, Western Europe, North America, Latin America, Africa, Asia/Pacific, the Middle East, Multi-regions and unidentifiable geographical. In addition, the UN is used as a separate entity for the purposes of this study.

Category G: *Source of news*. The sources of the news stories were encoded in the following categories: newspapers' own staff, the Saudi Press Agency [SPA], the major international services (Reuters, Agence France Press [AFP], Tass, The Associated Press (AP), and United Press International [UPI], other media- both home and abroad, private citizens, public officials, multi sources, other agencies and unidentified sources.

Every effort was made to keep the above main categories independent, but some categories were divided into sub-categories. After defining the categories, and detailing definitions, the encoding began with individual news stories. This was undertaken by the researcher. To facilitate systematic, quantitative encoding, seven separate data sheets for each newspaper were designed. Each sheet contains one category (see Appendix E). For this purpose, the constructed week approach was adopted, and samples of each of the three newspapers taken for the three periods, i.e. 21 issues in total. The idea was not simply to get data and calculate percentages of items in each category per se, but rather to learn about our research process, coding approach and observation techniques.

3.2.3 Reliability & Validity Checks

3.2.3.1 Reliability:

In social science research the term 'reliability' means that ". . . repeated measurement of the same material will result in similar decisions or conclusions" (Wimmer & Dominick, 1983: 152).

There are two types of reliability. Intercoder reliability, ". . . refers to the degree of agreement between different coders at the same time, whereas intracoder reliability measures the test- retest stability of an individual coder over time" (North et al., 1963: 42). Agreement means that each of the coders places a story in the same category (Smith et al. 1988: 741).

The following steps were undertaken. Research category boundaries were defined with maximum detail. Second, because there were no coders trained using the coding instrument and the category system, a pilot study was conducted. Samples of each of the three newspapers were taken for one week in the second of the three periods of interest to the study, one constructed week for period, i.e. 21 issues in total. Articles in this sample were categories to check that the categories were unambiguous and sufficient to cover the range of items to be classified.

3.2.3.2 Validity

The term 'validity' is defined as ". . . the extent to which an instrument measures what it is intended to measure" (North, et al., 1963: 41- 42). However, ". . . validity of the data, as well as the ability to generalise the results, is directly related to the level of reliability" (North et al, 1963: 49).

In order to avoid poor validity in observational data, four different possible sources were considered: "1. Inadequate sampling of complex stimuli, 2. Imprecisely defined or

inadequately understood observational categories or definitions [and] 3-4. Subtle changes in the environment and persons observed” (Smith 1981: 139, quoted Dunnette). “The commonest definition of validity is epitomized by the question: Are we measuring what we think we are measuring?” (Kerlinger, 1973: 457). In the case of the present research, a total 3,609 individual items were analysed. The researcher is confident that this was a sufficiently large sample to capture the complexity of press performance during the Gulf conflict. Moreover, the division of the sample into three periods allowed for changes in the environment during the course of the conflict, which might be expected to influence the content of the press. The classification categories drawn from Stevenson et al (1990) were found to be clear and in most cases straightforward to apply. In the few cases where some initial difficulty of classification was experienced due to the mixed nature of some items, a re-reading of the definitions given by Stevenson et al (1990) was sufficient to resolve the matter. However, “In most cases, validity does not seem to be a major problem in content analysis. Most of the time, a careful definition of categories and judicious and alternative selection of indicators will take care of the matter” (Berelson, 1952: 171).

3.2.4 Statistical Procedures

For an analysis of the data of the content analysis, tables that summarise the findings of the quantitative content analysis were prepared for all categories.

For the main news topic, type and tone of news topic, as well as the theme of news item and leading article, frequencies were employed. For the personnel, geographical locations, and source of news, rank order, frequencies and percentages were used. The purpose of this was to analyse the data to determine how each of the newspapers examined for this study performed in relation to the selected analysis categories. This would enable the researcher to identify similarities and differences between newspapers by comparing the tables but, more importantly, to answer the research questions and test the research hypotheses.

Each table addressed one of the main research questions and was used to investigate an individual hypothesis. The research questions were answered, and the findings presented in tables containing statistical summaries. The tables described the set of distribution, measurement of level (rank, frequency, and percentage) and measurement of spread of newspapers, to compare different levels of distribution.

For testing the research hypotheses, the main approach was to compare the proportions (p) of the differences in each category (main news topic, personnel, geographical, source etc.) for each newspaper. This was done using a statistical test based on a confidence interval (Everitt & Hay, 1992: 58-61) given by the following:

$$p \pm 1.96 \sqrt{\frac{p(100-p)}{n}}$$

where 1.96 is the critical value for a 95%* confidence interval;

p the proportion of news from each category; and

n the total number of news items for each category counted for each paper.

One important note is that the calculation for the 'unidentified' or 'other' unit in the three categories (personnel, geography and source) was eliminated in order to procure more accurate results to test the hypotheses.

In addition, in order to investigate fully each of the main hypotheses, we examined all the hypotheses (except those relating to the theme and leading articles) on two levels: for each newspaper (*Riy*, *Oka* and *Yau*) individually and then for all of them together. This means that each hypothesis listed in this study produced three subhypotheses (except hypotheses Nos. II and VI), all of which have been statistically tested.

* A 95% confidence interval was used to reflect a narrow interval for identifying differences or lack of differences between the proportions. This level is that most often used in the research literature as well. The corresponding critical value of 1.96 is obtained from statistical tables, from the normal distribution tables using the normal approximation to the binomial distribution.

The generation of sub-hypotheses can be illustrated with reference to hypothesis Ia which was:

Political and military/defence developments news in the Gulf conflict would be more newsworthy than other Gulf conflict news topics.

For the purpose of analysis, this hypothesis yielded three sub-hypotheses, mainly:

- 1) Political and military/defence developments news in the Gulf conflict would be more newsworthy in *al-Riyadh newspaper* than other Gulf conflict news topics.
- 2) Political and military/defence developments news in the Gulf conflict would be more newsworthy in *Okaz newspaper* than other Gulf conflict news topics.
- 3) Political and military/defence developments news in the Gulf conflict would be more newsworthy in *al-Yaum newspaper* than other Gulf conflict news topics.

Sub-hypotheses were generated in the same way for hypotheses Ib, Ic, III, IV and V. As a way of avoiding repetition, for each hypothesis that produced subhypotheses, their results appear in Appendix F. On the basis of the research findings, for all newspapers under investigation it was possible either to reject or accept each of the hypotheses with, however, slight differences in the source of news for three periods of the study, namely, the Iraqi invasion and occupation, liberation and after the liberation. As a result, the researcher was able to group all the newspapers under investigation into one broad dimension, and for most categories and for each period. This is especially pertinent, given the fact that all Saudi newspapers are governed to by the government's information policy, to which they must adhere.

In order to test hypothesis VI (theme of leading articles), since the frequency with which each subject matter occurred was very small, we used the overall total number of appearances in the three newspapers to investigate whether or not the theme of the leading article was positive or negative, by using the same statistical test. This was based on the same confidence interval as was used in testing research hypotheses Nos. I, III, IV and V. A summary of the research hypotheses results are presented in Appendix F.

To investigate hypothesis No. II (relating to the theme of news items), we used a pareto analysis (this involved the ranking of the themes in order of decreasing frequency). We have considered, and ranked, only the top ten themes (calculated from the total) and classified the rest as 'other' for each of the periods of the study.

The rationale for this cut off is due to the fact that, for the invasion and occupation period beyond this point, each theme outside the 'top ten' was mentioned less than 20 times for

all the newspapers combined, representing only $\frac{20}{861} \times 100$ (2.3%). For the liberation period, Each 'other' theme was mentioned less than 28 times for all the newspapers

combined, representing only $\frac{28}{1148} \times 100$ (2.4%). For the period after the liberation, each theme outside the 'top ten' was mentioned less than four times altogether, which

represents only $\frac{4}{174} \times 100$ (2.3%).

So, in order to test hypothesis No. II, a statistical Chi - square analysis (Everitt & Hay, 1992: 100) was performed, the formula for which is given as

$$\chi^2 = \sum_{i=1}^{11} \frac{(N_i - M_i)^2}{M_i}$$

where N_i represents the frequencies for each theme in one newspaper (i.e. *Oka* newspaper)

M_i are the frequencies for each theme in other newspaper, (i. e. *Riy* or *Yau* newspaper)

9 is calculated as the degrees of freedom (11-2), 11 = themes (and 2 = number of theme objective comparisons).

We used this test at a 5%* level. The critical value at this level is 3.3.

* The same rationale given for the use of a 95% confidence interval applies to the 5% level here. There are no approximations applied here as the Chi- square is the appropriate distribution for this analysis.

3.3 Survey Method

To answer question No. 8 [What are Saudi journalists' perceptions toward the Saudi press functions in time of war and their views and level of satisfaction with its performance in coverage of the Gulf conflict, and why?], a survey research methodology was used. A survey is defined by Webster's Encyclopaedic Unabridged Dictionary of the English Language as "a sampling, or partial collection, of facts, figures, or opinions taken and used to approximate or indicate what a complete collection and analysis might reveal" (1989: 1432). One writer argues that "Survey research, also called 'questionnaire research' enables. . . [the researcher] to obtain managerial defensible data that are (1) representative, (2) generalizable to a specific audience segment, and (3) precise estimates of audience characteristics" (Simmons, 1990: 75). Two types of survey in the quantitative approach are common in communications study: descriptive and analytic surveys. The descriptive survey is especially appropriate for this thesis, because it attempts to count a representative sample which tells us how respondents feel about a given subject or issue and then allows us to make inferences about the target population as a whole which, in turn, provides us with information to make predictions and take action. The analytic survey is used in studies that look at causal relationships between one variable and another. Both of these types of survey could be used to answer questions or test hypotheses through statistical analysis (Oppenheim, 1992: 12).

The descriptive survey is used in this study. The aim was to gain evidence from respondents. So, we arranged the questions and, more importantly, findings according to respondents' perceptions toward the Saudi press functions in time of the war and its performance in Gulf conflict.

In order to obtain manageable, defensible data, the following procedures were undertaken.

3.3.1 Target Population²

The population for the study was Saudi journalists (editors, reporters, correspondents) in all seven Saudi Arabian national daily papers (*al-Madinah*, *al-Nadwah*, *al-Bilad*, *al-Riyadh*, *Okaz*, *al-Jazerah*, and *al-Yaum*). This resulted in 79 journalists being surveyed. This sample's selection was based on the suggestions made by Editors-in-Chief and editorial managers who believed that the survey should be given only to those who had experience in dealing with the conflict. This approach may be considered an effective method of studying Saudi journalists' perceptions, particularly as the sample covered all regions of the country.

3.3.2 Design of the Study

This section of the study has a different starting point from those of FitzSimon, Morrison and Al-Jahlan (see Chapter 2), because we are concerned with Saudi journalists' perceptions of the Saudi press functions in time of war, and their views and level of satisfaction in its coverage of the Gulf conflict.

In exploring these, the following procedures were employed:

3.3.2.1 Research Instruments

Following Fowler's recommendations (1993) that questions should have several properties, the final design of the questionnaire contained several important elements: 1)

² In addition to journalists, it was originally intended to survey specialists in journalism and broadcasting from the media colleges and departments in Saudi Universities. However, the 50 questionnaires sent out yielded so few responses (12, i.e. 25%), that this group was discarded, being considered too small to be of benefit. The poor response may have been attributable to several reasons: fear that answers could be used against them; other demands on their time, particularly as the Kingdom's rapid development gives rise to a need for new communication campaigns, and the fact that Saudi society is still not familiar and comfortable with surveys as a means of giving information.

Both questions and answers were fully scripted, which allowed respondents to be fully prepared to answer the questions; and 2) Ambiguity was eliminated because every question meant the same for each respondent (69-70). In addition, all terms or concepts were written in such a way as to ensure full answers. A sixteen-page questionnaire, including a covering letter in the Arabic language, was distributed in March, 1997 to the groups mentioned above. The researcher himself visited each newspaper during May and July 1997 to collect the questionnaires and to follow up any queries³.

Respondents were asked to respond to the statements and questions employing three standardised formats: 1) Likert- type scales: “Strongly agree”, “Agree”, “Undecided”, “Disagree” and “Strongly disagree”; 2) ticking the appropriate choice from a set of pre-selected answers; and 3) a checklist, whereby respondents were asked to rank items in order of importance. These formats allowed for statistical analysis of both percentage and distribution of all responses, as well as the measurement both of direction and degree of agreement with any statement or question given.

The questionnaire was divided into three parts. The first part of the questionnaire contained forty - four questions. The questionnaire sought information regarding the respondents’ perceptions of the press functions in time of war. The questions were adopted following Starck’s (1974), FitzSimon’s (1991) and Morrison’s (1992) questions, but in a somewhat different way. They are broken into five themes in relation to the function of press as they were named by McQuail (see Chapter 2, p.46). They are: information, correlation, continuity, entertainment and mobilization function. In addition to these functions, questions in relation to press regulation was also presented in this part.

The second part, containing twelve questions, dealt with the respondents’ view towards and level of satisfaction with the Saudi press performance during the Gulf conflict. Finally, the third part dealt with the general characteristics of respondents: age, sex, education level, position held and experience in their former or current position.

³ Appendix G lists all the questions asked.

The questions in the first section revealed what the researcher labelled as the *ideological perspective* focusing on what Saudi journalists think the function of the press in an Islamic State should be. It prepared them to answer the second part, which was arranged around more specific questions, requiring greater knowledge of the Gulf conflict.

Accordingly, thirteen main types of questions were included in this instrument:

- (a) Questions about the respondents' perceptions of the function of the Saudi press in time of war;
- (b) Questions on the press coverage (the job the Saudi press did in covering the Gulf conflict);
- (c) A question on the perceptions of adequacy of various media coverage of the Gulf conflict;
- (d) Questions concerned with primary sources of news in coverage of the Gulf conflict;
- (e) A question concerning the press' agenda during the Gulf war;
- (f) A question concerning negative news (depth and fairness of the coverage in Gulf war);
- (g) A question concerning the publication of Saddam Hussein' speeches;
- (h) A question concerning the press and military authorities' intervention for the dissemination of news and information in coverage of the Gulf conflict;
- (i) A question concerning military censorship, and their reasons for doing so in coverage of the Gulf conflict;
- (j) A question concerning the limitations of the Saudi press in coverage of the Gulf conflict;
- (k) A question concerned with journalists' level of satisfaction with the Saudi press in coverage of the Gulf conflict;
- (l) A question concerning how closely journalists followed the Gulf conflict news after the liberation of Kuwait; and
- (m) Questions concerning the general characteristics of respondents: age, sex, educational level, position held and experience in his/her former or current position.

3.3.2.2 Validity and Reliability of Questions

3.3.2.2.1 Validity

Validity, is seen as the extent to which an instrument measures what it is intended to measure. However, “The validity of survey responses is inherently more difficult to establish than their reliability . . . because stated intentions are not matched by corresponding behaviours What people say they do and what they actually do, do not always coincide” (Bulmer & Warwick, 1993: 157). Thus in this survey, steps were taken to find out whether or not respondents were stating opinions that were matched by their corresponding behaviour. This was discovered by comparing the manifest content of the Saudi press with respondents’ answers to the questionnaire (see Chapter 7).

A preliminary draft of the questionnaire was prepared and subjected to tests of validity. The major classes of validity namely criterion, content, and construct, were considered in relation to the study’s questionnaire (de Vaus, 1986: 47-8).

In the light of deVaus’ major classes of validity, we presumed that the concepts incorporated into the questions, and the arguments that were in the researcher’s mind when he designed the questions, seemed an appropriate measurement of what the questions were intended to measure. In addition, validity is not seen as be a major problem in survey research in that, as long as careful testing of reliability is undertaken, the validity of measurement is guaranteed.

3.3.2.2.2 Reliability

It was not considered feasible or appropriate to carry out a statistical procedure checking the reliability of the survey instrument (i.e., part 2 and part 3) as the construction of items did not lend itself to measurement of the internal consistency of the section on an item -by-item basis to find out the correlation coefficient between each item and the overall ratings of each section. It was not possible to split the instrument into equivalent halves or to

constrict two equivalent forms of it. Nor was a test - retest design possible as Editors -in-Chief of the various newspapers made it clear that a questionnaire would go to journalists who are considered experts, rather than to all journalists in the organisation; as a result, the sample would be too small. So, it would be unrealistic to give the same test to the same sample twice as most respondents would remember their answers from the first occasion. The same would be the case with the group of people on whom we tried out the questionnaire (more details are represented below). The last reason is that the questions in the survey were written in a manner to suit what this researcher intended to measure. Thus, two ways of alleviating these problems were employed:

- 1- To have the questionnaire scrutinised by experts in the conduct of surveys; and
- 2- To try out the questionnaires (i.e. pilot test) on a number of people who were similar to the Saudi journalists used in the actual research. To do so, we translated the questions into Arabic, following the double translation method recommendation by Boyd (1978: 502). The Arabic translation was then translated back into English. After changes were made, the questions were yet again translated into Arabic, this time by a second translator. This double translation procedure was employed to ensure that the statements and questions in Arabic were consistent with the English original. The questionnaires were then distributed to faculty members from the following academic organisations: two from King Saudi University; two from The King Khalid Military Academy and one from the Institute of General Administration. After accommodating the changes recommended by these faculty members, a pilot study was conducted. The questionnaire was pretested on ten of people who were similar to the sample, i.e. journalists; this pre-test sample was chosen because they worked on *The National Guard Magazine* and *The King Khalid Military Quarterly*, on both of which the researcher used to work as an editor. The main advantage of this was that the respondents who worked on these two magazines added to the research to check the reliability of those questions, which related to the military and the war and helped the researcher to eliminate any ambiguities of phrasing from the questions. Their opinions and comments about the difficulties encountered in filling out the questionnaire were also solicited. The final version of the questionnaire was entitled, "The Saudi Arabian Journalists' Perception toward the Saudi Press Functions in Time of War and its Performance in Gulf Conflict (1990-1991)".

On the basis of the considerations and procedures outlined above, the survey instrument was deemed to be sufficiently valid and reliable to be used with confidence in the main study. Table 3.3 shows the newspapers, number of questionnaires distributed and number of usable responses.

Table 3.3 Questionnaire Distribution and Response Rate among Saudi Newspapers

Newspapers	Number of questionnaires distributed	Number of Usable Responses
<i>al-Madinah</i> [Madina] (Western SA)	5	3
<i>al-Nadwah</i> [The forum] (Western SA)	4	0
<i>al-Bilad</i> [The Country] (Western SA)	5	3
<i>al-Riyadh</i> [Riyadh] (Central SA)	22	8
<i>Okaz</i> (Western SA)	15	7
<i>al-Jazerah</i> [The Peninsula] (Central SA)	24	8
<i>al-Yaum</i> [Today] (Eastern SA)	4	0
Total	79	29 (37%)

3.3.3 Statistical Procedures

For the analysis of data, range, mean, rank order and percentage analysis were employed.

However, due to the fact that there were very few respondents, the percentage of responses for the first part of questionnaire was calculated by compressing the original 5-point scale into a 3-point one (agree, undecided and disagree).

In view of the small number of questionnaires returned, there is a danger in presentation of responses in terms of percentages, that one or two individuals responding in certain ways can result in large percentage shifts. However, whilst recognising this danger, the researcher has nevertheless expressed responses in such a manner so that the reader can readily gain a general view of the patterns of responses. Consequently the percentages have been given as integers rather than strict percentage points.

As for calculating the main news topic of the survey study, a ranked order was used from the respondents' answers. In this way the main news items were uncovered in terms of their importance to Saudi Arabians. Based on the results, rankings were calculated in relation to the following: when the response to a topic was given number 1, this received 12 points; a topic given number 2 received 11 points and so on, until number 12 received 1 point. All the points were added to determine which topic received the most points - that topic was accordingly ranked first.

Following from this discussion of the three methods that were used to test hypotheses and answer the research questions, the following chapters 4, 5, and 6 will present the research findings pertinent to both the research questions and hypotheses. A general interpretation, evaluation and conclusion of the performance of the Saudi press during the Gulf conflict appears in Chapter 7.

Chapter 4

Saudi Arabian Media Academics' and Journalists' Opinions toward the Performance of the Saudi Press during the Gulf Conflict (1990 -1991)

In the previous chapter, the three research methods, namely, the interview, content analysis and survey questionnaire, were used to collect quantitative and qualitative data. This chapter presents the opinions of Saudi media academics and journalists toward the performance of the Saudi press during the Gulf conflict. Their views expressed in individual face-to-face interviews provide a preliminary overview of the relevant issues which will contribute towards a detailed understanding of the role of the Saudi press in the conflict.

It must be admitted that the elapse of seven years between the Gulf conflict and the conduct of these interviews raises the potential problem of hindsight; in other words, there was a danger that respondents' answers may have been coloured by what they had learned, read or experienced since the conflict or by the ability to stand back from events and interpret than as a whole. The researcher made every effort to overcome this risk. It was made clear to respondents that what was required was recall of what they thought and felt at the time; moreover, the researcher used probes and follow-up questions to cross check responses and to identify and correct for hindsight.

For the sake of academic integrity, the researcher records in the following pages what the participants said in reply to the questions they were asked without any changes or alterations. However, because of translation as well as the nature of oral interview, there are cases where some explanation is needed in order to convey the correct meaning. It should also be pointed out that many of the participants tried to distance themselves from the issues by using terms like 'the Gulf' or 'Arab media' or 'press' instead of using the terms 'the Saudi media' or the 'Saudi press', to protect themselves against any further questioning later, because of the sensitive nature of the subject. The researcher does not feel this cautious wording detracts from the credibility or validity of their comments.

In presenting the interviewees' comments on the Saudi press performance during the Gulf conflict, seven areas are addressed (see Table 4.1).

Table 4.1 Seven Topic Categories Grounded in Interview Data Finding from Saudi Media Academics and Journalists

Topic Category
1. Saudi press performance before the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait.
2. Saudi press performance during the Iraqi invasion and occupation of Kuwait.
3. Saudi press versus Iraqi press performance.
4. CNN and Saudi press performance.
5. Suspicion between Military and Journalists.
6. The Saudi War correspondents.
7. Saudi press performance after the liberation of Kuwait.

In presenting the findings, under each heading, we present first the opinions of the Saudi media academics, followed by those of the journalists.

4.1 Academics' and Journalists' Opinions of the Saudi Press Performance before the Iraqi Invasion of Kuwait

Like any other area in the Arab World, the Gulf region is rather more reactive than proactive (militarily, economically and socially) towards threats. The press is faced with the task of interpreting the environment and what is really being planned or prepared. The participants were asked the following questions: (1) do you believe that before the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait and Iraq's subsequent threat to the rest of the Gulf States, the Saudi press had identified the threat, particularly in view of the conflict preceding the military occupation? (2) If the Saudi press did not identify the threat, what was its role during the political conflict? (3) Do you think the press covered the conflict thoroughly by publicising the common view point and/or predicting the future trends of the conflict?

Respondents from both groups were divided along two lines: those who supported the press performance and those who criticised the work of the press before, during and after the liberation of Kuwait.

4.1.1 Academics' Opinions of the Saudi Press Performance before the Iraqi Invasion of Kuwait

One media academic argued that predicting or identifying the Iraqi threat to Kuwait and the region was not the function of the press, as:

It was not the Saudi press alone that did not predict the invasion of Kuwait, but the whole of the western press had failed to predict the invasion because journalists do not see what is looming on the horizon and if we asked them to predict future events, it would be like asking them to act as prophets with each journalist predicting what s/he wants. It is true that there were high level meetings between the [political] leaders before the invasion, but do you want the press to write of an imminent invasion or war on the basis of these meetings? This is impossible (MA/1)¹.

Another academic referred explicitly to the connection between the Saudi press and the Saudi government, highlighting the interdependence between politics and communications not only in Saudi Arabia but all over the world, including in the developed countries. He said:

It was impossible for the press and other media channels to adopt any other point of view before the Iraqi invasion. There were mere guesses about what happened before the invasion. On the other hand, the Saudi government was part of the mediation effort between the Iraqi side and Kuwait and consequently the Saudi press had an obligation to comply with the official state policy and, hence, it was improper to give any indications of impending dangers while the negotiations were still going on. If it did, then that would have been taken to imply that there was no value in the mediation by the kingdom (MA/2)².

Not only was the Saudi press under an obligation to comply with the official state policy, but there are also "certain given things in international laws and conventions which cannot be attacked or broken. Predicting the future is not in the hands of the leaders but in the hands of the selected few and committees in charge of making the decisions" (MA/3)³. By 'international laws and conventions' the interviewee was referring to the fact that it is

¹ (MA/1) Saudi Media Academic, Umm al-Qura University, Makkah.

² (MA/2) Saudi Media Academic, Imam Mohammed ibn Saud Islamic University, Riyadh.

³ (MA/3) Saudi Media Academic, Imam Mohammed ibn Saud Islamic University, Riyadh.

unethical and unacceptable for one country, for example, to attempt to incite the people of another to subversion or rebellion. Thus, there are ethical and legal norms which constrain what the press may write about another country, especially in peace time. Even allowing for such constraints, however, MA/3 seemed to imply that the Saudi press might have done more than it actually did in this respect.

The press did not handle the events in depth to be able to forecast the future. It reported the events as such but without saying what was the purpose of the visit of Mr. so and so or why such and such an official left the country. What was discussed in such and such meetings? Why was there a meeting? The answers to all these questions was not been dealt with before the invasion (MA/3).

Despite the reservations expressed by these respondents, it might reasonably be expected that experienced journalists should be able to give some indications as to what was happening without being too explicit, giving the reader the chance to make up his/her own idea of what was going on or at least to be mentally prepared for the invasion.

Disagreeing with MA/1, another media academic said: "in principle I agree that the press has a role in discovering or forecasting the future. This is from the theoretical point of view, but the question is what has hampered the press from playing this role? Why was the Saudi press unable to play this role?" (MA/4)⁴. He attributed its failure to two causes:

The first and most important one relates to a question of values rather than the question of the role or function of the press because the Kingdom and the Saudi population have a deeply held conviction that no crisis can develop between one Arab country and another Arab country and it is unthinkable that an Arab country would invade another Arab country. The second aspect is that there were marked differences between the Saudi press and other press in the Gulf in terms of dealing with this issue. Perhaps leading editors of the Saudi press had sensed that there was something looming on the horizon but backed off from discussing it. I consider this a good judgement on part of the Saudi press because it did not lose its head. Perhaps the press, on the other hand, did not have enough information to deal with this type of conflict (MA/4).

⁴ (MA/4) Saudi Media Academic, Imam Mohammed ibn Saud Islamic University, Riyadh.

This interviewee was very conscious of the position of Saudi Arabia as the leader of the Islamic world and he felt that the Saudi press, in this situation, especially given that such a war was unprecedented in Saudi experience, had a duty to remain calm and controlled until the situation became more clear. This is what he meant by the Saudi press 'not losing its head'. Another respondent contrasted the Saudi press performance with that of the foreign media:

I followed the BBC's programmes from 12 o'clock for a month and they were talking about the military build up in the region and saying such and such is going to happen. Yet, the Saudi and Gulf media did not say a word about all this. The danger of the situation was like the issue of the 'Tylenol' tablets in the US where a sick person contaminated these tablets with poison and distributed them to the chemists all over the US. A study was immediately conducted to assess the speed by which information has reached the general public and they found that some people did not even know that these tablets were contaminated with a poisonous substance until five days after. This happened in a society that is saturated with information. Information in this case means the difference between life and death (MA/5)⁵.

Respondents offered various reasons why the Saudi press did not talk about the conflict between the Iraqis and Kuwait. Some thought the press lacked the ability to interpret events. For example: "the press lacked the specialist eye that could unveil what is behind the events" (MA/6)⁶. Unveiling what is behind the events requires knowledge of a number of social, military, economic and political issues. Is there a specialist eye to control the flow of information in this press organisation? One believed that:

All those in charge of editing the political articles in the Gulf press are not qualified for the job because the responsibility here is not only the supervision of the political pages in the press. Journalists often resort to what the news agencies report to edit even the political columns and they lack independent voice and opinion. As a result all the press expresses a single opinion and not diverse points of view (MA/2).

⁵ (MA/5) Saudi Media Academic, King Abdul Aziz University, Jeddah

⁶ (MA/6) Saudi Media Academic, King Abdul Aziz University, Jeddah.

An alternative explanation by MA/5 was that the press knew what was happening, but could not announce it for political reasons. One commented that it would be strange if the Saudi media did not sense something when half a million Iraqi troops crossed the Kuwaiti border:

The mobilisation of all these troops took a long time and did not take place within 24 hours or so and it was accompanied by a stream of circulars, personnel carriers, frantic movements and clear pictures were relayed all the time by satellites about what was taking place on the ground. The whole invasion took place in broad daylight (MA/5).

He went on: “the media was quite capable of predicting what was going to happen, i.e. the Iraqi/Kuwait conflict, but the Saudi media and that of other countries in the region [the Gulf] always wait for the go - ahead from the political leadership before taking any action” (MA/5).

Thus, the media academics did not think that the press had raised peoples’ awareness of impending events, but acted only after the incident had happened. At this point, it would be interesting to consider the views and comments of these more directly involved: the journalists.

4.1.2 Journalists’ Opinions of the Saudi Press Performance before the Iraqi invasion

Consistent with the normal relationship in a state-controlled press system, according to one journalist, it was not the role of the press to involve itself with politics and it could not have been expected to predict the course of events in the Gulf:

First, the Saudi press has no right to discuss or to meddle into other Arab affairs and no Saudi press representative would go to the “Cultural Forum” to receive money or gifts from any one. I remember there was one person, by the name of Mufashar, from the Iraqi embassy, who used to frequently visit our newspaper and invite us for lunch and we used to refuse to go with him out of our conviction that the Ba’th Party policy would lead to nothing but the destruction of the future of the Arabs and Muslims. The second point [in the researcher’s opinion it contradicts the first point] is that the press is not an intelligence agency and even the intelligence agencies have failed to predict what Saddam had in mind (J/1)⁷.

⁷ (J/1) Saudi Journalist, *al-Riyadh* Newspaper, Riyadh.

This was not, however, the general view. Other journalists appeared to imply that the Saudi press could or should have done more than it did to warn readers of the turn events were taking. Nevertheless, it failed to perform that role. As one interviewee put it, the Gulf media before the war:

did not do well to unveil the real intentions of the Iraqi regime and it failed to deal with these matters in an appropriate manner. The media is like a protective medicine but prevention by the media in the Gulf states fell far short of what was required, by failing to make the reader aware of the impending dangers surrounding him because of good will. This hit people in the region very hard because we did not deal with issues realistically and honestly (J/2)⁸.

Did the Saudi press, then, deliberately turn a blind eye to what was going on in the Iraq-Kuwait conflict? In the view of journalists, the matter was not so simple. There were several reasons why the Saudi press failed to predict or report what happening in the early stage of the Gulf conflict. One was simply lack of information.

One of leading journalists in the Saudi attributed what had happened in the region to the fact that

The Iraqis kept a low profile about their activities in a deliberate and tactical attempt to cause the greatest element of surprise to countries in the region and this was actually reflected in the media. The local press was optimistic. The Iraqis, however, succeeded in hiding their real intentions even though this is some kind of opportunism and deception (J/3)⁹.

For others, the problem was more one of the lack of political awareness, both among journalists and among the readership and in Saudi society as a whole. One referred to

the indifference in analysing the political situation due to (a) the lack of political awareness and the absence of specialist cadres who are capable of thinking about these issues, and (b) the inability to decipher a particular political message or piece of news in the media (J/4)¹⁰.

⁸ (J/2) Saudi Journalist, Islamic States Broadcasting Organization, Jeddah.

⁹ (J/3) Saudi Journalist, *Okaz* Newspaper, Jeddah.

¹⁰ (J/4) Saudi Journalist, *al-Madinah* Newspaper, Jeddah.

Another interviewee suggested that the Saudi press was unable to predict or identify the danger because

The Saudi press is weak in the political sphere. We are not politically minded readers nor a politicised nation and consequently we do not have political analysts, except perhaps three writers: (1) Ridha Ladri, a writer for the *Okaz* newspaper, 2) the leading article of *al-Riyadh* newspaper, and 3) Abdul-Rahman Al-Rashid, the chief editor of *al-Sharq al-Awsat* newspaper. The rest are confused between application, analysis, opinion and propaganda (J/5)¹¹.

In this connection, several journalists drew attention to the difficulty of criticising, or even evaluating objectively, a leader who was widely hailed in the Middle East as a champion of pan-Arab nationalism, and of swimming against the tide of popular adulation. One referred to

the large contingent of Palestinian and Jordanians journalists in the Kuwaiti press who lauded Saddam and later became his victims. The two most prominent Kuwait newspapers involved in this praise were: *al-Qabas* and *al-Siyasah* newspapers with Ahmed Al-Jar-Allah, the editor in chief of *al-Siyasah*, spearheading this work (J/6)¹².

Another commented on the fact that:

The Gulf media had glorified Saddam and in good spirit promoted him as the pan-Arab leader. It failed to explore his motives and as there was no direct control over the media and the only form of control was self-judgement. No voice was raised to say that there was danger looming in the horizon (J/1).

Not all journalists, however, had glorified Saddam Hussein. One journalist, the only one of these interviewed who responded to the researcher's questions in English, and who criticised the Arabs' praise of Saddam, said:

I know and many people know that Saddam is a *Mafia* man. Then why do we praise him? When he attacked the Kurds in Halabjah, all the leading articles in the Gulf newspapers came out saying that what had

¹¹ (J/5) Saudi Journalist, *al-Hayai* Newspaper, Riyadh.

¹² (J/6) Saudi Journalist, *al-Jazeera* Newspaper, Riyadh.

been said about Saddam's behaviour and the massacre of people of Halabjah were all false accusations. One of the people who praised Saddam eight years ago took pictures of the dead and the charred bodies of the people massacred in Halabjah and gave them to the newspapers in disgust, deploring what had happened. He did not bother to comment on these pictures eight years ago but instead he was full of praise to Saddam. In short I do not trust Saddam and if you go back to the articles I wrote in *al-Sharq al-Awasat* newspaper before the invasion, you will see that I criticised the people who praised Saddam (J/7)¹.

Another journalist commented that if the Saudi press had not predicted events in the Gulf, at least it had not fallen into the same trap as some others in the region:

The Gulf press, including the Saudi press, was totally absent, but what I want to confirm is that the Saudi press did not join the adulation of Saddam Hussein as a person, in what was previously published about the Iran-Iraq war. He is a Ba'th man and his talk about Arab nationalism is out dated and rejected since 1976, because the media policy and we as journalists do not applaud leaders of other countries (J/6).

It was also suggested by one journalist that it should have been clear what was happening in the Gulf, as the events of 1990 had been over-shadowed by earlier signs of Iraq's expansionist intentions. In 1963 "Abdul Karim Qassim had massed troops on the Kuwait border in a dress rehearsal of the [1990] conflict. The Iraqi troops pulled back after British troops rushed to the sheikhdom, later to be replaced by Arab League forces" (Frankel, 1991: 19).

One can conclude that the Ba'th regime had long had it in mind to take over Kuwait, which it viewed as part of Iraq. The question arises, was the situation then any different from the situation in 1990? Or "are we a nation without memory?" (J/8)².

Thus, journalists and readers should believe and not believe everything that is said, but ask why it was said? Is there a hidden agenda? They should look at information critically, and allow themselves doubt and scepticism. Even for those journalists who were more

¹ (J/7) Saudi Journalist, Saudi Public Relations CO, Jeddah.

² (J/8) Saudi Journalist, *al-Bilad* Newspaper, Jeddah.

politically aware and had their suspicions as to Iraq's intentions, however, it would have been difficult to make such a dramatic claim openly. As one journalist commented:

I, like the decision makers in the Gulf states in particular and the Arab world in general, was surprised by Saddam's actions. Even if the press had had its doubts at that time, it could not have reflected them to its readers. Who could dare to write a day or two before the invasion that Iraq would invade Kuwait? Even if analysts in newspapers had their own vision of what is likely to happen, nobody in the newspapers would have believed them; not even they themselves would have come to terms with such a thought (J/9)¹⁵.

Another point to be considered is the constraint imposed by government policy. As one journalist explained: "The kingdom's policy is characterised by patience and waiting, and for this reason the Saudi press is confined to official press releases which are often cautious in tone" (J/5). In a similar vein, another commented: "The Gulf media was at one time representing the official state policy. It was giving information but not receiving any feedback from the recipients on what they want. This perhaps explains why things went wrong" (J/2).

The comments presented in this section suggest that, before the Iraq invasion and occupation of Kuwait, the Saudi press played little if any role in predicting the course of events. This was mainly a result of lack of information, lack of political awareness, and the constraints imposed on the press by its role as a government mouthpiece. As a result, the invasion of Kuwait came as a complete surprise to the Saudi population. The next section will consider whether or not the Saudi press carried out its functions effectively during the invasion and occupation of Kuwait.

4.2 Academics' and Journalists' Opinions of the Saudi Press Performance during the Iraqi Invasion and Occupation of Kuwait

Attitudes, then, towards the Saudi press performance before the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait may or may not shape participants' attitudes as to how the press tackled the conflict. This

¹⁵ (J/9) Saudi Journalist, *al-Bilad* Newspaper, Jeddah.

is because some believed that the Saudi press like the Saudi government, was shocked and surprised by events, which justified their lack of rational, analytical response, while others believed that the Saudi press failed in its duty towards society. The participants were asked to indicate their opinions of the Saudi press performance from the Iraqi invasion and occupation until the Liberation of Kuwait. Each was asked if he believed that the Saudi press performance was changed in this period of the conflict, and to what extent was the Saudi press able to present the news and information and, why?

In fact, and astonishingly after the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait, the press and broadcast channels in Saudi Arabia kept silent about the invasion for several days. Franklin said that:

Saudi Arabian news media assumed a traditional pose: they ignored it. They were silent the next day, even as frantic Saudis huddled by short-wave radios, or if they lived near the borders, watched television news from other Arab nations. By the third day some newspapers were writing about 'Iraqi aggression' although they offered few details. Others were not so gutsy, referring only obliquely to tensions in Kuwait (1991: 24).

Interviewees were asked about the silence of the Saudi press. From their responses, it might be possible to identify the social, political or military reasons for it. However, because of the intensity of the discussion in the limited time available and because the period under discussion was that after the Iraqi invasion and occupation, which includes the time of military build up in the region and the war time itself, the interviewees tended to treat these events as one. Nevertheless, an attempt is made to present as reliable and accurate picture as possible of their views of the Saudi press coverage of these events.

4.2.1 Academics' Opinions of the Saudi Press Performance during the Iraqi Invasion and Occupation of Kuwait

One media academic pointed out that: "It is difficult for experts to judge on a theoretical basis or from their own experiences the media channels in our society from a functional point of view or how they work". He added that:

At the time of the Iraqi aggression and invasion of Kuwait, the nations were in a race with time to achieve fast growth and economic development to build welfare societies. The occupation of Kuwait psychologically shocked people in the region and has introduced unexpected changes in the values and priorities in Islam.

All people irrespective of their backgrounds . . . , were in this state of shock but with varying degrees of severity. The whole situation was unusual and this applies to peoples' reactions and the response of the media channels. The majority of people did not expect that they could live in a war environment (MA/7)¹⁶.

Another reason why the press did not report the invasion during the first three days was because "it was taken by surprise and it did not know what the official line was. The press is bound by the official point of view and it uses it as a guidance in its work, especially in circumstances like this one" (MA/2).

A similar point was made at some length by another media academic who said: "We must understand the climate in which the press works. The press in Saudi Arabia is not completely independent to warrant complete separation between the press and the political establishment and other social institutions" (MA/4).

Justifying the stance taken by the Saudi press one interviewee pointed out that:

The press in any part of the world and at any time is constantly in a state of emergency. It reassures people and avoids exciting them during war time. There is no discussion of the political or military issues and getting people to support the military decisions is an important issue. In addition, it is necessary to close the doors on mundane and useless criticisms (MA/8)¹⁷.

Reiterating what MA/3 had said earlier, when we talk about the Saudi press performance before the Iraqi invasion, about the publication of the details of 'who met who and who left and what was discussed in the meetings', MA/1 argued that "the role of the press should have begun from the very moment the invasion took place". He went on to say:

¹⁶ (MA/7) Saudi Media Academic, King Saud University, Riyadh.

¹⁷ (MA/8) Saudi Media Academic, King Saud University, Riyadh.

but unfortunately the press at that time was working in a haphazard way. All that was written in the press was highly emotional and there was a lack of concentration. This is because during the first few days there was a news black out which had its advantages and disadvantages. The press in Saudi Arabia usually addresses people's sentiments and feelings more than it deals with the logic of things and this causes others to say that the Saudi general public was unaware. Why did not the press say why Iraq invaded Kuwait? (MA/1).

Another disagreement with what MA/8 said came from one media academic who argued that "the media can succeed even if there are no burning issues to be discussed" (MA/5).

He identified two reasons for the stance taken by the Saudi press:

First, . . . in the Arab media we are used to being convinced with the voice representing the official line . . . when the Saudi public was looking for an official voice, the leadership came out with its view which matched the nationalistic feeling of the citizens.

Second, the media was faced with other issues related to the conflict and problems appeared because the media was not prepared . . . The Arab media had to deal with various new concepts related to the political regime, the *ruler*, the subjects, *wealth distribution*, *those in power* and the *haves and have nots*. In short, the media had to deal with religious and social issues (MA/5).

The same interviewee commented that dissatisfaction with the lack of any clear message from the Saudi press caused people to turn to the foreign media. Other interviewees analysed what they considered to be the deficiencies of the local media reporting, for example that "each Saudi media channel became isolated from the others and each tried to make, as far as possible, the maximum use of the information it has got in such a way that one feels that Saudi media is controlled and lacks any creativity. I would have liked the treatment to be carried out in unified way using a single strategy" (MA/6). As examples of what he considered to be impulsive, badly thought-out reporting, MA/6 noted that:

Some newspapers hurriedly reported information which was intended by its sources to create confusion and to make the press lose credibility, such as, for example, when one of the newspapers reported that Saddam's son, Uday, [Saddam's eldest son] got married to the Israeli minister daughter. Another example, is the newspaper articles calling for repressive measures to stop the demonstrations that were taking place in Arab countries against the presence of foreign troops on Arab

soil. It is a well known fact that you cannot stop a democratic country from expressing what it feels even if that was directed against you . . . the scholars should be objective in their treatment of the issue (MA/6).

Another reason for press reticence was said to be that the Gulf region was “an emotional subject and the public was not prepared to read about it. This reaction emphasises the importance of the psychological factor in the media message” (MA/5).

An interesting point was made by MA/5 who compared the performance of the press to the impact of poetry. He saw the press as having less impact than poetry, because it failed to appeal to people’s emotions.

There is a tradition in Arab culture of using poetry to mobilise patriotic sentiment. During the period of the Gulf conflict, much coverage in the media was given to the poems of it. Colonel Al-Oteibi, whose work was broadcast on radio and television and published in the *National Guard Magazine*¹⁸. These poems were full of patriotic fervour appealing to Saudis’ love of their homeland and emphasising the sacrifices made to protect it. It is difficult to translate Arabic poetry verbatim, but some typical extracts from one of Al-Oteibi’s poems are paraphrased below:

When the king called out to his people,
Our tribes responded, so that all the
world heard them.

The kingdom is in our keeping,
protected wherever we are.
Its land will be protected by our blood.
We will hold it within our embracing arms.

Our land raised us and cared for us, and
it is where we will die, rather than
let anyone sully it and make it dirty.

No human being or evil will break our land,
for our families shelter it and will
sacrifice themselves for it¹⁹.

¹⁸ Four poems were published in *The National Guard Magazine* (August, 1990, Issue No. 95: 88-89; October, 1990, Issue No. 97: 90-91; May, 1991, Issue No. 105: 88-89; and July, 1991, issue No. 107: 88-9).

¹⁹ *The National Guard Magazine*, October, 1990, issue No. 97: 90.

It is to these poems that MA/5 referred when he said:

What Lt. Colonel Khalaf ibn Hazal Al- Oteibi [a folk poet] has achieved far exceeds what the Saudi media has achieved because he knew how to rally the masses more effectively than the media planners themselves. This is because his poems contained some of the words that were used by our grandfathers and forebears in these situations and they succeeded. The poet played on the nationalist feelings, respect for neighbours and courage (MA/5).

These are various points of view expressed by the academicians. But what are the views of journalists who were at the heart of the press institution, on its treatment of the invasion, occupation and war?

4.2.2 Journalists' Opinions of the Saudi Press Performance during the Iraqi Invasion and Occupation of Kuwait

Journalists who were asked about press coverage of the Iraqi invasion and occupation of Kuwait emphasised a point that had already emerged in relation to the pre-invasion period. This was the initial silence of the Saudi press, until the government stance became clear. In relation to the Iraqi aggression, it was said that "on the first three days of the invasion the picture wasn't clear for the official broadcasting as they didn't know how to deal with the situation" (J/6). The same interviewee added that: "The Saudi newspapers didn't publish anything, because their position was tricky. But when the government announced its stand, we started to take their event seriously and with more attention" (J/6).

Some journalists were of the opinion that, once the Saudi press began to cover events, they played an effective role in informing the readership and mobilising public opinion. One journalist gave the impression that his newspaper had been prepared, controlled, and active in responding to the needs of the public. He described, for instance, the holding of regular "operation room" meetings, the production of a new 'Events' supplement to re-establish contact with readers who might otherwise have looked to other media outlets, the review of opinions being expressed internationally by the media and by various interest groups, and the provision of civil defence information.

On the latter point, for example, he said: "People did not want rhetoric about nationalistic issues but more concrete answers as to how to deal with chemical and biological weapons, worsening of the economic conditions or food shortages should these occur" (J/8).

One area in which several journalists thought the Saudi press had succeeded was in the provision of accurate and objective information. For example, the Saudi press spoke out to reveal the extent of Saddam's use of chemical warfare against the Kurds in the North of Iraq, an issue on which they had previously kept silent. They also drew attention to Saudi Arabia's former support for Iraq during the conflict with Iran in the 1980s, giving details of the value of aid given, the materials and equipment supplied, and so on. It could be argued, however, that this objectivity on the part of the press occurred not so much out of abstract commitment to journalistic values, but because the Saudi government, perceiving a threat from Iraq, decided it was in its interest for these matters to be aired and gave the "green light" to the press to do so.

Looking at the performance of the Saudi press during the conflict one interviewee said, "it was good overall, because the press has more freedom to tackle the issues more than television, which is considered the official instrument. For example, the *al-Yamamah* Magazine exposed the lies of the Heshimis, the ruling family of Jordan. *Al-Riyadh* newspaper also published a sensitive cartoon of Saddam which could not have been presented by the official television" (J/6). Another point presented was that:

Action during the conflict wasn't through the newspapers but was between the people, and the newspapers are the part of society which represents this action. There is a special way of dealing with information during the conflict because the policy of the newspaper is part of government policy and at this time the nation is at war and everyone should be aware of the danger of the situation which could affect the fate of the nation (J/4).

One journalist contrasted the performance of the Saudi and other Arab press thus:

The Saudi press played a big part in this conflict. If you compare *al-Riyadh* newspaper with Egyptian newspapers and newspapers of neighbouring states, you will find that the Saudi press tackled the Iraqi

aggression in a more critical and intellectual way and followed a straight line with no exaggeration (J/1).

Some Arab media were accused of misleading the public. For example, “the Sudanese newspapers described Saddam as being at the doorstep of Riyadh. The same applied for Jordan newspapers -which I read- it was the same demagogy as appeared in Iraqi, Yemeni and Jordanian newspapers in 1967” (J/1). The interviewee is of course referring to the Six Day Arab Israel war, when the Arab states sought to retake by force territory which had been annexed by Israel. In this journalist’s view, the emotive reports, with no basis in fact, that appeared in some Arab newspapers during the Gulf conflict were akin to the kind of propaganda they had published during the earlier war. In the 1967 case they exaggerated their own capability and tried to demonize Israel; in the Gulf conflict, they exaggerated Saddam’s success and tried to demonize Saudi Arabia for supporting the West. In neither case was the rhetoric based on factual analysis.

Whether this was due to lack of political awareness or was deliberate propaganda is open to question. Inter-Arab conflict has commonly been accompanied by extensive use of media propaganda and misinformations to justify a state’s actions or policies, or to mobilise popular sentiment. Dr. Al-Badr, a member of the Saudi Consultative Council drew attention to the manipulation of the media as a tool of psychological warfare by Iraq:

We found edited films and films from the war to which American men and women soldiers were added, to make it appear that they were inside the Kaba (the holiest Muslim shrine in Makkah towards which Muslims turn their faces in prayer) and these films were being circulated in south-east Asia and other Islamic societies. They were ready for distribution before the conflict began and when the war started they started circulating them (1991: 55).

In contrast, the Saudi official media, according to another journalist, were more reliable. “Colonel Al-Rab'an [the official military spokesman of Saudi Arabia], for example, used to hold press conferences attended by all media channels including CNN which used to report it live” (J/6).

Another journalist highlighted the connection between the task of the Saudi press and the government campaign which relied on religious scholars. He said that:

The Arab world was split into two: those who stood in support of right, justice and international law and those who stood against international law. The media was supposed to prepare public opinion both inside and outside especially with respect to the presence of friendly armed forces in the region. The Saudi media succeeded in drawing attention to these matters and it was supported in this by religious ulama from Al-Azhar University in Egypt, Tunisia, Morocco, Syria and Lebanon who tried to convince people that the petitioning of friendly armed forces is Islamic and constitutionally correct and it does not contradict the constitution of the Arab League (J/10)²⁰.

Not all journalists, however, were satisfied with the performance of the Saudi press. One challenged the view that the press was prepared and well organised:

The Saudi media was not prepared and did not correctly understand the conflict. The man in the street was wondering, where was the role of the media given the large support it receives from the state? This may be attributed to the lack of planning and knowledge of how to manage communication in the short, medium or the long term (J/3).

He attributed this to:

The lack of scientifically qualified personnel capable of planning and forecasting the future and dealing with it in a well thought manner. The press institutions do not believe in spending money to recruit people with high qualifications who are capable of planning and good thinking. Lack of enough knowledge of the aims of the press work in order to finance these aims and eventually correct planning on sound basis. Thus, when we look into the local newspapers, including the successful ones like *al-Riyadh* and *Okaz*, we see the weakness in their job structure and even the most effective cadres do not have academic experience in their area of specialisation (J/3).

A critic of the press information function said:

Unfortunately we did not write about the crisis and the conflict in the Saudi papers but when the media was given the go ahead the press was

²⁰ (J/10) Saudi Journalist, *al-Nadwah* Newspaper, Jeddah.

putting across what other media channels (*The New York Times*, *Guardian* newspapers) were saying. We got all our information from the West, yet we were the ones who had the problem. At least we should have been able to tell people of impending dangers (J/7).

Another point was that “when our newspapers went out and asked the public what they were reading during the war, they said ‘the newspapers go further than they should’ (J/8). He noted that readers found it difficult, at a time when they were trying to take in the information on events in the Gulf, to be confronted also by new information on subsidiary political and economic issues. He suggested that the problem had been caused because the Saudi press had failed to give readers accurate information when these issues first arose. For example, he added:

Information was put out concerning those countries which refused to support Kuwait such as Sudan, Jordan and Palestine, and which had been become financially supported by the Saudi Government previously. The Saudi citizens said that they had not known about this financial support previously and that it was hard for them to believe about it before. “This is not the appropriate time to tell me about it”, they said. The media was directly responsible for this lack of information. If we consider Kuwait’s policies we find that whenever they build anything abroad, however small, they put the name of Al Sabah on it. On the other hand, nobody knows that the “Royal Education Centre” in Jordan, which is considered the most important education centre in the Arab World, was built by Saudi Arabia and when people are informed about this they are surprised and ask why it hasn’t been made known (J/8).

On the subject of the press’s information function, an interesting theme emerges, namely that of objectivity versus external constraint. Whereas some journalists expressed the view that Saudi press coverage of the Gulf conflict was constrained by external factors such as government policy, others, as we have seen, believed they had considerable freedom to report events as they saw them. To those who were satisfied with the performance of Saudi press such as J/6, quoted earlier this freedom contributed to their success. One journalist who was dissatisfied, however, questioned the desirability of total freedom, suggesting that it had led to inaccurate and misleading information being published. He said:

There should be a body - even in the most developed countries - to protect the people from false information, which might make them scared and shaky. Since the war started and till the cease fire I was not subject to any external constraint. I am 100% sure that chief editors were given the freedom to deal with the news in their own way. For example, there were 20 Stealth aircraft. The Tass news agency reported that one was shot down by Iraqis with a Soviet- made SCUD missile. I published this, but the Americans said that they had all 20 aircraft intact. If there was any regulation, that would prevent this news from being published (J/1).

This interviewee's comments raise several interesting issues. It could be said that even without an official regulatory body, censorship exists; there are certain types of news and opinion that the press will not publish. There is also the point that a regulatory body would not necessarily be concerned with the type of news cited in J/1's example, nor would its existence guarantee against mistakes of this kind.

The previous answers concern the Saudi press situation in relation to the Iraqi aggression. Given the conflict between the two countries, Iraq and Saudi Arabia, the question arises of how each government should deal with the events. Was there any misunderstanding or was there any kind of propaganda? To answer these questions it is necessary to look at what the participants believed about the Saudi press versus the Iraqi press, based on what they had heard, watched and read on both sides.

4.3 Saudi Press versus Iraqi Press Performance

It is inevitable that a clash would develop between the optimism of the Saudi media and the stubbornness of the Iraqis on how to get out of the conflict. The media is one of the public tools by which some kind of respectability is given to the Saudi and Iraqi political leaderships by making the public the judge, and if it is not influential, it can be made at least co-operative with the political ideology of the leadership and its political and economic decisions. Iraq, for example, had to substantiate its claims over the petroleum resources of the Remailah fields. This required a media message or messages to raise the spirit of the soldiers on the ground, on the one hand, and to win the support of the Arab

general public, on the other. A question thus arises here: how did the Saudi press interact with, or to what extent was it opposed to, the Iraqi press, since each press followed its respective government policy?

4.3.1 Academics' Opinions of the Saudi Press versus the Iraqi Press

The Saudi press faced a challenge from the Iraqi press which had two messages during the invasion and occupation of Kuwait. These were summarised by one respondent thus:

One was addressed to the politicians and it was accusing Kuwait and the Gulf states of stealing the Iraqi oil while it was engaged in the war with Iran. It also addressed the general public by claiming that Kuwait is part of Iraq. However, this convinced no political leaders but it is the Arab general public which were more likely to be convinced by this claim. The second card the Iraqi media tried to play was the religion card and this was the most effective message the Iraqi media put across. It aroused the Arab masses in Jordan, Egypt, Sudan, Yemen, Tunisia, and Algeria especially the Islamic organisations. This was reinforced by the Iraqi bombardment of Israel with Scud missiles and the use of such terms as the '*mother of all battles*', and God's '*servants, the believers*' and by *attending the prayers* for those killed in the fight. All these actions aroused the Islamic masses (MA/3).

Supporting the above argument about the second Iraqi message "the Iraqi media found a wide reception because it touched the cord of religion and the nationalistic feelings of the Arab and Islamic masses. This continued for about three months until the air attack on the Iraqi forces in Kuwait and some of the strategic places in Iraq itself on 17th January" (MA/2). As far as the Saudi public is concerned, MA/2 believed:

The Iraqi propaganda did not create any problem because a large section of the Saudi public did not believe that the American armed forces had arrived and were present in the holy places (Mecca and al-Madina) i.e. they did not know of the new crusade attack to use the Iraqi media term. The echo of this matter, however, was felt in some distant foreign circles such as the Arab groups residing in Europe, the USA and some Islamic countries (MA/2).

However, the best way to look at the Saudi - Iraqi press contest is to look at the journalists' opinions. One reason is that most of them were working during the first Gulf war (Iraq-Iran 1978-1989) and were often involved in news gathering and presentation. Their views would give us more details or at least show how their experience affected their presentation of the news and information.

4.3.2 Journalists' Opinions of the Saudi Press versus the Iraqi Press

The target of Saddam's media campaign was the ordinary citizens because he was calling for the redistribution of wealth and the liberation of Jerusalem. In other words, his media campaign was directed to people in Jordan, Egypt, Yemen and Sudan. In this the Iraqi media were seen by journalists as having the upper hand and having a big influence in the Gulf region. This is due to the fact that:

It [the Iraqi message] was very convincing and had a number of the Gulf newspapers revolving in its circle by playing the card of Arab nationalism, and Arab unity vis-à-vis the Persian nationality.

He used the annual gatherings of Arab writers and learned scholars in Iraq (in Al-Mirbid) to shower them with gifts and put them in the most luxurious hotels. He also had good relations with some of the Gulf newspapers. Some newspapers were loyal to Iraq, such as *al-Qabas* [a Kuwait newspaper], and used to defend Iraq and no one could have dared to criticise Iraq in these papers.

Iraq played well its war with Iran and the threat of the Islamic revolution and coined the phrase of 'exporting the Iranian revolution' to neighbouring states. It used this very effectively, especially the threat Iran poses to countries in the area (J/6).

In fact, not only did Saddam give gifts before the invasion to influential writers and thinkers, as the previous interviewee said, but also gave them to Arab heads of state as well. The ambassador of the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques to the United Kingdom, Dr. Al-Gosaibi, wrote that "Saddam gave on behalf of the Iraqis 50 million dollars to the Egyptians, transferred in the name of President Husni Mubarak, who admitted publicly that Saddam had promised more. The aim of this gift was to put the last touch to his plan to draw Egypt into the Iraqi orbit on Iraq's side" (1992: 82).

The researcher asked one of the Saudi journalists who had covered part of the Iraq-Iran war, what had been the Iraqi regime's behaviour since. He responded as follows:

1. I saw by myself one million palm trees destroyed in Basra in Iraq to use the land that had been cleared for the military offensive against Iran. Iraq is a very rich country with huge natural and oil resources and I do not think that it really needed to claim a few additional oil wells; besides it is a member of OPEC.
2. Iraq has expansionist aims. He (Saddam) built himself and his country from our money and the Gulf states aid and he started to see himself as an emperor who is dissatisfied with the piece of land on which he lives.
3. The Iraqi media is a popular media and appeals to the lower classes. It does not address the enlightened sections of the population (J/4).

He concluded that "the Arabs are sentimental people and they consist of groups without political organisations" (J/4). In this researcher's view, however, it is too easy to blame the people. It could be argued that if Arabs are emotive, lacking in political consciousness and easily manipulated, it is because their governments have made them that way. They have withheld information, stifled opposition and debate, and failed to involve the people in decision-making. Moreover, they have engaged political conspiracies in their own interest.

Since it has been claimed that today is "an age of propaganda" (Taylor, 1995: 303), it may be that journalists were involved in propaganda in one way or another on this issue. A good starting point here is to record what a Saudi Television official said:

The Saudi press abided by neutrality and did not respond to the Iraqis' painful media insults and nonsense. During this verbal shoot-out the BBC's Arabic service and some of the broadcasting stations in some other countries started to broadcast scaring news about the ferocity of the coming war in the Gulf and started to speak about the new deadly weapons that might be used in the fight especially from the Iraqi side. Under the direct psychological influence of what was being broadcast by the BBC and the lies of the Iraqi media and misleading propaganda, a number of people, especially in the Gulf region and the Arabian Peninsula, started to turn to foreign radio, especially those broadcasting on short wavelengths (J/11)²¹.

²¹ (J/11) Saudi Journalist, Saudi Ministry of Information, Riyadh.

Historically, the conflict in the Middle East, and in particular the Arab-Israeli conflict and the 1967 war, gives us some indication of the influence of the Arab media and its policies, bearing in mind the assumption that the credibility of Arab media was and still is under suspicion, since each medium follows its government's policy and freedom of speech and of the press does not exist. One journalist conceded that:

The Arab media played a different role during the Gulf war compared with its role during the 1967 war and other conflicts in the region. Nevertheless, the change did not measure up to what was required from a media point of view because we are still following a policy of news black out and leaving the recipient to turn and listen to other channels such as Monte Carlo, BBC, Voice of America, and Israel to get what it wants. This is like a disease affecting all recipients, even those in Arab countries which like to regard themselves as democratic. The media in all the Arab world does not meet the need of the recipient by giving it what he wants but it gives him what it wants him to receive (J/2).

But he gave qualified credit to the performance of the Saudi radio, given its current staffing levels, saying that "young journalists in the radio were able to perfect the choice of words and to keep track of events, even it not to the extent one would have liked" (J/2). One journalist picked up this point, saying that

The Saudi media was working on a number of fronts: the Egyptian opposition, the Jordanian media, the Yemeni radio, the Islamic parties in Tunisia, and Algiers and the Arab based Arabic newspapers. The Saudi media, indeed the whole country, were shocked with the Iraqi behaviour and that of some of the Arab countries who over the years had received billions of dollars of Saudi in the form of aid, like Yemen, Jordan, and Palestine. All these countries received annual aid and financial support to develop their ailing economies, yet despite all this the Saudi media had portrayed Saddam as an Arab hero (J/6).

Another disagreed that the Saudi press had praised Saddam, saying that "portraying Saddam as a hero was not in the Saudi press before, but it was the Gulf states media"(J/1). He suggested that:

Saddam bribed journalists in Jordan by building an apartment for each one of them and selected in Egypt a group of journalists and paid each one of them a regular salary and a car. He also succeeded in

manipulating the ambassadors of some countries; Algiers, Morocco, Mauritania, and Sudan (J/1).

The aim of some of those who claim Islamic leadership and those organisations which held meetings with Iraqi backing “was to buy peoples’ support for the occupation of one country by another and to make people believe in the claim that the liberation of Jerusalem passes through Kuwait” (J/4).

One journalist added that “the Iraqi ambassador in Jordan was very determined to build a club in Amman, no matter how much that would cost and to present it as a gift to journalists there” (J/2). Another said that “it is not the press which rejected the Iraqi claims but there were other factors that contributed to this rejection” (J/4). This was because, “Saddam was using the slogan that Israel is an occupying force and must pull out of the lands it occupied in the 1967 war but by occupying Kuwait he was doing the same thing and contradicting himself” (J/4).

Regarding the similarities of journalists’ responses to the Saudi press performance against Saddam’s press propaganda it was said that, “Saddam had actually warned people, especially in the last Arab leaders’ summit, just before the invasion, when he said ‘if any army attacks an Arab country, or even Iraq, then you must fight it’. This was the trap into which all leaders fell. They believed this ‘snake’ and in the end he chose his time very well to deal a blow to them” (J/2).

Another important point raised is that made by one journalist who criticised CNN. He said “CNN for its part gave Saddam some room to manoeuvre and spread his filth and to play with his political message” (J/2). This was because of CNN’s presence in Baghdad. We will look more closely, later, at views of how the CNN helped or changed the Saudi press, but it is useful at this point to take one specific statement of the principal fact that it allowed gave Saddam’s messages to reach the world:

The meetings with Saddam were to a large extent made possible by CNN because he knows that western journalists and journalists in the US, the country of democracy and freedom of speech, have a high standard of journalistic conduct. In fact a number of journalists kept their own

opinions to themselves to give Saddam a chance and in the end he succeeded in putting across some of his ideas to the western world. It is true that freedom of expression must be upheld but CNN was misguided and consequently the chances that were given Saddam were considered as causing harm to the other side. What I want to say is that during the time Saddam was using the satellite stations, the Saudi press was rejecting his claims. What was required then was more detailed analysis and discussion of what should be published, how it should be presented, whether the material needed explanation, commentary or rejection or should it be broadcast without any comment, bearing in mind that there were some communities in the kingdom who were supporting him (J/11).

The press rejected Saddam's claims which he tried to propagate in a number of ways, and in the end the press was proved right. The rejection of Saddam's claims by the Saudi media was somewhat closer to Saudi peoples' perception about the political issues, even though they were detached from it. Referring to the two most important daily newspapers, namely, *al-Riyadh* and *Okaz*, one said that "the performance of *al-Riyadh* newspaper was characterised by being logical and scientific whereas *Okaz* relied on excitement to attract the readers by presenting the information in a simple and different way" (J/4). He added that "the Saudi press have succeeded very well in rejecting the Iraqi claims which aimed to mislead the general public in an attempt to keep the Arab and Islamic masses ignorant of what was going on around them" (J/4).

One journalist took a more liberal stand on the press performance. He disagreed with all the above respondents and believed "that Saudi Arabia also disseminated propaganda during the Conflict" (J/5). He said that

it is common knowledge that in dealing with the other media the Iraqi media has acted with stupidity and propaganda and both the Saudi and Iraqi media were inward looking. We treated the Iraqi media in the way it treated us and we did not deal with the facts. At the time when Saddam did not make use or did make use of television stations, especially CNN, the Saudi press rejected his accusations and claims (J/5).

He commented that he used to play his part 'intentionally'. He said: "The work of the Saudi media during the Gulf war was of a propaganda nature with a varying degree of intensity because it was not based on information"(J/5). He added that:

I deliberately used propaganda for two reasons. I am officially required to use propaganda. I had no information to stop using the propaganda work. There might be a third reason which is, as a Saudi national, I felt that there was a danger facing my country and this type of work satisfied me emotionally and I accepted the propaganda work. In addition this kind of work arouses people and rally them around the political leadership and professionally this was required (J/5).

When I asked, ‘What do you mean by propaganda?’ he replied: ‘By that I mean the concepts, i.e. it is based on emotions, scarcity of information and you hammer on that to get across the point of view you want. In other words, you totally ignore neutrality and objectivity’ (J/5). When I pressed him to be more specific, he said

Neutrality is a ‘big lie’ even in the US media even though there is objectivity in the American media. The media there cannot, for example, describe a man and say he is black when he is white, but it can use information to promote the person it wants and discredit the one it does not want. In other words, it edits whatever it wants to report and scares you to win the point in its favour (J/5).

If this is true, then the Saudi press would be an instrument for political messages. One interviewee claimed that:

The standard of the Saudi press has fallen and became detached from the basic issues. It became engaged in personal and trivial matters such as the character of Saddam or the articles and poems that glorified him and other useless material in the media. In other words, the media was not dealing with the issues with full awareness and it was depending on its voice in arousing the individuals (MA/5).

According to one respondent, initially Saddam’s propaganda went unchallenged: the Saudi media, “in its treatment of the problem in its earliest stages did not do well for a simple reason, which is the lack of information. How do you reject Iraqi claims when you do not have information?” (J/12)²². Another media academic believed that propaganda was spread by other countries concerning the political crisis in the Gulf and especially for the societies in this area. For example:

²² (J/12) Saudi Journalist, Saudi Resarch Publication CO, Jeddah,

American propaganda played a major role in the Gulf conflict and war. It claimed that it came to the Gulf to liberate Kuwait in the name of international law but this was no more than propaganda because international law has been broken on many occasions before and the US did not move a finger on any of these occasions. This means that the main aim of the US involvement in the conflict was to protect its interests in the area. Hence the political message to the outside world was in the name of upholding international law. It was not meant to serve the politicians in any way because they know everything and have accurate and full information, and it was the general public which was misled by this and led to believe that the aim was to uphold international law. For this reason there was a political acceptance of the US in a number of countries, to such an extent that it was portrayed as the world's 'hero' even though the motive was not the protection of the international law (MA/3).

In fact, the American president himself had repeatedly reiterated on CNN that the aim was to protect American interests. This question of American interest, "should have been highlighted by the American and the Gulf press and it should have been made clear and more realistic" (MA/3).

4.4 CNN and the Saudi Press Performance

CNN is an influential news organisation, breaking the news first wherever, whatever and under any circumstances that it can. It is a great example of McLuhan's assertion that television would create, indeed, 'a global village'. It is a primary source of news and information and affects not only international public opinion but also the decision-makers of governments over the world. Indeed the media, as Taylor said,

act not simply as observers of events but also as participants and sometimes even as catalysts, as in the case of television pictures of the Kurds prompting John Major to suggest Operation Provide Comfort to the Americans in 1991 or Bill Clinton's reversal of American policy in Somalia after watching pictures of a butchered American airman being dragged through General Aideed's camp (1996:281).

Despite its different audience, the Saudi press during the Gulf conflict, particularly in the actual war, faced a challenge from CNN in making and presenting the news, in that CNN

were more politically experienced, had greater financial resources, and were able to present information more freely and attractively. Thus, the Saudi press had to produce a level and quality of coverage that would bear comparison with CNN and satisfy a public who were now being exposed to ideas from other sources. To what extent did this challenge affect the Saudi press in its coverage? Both media academics and journalists gave their opinions on this matter. It might be understood that one of the main reasons for the effect of the CNN coverage on the Saudi press was that it:

brought the war from the field to people's homes across the world because of its relation with the American military intelligence. It took the viewer from his living room directly to the nearest point of military operations. The soldiers in the battle field did not see the exciting events. Missiles were launched from the Red Sea or the Arabian Gulf using electronic brains with pin-point accuracy. The ferocity of the attack could be seen right in front of your eyes (MA/7).

He regarded the effect of CNN on the Saudi press as positive. He said: "We must admit that there are some positive aspects in CNN and the Internet such as their big influence on the general public. For some people following the war news became an enjoyment and the media channel became dependent on the events" (MA/7).

Such is the reputation of CNN that it occupied a special place on Saudi television

The Ministry of Information allowed Channel Two on the Saudi television to cover some CNN news in English. It was thought that this link between CNN and Channel Two of the Saudi television would make people have more trust in the Saudi media on the account that CNN has instant world wide reporting of news, analysis and, in most cases, realism (MA/8).

Journalists had been challenged and stimulated by the way CNN presented the news. As one respondent put it: "We would watch CNN and it was as though we were watching a live play or a film. We found that CNN presented ready, simplified and complete information within any effort on our part. This was a widening of our experience in dealing with media coverage of the war" (J/4). Another journalist said that "Although all the conflict news issued at the end of every day by the coalition forces was taken into

consideration, we were, also concerned with news from CNN, Reuters and reports from the correspondents on the field as well as from the battle field” (J/1). But the fact is, that only a few Saudi people who have satellite dishes and who are familiar with English would be able to watch CNN. Therefore, it was not the only medium that challenged the Saudi press. As one respondent explained:

Unfortunately, or fortunately, there were not too many satellite dishes during the crisis period. The only few dishes which were available were owned by the wealthy people and those who lived in US and Britain and who relied on satellite broadcasts to get the information they required. Therefore, the threat came from the radio at that time (J/8).

One media academic commented on the value of foreign news thus:

Resorting to foreign radios for news does not mean that there is a lack of credibility in the Saudi press but arose because of people’s awareness that they have advanced media techniques. The presence of various channels to listen to was one of the basic demands, especially for journalists. We quite often see a chief editor possessing an expensive radio set costing between 166-250 pounds, they can listen to different news from different stations (MA/9)²³.

Not only CNN but VOA, BBC and Satellite channels were also followed and the reason was that “People listened to other radio stations because they wanted to know the opinion of the other side about the Gulf conflict because they had [already] listened to one side of the story” (J/8).

One journalist noted his own dependence on the foreign media: “I get most of the information from the BBC which, to a large extent, says the truth. Yes, it has its own agenda, but I do not find the information I need anywhere else” (J/7). Another journalist, however, disputed the influence of foreign media such as CNN, claiming that his paper had maintained its independence. He explained: “We have nothing to do with CNN because it has its own point of view and it has a different strategy” (J/1). Nevertheless, he acknowledged the role played by CNN in exposing Saddam Hussein:

²³ (MA/9) Saudi Media academic, King Abdul Aziz Univeristy, Jeddah.

I believe that CNN was clever and it presented Saddam to the American people in his true colour. Moreover, bearing in mind that the American people do not know Saddam, CNN presented the true picture of Saddam and it was stupid of him to allow this to happen, although he always maintained that he is courageous and that he never stayed in one place for more than two hours during the whole of the conflict. CNN also showed the human shields he used to shelter behind such as what happened in Al-Ma'mariyeh (J/1).

One journalist explained that he saw CNN as playing a strategic role in serving American political interests:

CNN stripped naked the Iraqi regime. Everyone knows that by getting himself engaged in correspondence and audio recordings Saddam fell into the trap. The Americans were playing with him and tried to portray him as a champion but in a different way. They were laying his fears because time was needed to build a high technology firing power that would be effective but cause minimum loss of life in the region because it was certain that the war would take place (J/9).

Another journalist considered that it was possible for CNN to broadcast Saddam's addresses in a way that might not have been possible in some countries, because of differences in the political and media awareness of the public: ". . . in the US they have self control and even if you broadcast hostile news it would not be immediately accepted but would be listened to with caution. This is something which does not exist in some other countries" (J/9).

However, another journalist looked at CNN from a different perspective, that of the effect of CNN not only on the Saudi press but also on the Saudi culture. He saw this as a dangerous situation and said:

Unfortunately the Arab societies, including the Saudi society, fell an easy prey to the media messages of CNN and others. Some sort of paralysis prevailed at the beginning of the invasion and the subsequent occupation of Kuwait. Who were the readers and the Arab society at large to believe? And from whom and from where could they get the truth? This problem was created by the foreign media channels and its main aim was to control people's thinking, behaviour and relationships with others. This was a kind of cultural invasion. Even France fought the American invasion more than any other Arab country by using censorship,

subtitling and even changing the scenario itself, in order to protect French citizens from American propaganda (J/10).

A similar view was taken by another journalist who believed that the presence of foreign news media provided an opportunity for some Saudi citizen to raise issues and grievances unrelated to the war, and that their exploitation of the media attention focused on the country was socially disruptive:

Western media channels and the American media . . . influenced a number of social aspects including the presence of foreigners and foreign forces on the land. Some Saudi girls, for example, took this opportunity to make certain demands and drove their cars in the streets of Riyadh to make their voices heard. This happened at a time when the country was facing a crisis situation and could not cope with any of these demands and all this happened because there was media openness at the time (J/6).

The problem, however, was not the presence of the Western media *per se*. Saudi society has in fact been exposed to western films and technology since the 1970s, and no social disturbance of this kind has occurred previously. Moreover, to the extent that the Western media have been influential on Saudi culture, the blame must be shared by the Saudi press, on the basis that the Western media would have less influence if the domestic alternative was more attractive.

4.5 The Suspicion between the Military and Journalists

During a war, those who assess the situation are not the media people nor the military people. The military simply carry out specific orders based on political decisions. In the final analysis, it is politicians who control both these groups. They control the armed forces and guide the media into the desired direction. The media people want to obtain information and to be the first to break the news, while the military may not be authorised to give it, or have only limited scope to do so, since their priority is accomplishment of their military task to serve a political objective. During the Gulf war, there was some flexibility on the part of the military through press conferences and frequent news briefings.

A media academic explained the conflicting roles and interests of the military and journalists, which sometimes led to suspicion and tension:

The military sometimes do not realise the importance of information which would serve them because they want to direct that in their own way. This is because they do not know the media procedures, on the one hand, and if they do not see a direct benefit to their cause, it is easy and beneficial to hide it, on the other. By contrast, journalists do not know the security, military and political dimensions (MA/4).

He added that

Journalists' responsibility is to report information. To some journalists the problem is really one of values because the journalist cannot report things without scrutiny based on the ethics and values of journalism. Even the freedom of the press in the west is not absolute and it is not utopian. There are information leaks in the western media which serve certain lines and interests (MA/4).

This raises the question as to whether there is any external control on what is reported. It was explained by interviewees that the editor, or chief editor, takes responsibility for what he writes. The press watch dog has no time to make sure whether the information given is correct or not but the supervision in Saudi Arabia "usually follows after and not before the incident and it is the responsibility of the editor and chief editor" (MA/8).

However, post-mortem treatment is of little use if the incident represents the border between life and death. The fact is that

Sometimes disseminating information could lead to a catastrophe, either to the military troops on the ground or to the cities such as, for example, the bombardment of Riyadh city by the Iraqi Scud missiles. Some of these missiles fell near the Saudi Ministry of Defence and a television reporter at that time came on the screens and addressed the viewers by saying 'I greet you from near the Ministry of Defence' and then told the viewers that some Scud missiles had fallen near the site he was reporting from (MA/8).

Such reports and information could only help the enemy, enabling them to take extra measures to ensure that their missiles, next time, hit their targets. It was suggested that

this was probably the reason why, in other conflicts, American and British leaders had taken decisions to exclude reporters from certain sensitive areas.

Nixon, for example, barred reporters from reporting military and security emergency activities which many cause negative social, military or psychological problems. On the other hand, Mrs Thatcher demanded that the press and the media should be barred from giving personal accounts or reporting emergency and battle field news and to make sure that what they report is true (MA/8).

To report the truth requires access to the information and the event itself, but the fact is that information gathering from the media centre was insignificant. The media centre of the allied forces "was more of a public relations office than it was a media centre and there is a big difference between having a public relations office and a media centre. As a result, journalists were not creating the events but they were just reporting them from this media centre which was under the direct control of the allied forces" (MA/3).

But journalists believed information from the field is important and that there had been co-operation from the military authorities. One journalist said:

At the beginning of the invasion I was one of those who went to the front line and we were welcomed by military commanders who gave us some information. Some of what we were given was that we had received ten group of tanks including their personnel and ammunition (supplies) and all that was published regardless of it being military information which should not have been announced (J/1).

Another journalist said:

I do not think that there is a suspicion or a lack of trust between the military and the media people. It is only a matter of obeying pre-agreed upon rules. The military are usually given orders in broad terms and they must adhere to army discipline and not talk about them. There are, however, personnel from the general security, public affairs, and the armed forces who are dedicated for this specific purpose (J/6).

This interviewee, however, contradicted himself. Having denied the existence of suspicion or lack of trust, he later commented "the military fears the press in its quest for news and

information. The journalist might pick up something from an officer and then embarrass him in front of his superiors” (J/6).

Confirming what J/6 said, another interviewee explained that “the relationship between the military and the media was first started when the Saudi Ministry of Defence and Air Force organised a tour for the chief editors and took them to the front, during which journalists saw the level of preparations and the huge number of tanks”. He added that:

I remember one day one of the military leaders had a map in front of him and he showed us the positions of our forces and from his knowledge of Saddam’s tactics in the Iraq/Iran war he explained to us the possibilities of Iraq attacking us from the various sides.

Secondly, the war was a television war. Planes flew from Al-Mahraq [in Bahrain] air field or from aircraft carriers and they were reported by television cameras from the minute they left their bases until they finished their operations returned to base and so on. In addition, it was possible to record on television cameras the launching of a cruise missile from the moment it left its launching pad until it hit its target. This was in addition to the recording of the disarray of the Iraqi forces on television cameras and their low fighting spirit. Even the bunkers looked like the First World War bunkers (J/1).

However, even this co-operation between the military and the media was subject to some sort of voluntary restraint:

I cannot report how hard a leader or an official works and broadcast this information about him all over the kingdom, while he is in fact sitting all the time in his bunker. I cannot kiss the fighter pilots in their positions to say to them thank you for your good work. This is simply not on in our press. The soldier or the officer is like my brother, my first cousin, or my relative and he spends his time defending me so that I can relax (J/8).

It is quite clear that there were differences of opinion between these two groups and even within each group. It was thought, therefore, that more light would be shed on the issue by looking in more detail at the role of war correspondent as practised in Saudi Arabia during the Gulf conflict.

4.6 The Saudi War Correspondents

All media academics and journalists agreed that the Saudi press had no professional war correspondent that could give the press quality news during the coverage of Gulf conflict. Some reasons for this can be derived from the responses of journalists, since their responsibility is to report actual events. One major reason why there were no professional war correspondents was general lack of experience among journalists. Saudi Arabia had fought few wars in recent times and there was no tradition of the press sending its correspondents to 'other people's wars'. As one interviewee commented:

a group of colleagues who are experienced in the local news went to Kuwait and they had no previous experience in war correspondence. For example, they did not know what mines do and this could have put them in great danger. They did not know how to deal with people facing invasion or anything about military plans or strategies (J/6).

Journalists' lack of experience in reporting on such situations was elaborated on by another interviewee who also highlighted the impact of that lack of experience on the quality of news coverage. He said:

Our experience in coverage events in the field as well as understanding ideological war is very little because this a new situation which we have not experienced before. Most of the newspapers' plans were new and they focused with merely reporting news events rather than analysing them. If any analysis was to be found then it was only in leading articles or in the opinions of newspapers writers. There was no existing organ within the newspapers to carry out this analysis until some days after the beginning of the war (J/4).

This is not to say that the papers did not cover military topics. Such coverage was made possible because many of the local newspapers recruited retired Saudi military officers, though even their military analysis was limited. As (J/6) explained:

Retired Saudi military personnel have no war experience nor a proper understanding of the media work to identify alternative military options and present them in the form of a media message. Basically they lack military experience in the field (J/6).

He added, “The war has revealed a huge deficit in military comment in the media and unfortunately so far the press institutions have not found military analysts and if we have to enter into another war, we would still have to rely on the help of Egyptians or Syrians to do the military analysis for us” (J/6).

Even those few journalists who had reported from other conflict areas around the world did not have direct battlefield experience. “We have journalists who went to Afghanistan or Bosnia but stayed away from the battle fields. Even in our own newspaper we cover the preparations, tendencies, and manoeuvres but not the war itself” (J/8).

Some journalists were to report from field during the Gulf war. One of them recounted the experience, highlighting the important role played by co-operation between Saudi and foreign journalists, the local knowledge of the former being pooled in exchange for access to the facilities of the latter:

I lived the life of a fighter and saw how the soldiers eat and how they send their letters and greeting cards to their families and relatives. I reached the battle field a day after the land attack. We were ten people. We were woken up by the noise of the engines of tens of buses coming from Kuwait full of Iraqi prisoners and we did the reporting to *al-Zaheerah* newspaper, a subsidiary of the London based *al-Sharq al-Awsat* newspaper, and to the Saudi press. The success of our mission or ability to report information was due to the co-operation of the CNN reporters, who had a telephone line via satellites. We struck a deal with them: we took them all the way to Kuwait and across all barriers and in return they allowed us to use their telephone line. I remember I had to disguise myself at check points as a plain clothes officer accompanying the media photographers who were with us and this continued until we reached Al-Khafji and joined the battle field (J/12).

Another who was with J/12 criticised Kuwaiti journalists for not participating during the conflict and the actual war. He said:

Ahmed Al-Jar-Allah the chief editor of *al-Siasah* newspaper where was he during the crisis? I challenge anybody to say that there was a Kuwaiti journalist in the battle field. There were only Jordanian journalists, American journalists and a few Saudi journalists. Journalism is not to sit in a luxurious chair or in a hotel and wait for the news (J/7).

He went on to describe the way he and his colleagues had concealed their identity in order to penetrate the scene of the fighting:

J/12 and I witnessed in Al-Jabiriyah hospital the Iraqi soldiers pulling out of Kuwait on the 24-25 February, and they were asking us who we were and we told them that we were from India (because of the similarity of our colour to the Indians), so we would not be exposed to them.

When we went from Al-Dhahran to Kuwait we could hear the bombardment as we drove our two Jeeps in the dark: J/12, myself and ten non-Saudi journalists. When we came to a military check point we quickly recognised the accent of the soldier. If they were Saudis, for example, we played a Madonna audio tape and told them that we were American journalists and they gave us the all clear to pass and vice versa. If we came to an American check point we played an Arabic audio cassette by Um kulthoum [the famous Egyptian women singer] and so on, until we entered Kuwait. The bombardment was still going on when we reached Kuwait and as we drove through we saw the dead bodies and some Iraqi soldiers getting out of their bunkers with their hands raised above their heads and some carrying their weapons. We were in real danger but nothing happened to us (J/7).

Another interviewee who had spent a short time with the above journalists had taken the opportunity, during an international media gathering, to attach himself to the American forces:

On my way to the joint information bureau I read a sign giving the Saudi journalists the chance to join the American forces. I went with my colleague [J/12] with the US army . . . I said that I wanted to join and obtained all the necessary personal safety equipment including a bullet proof vest and a helmet. I was allowed to join the marines troops in the logistic base responsible for supplies, provided that I did not stay for more than three weeks . . . and that all the reports I wrote must be given to the communications officer first (J/13)²⁴.

He noted the difficulty of reporting events, given his poor English and the fact that reports in Arabic would be subject to censorship by the Saudi Armed forces. He also recalled his sense of isolation: "I was completely cut off from the outside world and our only link with

²⁴ (J/13) Saudi Journalist, *al-Riyadh* Newspaper, Riyadh.

the world was what we heard from the radio and sometimes we took a summary of what we heard on the radio and wrote our reports” (J/13).

J/12, quoted earlier, emotionally and tearfully recalled an incident which indicates how close to danger some of the reporters came:

When we entered Kuwait it was the second day of the Iraqi forces’ pull-out and it was about dusk with petroleum oozing out from oil fields, a lot of smoke, oil wells fires and cars’ speed was restricted to 20 mph. About one quarter of the way, a strange car caught us and a man stepped down from it with his gun pointed at us. I said to my colleague [J/11] “This is an Iraqi and either we stop or we die”. I told the group I would speak on their behalf and no one should say a word. The soldier asked pointing his gun to my face: “Where are you from?” I said to him” From there !!! “Where are you from ?” I said, “From there !!!.” “Who are you?” I replied, “We are journalists”. “From where?” I murmured unrecognisable words with my eyes on his colleague who was standing behind his car with his gun pointed at us. All of a sudden I pulled myself together and asked him, “Who are you ?” He said, “I am from the Kuwaiti resistance.” I said to him “You scared us”. We then entered Kuwait. There were corpses of Iraqi soldiers everywhere on the side of the road. We saw a nurse in Al-Mubarak hospital in a hysterical state. One person shouted, “Iraqis are coming” and my colleague J/7 and myself entered the Kidney Operating Theatre (J/12).

As this story shows, the journalists, despite lack of training and experience, were prepared to put themselves at risk in the effort to follow events and uncover stories. A sad irony is that often the journalists braved these dangers to no avail; they reached the area of conflict and witnessed history-making events, only to find themselves unable to report them due to lack of a telecommunications link.

4.7 Academics’ and Journalists’ Opinions of the Saudi Press Performance after the Liberation of Kuwait

It emerges clearly from the interviewees’ comments that the Saudi government played a dominant role in the way information on the conflict was disseminated, and that the Saudi press was used as an intermediary between the public and the government. In view of the increasing importance of the government in all phases of domestic and foreign handling of

the Gulf conflict, the question arises whether the Saudi press performance changed as a result of the social, political, economic and psychological impacts of the war? How did the media academics and journalists look at the role of the press in the post-war period?

4.7.1 Academics' Opinions of the Saudi Press Performance after the Liberation of Kuwait

The researcher was interested to know whether the experience of the conflict and contact with media professionals from other countries brought any change in the approach of the Saudi press, which might be reflected in its performance after the liberation of Kuwait. One media academic said: "the Gulf conflict has given the Saudi press and the chief editors of newspapers practical experience on Saudi soil by giving them a chance to make use of mixing with western and American journalists and listen to news briefings and see how the freedom of expression is practised" (MA/1). Another media academic said that:

There is no doubt that the Saudi's view has changed after the conflict, but the question is, has this change had any impact on journalistic work? Has the press started to change its concepts of values and the relationship with other countries? I believe not, because there are still some unresolved matters; more specifically, perhaps, is that there is not enough courage. Being open and honest about something involves confrontation because what is actually happening is that we tend not to talk about certain things and try not to stir problems. In addition, the press feels that there is no strategic orientation or a strategic change, though you find some degree of openness and in-depth analysis of some aspects in some of the newspapers even though in very broad terms (MA/4).

Although in the first part of his response, MA/4 suggested that a change of view has occurred as a result of the conflict, MA/6 agreed with him that there has been little real change in practice:

The press has remained largely unchanged and it had not made any use of its past mistakes or its past work experience. It had not carried out a single study or research on its past performance. After the war has ended there was no post-mortem analysis, political or otherwise, to tell us what lessons we learned from our past mistakes. In future there should be some predictions of what are the likely events and scenarios,

accompanied with analysis at the social and political levels, to bring down the psychological barriers in society (MA/6).

The view of these respondents was echoed by one of the journalists, who commented: "The Saudi press after the war went on doing the same things it was doing before and during the war" (J/8). He contrasted the Saudi experience with that after World War Two, when the role of the media had been analysed, and argued the need for the Saudi press to learn to target their messages more effectively:

The media must try to change its language and the method it is using in getting its message across and the way it addresses people. The media has a theory but if you do not understand how the person you are addressing thinks, you would not be able to arouse him. In short the psychological factor is important in convincing others of your view (MA/5).

He went on to suggest that "the media should have treated the issues that were difficult to discuss during the conflict or to deal with them in talks and meetings specifically held for that purpose"(MA/5). He thought this would be an effective way of ensuring that the desired messages were effectively disseminated, in line with Mowlana's note that "Almost all governments around the world set up 'information' and 'propaganda' agencies, hired public relations firms, and organized regular and systematic ' briefing' meeting and lavish diplomatic parties . . ." (1997: 8). Kuwait itself took such an approach, hiring an American public relations firm at more than '1,000,000' dollars per month to gain American public support for the liberation of Kuwait (Lacey & Longman, 1997: 7).

Another media academic MA/3, like MA/5, contrasted Saudi and Western experience, concluding that "the Saudi press should have a strategic plan specially in the political sphere and should take a stand from the general issues confronting it on the basis of this conflict as a basis". He went on to assert the importance of informed political opinion:

We, in the Arab world, especially in the Gulf states, suffer from the problem of politicising the culture or educating the authority which should be based on a careful reading of our political situation. The indisputable fact is that the authorities need educated people especially those with a political culture. There are decision makers who are not

qualified, as well as there are unqualified journalists, but this does not mean that there are no qualified people. There are a few highly educated individuals (MA/3).

In the view of one media academic, the major impact of the conflict as far as the media was concerned is that it has accelerated the rate of technological advance: "The Gulf war helped to bring about an information revolution, with direct broadcasting and satellite channels. All these things would have come in due course but the war speeded up their arrival to the kingdom" (MA/10)²⁵. He did not, however, believe that this would necessarily lead to more openness in reporting: "The function of the media is to report all events but in reality this was not possible because not everything one knows can be reported and not everything said can be written" (MA/10).

The above opinions of media academics suggest that any change in the quality and manner of press performance is subject to political constraint. The ultimate objective of any change would be a sharing of political power, in the sense that journalists are considered as the carriers of the political agenda.

4.7.2 Journalists' Opinions of the Saudi Press Performance after the Liberation of Kuwait

The journalists were inclined to a belief that the Saudi press has been changed in its dealings with analysis. One journalist gave examples of what he saw as the increased power of the Saudi press:

One of the consequences of the Gulf War was that it opened the eyes of the Saudi media and increased its ability to confront the media campaign against Saudi Arabia. For example, some of the Egyptian newspapers staged a campaign against Saudi Arabia after a teacher in one of the government schools was accused of having gay sex with an Egyptian pupil and this nonsense and accusations and counter accusations nearly severed diplomatic relations between Saudi Arabia and Egypt. I think that the Egyptians were surprised by the strong counter attack from the Saudi press and consequently backed down and stopped the heated

²⁵ (MA/10) Media academic, Umm al-Qura Univeristy, Makkah.

campaign against the kingdom. Another example is the 1995 tour by journalists and press representatives of local military establishments and some of the areas that were previously regarded as sensitive areas, which was regarded by some as some sort of media triumph (J/12).

Another linked journalistic and political work and said:

Unfortunately when we are confronted with a particular crisis, we always tend to feel the enormity of our responsibility but for only a short time and when the crisis passes away we think of it as a temporary situation that no longer exists. Thus, there is a need to put our house in order by activating the Gulf Co-operation Council to ensure that the council takes more actions and does not confine itself to meetings, circulars and a final resume (J/9).

The assumption is that after the liberation of Kuwait, there would be major changes, at least in people's attitudes toward the press function and the way journalists gather and present the news. One respondent noted that viewers and readers have become more critical and questioning, though he doubted whether the Saudi media have, as yet, responded to this changed environment.

After the war people became more open and critical of what had happened. People who call for the truth are the ones who experienced the crises. As far as the press is concerned nothing has changed and most of the writings in the papers are below standard because there is no information and in addition the Arab press have continued to praise and report the movements of the officials . . . Thus, people started to look for other sources of information with more honest treatment, especially with regard to those stories which have psychological and social influence, as well as the news of other disasters in the world and, hence, the move to the American and European media (J/7).

Referring to the accusations and propaganda that dominated the scene before the liberation of Kuwait, as claimed J/5, raised the rhetorical question: "why was there no counter propaganda work to stop the Iraqi accusations after the liberation?" He went on to comment that:

The media channels did not discuss these Iraqi accusations to find out their causes and to bring the matter to a close. Rather, we became obsessed by the Oslo Accord and forgot the problem, as if the accord is

so important to the extent that it prevented us from discussing these details at a time when it is perfectly legitimate to discuss the past (J/5).

He went on to imply that the sudden dropping of the discussion of the Gulf conflict reflected inability on the part of the Saudi media to discuss it objectively and analyse it critically. The press, some thought, “was not used in an effective way before, during or after the war” (J/4). One interviewee cited an example which in his view showed that the Saudi press had failed to learn the lesson of the Gulf conflict:

It is shameful to say that we are a nation without a memory and the proof is what happened in Tel Aviv as a result of the suicidal bomb attack a month ago in January 1997 when *Okaz* newspaper came out with its main headline saying “the Mossad did it against Tel Aviv”. The opening page of the paper said it was the Mossad who did this, at a time when photographs from news agencies, France and Reuters explained the situation, identified the name of the bomber, reported that his house was demolished and said that the organisation behind the attack had claimed responsibility for it. The next day the same newspaper came out with a big heading saying ‘HAMAS reiterates its threat to repeat such attacks’. This had happened within 24 hours !! (J/8).

In addition to the continued weaknesses in political interpretation, he believed the Saudi press had still not sufficiently embraced its role as a source of information and debate on social issues. He commented:

The fact is we did not make any use of the Gulf War, either at the level of the media message, the tactical level, news or at the level of our awareness. How can we discuss social issues like drugs, or homosexuality for example? We started the debate and there is no objection to putting it across but the problem is how to deal with it and at the same time not to spread it. This unprofessional work is not useful and neither the media nor the political leadership will accept it. We want to create a complete citizen, upright, pure and the information available to him is clear because the press of today is an information press (J/8).

Another journalist suggested that the Saudi press still lacks credibility, compared with other sources of information:

When a political incident occurs, the ordinary reader goes to buy the London-based Arabic newspapers like *al-Sharq al-Awsat* or *al-Hayat*

because our newspapers are poor and what they give us is not 100 per cent correct. In the end it is a piece of news perhaps with slightly different analysis because our press is still young and lacks specialist cadres and professionals (J/14)²⁶.

Another commented on the local media's failure to explain the consequences of the war:

If there is no journalistic feeling then this will be reflected in three things: political matters, security issues and professional matters and if we added to this list economic issues, then what did going to war mean to us? How to prepare public opinion to bear the economic consequences of the war? Very soon it became public that Saudi Arabia paid 36 billions to meet the expenses of the war and its consequences. The Saudi media did not address this question. It could have explained that there would have economic losses far in excess of what Saudi Arabia has paid, if the economic establishments had been destroyed (J/3).

In other words, the press could have highlighted what Saudi Arabia stood to lose if Iraq had succeeded in attaining its ambitions. If Saudi Arabia had been defeated in the conflict and overrun by Iraq its economy would have been destroyed. By exploring such issues, the press could have helped people to assess the situation more realistically.

Another respondent, pointing out that the press role had been largely reactive, rather than proactive, noted that, with better planning, this need not be the case, given that Saudi Arabia has a clear media policy and that the technical requirements for development of the media's role are met. The answer, however, seems to lie at government level. "The methodology is available and the general policy is known and the high Media Council is in place and in these circumstances the Ministry of Information's role would be to implement these policies and translate them into studies, then into policy and afterwards apply them into practice" (J/3).

Another journalist elaborated on the impact of government influence on Saudi information policy, thus:

After that [i.e. the Gulf war] every Minister of Information started to make an effort in every aspect big and small. If the minister is open and

²⁶ (J/14) Saudi Journalist, *al-Yaum* Newspaper, Dammam.

understanding, like al-Hajlan [the first Saudi Information minister] or Mohammed Abdh Al-Yamani [the second Saudi Information minister], the media in turn will become open. On the other hand, Ali al-Sha'ir [the former minister during the Gulf conflict] closed the media. The minister usually lays down the policies and then carry out this policy. The body responsible for policy making is the Council of Ministers and the specialised advisors but in the absence of any directive the minister lays down the policy (J/5).

Thus, both media academics and journalists highlighted the connection between the government (decision makers) and information policy. They noted the gap not only between journalists and politicians or decision makers but also “between the journalists and the role they play because they do not know the nature of their role” (J/3). The interviewee who made this comment went on to explain that the communication process

consists of senders, recipients, and a message and the absence of correct understanding of the message can create a gap between you and the job you are doing because you are not qualified to do this job in a proper way. This will be reflected in the relations between the official and the journalist because if the journalist does not understand his duties, he would have inadequate relations with the official and consequently in some cases may reveal some things and this is not good for the country (J/3).

The extent to which journalists understand their duties will depend to a large extent on the explicit information of media policy. However, although the Saudi media policy written in well structured language in the form of a constitution, with highly sophisticated concepts, it contains contradictions and ambiguities, leaving it open to interpretation.

Historically, if we go back to the phrases that were written when the broadcasting station was first opened we find the following: In the Name of God the Most Compassionate the Most Merciful . . . From King Abdul-Aziz to (his) son Saud²⁷ . . . With the help of God we open the broadcasting station as the first media channel which must mention what we usually mention and not mention what we usually do not mention’.

²⁷ The respondent was not sure to whom the King had sent the letter, so the researcher made a point of investigating this matter. The letter was, in fact, to the King’s son Faisal, dated on 23, Ramadan (The ninth month in the Islamic Lunar calender). See Abdul Rahman Shobaili, 1980. *A History and Analytical Study of Broadcasting and Press in Saudi Arabia*, Doctoral Dissertation, Ohio State University.

This short message encompasses more meaning than it might appear. For example, what did HRH mean by “what we usually mention” and what he means by “things which we usually do not mention”?

We deal with the media policy as rigid phrases and this is what causes conflict between the journalist and these policies, either knowingly or in good faith and sometimes the journalist may dictate his own vision which is not really part of the country’s policy on that particular subject (J/5).

The same journalist added that: “If there is no political leadership to give a directive, the Saudi media tries to look for a directive from within itself” (J/5). When asked, “How?” he said that:

There are big figures in the Saudi press, like the chief editor of *Okaz* newspaper, for example, and the papers follows the directives of these figures, whichever direction they take. The reporting of the Iranians’ massacre during one of the Hajj [The Muslim pilgrimage which involves setting out for the Kaba, Arafat, and Mina and performing specific rites during the days 8-13 in the month of Du al-Hijja] seasons perhaps is intimately connected with the political regime (J/5).

Does the above argument mean that there should be more freedom and less structure for the Saudi press? One journalist replied:

I do not ask for absolute freedom of expression because if that happened, tomorrow there would be an attack on religion or disorderly pictures in our media on the ground that this is a free society. No. In Saudi society we have the holy book and the prophet’s (peace be upon him) traditions. However, the media should stop perpetuating the myth that our society is the best place in the world and has no problems. This is not the land of milk and honey and the best proof is the Gulf war (J/7).

Conclusion

The comments of the interviews highlight deficiencies in the Saudi press coverage of the events leading up to the invasion and occupation of Kuwait, and of the war itself. Before the war, the press seemed to be largely taken unawares by the course of events and played little or no role in analysing the initial diplomatic manoeuvring nor in predicting the possible outcomes of the conflict, though some journalists maintained that at least they had

not been seduced by Iraqi propaganda as, they claimed, was the case in some neighbouring states.

For some time, the Saudi press remained largely silent. Moreover, despite the proactive role taken by some individual journalists during the conflict itself, in their effort to penetrate the scene of the conflict, often at great personal risk, the impression remains that Saudi coverage was largely reactive in nature, and included little comment or analysis. Three main reasons emerged for this limited role. The first was lack of information. The second was, it was claimed, a lack of political awareness in Saudi society as a whole, including amongst its journalists, that prevented the press from thoroughly analysing and skilfully interpreting such information as was available. The lack of experience of Saudi journalists, even those who had previously covered international events such as those in Bosnia, was frequently commented upon. Above all, however, the role of the Saudi press in relation to the conflict was limited by political constraint. The Saudi Press Agency played an intermediary role between the Saudi government agenda and the journalists, represented by the chief editor (who significantly is himself appointed by the Ministry of Information) the person accountable before the authorities, for what is published. The fine line between press policy and state policy is illustrated by the silence maintained by the Saudi press at the outset of the Gulf conflict, until the official stance of the state had become clear.

The consequence was a loss in credibility in the Saudi press, which strengthened the competitive impact of other media, particularly the foreign news media, such as the BBC and CNN. Although the direct influence of the foreign media was to some extent mitigated by the comparatively small proportion of the population who had access to it (e.g. through satellite dishes) and who possessed the requisite foreign language skills, there is no doubt that the more educated Saudis turned to such sources of information, which were perceived as providing a better service. The Saudi journalists themselves gained much of their information about the conflict from foreign sources. Moreover, through watching, listening to and reading foreign news coverage, and by direct contact and co-operation with foreign journalists in the field, they gained new insights into ways of obtaining and presenting information.

It might be expected that the psychological, experiential, and technical consequences of the Gulf war itself may have had a lasting impact on the Saudi press in the post-war period. There was little evidence that such is the case. Although the journalists acknowledged some change in their perceptions of the potential press role, they reported that in practice, little has changed, due to inadequate planning, lack of sufficiently trained and skilled journalists, and the continued constraints imposed by the press's relationship with government.

In the next chapter, we will examine the nature of the Saudi press news coverage during the Gulf conflict, and analyse the characteristics pertaining to the selection of conflict (i.e. war) news. Both examination and analysis will be quantitative in approach. It will provide us with the opportunity to note textual differences through the analysis of reports, and in this way identify the overall agenda of the Saudi press during the Gulf conflict.

Chapter 5

The Performance of the Saudi Press during the Gulf Conflict of 1990 - 1991: A Quantitative Content Analysis

The purpose of this chapter is to present the nature of the Saudi press news coverage during the conflict, and the characteristics pertaining to the selection of news.

The focus of the Chapter is primarily quantitative; in other words, it concentrates on presenting information about the frequency and percentage distribution of news items and leading articles according to themes etc. in order to test the research hypotheses. A brief interpretative discussion of these findings is presented at the end of the chapter. More detailed interpretation is, however, reserved to Chapter 7, where the findings are integrated with those of other chapters and with the relevant theory.

5.1 Research Findings

During the sample period, 297 issues each of *Riy*, *Oka* and *Yau* daily newspapers were analysed. A total of 3,609 individual news items were analysed, of which 2,183 were related to the Gulf conflict. Over half (60.49%) appeared on the front pages. Table 5.1 shows the total frequency of Gulf conflict news stories in all the newspapers under review in each period of study, and their average (mean).

Table 5.1 Total Frequency of Gulf Conflict News Stories in Saudi Press during the Gulf Conflict

Period of study	<i>Riy</i>	<i>Oka</i>	<i>Yau</i>	Total	Mean
Before Iraqi invasion of Kuwait 2 July 1990 -1 August 1990	0 (86)	0 (90)	0 (82)	0 (258)	0 (86)
Iraqi invasion and occupation of Kuwait 2 August 1990-16 January, 1991	324 (220)	248 (246)	289 (225)	861 (691)	287 (230.33)
The liberation of Kuwait 17 January 1991- 28 February, 1991	388 (130)	354 (142)	406 (114)	1148 (386)	382.67 (128.67)
After the liberation of Kuwait 1 March, 1991-30 March, 1991	58 (22)	43 (29)	73 (40)	174 (91)	58 (30.33)

* The numbers in parenthesis relate to *non* conflict news stories by frequency.

In addition to the front page news stories, leading articles were also analysed. A total of 297 leading articles were looked at, of which an overwhelming majority of 252 (84.85%) related to the Gulf conflict. Table 5.2 shows the total frequency of Gulf conflict leading articles in the Saudi press during the Gulf conflict, and their average (mean) in each period of study.

Table 5.2 Total Frequency of Gulf Conflict Leading Articles in Saudi Press during the Gulf Conflict

Period	<i>Riy</i>	<i>Oka</i>	<i>Yau</i>	Total	Mean
Before Iraqi invasion of Kuwait 2 July 1990 - 1 August 1990	0	0	0	0	0
Iraqi invasion and occupation of Kuwait 2 August 1990 - 16 January, 1991	36	36	39	111	37
The liberation of Kuwait 17 January 1991- 28 February, 1991	39	40	44	123	41
After the liberation of Kuwait 1 March, 1991- 30 March, 1991	6	6	6	18	6

The findings from all four periods of the study were remarkably consistent and enabled a number of the research questions to be answered, and the hypotheses to be tested. In presenting the findings, the order adopted is, however, not necessarily that of the hypotheses used in Chapter one; rather the sequence is determined by the procedure which the Saudi journalists go through in selecting material for publication. They usually starts by reading the main news topic, its type and tone, then they ask who are the personnel involved, and what is the location and the source of the news. This, therefore, is the order in which the topics are analysed in the following sections.

5.1.1 Period I. Before Iraq's Invasion of Kuwait (2 July, 1990 - 1 August, 1990)

An analysis of 21 issues of each newspaper showed that all Saudi press front pages and leading articles were devoted to subjects *other* than the Gulf conflict (see Tables 5.1 and 5.2). None of the research questions or hypotheses could, therefore, be answered or tested in relation to the newspapers for this period. The reason is that the Saudi media in general, including the press, the radio, and television, could not deal freely with external issues, such as the Gulf conflict, the border problems between Kuwait and Iraq, Iraq's

accusation that Kuwait and UAE had conspired to steal its oil, or their conspiracy to lower oil prices by increasing their production. All these issues were well known to those in charge of the press, which has close very links with the Ministry of Information through the appointed Editors-in-Chief or through the radio and television which are controlled by the Ministry of Information. Nevertheless, as discussions with the Saudi media academics and journalists presented in Chapter 4 revealed, it was natural for the press to adopt the state policy. The government views issues such as the Gulf conflict as political rather than media or press issues. Saudi Arabia has always adopted the principle of “wait and see” and prefers not to delve into such matters hastily but wait until things become clearer. Only then will a political decision be taken and made public through the Saudi Press Agency which releases it to all the media channels, including the press. It is then that the press comes into play, and its reporting is constrained by the written media. Such constraints are reiterated in the meetings that take place between the officials and the journalists.

5.1.2 Period II. During Iraq’s Invasion and Occupation of Kuwait (2 August, 1990 - 16 January, 1991)

5.1.2.1 Main News Topics, Types and their Tone

Question two centred on the main news topics, type of news (domestic, international or foreign) and the tone of these main news topics that were carried by the Saudi press. Table 5.3 lists the main news topics, their type and tone. As can be seen, the Saudi press agenda during the Iraqi invasion and occupation is obvious. Most immediately striking is the prominence of political stories from domestic, international and foreign sources (62.60%) reported both positively and negatively in tone (positive 94.62%; negative 5.38%). Foreign political news topics accounted for 50.83% (positive 91.20%; negative 8.80%), international political news topics comprised 33.21% (positive 98.32%; negative 1.66%), while domestic political news topics constituted 15.96% (positive 98.84%; negative 1.16%).

Table 5.3 Main Saudi Press News Topics, Type of News and their Tone during the Iraqi Invasion and Occupation of Kuwait

Main news topic	Domestic type of news						International type of news						Foreign type of news											
	P	N	Oka	P	N	Yau	P	N	Riy	P	N	Oka	P	N	Yau	P	N	Riy	P	N	Oka	P	N	Yau
Political	23	0	42	1	20	0	81	1	53	0	42	2	87	12	69	6	93	7						
Military/Defence	5	0	7	0	8	0	22	3	4	2	19	0	21	2	19	3	30	11						
Economic	1	0	0	0	1	0	4	2	0	0	0	0	3	0	5	5	7	2						
Social Service	1	0	1	0	1	0	2	1	1	0	1	0	2	3	0	1	5	0						
Crime/Law/Justice	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	32	1	9	3	23						
Sport	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0						
Education	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0						
Ecology/Environment	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0						
Natural disasters/ accident	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1						
Religious	0	0	3	0	1	0	4	0	4	0	2	0	2	0	1	0	3	0						
Multi-issues	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	2	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	1	0						
Other	0	0	7	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	3	0	3	0	2	0	2	0						

P = positive N= negative

The numbers in the table are by frequency

Not surprisingly, during this period, there was a preoccupation within the Saudi government and reflected in the press, on the course of diplomatic negotiations to resolve the Kuwait conflict and avert, while 'negative' items focused on Iraqi aggression and lack of co-operation with the international community.

Second in prominence were military/defence items with 18.12% (positive 86.54%; negative 13.46%). Of this, foreign military/defence news comprised 55.13% (positive 81.40%; negative 8.60%); international news 32.05% (positive 90%; negative 10.00%) and domestic news 12.82% (positive 100%).

Third was crime/law/justice items with 8.01% (positive 7.25%; negative 92.75%), totally (100%) from foreign sources (positive 7.25%; negative 92.75%). It is surprising that no international and domestic crime/law/justice news topics were cited, since it might have been expected that crimes perpetrated by Iraq and affecting Saudi Arabia or its nationals would have attracted attention. It seems likely that the silence on these issues was part of a conscious "wait - and - see" policy; in other words the government, through the press, did not want to inflame the situation, but preferred to await developments.

Fourth was economic items with 3.48% (positive 70%; negative 30%). Of this figure, foreign news comprised 73.33% (positive 68.18; negative 31.82%); international news 20% (positive 66.67%; negative 33.33%) and domestic news 6.67% (100% positive).

Fifth was social service, items with 2.21% (positive 73.68; negative 26.32%). Of this, foreign news comprised 57.89% (positive 63.64%; negative 36.36%) with international news 26.34% (positive 80%; negative 20%) and domestic news 15.77% (100% positive).

Hypothesis Ia predicted that political and military/defence developments in the Gulf conflict would be considered more newsworthy than any other news topics.

A summary of the information used to evaluate hypothesis Ia is given Table 5.4.

Table 5.4 A Summary of Main News Topics during the Iraqi Invasion and Occupation of Kuwait

Newspapers				
Main News Topics	<i>Riy</i>	<i>Oka</i>	<i>Yau</i>	<i>Riy, Oka & Yau</i>
Political and Military/defence	257	206	232	695
Other main news topics (economic, crime/law/justice, social service, sport, education, etc.)	67	42	57	166
Total	324	248	289	861

For the three newspapers, it was found with a 95% level of confidence, that the proportion of news items concerned with political and military/defence developments was between 78.09% and 83.35%. There was a statistically significant difference between level of coverage of political and military/defence developments, and other main news topics, which accounted for only 19.28% of all stories in all three newspapers. Therefore, this hypothesis Ia was supported.

Regarding the type of news, hypothesis Ib predicted that, for political and military/defence developments in the Gulf conflict, news items would largely be domestic rather than international and /or foreign.

The data collected on the type of news are given in Table 5.3. A summary of this information, used to evaluate hypothesis Ib, is provided in Table 5.5.

Table 5.5 A Summary of Type of Political and Military/Defence News during the Iraqi Invasion and Occupation of Kuwait

Newspapers				
Type of news	<i>Riy</i>	<i>Oka</i>	<i>Yau</i>	<i>Riy, Oka & Yau</i>
Domestic	28	50	28	106
Other (international & foreign)	229	156	204	589
Total	257	206	232	695

For the three newspapers, with a 95% level of confidence, the proportion of domestic news items of a political or military/defence nature was between 12.68 % and 18.06%. This shows there is a statistically significant difference in the coverage of political and military/defence news from domestic sources and that from other sources, since we observed that 84.74% of all types of political and military news for the three newspapers were from international and foreign sources. Thus, hypothesis Ib was not supported.

For the tone of news, hypothesis Ic predicted that for political and military/defence developments, it would generally be positive rather than negative. See Table 5.3 for the data collected on tone. A summary of this information used to evaluate hypothesis Ic is given in Table 5.6 below.

Table 5. 6 A Summary of Tone of Political and Military/Defence News Stories during the Iraqi Invasion and Occupation of Kuwait

Main news topic	Newspapers							
	<i>Riy</i>		<i>Oka</i>		<i>Yau</i>		<i>Riy, Oka & Yau</i>	
	P	N	P	N	P	N	P	N
Political & Military/defence	239	18	194	12	212	20	645	50

P= positive N= negative

With a 95% confidence level, the proportion of the news items of a political and military/defence nature that were positive in tone lay between 91.83% and 93.79%. There is a statistically significant difference in the proportion of news items of a political and military/defence nature that were positive and those that were negative, since it was observed that 7.19% of political and military news in all three newspapers was negative. Thus hypothesis Ic was supported.

5.1.2.2 Themes of News Items

Question three asked: what was main theme of news items chosen, and their tone in the Saudi press? While news items covered a wide range, it is possible to identify those news items during Iraq's invasion and occupation of Kuwait which were given prominent coverage by the Saudi press. The first ten news items classified in Table 5.7 are the main themes emphasised in all Saudi press taken together. These first ten themes accounted for more than half (55.40%) of all the themes *in toto*. The most dominant themes were SA diplomacy in connection to the UN, EC, US, and others, and the level of Iraq's crime and injustice (see over Table 5.7).

Hypothesis II predicted that there would be similar themes in the news items presented by the three newspapers. The data collected on news themes are provided in Table 5.7.

Table 5.7 Frequency Distribution of Items by Themes of all three Newspapers during the Iraqi Invasion and Occupation of Kuwait (2 August, 1999 - 16 January, 1991)

Theme	Riy	Oka	Yau	Riy, Oka & Yau
SA diplomacy as a means of solving the problem - in connection with UN, EC, US, Arab Nations (excluding Iraq, Yemen, Jordan, Sudan)	47	27	28	102
Level of Iraq's crime and injustice - both inside and outside Iraq e.g. foreigners held hostages, killed etc.	34	12	26	72
US reaction to the problem	28	12	24	64
SA government official communication (broadcasts, speeches, etc.	25	20	8	53
Support for SA's position - countries, organisations and individuals	18	17	15	50
Kuwait's Royal government e.g. visits, speeches, receptions, etc.	17	9	18	44
Reaction of Kuwaiti people and government, both inside and outside Kuwait	11	6	10	27
Royal visits to troops, reception of Saudi citizens etc.	10	4	8	22
Diplomacy as a way of solving the problem - (excluding SA)	8	4	10	22
SA & Gulf Co-operation Council (GCC) meetings	10	6	5	21
<i>Others</i>				
US technological effects in Gulf conflict	0	1	0	1
UK & Egypt reject the connection between Israeli occupied Palestine and Iraq's invasion of Kuwait	1	0	0	1
Social services provided to countries affected by sanctions (i.e. Egypt, Jordan & Turkey)	1	2	0	3
Iraq's evacuation of Kuwait	0	1	1	2
Spain's blueprint for moving troops to the Gulf	1	0	0	1
Kuwait's security arrangements in relation to Kuwaitis returning to Kuwait following liberation	1	1	0	2
Meeting of five major nations' foreign ministers	1	0	0	1
Schwarzkopf's announcements to stop oil well fires & their environmental impact	0	1	3	4
Foreign media display	3	1	7	11
Possible withdrawal of Soviet military advisers from Iraq	0	1	3	4
Support for UN resolution and aggression (positive) by:				
Russian reaction to the problem	9	4	4	17
US & Russian summit meetings	1	1	2	4
France	5	0	2	7
India	1	0	0	1
United Arab Emirates	0	0	3	3
Egypt	2	3	14	19
Bahrain	0	1	1	2
Japan	1	0	3	4
Kenya, Uganda & Ethiopia	1	0	0	1
Indonesia	0	0	1	1
UK	7	5	7	19
Oman	0	1	0	1
Australia	0	0	1	1
Argentina	0	1	0	1
Turkey	1	0	0	1
Holland	1	0	0	1
Canada	0	1	0	1
Pakistan	1	1	0	2
Belgium	1	0	0	1
Iran	0	4	1	5
Austria	1	0	1	2
Algeria	1	1	0	2

Table 5.7 (continued)

Theme	Riy	Oka	Yau	Riy,Oka & Yau
Tanzania	0	1	1	2
Bulgaria	0	1	0	1
Syria	0	0	1	1
Qatar	0	1	2	3
China	2	0	4	6
Egypt welcomes Saudi debt cancellation	0	1	0	1
Neutral Position - Iran's neutral reaction to the problem	1	0	1	2
Poetry	1	0	0	1
Citizens' views (letters to the editor/public forums, etc.)	0	20	0	20
Debate among Arab nations	0	0	1	1
Preparation of mass distribution of gas masks in Israel	0	0	1	1
Satellites (8) used to check Iraq's military activities	0	0	1	1
Military capacity- ships, aircraft, etc.	0	1	1	2
Saddam asks Iraqis to turn their private yards into food producing units	0	0	1	1
Jordanian aircraft falls out of sky	0	0	1	1
American aircraft assignment for Kuwait	0	0	1	1
Anti- government leaflet distribution in Iraq	0	0	1	1
International Monetary Fund increases its loans for belligerents	0	0	1	1
Bahrain & Iran agree that changes in the redrawing of the map are unacceptable	0	0	1	1
International Labour Organisation discusses Egypt's claims against Iraq	0	0	1	1
Tunisia asks Iraq to withdraw from Kuwait	0	0	1	1
Liberation of Kuwait strengthens other Gulf states	0	0	1	1
American Navy prepares to bombard Kuwait	0	0	1	1
The greatest challenge for the world is to force Iraq from Kuwait	0	0	1	1
Extent of Arabian diplomacy urging Iraq to withdraw from Kuwait	0	0	1	1
Iraq invades Kuwait	0	2	0	2
Iraq insists its position in non negotiable	2	2	2	6
Iraq's political system - history etc.	0	2	2	4
Iraq's nuclear & chemical weapons capabilities	0	1	1	2
Iraq's use of decoys (e.g. printing false plans to help Iraq identify US military locations)	0	1	0	1
Oil wells alight/ belching smoke	1	0	0	1
Oil prices rise	2	6	1	9
Effects of economic sanctions because of the conflict	1	4	2	7
Economic sanctions as a way of solving the problem	3	3	0	6
Summit meeting of the five permanent members of the UN Security Council	2	0	0	2
UN resolutions in relation to the conflict	2	2	4	8
Failure of French peace initiatives	0	1	0	1
Failure of Russian peace initiatives	1	0	3	4
Failure of UN Secretary General De Cuellar's peace initiatives	2	1	2	5
Failure of SA peace initiatives	0	1	0	1
EC role in peace initiatives - meetings with other countries	2	2	8	12
Allied military incompetence - French patrol loses its way	1	0	0	1
Allied military skills	0	0	1	1
Possibility of fighting	0	4	0	4
Military build-up in SA	6	4	7	17
Kuwait TV station transmitted SA TV station	1	0	0	1

Table 5.7 (continued)

Theme	<i>Riy</i>	<i>Oka</i>	<i>Yau</i>	<i>Riy, Oka & Yau</i>
PLO's mistake in supporting Iraq	1	1	1	3
Reasons behind overtures to OPEC	0	1	0	1
Level of support among non-Muslims for Sharia law	0	1	0	1
Backstage diplomacy could undermine Gulf puzzle	0	1	0	1
Iraq asks to withdraw from Kuwait by giving guarantees not to attack the Rumaila oil fields	1	0	0	1
Saddam asks for asylum	0	0	1	1
Iraq's failure to stand (e.g. trouble of relations with Iraqis)	7	6	3	16
Saddam as an atheist, and co-operation with, is a break with Islamic outlook	0	1	0	1
Military aggression and breakdown of Iraqi regime	0	1	0	1
Sudan's reaction	1	0	0	1
Jordan's reaction	1	0	1	2
Yemen's reaction	4	1	2	7
Sudanese, Jordanian and Iraqi citizens are affected by their governments' behaviour	1	2	2	5
Iraq the loser, both politically and militarily	0	1	0	1
Yemen searches for an exit from Saddam's "rat trap"	0	1	0	1
Iraq connects its withdrawal from Kuwait with resolution of Palestine problem	0	2	1	3
Iraq to withdraw from Kuwait before expiry of deadline	0	1	0	1
Support for sending of troops to SA (US, UK, Egypt)	5	0	0	5
Meeting of SA, Egypt and Syrian foreign ministers	7	3	2	12
SA Armed Forces - ready	1	1	1	3
Skill of SA Troops (pilots, soldiers etc.)	0	3	0	3
SA Council of Ministers' meetings	2	0	0	2
SA Ulema (Religious Scholars) reactions	1	1	0	2
SA prepares for war - jobs, draft, military areas opened, etc.	1	4	2	7
SA's treatment of Kuwaitis and other Arab people, prisoners of war, etc.	4	2	0	6
Meeting of Gulf Co-operation Council (GCC), Egypt and Syrian foreign ministers	2	0	1	3
Organisation of Islamic Conference (OIC) reaction	3	1	2	6
The Arab League's reaction	2	2	3	7
Non- Aligned Organisation's countries' reaction to the conflict	1	0	1	2
Islamic countries' meetings/reactions	0	2	2	4

The results show that there were differences among the three newspapers in the number of themes presented. Between *Riy* and *Oka* it was $\chi^2_9 = 106.45$; between *Riy* and *Yau* it was

$$\chi^2_9 = 62.03; \text{ and between } Oka \text{ and } Yau \text{ it was } \chi^2_9 = 44.1.$$

Because of these pronounced differences among the three newspapers, hypothesis II was not supported.

5.1.2.3 Personnel in the News

Question four asked: which personnel did the Saudi press give coverage to in each news item? Table 5.8 overlaid shows the origin of each individual, institution or organisation to which the Saudi press gave coverage. The figures in Table 5.8 indicate a high level of concentration on personnel from the SA government (15.91%) Multi-region governments (15.68%) and the Middle East (14.40%).

These were followed by the US (9.64%) Asia/Pacific (8.48%) Western Europe (8.36%) Iraq (4.65%) Yemen (1.51%) Jordan (0.81%) and Sudan (0.46%). Beyond these countries, the secondary spheres of interest contributed between 0.23%-8.40%. Individual and institutional contributions are also itemised in the Table.

Table 5.8 Origin of Personnel Covered in News Stories during the Iraqi Invasion and Occupation of Kuwait

The Personnel	Riy			Oka			Yau			Riy, Oka & Yau		
	R	F	%	R	F	%	R	F	%	R	F	%
SA Government	2	59	18.21	2	42	16.94	3	36	12.46	1	137	15.91
Yemen	12 =	4	1.23	10	7	2.82	14 =	2	0.69	13	13	1.51
Sudan	16 =	2	0.62	15	2	0.81	20 =	0	0.00	18 =	4	0.46
Iraq	7	18	5.56	7	14	5.65	10	8	2.77	7	40	4.65
Libya	21 =	0	0.00	20 =	0	0.00	20 =	0	0.00	23 =	0	0.00
Jordan	16 =	2	0.62	14	3	1.21	14 =	2	0.69	16	7	0.81
PLO	21 =	0	0.00	20 =	0	0.00	20 =	0	0.00	23 =	0	0.00
Eastern Europe	21 =	0	0.00	16 =	1	0.40	12 =	3	1.03	18 =	4	0.46
Western Europe	5	24	7.41	4	25	10.08	4 =	23	7.96	6	72	8.36
North American	4	26	8.02	6	18	7.26	2	39	13.49	4	83	9.64*
Latin American	21 =	0	0.00	12 =	0	0.00	7 =	11	3.81	14	11	1.28
Australia	21 =	0	0.00	12 =	0	0.00	20 =	0	0.00	23 =	0	0.00
Africa	8	17	5.25	8	9	3.63	7	11	3.81	8	37	4.30
Asia/Pacific	10	14	4.32	3	40	16.13	6	19	6.57	5	73	8.48
Middle East	3	35	10.80	12 =	0	0.00	1	89	30.80	3	124	14.40
Multi Region	1	69	21.30	1	43	17.34	4 =	23	7.96	2	135	15.68
UN	12 =	4	1.23	12 =	4	1.61	11	6	2.08	12	14	1.63
Allied Coalition	11	5	1.54	16 =	1	0.40	12 =	3	1.03	15	9	1.05
Individual												
- Domestic	12 =	4	1.23	5	19	7.66	17 =	1	0.35	10	24	2.79
- International	16 =	2	0.62	20 =	0	0.00	20 =	0	0.00	21 =	2	0.23
- Foreign	6	19	5.86	11	6	2.42	9	9	3.11	9	34	3.95
Institution												
- Domestic	19 =	1	0.31	16 =	1	0.40	20 =	0	0.00	21 =	2	0.23
- International	19 =	1	0.31	9	8	3.23	20 =	0	0.00	15 =	9	1.05
- Foreign	9	15	4.63	16 =	1	0.40	17 =	1	0.35	11	17	1.97
Multi-Region	21 =	0	0.00	12 =	4	1.61	14 =	2	0.69	17	6	0.70
Unidentifiable	15	3	0.93	20 =	0	0.00	17 =	1	0.35	18 =	4	0.46
Total		324			248			289	100		861	100

R= Rank F= Frequency

* US provided 82% and Canada got 18%

Hypothesis III predicted that Saudi press coverage would rely more heavily on SA government officials than on other personnel. The Information used in evaluating hypothesis III is given in Table 5.9 below.

Table 5.9 Personnel Covered by the Saudi Press during the Iraqi Invasion and Occupation of Kuwait

Personnel	Newspapers			
	<i>Riy</i>	<i>Oka</i>	<i>Yau</i>	<i>Riy, Oka & Yau</i>
Domestic (SA government officials)	59	42	36	137
Other (other government, non government officials, individuals and institutions, etc.)	262	206	252	720
Total	321	248	288	857

It was found, with a 95% level of confidence, that the proportion of news items employing SA government officials as sources for all these newspapers lay between 12.85 % and 18.97 %. This shows there is a statistically significant difference between the employment of SA government officials personnel and other personnel, since it was observed that 84.09% of news items for the three newspapers originated from non-Saudi government officials. Thus hypothesis III, also, was not supported.

5.1.2.4 Geographic Origin of News

Question five asked: to which geographically newsworthy locations of news did the Saudi press pay more attention? Table 5.10 shows the locations of news events during the coverage of the Iraqi invasion and occupation of Kuwait.

It can be seen that the Saudi press paid greater attention to some areas of the world, and less to others. All the locations were geopolitically significant in relation to the reactions to Iraq's invasion, which explains the newspapers' reliance on these areas of the world, for both political and diplomatic reasons. Nearly a third of the news items (29.38%) originated in SA.

Table 5.10 Geographic Locations of News Stories during the Iraqi invasion and Occupation of Kuwait

Geographic locations	Riy			Oka			Yau			Riy, Oka & Yau		
	R	F	%	R	F	%	R	F	%	R	F	%
Saudi Arabia	1	113	34.88	1	89	35.89	2	51	17.65	1	253	29.38
Eastern Europe	9 =	0	0.00	8 =	1	0.40	9	3	1.03	11	4	0.46
Western Europe	4	33	10.19	4	23	9.28	5	30	10.38	6	86	9.99
North American	3	35	10.80	3	24	9.68	4	35	12.11	3	94	10.92*
Latin American	9 =	0	0.00	8 =	1	0.40	11	0	0.00	10	1	0.12
Africa	5	25	7.72	5	22	8.87	3	41	14.19	5	88	10.22
Asia/Pacific	6	20	6.17	2	58	23.39	7	12	4.15	4	90	10.45
Middle East	2	75	23.15	8 =	1	0.40	1	91	31.49	2	167	19.40
Multi- region	7	19	5.86	6	16	6.45	6	20	6.92	7	55	6.39
UN	8	4	1.23	8 =	1	0.40	8	5	1.73	9	10	1.16
Unidentifiable	9 =	0	0.00	7	12	4.84	10	1	0.35	8	13	1.51
Total		324	100		248	100		289	100		861	100

R = Rank F = Frequency

* US provided 98.94% and Canada 1.06%

These figures show also the extent to which news was concentrated on countries which were politically important to SA. Middle Eastern countries, for example, comprised the second most significant location (19.40%).

This was followed by the US (10.92%), Asia/Pacific (10.45%), Africa (10.22%) and Western countries (9.99%). Other geographical areas were represented to various degrees, in the vicinity of 6.39% or less.

Hypothesis IV predicted that Saudi press coverage would pay greater attention to Gulf conflict news stories originating in the SA region, than to stories from other geographical locations. The relevant data are presented in Table 5.10.

A summary of the information used in evaluating hypothesis IV is given in Table 5.11.

Table 5.11 A Summary of Geographical Locations of News Stories during the Iraqi Invasion and Occupation of Kuwait

Newspapers				
Geographical Locations	<i>Riy</i>	<i>Oka</i>	<i>Yau</i>	<i>Ria, Oka & Yau</i>
Domestic (SA)	113	89	51	253
Other geographical Locations (East Europe, West Europe, Middle East, etc.)	211	147	237	595
Total	324	236	288	848

It was found, with a 95% level of confidence, that the proportion of news items originating in SA for all the newspapers lay between 26.77% and 32.89%. This shows there is a statistically significant difference between the proportion of stories from SA, and those originating in other regions, since it is observed that 70.17% of news items in all three newspapers were from other geographical locations. Thus hypothesis No. IV was not supported.

5.1.2. 5 News Sources

Question six asked: On which news sources were the Saudi press dependent for their news presentation? Table 5.12 shows the sources of Gulf conflict news stories during the Iraq invasion and occupation of Kuwait. An examination of all three newspapers together revealed that the news was obtained entirely from a variety of local, international and foreign agencies.

For instance, as Table 5.12 shows, the newspapers obtained nearly two-thirds of their Gulf conflict news stories from the following: SPA (26.25%) their own staff (21.49%) multi-sources (17.07%) other agencies, such as the Egyptian, Qatari and Iranian news agencies (14.75%) and Reuters (11.73%). Use of other sources ranged between 0.12% and 6.62% for the three newspapers.

Table 5.12 Sources of News Stories during the Iraqi invasion and Occupation of Kuwait

Source	Riy			Oka			Yau			Riy, Oka & Yau		
	R	F	%	R	F	%	R	F	%	R	F	%
Own Staff	2 =	55	16.98	1	102	41.13	6	28	9.69	2	185	21.49
S P A	1	125	38.58	2	44	17.74	2	57	19.72	1	226	26.25
Reuters	5	31	9.57	5	19	7.66	4	51	17.65	5	101	11.73
AFP	6	13	4.01	6	11	4.44	5	33	11.42	6	57	6.62
TASS	9	1	0.30	9 =	0	0.00	9 =	0	0.00	10	1	0.12
AP	7	4	1.23	9 =	0	0.00	9 =	0	0.00	9	4	0.46
UPI	10 =	0	0.00	9 =	0	0.00	9 =	0	0.00	11 =	0	0.00
Other media- home	10 =	0	0.00	9 =	0	0.00	9 =	0	0.00	11 =	0	0.00
Other media- foreign	10 =	0	0.00	9 =	0	0.00	9 =	0	0.00	11 =	0	0.00
Private Citizens	10 =	0	0.00	7	5	2.02	8	1	0.35	8	6	0.70
Public Officials	10 =	0	0.00	9 =	0	0.00	9 =	0	0.00	11 =	0	0.00
Multi Sources	2 =	55	16.98	3	38	15.32	3	54	18.69	3	147	17.07
Other Agencies	4	38	11.73	4	27	10.88	1	62	21.45	4	127	14.75
Unidentifiable	8	2	0.62	8	2	0.81	7	3	1.03	7	7	0.81
Total		324	100		248	100		289	100		861	100

R= Rank F= Frequency

Hypothesis V predicted that Saudi press coverage of the Iraqi invasion would depend more heavily on domestic sources (own staff, the Saudi Press Agency [SPA] and government officials) than on other sources. A summary of the data collected on sources is given in Table 5.13 below and is used for an evaluation of Hypothesis V.

Table 5.13 A Summary of Sources of News Stories during the Iraqi Invasion and Occupation of Kuwait

Newspapers				
Source	<i>Riy</i>	<i>Oka</i>	<i>Yau</i>	<i>Riy, Oka & Yau</i>
Domestic (Own staff, SPA, etc.)	180	146	85	411
Other sources (Reuters, AFP, AP, etc.)	142	100	201	443
Total	322	246	286	854

Using the statistical test described earlier (see Chapter 3), which was used for all hypotheses testing, it was found that with a 95% level of confidence, the proportion of news items from domestic sources ranged between 44.78% and 51.48% for the three newspapers. This shows there is a statistically significant difference between the level of reliance on the sources of news stories, since it was noted that 51.87 % of news items for all three newspapers were from other sources. Thus, hypothesis V was not supported.

5.1.2.6 Leading articles

Question seven asked: what was theme of the leading articles, their tone , and to whom were they directed or related? The selection of leading articles largely reflects the interests and attitudes of journalists. Table 5.14 below lists some 111 themes, most of which were directed towards the Iraqi government (47.74%) and were negative in tone, while the SA government received 15.32% and the Allied coalition 14.41%, all positive in tone.

Table 5.14 Main Themes/Headlines of Leading Articles of each Newspapers during the Iraqi Invasion and Occupation of Kuwait (2 August, 1999 - 16 January, 1991)

Theme/ Headline	<i>Riy</i> Newspaper
	<p>The Arab diplomatic efforts in the Iraq- Kuwait crisis Saudi Arabia (SA) as the centre of Arab meetings Can Arabs overcome their own problems? Are Arab nations 40 years behind the times because of lack of co - operation? The Arab World looks like a train carrying explosives (with many entrenched problems) Antichrist- Saddam Saddam's preaching and lies to his own people Iraq and the death of restraint Saddam two faced Iraq destroys all chances Saddam and the promoters of lost causes Saddam pretending to be the sole representation of Islam Enemies and friends in the war against Iraq Who will reinstate confidence in Arab relations? The eye of political extortion over message to Saddam Will international warships invade Iraq? Will security files be opened? Kuwait as a vehicle to open the facts of the region Who can rescue/save Arabs from themselves? Saddam is between military bombing and nerve war First warning from Yemen Baker's war file is diplomatic move More secrets have opened about Saddam The necessity of security in the region Decisions, war and peace The perfection of treatment-SA- Gulf security in war and peace Enduring peace with SA The centre of Arab countries -reaction to the situation Is the Arab question complicated? Iraq between peace and war Arabian and blood (the only Arab world situation to their problems is bloodshed) Iraq for war or peace? Who wins peace and who will announce war? Our leaders - SA government- and forces in the one trench King Fahd and his speech on peace</p>
	<i>Oka</i> Newspaper
	<p>Saudi Govt. offerings to reach agreement No to destroy the UN unit-refers to the international community The real power- Arabs standing by Holding together the chance of safety Those who agree with the Arab solution, where are they? DeCuellar is the only alternative to Saddam The world's doors closed in the wavers' faces- Saddam- Hitler died before being judged, but Saddam will be condemned This is the Egypt that we know Arabs reveal suspicious attitudes Will Saddam get the message before it's too late? What does it mean to internationally agree against Saddam? Comparisons of sadness (message to Saddam) Even the wavers repented Iraq the executioner; his inevitable fate</p>

Table 5.14 (continued)

Theme/ Headline	<i>Oka Newspaper</i>
<p>The last contentment (the world contentment) Jazan' basis (a town in the south of SA) and the extent of our - SA country devastating power Saddam's terrorism is a declaration of failure Hypocritical comments and Satanic acts - Iraq's regime The war is worthily accepted by the world as a means of ensuring long term peace Our immortal message in spite of mercenary deception (comment on the King of SA's message) Will Iraqi dictatorship be weakened ? The Gulf states' unity is answer to the waverers Test of the newly operational Iraqi regime The Gulf States' co-ordination and the future of the crisis Maintaining commitment is the only way of ending the crisis The world appreciates the SA position Kuwaiti liberation at any cost The Gulf States' summit is desirable, but challenging Will Saddam understand the peace message? No procrastination and stalling A lack of realisation at the last decisive moment Geneva - chance for peace- meeting between Baker and Aziz What does the Iraqi dictator want? This is our position - SA in front of the world Last words for Iraq's dictatorship</p>	
	<i>Yau Newspaper</i>
<p>SA usually supports Islamic co-operation The importance of Arab unity Israel - the only one to benefit from Arab weakness SA responsible for Arab reconciliation The danger of procrastination Saddam afraid of ending the conflict Obstinacy of Iraq's executioner No escape but withdrawal from Kuwait SA as instigator for push for peace What kind of Jihad is Saddam (the executioner) after? Saddam in power is an insult to Iraqi people Saddam and his deadly mistakes The difficult choice Saddam and Israel -Saddam's contact with Israel behind the backs of his Arab neighbours Unity and theft Saddam and his dishonourable escape Iraq conspiring against both the Arab and Muslim Worlds Saddam chooses the road to war People paid the price - the Arab leaders' situations The repercussions for Iraq Saddam scared to face international community The last initiative, what does it mean? Wanted - Saddam- alive Kuwait's liberation The end of a tyrant Prince Sultan - SA Minister of Defence- visiting his armed forces A distinguished relationship - Egypt and SA Saddam is confused/bewildered Shield and security (meeting of the Gulf states ministers of defence) SA and Bush initiative - SA agrees with his approach Saddam claims false allegations</p>	

Table 5. 14 (continued)

Theme/Headline	<i>Yau</i> Newspaper
The game of hostages	
The uprising and Saddam's risk	
The parameters of Saddam's withdrawal are established	
Saddam and his aggressive tendencies	
The decisive movement	
Saddam's perception of political negotiations	
The commander with his soldiers - King Fahd	
The continuation of wisdom - SA convinces Iraq to withdraw from Kuwait	

The Arab world was the object of 18.92% of leading articles, with 47.68% of these positive and 52.32% negative. Other themes, such as economic and military matters and those related to the conflict, received 2.70% all positive in tone, while anti-UN resolution leading articles appeared hardly at all (00.9%) but were again positive in tone.

Hypothesis VI predicted that the tone of the leading articles within each theme would generally be positive, rather than negative. The data collected on the themes of the leading articles are given in Table 5.14.

A summary of this information, used to evaluate hypothesis VI, is given in Table 5.15.

Table 5. 15 A Summary of the Tone of the Themes/Headlines of Leading Articles during the Iraqi Invasion and Occupation of Kuwait by Frequency

Category	<i>Riy</i>		<i>Oka</i>		<i>Yau</i>		<i>Riy, Oka & Yau</i>	
	P	N	P	N	P	N	P	N
Saudi Arabia	5	0	5	0	7	0	17	00
Arab World	3	7	4	3	3	1	10	11
Allied coalition	5	0	9	0	2	0	16	00
Iraq	0	14	0	14	0	25	0	53
Anti-UN resolutions (e.g. Jordan, Sudan, Yemen, PLO, etc.)	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
Other	1	0	1	0	1	0	3	0
Total	14	22	19	17	13	26	46	65

With a 95% level of confidence, the proportion of themes in the leading articles that were positive in tone lay between 32.27% and 50.61%. There is a statistically significant difference between the number of positively and negatively treated themes, since it was

observed that 58.56% of leading articles in the three newspapers were negative. Hypothesis VI, therefore, was not supported.

5.1.3 Period III. During the Liberation of Kuwait (17 January, 1991 - 28 February, 1991)

5.1.3.1 Main News Topics, Types and their Tone

Question two asked: what were the main news topics, the type of news (domestic, international or foreign) and the tone of these main news topics that were carried by the Saudi press? Table 5.16 lists the main news topics, their type and tone. The negotiations of the previous 166 days having failed, this was the period of the concerted military intervention by the allied coalition. Thus, primary concerns of the press in this period were to justify the war and report on the progress of the air and ground campaigns. These reports were predominantly positive, in the sense that the military action was seen as achieving the aims of the UN resolutions.

Most immediately striking is the prominence of military/defence items with 41.99% (positive 92.53%; negative 7.47%). Of this, foreign military/defence news comprised (30.50%) (positive 93.20%; negative 6.8%); international military/defence news 62.66% (positive 92.05%; negative 7.95%) and domestic military/defence news 6.84% (positive 93.94; negative 6.06%).

Second came political stories, with 39.29% (positive 94.01%; negative 5.99%). Foreign political news topics accounted for 54.10% (positive 91.39%; negative 8.61%); international political news topics for 34.81% (positive 96.82%; negative 3.18%) and domestic political news topics for 11.09% (positive 98.00%; negative 2.00%).

Third was crime/law/justice, with 7.67 % (positive 22.72%; negative 77.28%). Of this, the foreign component was 87.5% (positive 5.58%; negative 84.42%); international crime/law/justice comprised 3.41% (positive 66.67%; negative 33.33%) and domestic crime/law/justice comprised 9.09% (positive 75%; negative 35%).

Table 5. 16 Main Saudi Press News Topics, Type of News and their Tone during the Liberation of Kuwait

Main news topic	Domestic type of news						International type of news						Foreign type of news					
	P	N	Oka	Yau	Riy	P	P	N	Oka	Yau	Riy	P	P	N	Oka	Yau	Riy	P
Political	15	1	23	0	11	0	66	2	40	0	46	3	38	6	80	1	105	14
Military/Defence	6	1	10	1	15	0	151	11	55	8	72	5	24	3	39	2	74	5
Economic	2	0	2	0	0	1	3	1	3	2	3	0	1	1	1	1	5	3
Social Service	1	0	2	1	3	0	1	0	1	0	1	1	0	3	4	2	0	0
Crime/Law/Justice	0	2	3	0	3	0	1	0	1	1	0	0	2	30	1	32	9	3
Sport	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Education	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Ecology/Environment	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Natural disasters / accident	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	2	0	0	0	1	0	0	0
Religious	4	0	5	0	4	0	4	0	4	2	4	0	0	0	1	0	2	2
Multi- issues	0	0	2	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	1	0	1	0	1	0	2	0
Other	3	0	12	0	1	0	2	0	4	0	1	0	0	0	4	0	2	0

P = positive N= Negative

The numbers in the table are by frequency

Fourth was religion, with 2.79% (positive 87.5%; negative 12.5%). Of this, foreign religious news comprised 15.63% (positive 60%; negative 40%) with international religious news 43.75% (positive 85.71%; negative 14.29%) and domestic religious news 40.62 % (100% positive).

Fifth was economic, with 2.53% (positive 68.97% ; negative 31.03.%). Of this, foreign economic news comprised 41.38 % (positive 58.33%; negative 41.67%) with international economic news 41.38% (positive 75%; negative 25%) and domestic economic news 17.24% (positive 80%; negative 20%).

Equal fifth was other news, with 2.53% (positive 100%). Of this, foreign other news comprised 20.7% (positive 100%) with international other news 24.14% (positive 100%) and domestic other news 55.17% (100% positive). The prominence of 'other' news can be interpreted in two ways: as an effort to fill the newspaper, bearing in mind that censorship would prevent the publications of some news in, for example, political and military categories; and to raise moral and mobilise patriotic sentiment. An example is the publication of the poems of Lt. Colonel al-Oteibi, referred to in an earlier chapter.

Hypothesis Ia predicted that the political and military/defence developments in the Gulf conflict would be more newsworthy than other main news topics.

A summary of the information used to evaluate hypothesis Ia is given Table 5.17 below.

Table 5.17 A Summary of Main News Topics during the Liberation of Kuwait

Main news topics	Newspapers			
	<i>Riy</i>	<i>Oka</i>	<i>Yau</i>	<i>Riy, Oka & Yau</i>
Political and Military/defence	324	259	350	933
Other main topics (economic, social service, crime/ law/justice, sport, education, etc.)	64	95	56	215
Total	388	354	406	1148

All three newspapers, with a 95% level of confidence, featured predominantly of news items of a political and military/defence nature accounting for between 79.02% and 83.52%.

This shows there is a statistically significant difference between the coverage of political and military stories, and that of other main news topics, since it was observed that 18.73% of all stories in all the newspapers were of a political and military nature. Thus hypothesis Ia was supported.

For the type of news, hypothesis Ib predicted that for political and military/defence developments in the Gulf conflict, the news would largely be domestic rather than international and/or foreign.

The data collected on the type of news is given in Table 5.16. A summary of this information, used to evaluate hypothesis Ib, is provided in Table 5.18 given below.

Table 5.18 A Summary of Type of Political and Military/Defence News during the Liberation of Kuwait

Type of news	Newspapers			
	<i>Riy</i>	<i>Oka</i>	<i>Yau</i>	<i>Riy, Oka & Yau</i>
Domestic	23	34	26	83
Other (International & foreign)	301	225	324	850
Total	324	259	350	933

The three newspapers, with a 95% level of confidence, featured domestic news items of a political and military/defence nature, in proportions ranging from 7.07 % and 10.71%. This shows there is a statistically significant difference between the coverage of domestic and other political and military/defence news, since it was observed that 91.10 % of all political and military/defence news for the three newspapers was either international and foreign in origin. Thus hypothesis Ib was not supported.

For the tone of news, hypothesis Ic predicted that for political and military/defence developments, the tone of the news items would generally be positive rather than negative. See Table 5.16 for the data collected on tone. A summary of this information, used to evaluate hypothesis Ic is given in Table 5.19.

Table 5.19 A Summary of the Tone of Political and Military/Defence News Stories during the Liberation of Kuwait

Main news topic	Newspapers							
	<i>Riy</i>		<i>Oka</i>		<i>Yau</i>		<i>Riy, Oka & Yau</i>	
	P	N	P	N	P	N	P	N
Political & Military/ Defence	300	24	247	12	323	27	870	63

P = positive N = negative

With a 95% confidence level, the proportion of news items of a political and military/defence nature that were positive in nature was between 91.64% and 94.86%. This shows there is a statistically significant difference between the proportion of positive and negative of news items of a political and military/ defence nature, since it was observed that only 6.75% of political and military news in all three newspapers was negative in tone. Hypothesis Ic, therefore, was supported.

5.1.3.2 Themes of News Items

Question three asked: what was the main theme of the news items chosen, and their tone, in the Saudi press? While the themes of the news items were wide-ranging, it is possible to identify those news items, during the liberation of Kuwait, to which Saudi press gave prominent coverage. The first ten news items that are classified in Table 5.20 are the main themes emphasised for all Saudi press together. The first ten themes comprised around half (47.56%) of all the news themes mentioned. The most dominant themes were Iraq's failure to stand and aggression as a way of problem solving (see Table 5.20).

Hypothesis II predicted that there would be similar themes within the news items that Saudi press presented. The data collected on news themes is provided in Table 5.20. The results show that there were differences among the three newspapers in the number of themes presented. Between *Riy* and *Oka* it was $\chi^2_9 = 157.46$; between *Riy* and *Yau* it was $\chi^2_9 = 106.92$; and between *Yau* and *Oka* it was $\chi^2_9 = 51.34$.

Because of these pronounced differences among the three newspapers, hypothesis II was not supported.

Table 5.20 Frequency Distribution of Items by Themes of all three Newspapers during the Liberation of Kuwait (17 January, 1991 - 28 February, 1991)

Theme	<i>Riy</i>	<i>Oka</i>	<i>Yau</i>	<i>Riy, Oka & Yau</i>
Iraq's failure to stand - e.g. prisoners of war, destroyed aircraft shelters, air bases, abandoned military hardware, elements of the Republican Guard in Kuwait, number of dead, damage to military equipment, etc.	31	21	47	99
Aggression as a way of problem solving - e.g. Allied air attack of Baghdad, bombing of military target, bases, etc.	40	23	15	78
SA diplomacy as a means of solving problem - in connection with the UN, EC, US, Arab world (excluding Iraq, Yemen, Jordan and Sudan)	29	15	27	71
SA government's official communications (broadcasts, speeches, etc.)	28	22	11	61
US support for UN resolutions and aggression	21	16	23	60
Level of Iraq's crime and injustice - both inside and outside Iraq -- e.g. foreigners held hostage, killed , terrorism , etc.	25	4	14	43
Egyptian support for UN resolutions and aggression	5	14	17	36
Support for SA position - countries, governments, organisations, tribal, personal	7	12	16	35
Kuwait's Royal government e.g. visits, speech, receptions, etc.	8	8	18	34
Oil wells on fire/smoking	5	12	12	29
Others				
Military capacity(ships, planes, etc.)	13	5	4	22
Patriots shoot down Iraq's scuds	13	2	6	21
Allies' military preparation for ground war	6	7	3	16
Liberation of Kuwait - Island, City	8	1	6	15
The ground war begins at 4.00 am (Saudi time)	1	0	0	1
US technological effects on the Gulf War	1	0	0	1
Liberation of Al-Khafjl	2	5	1	8
Saudi army enters Kuwait	1	0	0	1
Defusing of mines in Kuwait could take up to 16 months	0	1	0	1
Iraqi citizens evacuated from Kuwait	1	0	1	2
Closure of Saudi schools	1	0	0	1
Bush and Major believe Gorbachev peace plan insufficient	1	0	0	1
Schwarzkopf and Lt. General Prince Khalid receive Iraqi prisoners	0	1	0	1
American and Saudi military vehicles crash in Jeddah	1	0	0	1
Schwarzkopf announcements - e.g. oil fires won't stop Allied mission, Iraqi pilots tried to bomb Saddam, etc.	5	2	4	11
Foreign media display	12	5	10	27
Support for UN resolutions and aggression by:				
Malaysia	0	1	1	2
Senegal	0	1	1	2
Italy	0	1	0	1
Mauritania	0	1	0	1
Philippines	0	1	0	1
India	0	1	0	1
United Arab Emirates	0	2	2	4
Bahrain	0	0	2	2
Japan	0	1	1	2
Russia	11	2	7	20
France	4	2	2	8
UK	6	2	8	16
Australia	0	1	1	2
Turkey	0	4	5	9

Table 5.20 (continued)

Theme	Riy	Oka	Yau	Riy, Oka & Yau
Pakistan	2	3	1	6
Afghanistan	0	1	1	2
Iran	4	5	8	17
Austria	0	1	1	2
Germany	2	4	2	8
Libya	1	0	0	1
Algeria	0	0	1	1
Holland	0	1	0	1
Tanzania	0	0	1	1
Morocco	3	1	0	4
Syria	1	8	2	11
China	0	2	0	2
Thailand	1	1	0	2
US Intelligence - on Saddam	1	1	0	2
Swedish reaction to UN and aggression	0	0	1	1
Libya's Qaddafi: Saddam will make mistake if he intends to ask me to fight against Israel	1	0	0	1
Egypt welcomes Saudi debt cancellation	1	0	0	1
Scholars, Experts, Analysts study the Gulf conflict - e.g. economic, military, social, etc. perspectives	0	9	7	16
Saudi Citizens' letters to the editor	0	24	2	26
Iraq's use of human shields	1	0	1	2
Saddam insists on his position	8	2	3	13
Saddam's political system, history, etc	1	7	5	13
Iraq's nuclear and chemical weapons capabilities	1	1	6	8
Iraq's use of propaganda	0	1	1	2
Why Iraq set oil fields alight	0	1	0	1
Iraq's Republican Guard crushed by joint Allied forces	1	0	0	1
Saddam asks for asylum in India and Algeria	0	1	1	2
Iranian criticism of Iraq's aircraft using Iranian air space	3	3	2	8
Iraq sends Scuds to Jordan	4	0	1	5
Sudanese reaction to UN and aggression	1	0	1	2
Tunisian reaction to UN and aggression	0	1	0	1
Yemen reaction to UN and aggression	0	1	0	1
Sudanese, Yemeni, Jordanian, Iraqi citizens are affected by their governments' attitudes	2	3	2	7
Korea (South)	0	0	1	1
Yemen seeks exit from Saddam's "rat trap"	0	1	0	1
War is against injustice and Iraq must withdraw from Kuwait	0	2	0	2
Turkish citizen spies for Iraq	0	1	0	1
200 Kuwaitis go to America for military training	0	1	1	2
Allied Coalition reach Forit River and surrounds Iraq's Republican Guard	0	1	0	1
Iraq refuses meeting of prisoners of war with outside world	0	0	1	1
Five Iraqi aircraft land in Tunisia	0	0	1	1
Strain in Iraq / PLO relationship	0	0	1	1
American people urge CNN to leave Iraq	0	0	1	1
Allied forces refute Iraqi claims	0	0	1	1
Egypt and Iran angle for normalisation of relations	0	0	1	1
Kuwaiti flag flies once again in Kuwait City	0	0	1	1
Military communiqué (# 38) starts the liberation of Kuwait	0	0	1	1
End of Allied warning- military forces continue invasion of Iraq	0	0	1	1

Table 5.20 (continued)

Theme	Riy	Oka	Yau	Riy, Oka & Yau
Iraq must withdraw from Kuwait	0	0	2	2
Land mines	0	1	1	2
2000 aircraft used in first attack	0	0	1	1
\$ US. 17 billion aid given to Iraq by Kuwait before invasion	0	0	1	1
700 journalists sign up to visit Kuwait	0	0	1	1
Iraqi Scuds buried in Jordan	0	0	1	1
A new shelter for Saddam	0	0	1	1
Air attack against Saddam was defeated because of weather conditions	0	0	1	1
69 Iraqi aircraft escape from Iraq	0	0	1	1
Various countries received 2000 Iraqi refugees	0	3	1	4
Iraq's Ambassador in Kuwait shelters Austria	0	0	1	1
5 million leaflets dropped on Iraq, calling on her to surrender	0	0	2	2
Greece asks for Patriotic Missiles	0	0	1	1
650 Sudanese refugees go to Iran	0	0	1	1
Royal visits to troops, reception of Saudi citizens, condolences, etc.	7	3	4	14
Meeting of SA, Egyptian and Syrian Foreign ministers	0	1	1	2
Readiness of SA armed forces	2	1	0	3
SA Army losses	1	0	0	1
Skill of SA troops (pilot accuracy, bombing of Baghdad, etc.)	10	3	6	19
SA & GCC meetings	1	3	5	9
SA Council of Ministers' meetings	2	2	1	5
SA Ulema's (Religious Scholar's) reactions	0	1	0	1
SA authorities' and citizens' attitudes	0	4	1	5
SA prepares for war -- jobs, draft, military areas opened, etc.	2	4	1	7
SA's treatment of Kuwaitis (Arab people, prisoners of war, etc.)	2	0	1	3
Meeting of GCC, Egypt & Syrian Foreign ministers	3	2	1	6
Organisation of Islamic Conference (OIC) reactions	2	0	0	2
The Arab League - reaction	1	0	0	1
UN's favourite countries	0	0	1	1
Oil prices increase	0	5	5	10
\$ US 25,734,469,885 given to Iraq by Saudi government before Iraq's invasion of Kuwait	1	1	0	2
UN calls for solutions & resolutions	4	1	3	8
Failure of Soviet peace initiative	0	2	3	5
European Community (EC) role in peace initiative (including meetings with other countries)	0	1	3	4
Allied military losses	0	1	0	1
Possibility of war	4	0	4	8
Allied military treatment of prisoners of war	0	0	1	1
Scud launchers (Israel & SA)	7	7	4	18
Diplomacy as a way of solving problem (many countries excluding SA)	0	5	10	15
Military build - up in SA	5	3	3	11
Reaction of Kuwaiti people & government, both inside and outside Kuwait	4	2	4	10
PLO's mistake in supporting Iraq	1	2	0	3
Chemical weapons forbidden by Sharia law	0	1	0	1
US & France warning to Iraq of reprisals if prisoners are mistreated	0	1	0	1
Iraq - Jordan border closed	0	1	0	1
Why Iraqi planes land in Yemen, Jordan and Sudan	0	1	0	1
Liberation of Kuwait stabilises region	0	1	0	1
Economic effects of the conflict	1	4	2	7
Economic sanctions as a way of solving the problem	3	3	0	6

5.1.3.3 Personnel in the News

Question four asked: which personnel did the Saudi press give coverage to in each news item? Table 5.21 shows the origin of each individual, institution or organisation to which Saudi press gave coverage. The figures in Table 5.21 show a high level of concentration on personnel from the Allied Coalition (17.33%), the SA Government (15.67%) and the Middle East (15.24%). These were followed by Western Europe (8.36%) and the US (8.19%). The Asia/Pacific, Multi region, Iraq, Africa, all shared between 3.22% and 5.23%. Beyond these, personnel from secondary spheres of interests contributed 1.74% or less. Little coverage was given to personnel from Yemen, Sudan, Libya, Jordan, PLO or Eastern Europe (see Table 5.21).

Table 5. 21 Origin of Personnel Covered in News Stories during the Liberation of Kuwait

Personnel	Riy			Oka			Yau			Riy, Oka & Yau		
	R	F	%	R	F	%	R	F	%	R	F	%
SA Government	2	71	18.30	1	60	16.95	3	49	12.07	2	180	15.67
Yemen	22 =	0	0	17 =	2	0.56	15	3	0.74	17 =	5	0.44
Sudan	18 =	2	0.52	17 =	2	0.56	19 =	1	0.25	17 =	5	0.44
Iraq	9	13	3.35	10	11	3.11	9	18	4.43	8 =	42	3.66
Libya	22 =	0	0	24 =	0	0	21 =	0	0	24 =	0	0
Jordan	18 =	2	0.52	15 =	3	0.85	21 =	0	0	17 =	5	.44
PLO	22 =	0	0	15 =	3	0.85	17 =	2	0.49	17 =	5	.44
Eastern Europe	20 =	1	0.26	24 =	0	0	21 =	0	0	24	1	.09
Western Europe	5	27	6.96	4	31	8.76	4	38	9.36	4	96	8.36
North American	3	35	9.02	6	26	7.34	5	33	8.13	5	94	8.19*
Latin American	22 =	0	0	19 =	1	0.28	15 =	3	0.74	21 =	4	0.35
Australia	22 =	0	0	24 =	0	0	19 =	1	0.25	24 =	1	0.09
Africa	6	17	4.38	11 =	9	2.54	10 =	11	2.71	11	37	3.22
Asia/Pacific	7	16	4.12	7 =	25	7.06	7	19	4.68	6	60	5.23
Middle East	4	32	8.25	3	41	11.58	1	102	25.12	3	175	15.24
Multi Region	15 =	5	1.29	9	15	4.24	6	20	4.93	10	40	3.48
UN	15 =	5	1.29	11	9	2.54	12	6	1.48	13	20	1.74
Allied Coalition	1	97	25	2	43	12.15	2	59	14.53	1	199	17.33
Individual												
- Domestic	13	8	2.06	5	30	8.48	14	4	0.98	8 =	42	3.66
- International	20 =	1	0.25	19 =	1	0.28	21 =	0	0	23	2	0.17
- Foreign	12	9	2.32	7 =	25	7.06	7 =	19	4.68	7	53	4.62
Institution												
- Domestic	11	10	2.58	13	8	2.26	21 =	0	0	14	18	1.57
- International	10	12	3.09	19 =	1	0.28	17 =	2	0.49	15	15	1.31
- Foreign	17	3	0.77	19 =	1	0.28	21 =	0	0	21 =	4	0.35
Multi- Region	8	15	3.87	14	6	1.70	10 =	11	2.71	12	32	2.79
Unidentifiable	14	7	1.80	19 =	1	0.28	13	5	1.23	16	13	1.13
Total		388	100.00		254	100.00		406	100.00		1148	100.00

R = Rank F = Frequency

* US provided 100%

Hypothesis III predicted that Saudi press coverage would rely more heavily on SA government officials rather than on other personnel. A summary of the data collected on personnel used in the news is given in Table 5.21. Information used in evaluating hypothesis III is given below (Table 5.22).

Table 5.22 Personnel Covered by the Saudi Press during the Liberation of Kuwait

Personnel	Newspapers			
	<i>Riy</i>	<i>Oka</i>	<i>Yau</i>	<i>Riy, Oka & Yau</i>
Domestic (SA government officials)	71	60	49	180
Other (other government and non-government officials, individuals, institutions, etc.)	310	293	352	955
Total	381	353	401	1135

It was found, with a 95% level of confidence, that the proportion of news items employing SA government officials as sources for all these newspapers was between 13.74 % and 17.98 %. This shows there is a statistically significant difference between the employment of SA government officials and other personnel, since it was noted that 84.14% of news items for all three newspapers originated from non-Saudi government officials. Thus hypothesis III, also, was not supported.

5.1.3.4 Geographic Origin of News

Question five asked: to which geographically newsworthy locations of news did the Saudi press pay more attention? Table 5.23 shows the origins of news during the coverage of the liberation of Kuwait. It showed that the Saudi press paid greater attention to some areas of the world and less to others. All the locations were geopolitically significant in relation to the liberation of Kuwait, which explains the newspapers' reliance on these areas of the world, for both political and military reasons. Close to a half of the news items (44.08%) originated in Middle East, followed by SA (23.17%). These figures show, also, the extent to which news was concentrated on so-called 'elite' countries.

Table 5.23 Geographic Locations of News Stories during the Liberation of Kuwait

Geographic Locations	Riy			Oka			Yau			Riy, Oka & Yau		
	R	F	%	R	F	%	R	F	%	R	F	%
Saudi Arabia	2	91	23.45	2	104	29.38	2	71	17.49	2	266	23.17
Eastern Europe	10	0	0	10	2	0.56	11	0	0	10	2	0.17
Western Europe	4	31	7.98	4	25	7.06	3	54	13.30	3	110	9.58
North American	3	36	9.27	5	18	5.08	4	39	9.61	4	93	8.10*
Latin American	10	0	0	11	1	0.28	10	1	0.25	10	2	0.17
Africa	5	22	5.67	6	14	3.96	6	12	2.96	6	48	4.18
Asia/Pacific	6	13	3.35	3	32	9.04	5	31	7.63	5	76	6.62
Middle East	1	183	47.16	1	137	38.70	1	186	45.81	1	506	44.08
Multi-region	9	2	0.54	7	12	3.39	7	5	1.23	7	19	1.66
UN	7	6	1.55	8	6	1.70	7	5	1.23	8	17	1.49
Unidentifiable	8	4	1.03	9	3	0.85	9	2	0.49	9	9	0.78
Total		388	100.00		354	100.00		406			1148	100

R = Rank F= Frequency

* US provided 100%

News from Western European countries, for example, comprised the third largest amount (9.58%) of the news. Then followed the US (8.10%), Asia/Pacific (6.62%) and Africa (4.18%). Other geographical areas accounted for 1.66% or less of coverage.

Hypothesis IV predicted that Saudi press coverage would pay greater attention to Gulf conflict news stories originating in the SA region than it would to other geographical locations.

A summary of the information used in evaluating hypothesis IV is given Table 5.24 below.

Table 5.24 A Summary of Geographical Locations of News Stories during Liberation of Kuwait

Newspapers				
Geographical Locations	<i>Riy</i>	<i>Oka</i>	<i>Yau</i>	<i>Riy, Oka & Yau</i>
Domestic (SA)	91	106	71	268
Other geographic Locations (East Europe, West Europe, Middle East, etc.)	293	245	333	871
Total	384	351	404	1139

The results indicated that, with a 95% level of confidence, the proportion of news items originating in SA for newspapers lay between 21.06% and 26%. This shows there is a statistically significant difference in news coverage of different geographical regions, since it was observed that 76.47% of news items in the newspapers were from geographical locations other than SA. Thus hypothesis IV was not supported.

5.1.3.5 News Sources

Question six asked: on which news sources were the Saudi press dependent for their news presentation? Table 5.25 shows the sources of Gulf conflict news stories during the liberation of Kuwait. An examination of all three newspapers together revealed that the news was obtained entirely from various local, international and foreign agencies. For, instance, as Table 5.25 shows, the newspapers received nearly a quarter of their Gulf conflict news stories from the SPA (24.91%).

Table 5. 25 Sources of News Stories during the Liberation of Kuwait

Source	Riy			Oka			Yau			Riy, Oka & Yau		
	R	F	%	R	F	%	R	F	%	R	F	%
Own Staff	4	43	11.08	1	101	28.53	5	39	9.61	4	183	15.94
S P A	1	120	30.93	2	67	18.93	1	109	26.85	1	296	24.91
Reuters	5	40	10.31	6	19	5.37	4	52	12.81	5	111	9.67
AFP	6	32	8.25	5	20	5.65	6	37	9.11	6	89	7.75
TASS	9	1	0.26	9	1	0.28	8	7	1.72	9	9	0.78
AP	7	17	4.38	8	4	1.13	10 =	0	0	7	21	1.82
UPI	10 =	0	0	10 =	0	0	7	8	1.97	10	8	0.69
Other media- home	10 =	0	0	10 =	0	0	10 =	0	0	11 =	0	0
Other media- foreign	10 =	0	0	10 =	0	0	10 =	0	0	11 =	0	0
Private Citizens	10 =	0	0	10 =	0	0	10 =	0	0	11 =	0	0
Public Officials	10 =	0	0	10 =	0	0	10 =	0	0	11 =	0	0
Multi- Sources	3	57	14.69	2 =	67	18.93	3	70	17.24	3	194	16.89
Other Agencies	2	75	19.33	4	65	18.36	2	80	19.70	2	220	19.16
Unidentifiable	8	3	0.77	7	10	2.82	9	4	0.99	8	17	1.48
Total		388	100.00		354	100.00		406	100.00		1148	100.00

R = Rank F = Frequency

The other sources were as follows: other agencies, such as the Egyptian, Qatari and Iranian agencies (19.16%), multi-sources (16.89%), their own staff (15.94%) and Reuters (9.67%). Use of other sources ranged between 0.69% and 7.75% for the three newspapers.

Hypothesis V predicted that Saudi press coverage of the liberation of Kuwait would depend more heavily on domestic sources (own staff, SPA and government officials), than on other sources. The data collected on source is given in Table 5.25.

A summary of this information, used for an evaluation of hypothesis V is given in Table 5.26.

Table 5.26 A Summary of Sources of News Stories during the Liberation of Kuwait

Newspapers				
Source	<i>Riy</i>	<i>Oka</i>	<i>Yau</i>	<i>Riy, Oka & Yau</i>
Domestic (Own staff, SPA, etc.)	163	168	148	479
Other sources (Reuters, AFP, AP, etc)	222	176	254	652
Total	385	344	402	1131

Overall, with a 95% confidence level, the proportion of news items from domestic sources lay between 39.47% and 45.23 %. This shows there is a statistically significant difference between domestic and other sources in the level of use, since we observed that 57.65% of items in the newspapers were from other sources. Thus, hypothesis V was not supported.

5.1.3.6 Leading articles

Question seven asked: what was the theme of the leading articles, their tone, and to whom were they directed, or related? The selection of leading articles largely reflects the interests and attitudes of journalists during the liberation of Kuwait. Table 5.27 lists some 123 themes, most of which were against the Iraqi government 59.34% being negative in tone. Meanwhile, others such as economic, military, and those related to the conflict received 13% and were positive in tone. Other themes were related to anti- UN resolutions (11.38%) the Allied coalition (8.13%) and the SA government (4.88%).

Table 5.27 Main Themes/Headlines of Leading Articles of each Newspapers during the Liberation of Kuwait (17 January, 1991 - 28 February, 1991)

Theme/Headline	<i>Riy Newspaper</i>
<p>Decisive hour Statement of account - Saddam's connection with Israel and the idea of an anti- UN coalition From Thursday to Thursday, 2 August 1990 Iraq invaded Kuwait and 2 August 1991 Allied coalition attacked Iraq Saddam and his dictatorial decision Saddam is enterprising but the blockade cripples him Iraq is the hostage To give up or to mock - message to Saddam Time will destroy the rest of Iraq's power Devil's game and his bloody empire - Saddam- Journey to die for - the Gulf crisis SA military credibility The other war - embassies expel Iraq's missions Arab press - misinformation The environment enters Saddam's thinking about the war The martyr/ terrorist-Saddam Saddam's justification of war - who will protect Iraq?! Saddam's war against his own citizens Palestine news agency and its destructive wishes Another internal war in Amman and San'a side King Hussein gets lost in Saddam's shelter Two faces on one corrupted coin - one relates to King Hussein and the other to Ail Saleh King Hussein is the other face of employment of mercenaries King Hussein and Ali Saleh are only fractions in the accurate numbers equation Public invitation for genocide - Saddam's attitude Saddam's papers burned, his credibility diminished Saddam and his long absence from reality Stupid allies - Jordan, Yemen and Sudan What is the Arab position after the war? Manoeuvring enacted is inadmissible - Saddam The last chance - Baker and Aziz meeting in Geneva Jihad is not a political toy Baghdad and the moment of evacuating Kuwait Equitable rights - the right of SA to protect itself Initiatives with and commitments to international decision No compensation over principles - message to Saddam Terminating the war of Kuwaiti Liberation Saddam and the burden of his nation's wealth The tyrant - Saddam gave up but remains Iraq's peoples' ruler Saddam facing international solution to war</p>	
	<p style="text-align: center;"><i>Oka Newspaper</i></p> <p>Iraqi deafness and 'everything's all right' theory - misinformation of Iraqi people Iraqi liberation from the tyrant Goebbels and Iraq's liar People smarter than propaganda The tyrant's methods - Saddam Down with traitors and wavers When an unpopular regime cannot keep its promises - Saddam's regime Self defence defeated the rockets and missiles The fate of the evildoer is decisive - Saddam No need to hurry, punishment day is just around the corner The inevitable end to his zigzag policies - Saddam</p>

Table 5.27 (continued)

Theme/Headline	<i>Oka</i> Newspaper
<p>The conspirator allied to the anxious The criminal's inevitable fate Saddam's rudeness and Iraqi peoples' suffering Honour of the victims of the conflict Why does Yemen support Iraq? Arab and Muslim images make a mockery of Saddam The inevitable result of Saddam's foolishness Lesson of retaliation for invading Khafji The tyrant speeds to his end Two weeks for liberation war Impudence of Iraqi officials and mindless accomplice of Allied-anti-UN resolutions Neither terrorism nor conspiracy will defend you Saddam Mercenaries and nobles The fall of the August criminal coalition Spineless screams and double standards - message to Jordan, Yemen, PLO and Sudan There is one goal that is true and one right to the land that is in Kuwaiti - i.e. Iraq's invasion of Kuwait was immoral The real killer of Iraq's people - Saddam Decisive hour of the tyrant - Saddam The international community holds together, stops Iraqi manoeuvring Confidence in ourselves and the goal of justice There is no time for waiting - the world given up A lesson for every tyrant The clearer the solution, the more invalid the bargaining The failure of a tyrant and Iraq's liberation Where is the Palestine case? What is going to happen after he is defeated ? Allied conspiracy - Jordan, Yemen, PLO and Sudan -reveal their real position The war will not be stopped until all goals, and UN resolutions are met It is time now for Iraq's people to show their responsibility - Iraq's people should turn against Saddam</p>	
Theme/ Headline	<i>Yau</i> Newspaper
<p>The factor behind Saddam's motivation What will happen after the zero hour? The end of a tyrant - Saddam Saddam and his plans of destruction A hypocritical group - Jordan, Yemen, PLO and Sudan An accurate political statement - SA position Suicide path Patience circle/ring War crimes - Saddam neglected international conventions The last route - Sdddam's desperation Who stopped this tyrant? A new escalation The decisive battlefield Ugly crime The secession break away Return to normal life in Kuwait The last chance Suicide route When will Saddam wake up from his dreams? Power settlement - Saddam aims to control the Khafji in order to control its flow of oil Kuwaiti liberation</p>	

Table 5. 27 (continued)

Theme / Headline	<i>Yau</i> Newspaper
The era of crime	
Despite his weaknesses, Saddam insists on the validity of his position	
The world condemns Iraqi regime	
The results of obstinacy	
A rational plan - SA's position - positive	
Kuwaiti security	
The international desire/volition	
Retreat is the only solution	
The humble yearling	
Retreat is the only solution	
The declaration is born crippled	
Jihad (holy war by Moslems) Festival- Jihad is an intricate part of worship	
The continuing war	
Saddam's manoeuvres to escape defeat	
The morality of war	
The lie of retreat	
Defeat or resignation?	
The retreat of a tyrant	
The failure of a tyrant	
The end of a tyrant	
The resignation document	
Saddam's real face revealed	
The plan and game - Saddam agreed with Russia's plan and at the same time burned the oil wells	

The Arab world was the subject of (3.35%) of the leading articles, of which (0.04%) were positive and (99.96%) negative.

Hypothesis VI predicted that the tone of the leading articles would generally be more positive than negative. The data collected on the themes of the leading articles are given in Table 5.27. A summary of this information used in evaluating hypothesis VI, is given 5.28.

Table 5. 28 A Summary of the Tone of the Themes/Headlines of Leading Articles during the Liberation of Kuwait

Category	<i>Riy</i>		<i>Oka</i>		<i>Yau</i>		<i>Riy, Oka & Yau</i>	
	P	N	P	N	P	N	P	N
Saudi Arabia	2	0	2	0	2	0	6	0
Arab World	1	3	0	0	0	0	1	3
Allied coalition	5	0	3	0	2	0	10	0
Iraq	0	20	0	21	0	32	0	73
Anti-UN resolutions (e.g. Jordan, Sudan, Yemen, PLO, etc.)	0	6	0	6	0	2	14	0
Other	2	0	8	0	6	0	16	0
Total	10	29	13	27	10	34	47	76

With a 95% confidence level, the proportion of news themes that are positive in tone was between 29.63% and 46.79%. This shows that there is a statistically significant difference between the number of positively and negatively treated, since it was observed that 61.79% of leading articles in all the newspapers were negative. Hypothesis VI was not supported.

5.1.4 Period IV. After the liberation of Kuwait (1 March, 1991- 30 March ,1991)

5.1.4.1 Main News Topics, Types and their Tone

Question two asked: what were the main news topics, the type of news (domestic, international or foreign) and the tone of these main news topics carried by the Saudi press? Table 5.29 shows the main news topics , their type and tone. As can be seen in Table 5.29, the Saudi press agenda after the liberation of Kuwait appeared clearly. Most immediately striking is the prominence of political stories, with 55.17% (positive 96.88%; negative 3.12%). The figures for other topics were, for foreign political news topics, 50% (positive 92%, negative 8%); for international political news topics 41.66% (positive 97.5%; negative 2.5%) and for domestic political news topics, 8.34% (positive 100%). It is to be expected that, in this period, after the liberation of Kuwait, political news came first, as it did same before the war, because the concern was to draw attention to the outcome of the government's policy on Iraq.

Second was military/defence with 20.11% (positive 97.14%; negative 2.86%). Of this, the foreign military/defence news comprised 54.28% (positive 94.74%; negative 5.26%); international military/defence news accounted for 34.28% (positive 100%) and domestic military/defence news constituted 11.42% (100% positive).

Third was crime/law/justice with 12.64% (positive 27.27% ; negative 72.73%). Of this, the foreign component was 95.45% (positive 23.81%; negative 76.19%); international crime/law/justice accounted for 4.55% (100% positive). No domestic crime/law/justice news was reported during this period.

Table 5. 29 Main Saudi Press News Topic, Type of News and their Tone after the liberation of Kuwait

Main news topic	Domestic type of news						International type of news						Foreign type of news					
	P	Riy	N	Oka	Yau	N	P	Riy	N	Oka	Yau	N	P	Riy	N	Oka	Yau	N
Political	1	0	3	0	4	0	13	0	8	18	1	17	0	14	0	15	2	
Military/Defence	0	0	2	0	2	0	8	0	0	4	0	0	3	0	15	1		
Economic	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	3	2	4	0		
Social Service	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0		
Crime/Law/Justice	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	2	3	3	0	0		
Sport	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		
Education	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		
Ecology/Environment	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1		
Natural disasters/ accident	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		
Religious	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		
Multi- issues	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0		
Other	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	0		

P= positive N= negative

The numbers in the table are by frequency

Fourth was economic news, with 5.74% (positive 80%, negative 20%). Of this figure, foreign economic news comprised 90% (positive 70%, negative 30%). There was no international economic news. Domestic economic news constituted 10% (100% positive).

Fifth was other news, with 2.29% (positive 100%). Of this, foreign other news comprised 50% (positive 100%). No international other news was reported; thus, domestic other news comprised the other 50% (positive 100%).

Hypothesis Ia predicted that political and military/defence developments in the Gulf conflict would be more newsworthy than any other Gulf news topic. The data collected on main news topics are presented in Table 5.29.

A summary of the information, used to evaluate hypothesis Ia, is given in Table 5.30.

Table 5.30 A Summary of Main News Topics after the Liberation of Kuwait

Main News Topics	Newspapers			
	<i>Ria</i>	<i>Oka</i>	<i>Yau</i>	<i>Riy, Oka & Yau</i>
Political and Military/defence	39	30	62	131
Other main news topic (economic, social service, crime/ law/ justice, sport, education, etc.)	19	13	11	43
Total	58	43	73	174

All newspapers, with a 95% level of confidence, contained a preponderance of news items of a political and military/defence nature, lying between 68.88% and 81.70%. This shows there is a statistically significant difference between coverage of political and military stories and other main news topics, since it was observed that only 24.71 % of all stories in all the newspapers were on other main topics. Thus, hypothesis Ia was supported.

For the type of news, hypothesis Ib predicted that, for political and military/defence developments in the Gulf conflict, the type of news would largely be domestic, rather than international and/or foreign.

The data collected on the type of news are given in Table 5.29. A summary of this information, used to evaluate hypothesis Ib, is provided in Table 5.31 given (below).

Table 5.31 A Summary of Type of Political and Military/Defence News after the Liberation of Kuwait

Type of news	Newspapers			
	<i>Riy</i>	<i>Oka</i>	<i>Yau</i>	<i>Riy, Oka & Yau</i>
Domestic	1	5	6	12
Other (international & foreign)	38	25	56	119
Total	39	30	62	131

For all the newspapers, with a 95% level of confidence, the proportion of domestic news items of a political and military/defence nature was between 4.22 % and 14.1%. This shows there is a statistically significant difference between the coverage of domestic and other political and military/defence news, since it was observed that 98.84 % of all political and military/defence news for the three newspapers was either international and foreign in origin. Thus, hypothesis Ib was not supported.

For the tone of news, subhypothesis Ic predicted that, as a political and military/defence developments were concerned, the tone of the news items would generally be positive rather than negative. See Table 5.29 for the data collected on tone. A summary of this information, used to evaluate hypothesis Ic, is given in Table 5.32 below.

Table 5.32 A Summary of Tone of Political and Military/ Defence News Stories after the Liberation of Kuwait

News topic	Newspapers							
	<i>Riy</i>		<i>Oka</i>		<i>Yau</i>		<i>Riy, Oka & Yau</i>	
	P	N	P	N	P	N	P	N
Political & Military/Defence	39	0	30	0	58	4	127	4

P = positive N = negative

With a 95% level of confidence, for all newspapers, the proportion of news items of a political and military/defence nature that was more positive in tone lies between 94.01% and 99.89%. This shows there is a statistically significant difference between the number of positively and negatively treated news items of a political and military/defence nature,

since it was observed that 3.05% of political and military/defence news in all three newspapers was negative in tone. Thus, hypothesis Ic was supported.

5.1.4.2 Themes of News Items

Question three asked: what was the main theme of news items chosen and their tone in the Saudi press? While the news items ranged widely, it was possible to identify those news items, after the liberation of Kuwait, to which Saudi press gave a prominent role. The first ten news items that are classified in Table 5.33 are the main themes emphasised for all Saudi press *in toto*. These first ten themes accounted for more half (55.74%) of all news themes mentioned. The dominant themes were SA diplomacy as a means of solving problems in relation to the UN, and to the individual countries, Kuwait government official communications and Iraq's failure to stand. (see Table 5.33).

Hypothesis II predicted that there would be similar themes within the news items that Saudi press presented. The data collected on news themes are provided in Table 5.33. The results show that there were a differences among the three newspapers in the number of themes presented. Between *Riy* and *Oka* it was $\chi^2_9 = 17.78$, between *Riy* and *Yau* it was $\chi^2_9 = 60.93$ and between *Oka* and *Yau* it was $\chi^2_9 = 28.69$. Because of these pronounced differences among the three newspapers, hypothesis II was not supported.

Table 5.33 Frequency Distribution of Items by Themes of all three Newspapers after the Liberation of Kuwait (1 March, 1991 - 30 March, 1991)

Theme	Riy	Oka	Yau	Riy, Oka & Yau
SA diplomacy as a means of solving problem - in connection with UN, EC, USA, Arab world (excluding Iraq, Yemen, Jordan, Sudan)	15	8	4	27
Kuwait Royal Government - visits, speeches, reception, etc.	8	4	3	15
Iraqi failure to stand - e.g. prisoners of war, destroyed aircraft' air bases, number of dead, damage to military equipment, etc.	3	2	6	11
SA government official communication(broadcast, speeches, etc.)	3	4	2	9
Diplomacy as a way of solving problems - except SA	0	0	7	7
French, UK & US troops not to stay in the region	2	2	3	7
US reaction to the problem	2	2	2	6
Support for SA's position - countries, organisations & personal	2	1	2	5
SA & GCC meetings	2	1	2	5
Citizens' articles (personal views)	1	4	0	5
Others				
Kuwaiti Ceremonies	0	1	1	2
The victory of natural rights over injustice	0	0	1	1
Iraq's prisoners sent to Baghdad	0	0	1	1
Military negotiations between Allied forces and Iraq in Basra	0	0	1	1
Kuwaiti enforcement of curfew	0	0	1	1
Britain and France welcome Syrian peace initiatives	0	0	1	1
33.000 Kuwaitis missing	0	0	1	1
Death of Saddam's son (Oudi) and execution of his Defence Minister	0	0	1	1
Iraq keeps 22.000 Kuwaitis as hostages	0	0	1	1
2nd March cease - fire negotiations	0	2	0	2
Canada & Japan to ask for compensation	0	1	0	1
Saddam victimises 42 army divisions	0	1	1	2
Dead, deformed bodies found in Sabah Hospital	0	0	1	1
Who can protect Arab achievements from Arab misappropriation?	0	0	1	1
The Arabian security order	0	0	1	1
Destruction of Saddam's portraits in Kuwait	0	0	1	1
Jordan's Crown Prince: "Saddam will not stay in power"	0	0	1	1
Iraqi oppositionists control five cities and march towards Baghdad	0	2	0	2
Iraq decides to return Kuwait's stolen money	0	0	1	1
Has the time come for a Middle East role?	0	0	1	1
Laying of mines in Kuwait	1	0	0	1
Foreign media display	2	0	0	2
Support for UN resolutions and aggression by:				
Russia	0	0	2	2
Egypt	0	1	1	2
Japan	0	0	1	1
UK	0	0	1	1
Scholars, Experts and Analysts' study of the Gulf conflict	0	1	1	2
Poetry	2	0	0	2
Meeting of SA, Egyptian & Syrian ministers	0	1	0	1
SA Council of Ministers meetings	0	1	0	1
SA official position and its citizens' attitudes to conflict	0	2	2	4
Meeting of GCC, Egyptian & Syrian ministers	2	0	2	4
Non - Aligned countries Organisation	0	0	1	1
The GCC's summit meeting	0	0	1	1
Oil wells on fire/smoking	0	0	1	1
Economic effects of the conflict	0	0	1	1
Kuwait thanks SA's King Fahd for helping to solve the problem	1	0	0	1

Table 5. 33 (continued)

Theme	<i>Riy</i>	<i>Oka</i>	<i>Yau</i>	<i>Riy, Oka & Yau</i>
UN calls for solutions & resolutions	2	0	0	2
EC role in peace initiatives - e.g. meetings with other countries	1	0	2	3
Allied military capabilities	1	0	0	1
Reaction of Kuwait people & government both inside and outside Kuwait	0	1	0	1
PLO's mistake in supporting Iraq	1	0	0	1
Iraq's political system - history etc.	2	0	0	2
Level of Iraq's crime and injustice - inside and outside Iraq	0	0	1	1
Iraqi use of decoys	0	0	1	1
Iraq yields to UN resolutions	2	1	1	4
Iraq promises Iran it will withdraw from Kuwait without condition	0	0	1	1
Iraq yields to international pressure	2	0	0	2
Sudanese, Jordanian and Iraqi citizens are affected by their governments' behaviour	0	0	1	1
Iraq agrees to all requirements of cease- fire agreement	0	0	2	2
Saddam asks for asylum - i.e. India	1	0	2	3

5.1.4.3 Personnel in the News

Question four asked: which personnel did the Saudi press provide coverage to in each news item? Table 5.34 shows the origin of each individual, institution or organisation to which the Saudi press gave coverage.

The figures in Table 5.34 show a high level of concentration on personnel from the Asia/Pacific region (17.82%), the US (12.07%), the SA Government (11.50%), Iraq (9.20%), Western Europe (8.62%) and Multi-region (8.05%). Other regions contributed 5.17% or less. No attention was given to personnel from Sudan, Libya, PLO, Latin America, Australia, or Eastern Europe (see Table 5.34).

Table 5.34 Origin of Personnel Covered in News Stories after the Liberation of Kuwait

Personnel	Riy			Oka			Yau			Riy, Oka & Yau		
	R	F	%	R	F	%	R	F	%	R	F	%
SA Government	5	6	10.35	2 =	7	16.27	3 =	7	9.59	3	20	11.50
Yemen	16 =	0	0	7 =	1	2.33	9	4	5.48	12	5	2.88
Sudan	16 =	0	0	15 =	0	0	11 =	0	0	20 =	0	0
Iraq	7 =	3	5.18	2 =	7	16.27	7 =	6	8.22	4	16	9.20
Libya	16 =	0	0	15 =	0	0	11 =	0	0	20 =	0	0
Jordan	16 =	0	0	7 =	1	2.33	11 =	0	0	16 =	1	0.57
PLO	16 =	0	0	15 =	0	0	11 =	0	0	20 =	0	0
Eastern Europe	16 =	0	0	15 =	0	0	11 =	0	0	20 =	0	0
Western Europe	6	5	8.62	4 =	3	6.97	3 =	7	9.59	5	15	8.62
North America	2 =	8	13.79	6	2	4.65	2	11	15.07	2	21	12.07
Latin America	16 =	0	0	15 =	0	0	11 =	0	0	20 =	0	0
Australia	16 =	0	0	15 =	0	0	11 =	0	0	20 =	0	0
Africa	10 =	1	1.72	15 =	0	0	7 =	6	8.22	10	7	4.02
Asia/Pacific	7 =	3	5.18	1	13	30.23	1	15	20.55	1	31	17.82
Middle East	2 =	8	13.79	7 =	1	2.33	11 =	0	0	7	9	5.17
Multi Region	4	7	12.07	15 =	0	0	3 =	7	9.59	6	14	8.05
UN	10 =	1	1.72	7 =	1	2.33	11 =	0	0	14 =	2	1.15
Allied Coalition	10 =	1	1.72	7 =	1	2.33	3 =	7	9.59	7 =	9	5.17
Individual												
- Domestic	10 =	1	1.72	15 =	0	0	11 =	0	0	16 =	1	0.57
- International	16 =	0	0	15 =	0	0	11 =	0	0	20 =	0	0
- Foreign	1	9	15.52	15 =	0	0	11 =	0	0	7 =	9	5.17
Institution												
- Domestic	10 =	1	1.72	15 =	0	0	11 =	0	0	16 =	1	0.57
- International	7 =	3	5.17	7 =	1	2.33	11 =	0	0	13	4	2.30
- Foreign	10 =	1	1.72	7 =	1	2.33	11 =	0	0	14 =	2	1.15
Multi-Region	16 =	0	0	7 =	1	2.33	11 =	0	0	16 =	1	0.57
Unidentifiable	16 =	0	0	4 =	3	6.97	10	3	4.10	11	6	3.45
Total		58	100.00		43	100.00		73	100.00		174	100.00

R= Rank F= Frequency

* US provided 100%

Hypothesis III predicted that Saudi press coverage would rely more heavily for Gulf conflict news on Saudi government officials rather than other personnel. A summary of the data collected on personnel used in the news is given in Table 5.34. The information used in evaluating hypothesis III is given below (Table 5.35).

Table 5.35 Personnel Covered by the Saudi Press after the Liberation of Kuwait

Personnel	Newspapers			
	<i>Riy</i>	<i>Oka</i>	<i>Yau</i>	<i>Riy, Oka & Yau</i>
Domestic (SA government officials)	6	7	7	20
Other (other government non government officials, individuals and institutions, etc.)	52	33	63	148
Total	58	40	70	168

It was found, with a 95% level of confidence, that the proportion of news items employing SA government officials as a source of information, for all the newspapers, was between 7% and 16.08 %. Thus, there is a statistically significant difference between employment of SA government officials and other personnel, since it was observed that 88.10% of news items, for all three newspapers, originated from sources other than Saudi government officials. Hypothesis III, therefore, was not supported.

5.1.4.4 Geographic Origin of News

Question five asked: to which geographically newsworthy locations of news did the Saudi press pay more attention? Table 5.36 shows the geographic origin of news events after the liberation of Kuwait. It shows that the Saudi press paid more attention to some areas of the world, and less to others. All the locations were geopolitically significant in relation to the reactions to the conflict after the liberation of Kuwait, indicating the major political areas of the world upon which newspapers relied for their sources. Over a third (37.93%) of the news items originated in the Middle East. News from SA comprised the second largest component with (20.69%).

The figures show, also, the extent to which news was concentrated on 'elite' countries; the Asia/Pacific area provided 17.24% followed by Western Europe (7.47%) US (6.32%) multi-region (4.02%) and Africa (3.45%). Other geographical areas that were unidentifiable comprised 2.30%.

Table 5.36 Geographic Locations of News Stories after the Liberation of Kuwait

Geographic Locations	Riy			Oka			Yau			Riy, Oka & Yau		
	R	F	%	R	F	%	R	F	%	R	F	%
Saudi Arabia	2	18	31.03	2	11	25.58	3	7	9.59	2	36	20.69
Eastern Europe	9 =	0	0	9 =	0	0	9 =	0	0	10	0	0
Western Europe	3	5	8.62	6 =	1	2.32	3 =	7	9.59	4	13	7.47
North American	4 =	4	6.90	3	3	6.98	5	4	5.47	5	11	6.32 *
Latin American	9 =	0	0	9 =	0	0	9 =	0	0	10 =	0	0
Africa	7 =	1	1.72	5	2	4.65	6	3	4.11	7	6	3.45
Asia/Pacific	6	2	3.45	6 =	1	2.33	1	27	36.99	3	30	17.24
Middle East	1	23	39.66	1	21	48.84	2	22	30.14	1	66	37.93
Multi- region	4 =	4	6.90	6 =	1	2.32	7	2	2.74	6	7	4.02
UN	7 =	1	1.72	9 =	0	0	9 =	0	0	9	1	0.58
Unidentifiable	9 =	0	0	3 =	3	6.98	8	1	1.37	8	4	2.30
Total		58	100.00		43	100.00		73	100.00		174	100.00

R= Rank F = Frequency

* US provided 100%

Hypothesis IV predicted that Saudi press coverage would pay greater attention to Gulf conflict news stories originating in the SA region, rather than stories from other geographical locations. A summary of the information used in evaluating hypothesis IV is given Table 5.37 below.

Table 5.37 A Summary of the Geographical Locations of News Stories after the Liberation of Kuwait

Geographic Locations	Newspapers			
	<i>Riy</i>	<i>Oka</i>	<i>Yau</i>	<i>Riy, Oka & Yau</i>
Domestic (SA)	18	11	7	36
Other geographic Locations (East Europe, West Europe, Middle East, etc.)	40	29	65	134
Total	58	40	72	170

The following, with a 95% level of confidence, was tabulated: the proportion of news items originating in SA for all newspapers lies between 15.05 % and 27.31%. This shows there is a statistically significant difference in geographic origins of news, since it was observed that 78.82% of news items in the newspapers were from other geographic regions. Thus, hypothesis IV was not supported.

5.1.4.5 News Sources

Question six asked: on which news sources were the Saudi press dependent for their news presentation? Table 5.38 shows the sources of the Gulf conflict news stories after the liberation of Kuwait. An examination of all three newspapers together revealed that the news was obtained entirely from various local, international and foreign agencies. For instance, as Table 5.38 shows, the newspapers got more than two-thirds of their Gulf conflict news stories from the SPA (35.06%).

The other sources were: their own staff (19.54%) multi-sources (10.92%) Reuters (10.92%) and AFP (9.77%). Other agencies such as the Egyptian, Qatari and Iranian agencies totalled 2.87% while private citizens provided 1.15%.

Table 5.38 Sources of News Stories after the Liberation of Kuwait

Source	Riy			Oka			Yau			Riy, Oka & Yau		
	R	F	%	R	F	%	R	F	%	R	F	%
Own Staff	2	13	22.41	1	14	32.56	4	7	9.59	2	34	19.54
SPA	1	18	31.04	2	8	18.60	1	35	47.95	1	61	35.06
Reuters	4	7	12.07	8	1	2.33	2	11	15.07	3	19	10.92
AFP	5	6	10.35	4	6	13.95	5	5	6.84	5	17	9.77
TASS	8 =	0	0	9 =	0	0	8 =	0	0	9 =	0	0
AP	8 =	0	0	9 =	0	0	8 =	0	0	9 =	0	0
UPI	8 =	0	0	9 =	0	0	8 =	0	0	9 =	0	0
Other media- home	8 =	0	0	9 =	0	0	8 =	0	0	9 =	0	0
Other media- foreign	8 =	0	0	9 =	0	0	8 =	0	0	9 =	0	0
Private Citizens	8 =	0	0	6 =	2	4.65	8 =	0	0	8	2	1.15
Public Officials	8 =	0	0	9 =	0	0	8 =	0	0	9 =	0	0
Multi Sources	3	8	13.79	3	7	16.28	6	4	5.48	3	19	10.92
Other Agencies	7	1	1.72	6 =	2	4.65	7	2	2.74	7	5	2.87
Unidentifiable	6	5	8.62	5	3	6.98	3	9	12.33	5 =	17	9.77
Total		58	100.00		43	100.00		73	100.00		174	100.00

R = Rank F= Frequency

Hypothesis V predicted that Saudi press coverage after the liberation of Kuwait would depend more heavily on domestic sources (own staff, Saudi press Agency and government officials) than on other sources.

The data collected on sources are given in Table 5.38. This information, used in evaluating hypothesis V, is summarised in Table 5.39.

Table 5.39 A Summary of Sources of News Stories after the Liberation of Kuwait

Newspapers				
Source	<i>Riy</i>	<i>Oka</i>	<i>Yau</i>	<i>Riy, Oka & Yau</i>
Domestic (Own staff, SPA, etc.)	22	12	42	76
Other sources (Reuters, AFP, AP, etc.)	31	28	22	81
Total	53	40	64	157

Overall, it was found, with a 95% level of confidence, that the proportion of news items from domestic sources was between 40.49% and 56.23 %, while the proportion of items from other sources was 51.59%, which lies between these two limits, so we can conclude that there is no statistically significant difference between the sources, domestic or other, in terms of the extent to which they were utilised by the newspapers. Therefore, hypothesis V was not supported.

5.1.4.6 Leading articles

Question seven asked: what was the theme of the leading articles, their tone, and to whom were they directed? The selection of leading articles largely reflects the interests and attitudes of journalists after the liberation of Kuwait. Table 5.40 lists some 18 themes, most of which were directed towards the Iraqi government of which 33.33% were negative in tone and another 33.33% such as economic, military, and conflict-related items, positive in tone. Meanwhile SA was the focus of (6.66%) of leading articles, all with a positive tone. Items opposed to the UN resolutions accounted for 11.11% and were negative in tone. The Allied coalition was the subject of 5.55%, positive in tone. No part of the Arab world was the subject of a leading article.

Table 5.40 Main Themes /Headlines of Leading Articles of each Newspaper after the liberation of Kuwait (1 March, 1991 - 30 March, 1991)

Theme/Headline	<i>Riy</i> Newspaper
	Saddam was defeated and the legitimate side won Each age has its own logic and goals From Desert Storm to Basra Storm Algeria and Tunisia have nowhere to manoeuvre Political setting of Algeria and Tunisia Saddam caused the war and also destroyed his country
	<i>Oka</i> Newspaper
	Lessons in crisis and a new method to the build up Let the defeated tyrant Saddam go away It is time to rescue the people of Iraq from Saddam Oppression and Saddam's regime must be eradicated to rescue Iraq's people Our principles are the source of our real power Our people should be proud of our leader and his reaction
	<i>Yau</i> Newspaper
	Victory day The necessity of Saddam and his regime is concealed The crime file- international organisations are preparing a file of Iraq's destruction An important lesson The salvation sphere - from Iraq's regime The God equation - King Fahd talks to SA's religious leaders

Hypothesis VI predicted that the tone of the leading articles would generally be positive, rather than negative. The data collected on the themes of leading articles are given in Table 5.40.

A summary of this information, used in evaluating hypothesis VI, is given Table 5.41 below.

Table 5.41 A Summary of the Tone of the Themes/Headlines of Leading Articles after the liberation of Kuwait

Category	<i>Riy</i>		<i>Oka</i>		<i>Yau</i>		<i>Riy, Ok & Yau</i>	
	P	N	P	N	P	N	P	N
Saudi Arabia	0	0	2	0	1	0	3	0
Arab World	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Allied Coalition	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
Iraq	0	1	0	2	0	3	0	6
Anti-UN resolutions	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	2
Other	2	0	2	0	2	0	6	0
Total	3	3	4	2	3	3	10	8

With a 95% confidence level, the proportion of news themes that were positive in tone was between 32.61% and 78.51%. While the proportion of news themes that were negative in tone was 44.44%, which lies between these two limits, so we can conclude that there is no statistically significant difference between the number of positively and negatively treated themes of leading articles. Hypothesis VI was not supported.

Summary:

In this chapter, we have reported the findings of the content analysis of the Saudi press of the three chosen newspapers during the Gulf conflict. The findings were reported in terms of the main news topics and their type and tone, the themes of articles, personnel covered in stories, geographic origin of the news, source of news stories and, finally, the tone of leading articles and to whom they were directed. In general, it was found that the events and issues covered, and the treatment given to them, were similar in all three newspapers, which justified treating them as one group. This is not to say that there were no differences within the Saudi press regarding their news presentation during the conflict. The proportion of the news stories presented and coded in each newspaper was not the same and there were considerable variations therein - however, these were not enough to affect the research operation or our findings.

The findings of this study enabled the researcher to answer the research questions, and test all the hypotheses posed in Chapter 1. The findings can be summarised as follows:

1. Political and military/defence developments in the Gulf conflict were more newsworthy than other Gulf news topics. Stories in these categories tended to be from international foreign sources more than domestic ones and were more positive than negative in tone.
2. The occurrence of the various themes differed from one newspaper to another. The news during the conflict tended to be positive in tone and to favour the UN resolutions in relation to Iraq. In addition, news which was opposed to the UN resolutions was related more to the Iraqi regime, than any other subject.

3. The Saudi press, in covering Gulf conflict news stories, relied more heavily on personnel (individuals, institutions and governments) from Western Europe, the US, Asia, Middle East governments, than they did on SA government officials.
4. The Saudi press coverage paid greater attention to Gulf conflict news stories originating in Western Europe, the US, Asia and the Middle East, than they did to those originating in SA itself
5. The Saudi press depended, in their news presentation during the Gulf conflict, more on international and foreign sources, namely, Reuters, AFP, AP, UPI and other agencies, than they did on domestic sources.
6. The leading articles of the Saudi press were directed at, more or less the following: SA, Arab World, Allied Coalition, Iraq, anti-UN resolutions and others such as economic, military, and those related to the conflict. The items on these themes were more positive than negative in tone during Iraq's invasion and occupation of Kuwait, as well as during the liberation of Kuwait. They were largely directed at Iraqi government officials and became increasingly positive after the liberation of Kuwait.

These findings are contrary to the assumptions made in chapter one, based on the authoritarian press model. Why has that model been challenged? Nations in the modern age are all influenced by global political and organisational co-operation through such international institutions as the United Nations. The Saudi press has concentrated on sovereign states with strong leadership in international affairs such as the United States, the United Kingdom and France, some Islamic states like Pakistan and some Arab countries like Egypt and Syria. Political and military news occupied a major space during the Gulf conflict. The Iraqi invasion of Kuwait and its aftermath was not a problem that concerned Saudi Arabia alone, but the whole of the international community, because of common interests, particularly the region's oil resources, which induced many countries to bring their diplomatic weight and economic and military might to bear on the dispute. Thus, the political and military news had an international character. The outcome was that the Saudi press was a recipient of political debates which it represented as important news,

such as the positive views of countries opposed to Iraq's invasion of Kuwait. It reported international diplomatic and military moves during the war without analysis or criticism, in a reactive manner, without taking the lead.

The data has shown that the Saudi press, in covering Gulf conflict news stories, relied more heavily on personnel (individuals, institutions and government) from Western Europe, the US, Asia, Middle East governments and others than they did on SA government officials. This was, basically, because the Saudi journalists were in less direct contact with the day-to-day political developments and had less intimate knowledge of behind the scene politics. However, the messages that came from the countries of these sources especially from those with high credibility (such as the US and UK) would to some extent be delivered with social pressure, because messages often imply social values and social norms that underlie them. Such social pressure would tend to silence dissenting views (Theory of Spiral of Silence – see Chapter 3).

The point here is that foreign messages and news, even though they were in agreement with Saudi official policy, may have contained subsidiary diplomatic, political, economic and military terms and information which the Saudis might find difficult or unfamiliar, particularly since Saudi society is, by and large, unpoliticised as revealed by the answers of the media academics (see Chapter 4).

Regarding the focus in press coverage on news stories originating in Western Europe, the US, Asia, Middle East, it can be said that these countries are event creators. Consequently, the work of the Saudi press was like an orchestrated effort to match that of the US, Western and Islamic allies. At the same time, the ideological perception of the Saudi press depends on the time and the place and on religious and political influences of the Saudi government. It could only reflect these efforts after the government had given the green light for discussion. Nevertheless, the dependence of the Saudi press on foreign sources ensures congruence between the point of view of the Saudi press and that of the Western press. It is possible to say that these foreign institutions helped to set the agenda of the Saudi press.

Turning to the leading articles of the Saudi newspapers, these broke the journalistic logic whereby such articles give the press a bigger area for debate and constructive discussion. The leading articles reflect the opinion of the paper. They should be critical and objective. This is the place where a newspaper might be expected to offer fresh and challenge insight and arguments that set the news reports in context and interpret their significance. This was lacking in the Saudi press. The leading articles confined themselves to the 'safe' topics of criticism of Iraqi and her allies, and the only facts that appeared in the leading articles were about the Arab-Arab relationship (see Chapter 7). The Saudi press acted in what it perceived to be the interests of the country, as an instrument of persuasion and mobilization. Indeed the performance of the press was very much in accordance with the Loyalist press model (see chapter 2, section 2.2.2.).

The next question, and the basis of the following chapter, is what did the Saudi journalists, in response to the survey questions, think of the Saudi press functions in war time and their respective performances during the Gulf conflict (1990 - 1991)?

Chapter 6

Saudi Arabian Journalists' Perceptions toward the Saudi Press Functions in Time of War and its Performance in the Gulf Conflict

The purpose of this chapter is to look at Saudi journalists' appraisal of their press function in time of war, and their views and level of satisfaction with the Saudi press's performance in its coverage of the Gulf conflict. However, for convenience, we will first present the general characteristics of the respondents, then the Saudi journalists' perception of the press function in time of war, followed by the journalists' views and levels of satisfaction with the Saudi press performance in the coverage of the Gulf conflict. The reading was accomplished by a mixture of both qualitative and quantitative approaches. A general interpretation, evaluation and conclusion appears in Chapter 7.

6.1 General Characteristics of the Respondents

6.1.1 Age, Education & Positions

The respondents (29) ranged in age from 20 to 55 , with a mean of 30.84 years of age. Three of the respondents had doctoral degrees, one had a master's degree, thirteen had a bachelors' degree, two had diplomas, eight had high school education, while two were educated to below high school level. Their years in their positions ranged from 1- 25, with a mean of 10.08. Table 6.1 (p.195) lists in greater detail their fields of expertise and job titles.

Table 6.1 Fields, Numbers of Employees, Positions and level of Education of the Saudi Arabian Journalists in the Saudi Press Employed for this Survey

Fields	Employees #		Positions				Degrees				
Mass Communications	6		Managing Editor, Chief Department, Managing Editor, Managing Editor, Editor, Managing Office of Editor-in -Chief			1	4				HS
Public Administration	2		Managing Editor & Editor *				1		1		
Political and Economic Science	1		Editor								HS
Science	1		Chief of Economic Department								HS
Economic	1		Sport Editor *						1		
Arabic Arts	1		General Supervisor			1					
Information and Library Science	2		Information Centre Manager & Manager Assistant of Information Centre *			2					
Political Science	2		Managing Editor & General Supervisor				2				
Administration Economic	2		Chief of Islamic Affairs Department Editor				1				
Psychology	1		Editor				1				
Business Administration	1		Unknown *				1				
Education	1		Editor *				1				
Computer Science	1		Managing Office of Editor-in-Chief				1				HS
Public Relations	1		Public Relation Practitioner								HS
Unknown **	2		Editor & Chief Department				2				
Unknown **	2		Editor & Editor-in- Chief Assistant								HS & Unknown Less HS & HS
Unknown **	2		Editor & Editor *								

* Contracted Employee (Six out of Twenty nine respondents (20.69%).

** Respondents who did not indicate their fields of expertise

Hs = High School

6.1.2 Experience

Respondents were asked to indicate if they had ever worked for an academic institution or press organisation other than the one by which they were currently employed. Eighteen of the respondents said that they had worked for a press organisation, three for an academic institution. Seven of the respondents had worked for neither. One respondent said that he had worked in the government.

6.2 Saudi Press Function in time of war

In this part, the first research question is examined by description of the percentage distribution of the responses provided by the survey participants to the perception statements of the questionnaire. The questions (see Appendix G) dealt with respondents' opinion of the Saudi press function in time of war, and of the *press regulation* in relation to its functions in war time. In line with the suggestion of Denis McQuail, (1994), the functions examined are: information, correlation, continuity, entertainment and mobilisation (see Chapter 2 for definitions of these functions).

6.2.1 Information

Items 1 to 18 of the questionnaire were concerned with the information function of the press. Respondents' views in relation to these statements are presented in Table 6. 2.

Table 6.2 Percentages of Responses to Information Function Statements

Statement	Agree (%)	Undecided (%)	Disagree (%)
1. The press should be accurate and objective.	90	4	6
2. The press should seek to fully report as many sides of the issue as possible.	59	7	34
3. The press should convey information to the public.	97	0	3
4. The press should be a credible reference source.	100	0	0
5. The press should expose crime and the depth of war.	83	10	7
6. The press should inform readers of forthcoming events.	73	17	10
7. The press should provide background information to help readers understand events.	100	0	0
8. The press should publish pictures that help explain or clarify the written story.	97	3	0
9. The press is a community's most important instrument for bringing together all elements of the war events.	80	3	17
10. The press should emphasise local and military news.	73	3	24
11. The press should print stories that are interesting and informative although not necessarily timely.	49	13	38
12. The press should depend on information releases distributed by publicity officials.	66	10	24
13. Information should be a factor in the selection of what news and information ought to go into the press.	83	7	10
14. The press should be able to sacrifice some accuracy in reporting if it means getting the news out before any of the other news media.	27	7	66
15. The press should present a variety of political, social and military issues directly or indirectly related to the war.	94	0	6
16. The press should assist in the promotion of worthy causes.	97	3	0
17. The press should try to print some "good" news.	97	3	0
18. The press should provide citizens with more information about the danger to the country in case of attack by the enemy such as bombing of cities, chemical warfare, tricks, . . . etc.	97	3	0

The table shows the high level of agreement among respondents on almost all aspects of the information function of the press in war time. The only item on which agreement was low (No. 14) concerned the possible need for the press to sacrifice some accuracy in order to report the news before any other media. This response is consistent with the view that the Saudi press, in presenting issues, should be accurate and objective (item. 1).

Two items, 2 and 11, evoked somewhat mixed responses, with more than a third of respondents in each case expressing disagreement. Regarding the idea that the press should seek to report fully as many sides of the issue as possible, the relatively high level of disagreement may have been due to a belief that it is the press function to protect its readers against propaganda or false statements coming from the enemy. In this respect, there may be a conflict between the information and correlation functions of the press. Regarding item 11, the inclusion of the elements of interest and timeliness may have clouded the issue for some respondents; it is noticeable that this item had one of the highest levels of uncertain response in this section.

6.2.2 Correlation

Items 19 to 31 of the questionnaire were concerned with the correlation (i.e. interpretation) function of the press. Respondents' views in relation to these statements are presented in Table 6. 3.

Table 6.3 Percentages of Responses to Correlation Function Statements

Statement	Agree (%)	Undecided (%)	Disagree (%)
19. The press should offer its opinions on war events through its leading page.	83	7	10
20. The press should protect its readers against propaganda and false statements.	100	0	0
21. The press should help authorities avoid publishing content that might violate the public trust.	83	14	3
22. The press should interpret stories that appear in local and foreign mass media.	83	10	7
23. The press should attempt to guide public opinion after impartially presenting the different sides of an issue.	90	10	0
24. The press should print only those photographs which have news value.	80	3	17
25. The press has no obligation to separate fact from opinion.	83	14	3
26. The press should promote public service.	83	3	14
27. The press should be required to correct all printed errors, deliberate or unintentional, as soon as possible.	73	10	17
28. The press should be responsible to follow up officials' mistakes and inform the public about them.	10	31	59
29. The press' function - as a mass medium - should be different from that of the electronic media (that is, radio and television).	93	0	7
30. The press should support and advance the policies of the government.	66	27	7
31. The press should promote what the people want during the war time.	94	3	3

Table 6.3 shows a high level of agreement among respondents concerning the correlation function of the press on all statements, with the notable exception of their disagreement over whether the press should follow up on officials' mistakes and inform the public about them during war time (No. 28). Only 10% of respondents agreed with this, while almost a third of the sample expressed uncertainty. It may be that some respondents were suspicious that their responses might be used against them, bearing in mind that, as indicted earlier, this was one reason why Media Academics refused to respond to the questionnaire.

Another important point is that the findings in relation to item 20 support the suggestion that was offered in relation to Table 6.2 (No. 2). All respondents agreed that it is a press function to protect its readers against propaganda and false statements. It should be remembered in this regard, that propaganda is not the sole preserve of the enemy. Both sides have their own agenda, and may have reasons for withholding information or disseminating biased or misleading information. During the Gulf war, for example, the Saudi press was required to follow Saudi and coalition information policies. There was, however, a high level of uncertainty among respondents as to whether the press have a duty to support and advance government policies (item 30), perhaps because to do so might conflict with the anti-propaganda stance upheld in item 20, and the concern for objectivity evinced in response to the information items of the questionnaire.

6.2.3 Continuity

Items 32 and 33 of the questionnaire were concerned with the continuity function of the press. Respondents' view in relation to these statements are presented in Table 6. 4.

Table 6.4 Percentages of Responses to Continuity Function Statements

Statement	Agree (%)	Undecided (%)	Disagree (%)
32. The press should present material that is not morally and religiously objectionable during the war time.	83	10	7
33. The press should be the voice of its readers.	83	3	14

Maintaining continuity of social and religious values and reflecting the voice of the readers are seen as elements of the press function during war time. Since the Islamic religion is highly important for the Saudi public at all times' in war time, when the culture faces external threat, people are likely to turn more strongly to such values. Journalists are not free from the impact of religion in the way they look at the press continuity function. Only a small minority were prepared to risk offending religions sensibilities, or were undecided on this issue. Given that war, by its nature, entails many activities that are condemned by Islam, as indeed by other religions, it could be said that accurate reporting will inevitably entail the reporting of some actions that are morally and religiously objectionable. That does not, however, mean condoning such activities. There is a distinction between the press reporting morally repugnant issues, and itself taking a morally and religiously objectionable stance. It may be that those respondents who did not agree with one or other of the 'continuity' statements had this distinction in mind.

6.2.4 Entertainment

Items 34 to 36 of the questionnaire were concerned with the entertainment function of the press. Respondents' views in relation to these statements are presented in Table 6.5.

Table 6.5 Percentages of Responses to Entertainment Function Statements

Statement	Agree (%)	Undecided (%)	Disagree (%)
34. The press should entertain readers.	56	24	20
35. The press should run photographs that don't offend the reader.	66	13	21
36. The press should be neat and attractive in appearance.	90	3	7

The table shows a spread of opinion among respondents concerning the entertainment function of the press. A third of respondents either disagreed with or were uncertain about the proposition that the press should run photographs that do not offend the reader, perhaps because they recognised that it would hardly be possible to convey the devastation of war without using photographs which might offend or upset some readers. The lowest level of agreement (56%) was with item 34 which referred explicitly to entertainment, and there was a high level of uncertainty in relation to this item, perhaps because the word

“entertain” was seen to have frivolous connotations. Respondents may have felt that for the press to be entertaining is inappropriate, or even impossible, when most of its content is taken up with war coverage.

6.2.5 Mobilisation

Items 37 to 39 of the questionnaire were concerned with the mobilisation function of the press. Respondents' views in relation to these statements are presented in Table 6.6.

Table 6.6 Percentages of Responses to Mobilization Function Statements

Statement	Agree (%)	Undecided (%)	Disagree (%)
37. The press should inform its readers about political and military developments during the war time.	86	7	7
38. The press should refrain from use of information that might damage the national image of Saudi Arabia or the allies.	90	0	10
39. The press should be a crusader.	100	0	0

Since Tables 6.2 - 6.5 showed a high level of agreement among respondents concerning the importance, information, correlation, continuity and entertainment functions of the press, it is not surprising that they also gave strong support to what might be considered the essence of the press function during war time, namely, the mobilisation function of the press whereby the press brings people together, informing readers about political and military developments, and fostering a sense of national identity and pride.

With regard to the statement No. 38, however, it may not always be possible to give news and information on political and military developments because, during war time, restrictions are often placed on the press for reasons of national security. This was the reason that respondents, next, were asked their views on the regulation of the press during war time.

6.2.6 Regulation

Items 40 to 44 of the questionnaire were concerned with the regulation of the press during wartime. Respondents' views in relation to these statements are presented in Table 6.7 below.

Table 6.7 Percentages of Responses to Regulation Function Statements

Statement	Agree (%)	Undecided (%)	Disagree (%)
40. There ought to be an agency of some kind to see that the press act in the right direction.	69	24	7
41. The press is more a public utility than a private enterprise.	94	3	3
42. The press should follow the Saudi Arabian policy and not be dictated to by anybody during the war time.	97	3	0
43. The press regulation should come from the press journalists.	100	0	0
44. The press should have access to all meetings of government and others who have influence in order to act as a mediator.	97	3	0

The findings presented in the table suggest a strong sense of social responsibility on the part of the journalists surveyed, consistent with their views expressed in the preceding sections. They accepted a need for some kind of regulation (item 40) but resisted external interference, favouring instead self-regulation. Thus, the views expressed in relation to the first section of the questionnaire suggest that, in journalists' perceptions of the Saudi press, it has a duty in times of war to keep readers informed of events as accurately as possible, but at the same time they recognised the role of the press in interpreting events, upholding social and religious values, mobilisation of public opinion and, to a lesser extent, entertaining the public-functions which they expected to perform in the manner of self-regulating professionals.

The following section, concerned with answers to the second part of the questionnaire, will shed light to on the extent to which the Saudi press was thought to have achieved these ideals in practice during the Gulf war.

6.3 The Performance of the Saudi Press during the Gulf Conflict

The second research question asked: "What do journalists' views, and their level of satisfaction, reveal about Saudi press' performance in coverage of the Gulf conflict, particularly while the war was under way?" This part encompassed ten issues: press coverage, the adequacy of coverage of various media, primary sources of news, press agenda of Gulf war, negative events, publication of Saddam Hussein's speeches, intervention by military authorities, military authorities' censorship, limitations of the Saudi press, dissatisfaction with the press coverage, and whether journalists followed news of the Gulf conflict after the liberation of Kuwait.

6.3.1 Press Coverage

The Saudi press coverage of the Gulf conflict, particularly during the period of actual fighting, was rated by respondents as follows: excellent 27%; good 31%; fair 24%; not good 17%. (see Table 6.8 below).

Table 6.8 Rating of the Job the Saudi Press had Done in covering the Gulf Conflict, Particularly during the time of Actual Fighting

Rating of Saudi Press during Gulf conflict	Journalists 29
Excellent	8 (27%)
Good	9 (31%)
Fair	7 (24%)
Not good	5 (17%)

Those who rated press coverage as 'not good' were asked to give reasons. Three out of five (10% of the whole sample) replied, giving three reasons: that the press was not informative enough; that coverage did not attract ordinary Saudi citizens who were forced to turn to other sources of information; that there was limited coverage of other events.

6.3.2 Perceived Adequacy of Coverage of Various Media

The great majority of respondents (72%) felt that the press proved an adequate medium of coverage during the Gulf conflict, particularly during the time of actual fighting. Twenty-four percent felt that Saudi Arabian Television proved a better medium of coverage, and none of the respondents favoured Saudi Arabian radio coverage.

Table 6.9 Perceived Adequacy of Saudi Media Coverage of the Gulf conflict

Media	journalists * 28
The Saudi Arabian Radio	0 (00.%)
The Saudi Arabian Television	7 (24%)
The Saudi Arabia Press	21 (72%)

* One (3.45%) did not respond.

6.3.3 Primary Source of News

While the majority of respondents said the press provided adequate coverage of the conflict and war, 65% of respondents did not use the press as their primary initial source of information.

Table 6.10 Press as the first source through which Respondents Gained Information about Political and Military Developments and other Subjects during the Gulf Conflict

Response	Journalists 29
Yes	8 (27%)
No	19 (65%)

* Two (6.90) did not respond.

Table 6.10 does not tell us anything about Saudi T.V. and radio, so we asked respondents to further clarify their main source of information and news about the Gulf conflict. The great majority of respondents (68%) relied on foreign media (e.g., CNN, BBC, VOA); 13% on the Saudi Arabian press; 10% on Saudi Arabian television; and 6% on the Saudi Arabia radio. (See Table 6.11).

Table 6.11 The Main Source of Information and News about the Gulf Conflict

Media	Journalists 29
The Saudi Arabian Radio	2 (6%)
The Saudi Arabian Television	3 (10%)
The Saudi Arabia press	4 (13%)
Other sources (e.g., CNN, BBC, VOA)	20 (68%)

6.3.4 Press Agenda of the Gulf War

The respondents were asked to rank the main news topics that should have greater space devoted to them by the press in terms of their importance to Saudi Arabian society during the Gulf War. They were given twelve such topics and, according to the results of the study, the respondents overwhelmingly ranked military/defence as the most important topic. The ranking of the other 11 topics appears in Table 6.12.

Table 6.12 The Main News Topics to be devoted space by the Press in terms of Their importance to the Saudi Arabian Society during the Actual Fighting

Main News Topic	Rank
Military/Defence	1
Politics	2
Religion	3
Economics	4
Crime/Law/Justice	5
Natural Disasters/Accidents	6
Social Services	7
Ecology/Environment	8
Science/Technology	9
Sports	10
Education	11
Culture/arts	12

6.3.5 Negative Events

It could be argued that reporting immediately all negative events during the Gulf War such as coalition planes being shot down, the bombing of a bunker/shelter in Baghdad that resulted in heavy civilian casualties, coalition pilots captured by Iraq, coalition air attacks

on Iraqi forces along the road to Basra while Iraqi forces were withdrawing from Kuwait, and the Saudi Military dead in al- Khafji could all have had harmful consequences, not only for the Saudi government, but also for the military coalition. The respondents were asked to record what the outcomes of reporting such negative events could be (see Table 6.13). Nearly all respondents (89%) thought that reporting all negative events supported the Saudi government and its mass media by reducing the likelihood of audiences looking at other media, which might present the outcomes of the events in a way that led to perturbation in the military and the nation as a whole. A significant group of respondents (10%) opposed this view suggesting that reporting all negative events during the Gulf war led to a lack of confidence in both the government and the mass media, and that greater confusion and attention could be created in the military forces and in the nation at large.

Table 6.13 Reporting of Negative Events

Reporting Negative Events	Journalists 29
Reporting all negative events could support the Saudi government and its mass media, which by reducing the likelihood of audiences to looking at other media, which might present the outcomes of the event in a way that led to perturbation in the military and the nation as a whole.	26 (89%)
Reporting all negative events could lead to lack of confidence in both sides of the government and mass media and more confusion and attention could occur in the military force and nation.	3 (10%)

6.3.6 Publication of Saddam Hussein's Speeches

The publication of Saddam Hussein's speeches is a critical issue for a variety of reasons. Analysts and critics differed as to the impact of his speeches and their differing effect on European, American, and Arab countries during the Gulf conflict. The respondents were asked to select one of the two statements, presented in Table 6.14, in order to indicate their views on this topic. The results show that 48% of respondents accepted the view that the publication of Saddam Hussein's speeches helped the world to understand better that Saddam was the aggressor, as well as prompting the world to take the necessary steps to intervene.

The second view, that publication helped Saddam gain support from several Arab nations for his invasion of Kuwait, created suspicion about the ability of Arab leaders and their governments to solve the problem and convince their respective peoples, and the world of their policies, was supported by 34% of respondents.

Table 6.14 Perceived of Effect of Publication of Saddam Hussein's Speeches

Publication views	Journalists 29*
This publication helped the world to better understand that Saddam was the aggressor as well as helping the world take the necessary steps to intervene.	14 (48%)
This publication helped Saddam gain support from some Arab nations for his invention of Kuwait, and created suspicion about the ability of Arab leaders, and their governments to solve the problem and convince their respective people, and the world of their policies.	10 (34%)

* Five (17%) did not respond.

6.3.7 Intervention by Military Authorities

The relationship between journalists' freedom and the requirements of the military authorities was another area treated by the survey. Respondents were asked to choose a response indicating how necessary they felt was the requirement by military authorities that the media "pool" their reports submitted to the 'Joint Information Bureau' (JIB) that would examine and censor all copy relating to the Gulf conflict and particularly to the fighting. As we can see in Table 6.15, respondents were divided in their views about military attempts to control the media during the Gulf conflict. Seven respondents (24%) thought that the requirements were very necessary; 24% somewhat necessary; 24% somewhat unnecessary; and 24% unnecessary.

Table 6. 15 Journalists Perceptions of Media "Pool" and Submission of Reports to the Joint Information Bureau (JIB)

Was Military Intervention necessary?	Journalists 29*
Very necessary	7(24%)
Somewhat necessary	7(24%)
Somewhat unnecessary	7(24%)
Unnecessary	7(24%)

* One (3.44%) did not respond.

6.3.8 Military Censorship

Respondents were also asked to give any reason (s) that could warrant the attitude of military commanders that sources of military information, communiqués and news must all be completely controlled by the military, and that those sources of information should not be seen by citizens or given to journalists for publication during the conflict.

Results were ranked as follows: a journalist would normally tend to publish stories which excite and attract the reader (65%); a journalist thrives on conflict rather than conflict resolution (27%); a journalist often takes refuge in the concept of 'objectivity' (13%); a journalist may be considered as a 'spy' (6%); and a journalist is not capable of dealing adequately with war issues and the cannot fully treat even a tiny part of these issues (6%). Six respondents (20%) added further reasons. These were: that media coverage may compromise military operations; that there has to be a trust between the press and the military; that the mass media are not sufficiently developed to provide adequate coverage; that some information needs to be withheld by the government in the interests of national security; that the military underestimate the importance of the press; and that the press is considered a part of the military weapon, and so should be protected for military purposes.

Table 6.16 Reasons for Military Control Information, Communiqués and News

Reasons	Journalists
- Journalists would normally tend to publish stories which excite and attract the reader.	19 (65%)
- A journalist often takes refuge in the concept of 'objectivity'.	4 (13%)
- A journalist may be considered as a 'spy'.	2 (6%)
- A journalist is not capable of dealing adequately with war issues and the cannot fully treat even a tiny part of these issues.	2 (6%)
- A journalist thrives on conflict rather than conflict resolution.	8 (27%)
- Other reason.	6 (20%)

6.3.9 Limitations of the Saudi Press

Given that the majority indicated that their main source of information and news was the international media, each of the interviewees was made aware of the assumption that, during a conflict, any country follows a different information policy and deals with the press and broadcasting organisations differently than during peace time. As a result, a newspaper might not provide its reader with detailed information. This will, thus, affect the press in presenting its news; this could be considered as a limitation of the Saudi press during the Gulf War. A majority of the respondents (65%) believed that this occurred because of co-operation between the press that the government in their treatment of the conflict in conforming to the government's military strategies and tactics. It was believed by 34% of respondents that it happened because the press conformed to the new information policy; and by 17% because of the benefits that the enemy could have gained in their military plans and psychological operations if there had been no censorship.

Still other respondents (10%) argued that the press should not give more information and news because other media (radio and television) have the capacity to broadcast events as they happened (Table 6.17).

Table 6.17 Constraints on Press Information and News during the Gulf Conflict

Reason Statement	Journalists
- Insufficient information and facts available to the press organisations	5 (17%)
- Conformity to the new information policy	10 (34%)
- Co-operation with the government in treatment of the conflict to compilation of its military strategies and tactics	19 (65%)
- The benefits that the enemy could gain in their military plans and psychological operations	5 (17%)
- Other	3 (10%)

6.3.10 Dissatisfaction with Press Coverage

It was expected that the respondents would have good reasons for their dissatisfaction with Saudi press coverage during the Gulf conflict. The respondents were accordingly

provided with a list of possible reasons for their feeling of dissatisfaction. They were also given a chance to offer other reasons if they wanted to. The majority of respondents (51%) believed that the general reason for their dissatisfaction with the press coverage of the Gulf conflict, particularly during the war, were first, that it was not informative enough, and secondly (37% of respondents) they believed that there was too little coverage, followed by the feeling that it was not always trustworthy (31%). The relevant data on this issue are presented in Table 6.18.

Table 6.18 The Reasons for Dissatisfaction with Press Coverage of the Gulf Conflict

Reason	Rank	Journalists
Not informative enough	1	15 (51%)
Too little coverage	2	11 (37%)
Not always trustworthy	3	9 (31%)
Not up- to - date	4	6 (20%)
Too much speculation	5	4 (13%)
Other reasons	6	3 (10%)
Did not always keep to the facts	7=	2 (6%)
Disrupted normal news	7=	2 (6%)
Boring	9=	1 (3%)
Too much space devoted to the war	9=	1 (3%)
Not very balanced	11=	0 (00%)
Unethical news	11=	0 (00%)

Interestingly, only three journalists (10%) gave other reasons for their dissatisfaction. Their reasons were: government restrictions limited their chances to gather information; the news was contrary to professional journalistic standards; and the content suggested it all originated from the one source.

6.3.11 Journalists Following the News after the Liberation of Kuwait

The question as to how closely the respondents followed the news, and more specifically the results of the Gulf conflict since the liberation of Kuwait, is important in providing information as to the importance of the Gulf region in terms of global significance. The majority of respondents (44%) said they did not follow very closely the news and the results of the Gulf conflict. 27% of respondents admitted to following it very closely, while 24% said they followed the news fairly closely (Table 6.19).

Table 6.19 Journalists Following the News and the Results of the Gulf conflict after the liberation of Kuwait

Level of following news	Journalists 29*
Very closely	8 (27%)
Fairly closely	7 (24%)
Not too closely	13 (44%)
Not at all closely	0 (00%)

* One (3%) did not respond

In the case of those who did follow the news, their reasons included the following: that the conflict in the region had not ended; the importance of the Gulf area; that Iraq had not fully obeyed all the United Nations resolutions; to follow the impact of the economic sanctions imposed by the UN resolution No. 661 on Iraq; to understand humanity; to find out about the economic impact resulting from the war; to gain fresh insights into what happened during the conflict; the nature of journalistic work; to discover items that were not broadcast; because they believed it was the war of the century and to keep up with any new information that may emerge about events during the conflict.

Those who did not follow the news, nor the results of the Gulf conflict, said that they did not do so because of the difficulty of finding reliable sources.

Summary

This chapter has reported the findings from the questionnaire survey into Saudi journalists' perceptions of the Saudi press' function in time of war, and their view and level of satisfaction with the Saudi press performance in its coverage of the Gulf conflict. In summary, the principal findings were the following:

The first part of the survey concerned perceptions of how the Saudi press should function in time of war and whether there is a need for press regulation. The majority of journalists endorsed all the press functions. There was evidence of a reluctance to sacrifice accuracy in the interest of a "scoop". However, a possible conflict emerged between the information function and the correlation function, in that reflecting varied perspectives on an issue may conflict with a desire to protect people from propaganda. Other areas of

disagreement concerned the 'entertainment' and 'continuity' functions, in the sense that accurate reporting of the horrific events of war, including, perhaps, publication of photographs, would inevitably upset certain sensibilities.

The respondents' views on regulation of the press revealed a strong sense of social responsibility, in that they recognised that totally unfettered reporting and comment might sometimes serve enemy interests. On the other hand, they showed a definite distaste for external interference, preferring self-regulation.

The Saudi press was thought to have done fairly well in offering adequate coverage of the Gulf conflict, and was brought to have done better than local television and radio; none of the Saudi sources, however, were relied on as main sources of information or perceived as favourably as the non-Saudi CNN, BBC radio and VOA.

Concerning the press agenda of Gulf war, the majority of journalists ranked military/defence as the most importance news to be presented to Saudi society.

Concerning the outcomes of reporting negative events, a significant number of journalists (89%) favoured the reporting of items which both supported the Saudi government and informed the public.

Saddam Hussein's speeches during the Gulf conflict was seen by almost half the journalists (48%) as helping the world to understand Saddam as the enemy, highlighting his objectives in relation to the war, and prompting the West to take the necessary steps to intervene. This view was, however, opposed by a third of the journalists. There was also a high level of non-response on this subject, suggesting that it was perceived as a sensitive issue.

In line with the new information policy adopted during the conflict which reflected the requirements of military authorities, some journalists favoured the idea of the media 'pooling' their reports, and submitting them to the 'Joint Information Bureau', but an equal number viewed it as unnecessary. There was, nevertheless, an acceptance that

military censorship might be justified, particularly as journalists had a tendency to sensationalism.

A significant number of journalists (65%) believed that one of the major reasons why the Saudi press performance had limitations was because it co-operated with the government in its treatment of the conflict, mainly to complement its military strategies and tactics.

Concerning dissatisfaction with press coverage, a significant number of journalists complained that the press' coverage was insufficient and not informative enough.

Regarding whether journalists followed the news during the Gulf conflict and after the liberation of Kuwait, it is interesting that 44% did not do so very closely and the main reason given for this was lack of reliable sources. Those who did follow up the story gave a variety of reasons for doing so, some personal and some professional.

This chapter has presented the views of the Saudi journalists in the Saudi press organisations, regarding the Saudi press functions in time of war and its performance in Gulf conflict. The aim was to determine whether the coverage given by the Saudi press to the conflict was consistent with journalists' ideas regarding the press function in times of war. The questionnaire and interview responses presented here and in chapter 4 indicate that there was an imbalance in the way the Saudi press covered the conflict. The journalists believed that the western media with their international wire service could have biased the Saudi press in its gathering of news and information. Journalists, even though they were the people who had gathered and disseminated the news, were dissatisfied with the press performance, which they saw as insufficient in quantity, and not informative enough. Thus, there was a discrepancy between the coverage journalists thought (based on professional reporting values or expectations of what would interest the readership) they should have provided, and what they actually presented.

This discrepancy can be interpreted in the light of the content analysis presented in the previous chapter, since, as that chapter showed, the Saudi press coverage of the conflict was dominated by Western definitions of news value (see Galtung and Ruge's criteria,

presented in Chapter 2, Figure 2.2). Nevertheless, they also felt a pressure, or a sense of responsibility, to promote Saudi policy goals and cultural views. This would create a set of conflicting values whereby 'positive' topics would be regarded as more newsworthy than 'negative' ones, or matters which might be regarded as newsworthy were nevertheless suppressed. This is to be expected, since the function of the Saudi press cannot be separated from government policy and religious values. A good example is the case of Saudi women driving cars in Riyadh during the conflict period. According to Galtung and Ruge's criteria, this might have been considered a "newsworthy" event, in terms of its significance in Saudi society, unexpectedness, and negative connotation as an implied criticism of the role accorded to women in Saudi society. Yet it was little reported in the Saudi press, because such behaviours was not culturally acceptable, particularly to the religious scholars, and at a time of crisis, the need for conformity and cohesion in Saudi society took precedence over the newsworthiness of women's rebellion. In general, "negative" items were only newsworthy to the Saudi press if their target was Saddam Hussein or his allies; government policy had to be presented, both explicitly and implicitly, in a favourable light.

Thus, since the Saudi press coverage of the conflict was largely reactive in nature, included little comment or analysis and was limited by political constraint, it can be argued that the Saudi journalists' practice was not in accordance with their professional ideals.

It now remains to assess how, overall, the Saudi press performed during the Gulf conflict (1990-1991) in the light of the evidence presented in this and the previous chapters.

Analytical and critical appraisal will be followed by recommendations and suggestions for further study pertaining to the Saudi Arabian press.

Chapter 7

Conclusions and Recommendations

This research started from the premise that the performance of the Saudi press system was in line with the *authoritarian press model* during the Gulf conflict (see Chapters 1 and 2). It was assumed that the Saudi press would be subject to censorship during the conflict, particularly during the actual fighting and that, in addition to national pride and patriotism, coverage of the Gulf conflict would be affected by lobby groups such as those led by religious leaders, which would exert pressure to either support or reject the administration's policy in the face of enemy aggression. The press, it was expected, would have disseminated the official political attitude toward the events: shaping the beliefs of the elite and the wider public.

The aim of this last chapter is to answer the original question, namely how did the Saudi press perform during the conflict and why? To answer this question, we need to consider whether the Saudis were given a fair opportunity to assess both sides of the conflict by looking at the themes of news and leading articles within the Saudi press, drawing together the information obtained from content analysis, interviews and questionnaire responses, and interpreting it in the light of press theories discussed earlier in the thesis.

7.1 The Performance of the Saudi Press during the Gulf conflict

In the evaluation of the Saudi press performance, the discussion here considers first its performance before, during and after Iraq's invasion of Kuwait. One important note is that the presentation will follow the same sequence as the arguments presented in Chapter 1 in questioning the validity of the 'authoritarian press theory' hypotheses. One major reason is that the first argument was about the source of news, specifically the heavy dependence on foreign sources, as exploration of other factors such as the geographic, personnel aspects etc. would logically depend on that one.

7.1.1 The Performance of the Saudi Press before the Iraqi Invasion of Kuwait

In July 1990, immediately before the Iraq invasion of Kuwait, the Saudi Arabian government and society as a whole were preoccupied with an important annual event in the Muslim calendar, the Haji pilgrimage to Makkah city. This is a major national event, when many Islamic officials, along with a great number of people from other Islamic countries, visit Saudi Arabia. Managing such an event required careful governmental planning, and the preparations for the pilgrimage occupied much of the attention of the Saudi press. A content analysis carried out by this researcher of July, 1990 over a one week period of all three newspapers under investigation showed that on average 46.4% of the paper was taken up by reports on this topic: *al-Riyadh* newspaper 57.8%, *Okaz* newspaper 55.7% and *al-Yaum* 38.7%.

Interestingly, none of the news or information within these publications warned of or even hinted at the forthcoming invasion. The Saudi press, quite simply, did not tackle the issue of the Gulf conflict. The general tone of all news items was positive, whether regarding political news, economic or social affairs, although there was some indication of tension between Iraq, Kuwait and the United Arab Emirates (UAE). For example, *al-Yaum* newspaper reported that Saddam Hussein had sent a letter to U.S. President George Bush, expressing Iraq's desire to cultivate a good relationship with the USA. In reporting this communication, the article mentioned American allegations that Iraq was working towards the creation of chemical weapons. There was, however, no official Saudi government statement within this article, and none of the other Saudi newspapers discussed the Iraqi situation. In short, the issue of Iraqi chemical weapons was not acknowledged in a Saudi government statement, nor was it on the press or public agenda.

A significant news item was presented on 8 July 1990 on the front pages of *al-Riyadh* and *al-Yaum* newspapers. This was that the Saudi Minister of Petroleum and Mineral Resources had carried a message from King Fahd to Saddam Hussein. The Saudi minister had met the United Arab Emirates' Minister of Petroleum before travelling to Iraq where he met first, the Iraqi Minister of Petroleum and then Hussein himself. No more

explanation or comment was offered in either newspaper. This should come as no surprise in light of the lack of analysis noted throughout this thesis.

Al-Yaum newspaper's leading article commented on the diplomatic negotiations under the title "Movement in appropriate time". The tone of the article was positive, but its title may be interpreted as reflecting the newspaper's awareness of the danger of the situation. However, it did not explain or comment on this situation further. The reasons are clearly obvious. The issue was a political one given the Iraqi claim that Kuwait was destroying Iraq's economy, violating its territory and stealing its riches. These issues could not be discussed in the press without government sanction via the Saudi Press Agency. The public therefore were unaware of the real situation.

However, the conflict did not start when Iraq invaded. The conflict started when Saddam Hussein gave a remarkable speech in late May 1990 suggesting an Arab oil boycott against the United States if the latter persisted in their support of the Israeli state. Further, in July 1990, Saddam accused Kuwait and UAE of violating export quotas, alleging that Kuwait had stolen Iraqi oil from the huge Rumaila oil field. The final straw came when Saddam announced Iraq's new international policy agenda, saying that Iraq possessed advanced chemical weapons and would use them against Israel if any attacks were made on Iraq. All of these events were significantly 'newsworthy' items. There were three key issues: 1) the use of oil as a political weapon, recalling the events of the 1973 October war between Israel and Arabia; 2) the accusations levelled against Kuwait and UAE, which was a political and economic affair, and 3) the threat of using chemical weapons to destroy another nation. Yet none of these issues were tackled within the Saudi Arabian press. Even when, on Tuesday July 31, 1990, talks being held in Saudi Arabia between Kuwait and Iraq broke down, the press still failed to comment. Indeed, they had little information with which to do so.

An official source gave the Saudi Press Agency a statement: "that the role undertaken by the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia in the meeting of brothers had been confined to provide a cordial atmosphere between the two sides [Iraq and Kuwait]. Without any participation on the part of Saudi Arabia, a bilateral meeting was held behind closed doors between the

representatives of the two countries” (Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, 1991: 14-15). In this atmosphere of secrecy, the trend of events was not brought to light in the Saudi press. It seems, as indicated by the Saudi media academics and journalists (see Chapter 4), that the press was acting as an instrument for government policy, and could not tackle this issue without official permission. For those Saudi citizens interested in external events, they would have to turn to foreign news services rather than domestic sources.

7.1.2 The Performance of the Saudi Press from the Iraqi Invasion until after the liberation of Kuwait

The night of Thursday August 2, 1991 was a holiday in most Saudi governmental departments. As people prepared to carry out their normal activities, they heard the news that the people of Kuwait were leaving their homes and fleeing towards Saudi Arabia. Sheikh Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, the Emir of Kuwait, was already crossing the Saudi eastern border.

Saudi Arabia was at internal and external risk. Saudi citizens knew nothing of these serious security issues. Information about the invasion might have been gained from foreign media broadcasts (such as VOA and BBC World Service, Monte Carlo or Middle Eastern radio stations) since large numbers of countries world-wide knew of the invasion, and their media reported the Iraqi aggression on the same day, but the Saudi press did not report it in detail until three days later.

7.1.2.1 The Sources of Gulf Conflict News

The performance of the Saudi Arabian press can be viewed, first, from the point of view of the sources used in covering Gulf events. Saudi journalists were undoubtedly concerned about the quality of news, proclaiming adherence to “professional news standards of timeliness, accuracy, objectivity, balance and relevance” (Rumbal & Adam, 1990: 93). At the beginning of the study, it was suggested (hypothesised No.V) that Saudi Arabian press coverage of the Gulf conflict would depend more on domestic sources than foreign

sources. Looking at each source *individually*, this may be true; the Saudi press appeared to be more dependent on the SPA than on any other single source. This is to be expected, since the Saudi press is indirectly controlled by the Saudi government, and it is the press duty to carry the government agenda via briefings from the SPA, which is under Ministry of Information supervision. However, if information sources are grouped into domestic and external sources, it becomes clear that the Saudi Arabian press depended more on external sources, particularly Reuters, AFP, AP, UPI and other agencies, than on domestic sources. Figure 7.1 shows the frequency of sources of the news stories of Saudi press over three periods [(51.87% to 48.13%) (57.65% to 42.35%) (51.60% to 48.40%)].

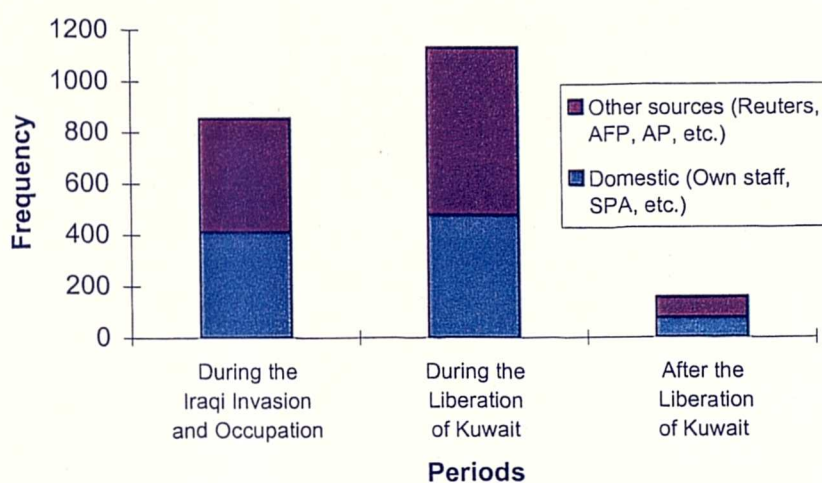


Figure 7.1 Frequency of the Saudi Press News Sources during the Gulf Conflict

It is clear that the Saudi press, immediately following the government's announcement that it would allow the United States, Western and other Islamic and Arab forces to use its land to counter the Iraqi military, looked to information outside Saudi Arabia, particularly from the US.

One reason why the Saudi press depended on foreign sources was a lack of Saudi staff writers, reporters and specialised editors. Saudi journalists are seldom in a position to cover the Saudi government's movements and opinions, as has been indicated from the research findings. In the absence of sufficient professional Saudi correspondents, the Saudi press editorial managers increased the effectiveness of their messages by using sources that were recognised for their credibility. In contrast, the credibility of Saudi

sources may be in doubt. The Saudi Arabian press reported, for example, that “Uday, Saddam’s eldest son, had been killed, during battles in Basra following the invasion of masses to the southern town, information that came from Iranian news agency” (*Okaz*, issue No. 8995, 5 March, 1991). It was also reported according to one media academic (MA/5) that Uday married the Israeli minister’s daughter. Both these stories were incorrect. The former bulletin was later corrected with an announcement that Uday was alive; and the latter news was patently ridiculous. The point here is that such mistakes would make readers suspicious about the way the Saudi press presented the news. As a result, many viewers turned to the foreign media services such as BBC and CNN. What is interesting is that the Saudi journalists themselves turned to these sources not only to gather news but also for understanding the conflict itself. Evidence of this came from the survey findings that although 72% of Saudi journalists believed that the Saudi press was a more adequate medium than Saudi radio and television, 68% believed that other external sources such as CNN, BBC and VOA were the main sources of information and news about the Gulf conflict. Significantly, 65% journalists believed that the limitation of the Saudi press was due to their co-operation with the government in their treatment of the conflict.

However, this researcher would argue that constraints imposed by the military authorities were another reason why the Saudi press could not fully rely on domestic or external sources. Intervention by the military, indeed, also limited the international wire services as well as the world media. Fialka quotes Michael Garther, President of NBC news, as saying on the front page of the *Wall Street Journal* (August 30, 1990): “here’s something you should know about that war [sic] that’s going on the Gulf: much of the news that you read or hear or see is being censored . . . There is no excuse for this kind of censorship [which] exceeds even the most stringent censorship of World War II” (1991: x).

In this respect, the Saudi journalists surveyed all agreed that press regulation should come from the journalists themselves. But since there was no choice, nearly half of Saudi journalists (48%) favoured the media ‘pooling’ their reports, and submitting them to the Joint Information Bureau; an equal number, however, viewed this as ‘unnecessary’. On the subject of the reasons censorship had been implemented, the majority (65%) suggested

that it was because the authorities believed that journalists would sensationalise stories to excite and attract readers, and that they thrive on conflict rather than conflict resolution.

One point that should be noted is that the Saudi press gave little attention to the Russian news agency, Tass. It used one item quoted during the Iraqi invasion and occupation and nine during the liberation and none after liberation of Kuwait. This is because Saudi Arabia does not accept Soviet Communist ideology, and also because Russia opposed the use of force to free Kuwait from Iraq. Another element was that unidentifiable sources ranked seventh during the Iraqi invasion and occupation and fifth both during and after the liberation of Kuwait. The reason is uncertain. Presumably the Saudi press assumed the items were newsworthy, but such items may have been a part of propaganda or intelligence tactics. For example, an instance that Iraqi tanks had been defeated later proved to have been falsely planted by the CIA to try to encourage defections (Zoglin, 1991: 56-7).

However, a significant implication was that the Saudi Arabian press tended to focus on other sources to learn world opinions about Iraqi aggression, so the press presented the news from the points of view of other world news sources or resources. These tended to give most attention to the American perspective because of US military and economic dominance in the world (Vandijk, 1988: 42). Moreover, American sources, in particular, had greater access to information than the Saudi sources, because of their superior technology. This conclusion would support the long-established academic theoretical tradition of 'media imperialism', especially US media imperialism. However, it tends towards the school that argues that such 'dependence' is due to indigenous factors within a less advanced media system rather than as a result of an imperialistic 'conspiracy' by a more advanced technologically media system. The CIA example, cited above, acts as a slight corrective to this. Nonetheless, this thesis inclines towards the view that Saudi dependence of western sources was due to inadequacies within the Saudi media system itself.

Modification from the individual press gatekeeper was insufficient. First, the Saudi press were not independent reporters, since news and information were to a large extent borrowed from outside Saudi Arabia. Second, the wire services and other foreign sources

stories would have taken the local papers' basic point of reference, interviewing perhaps the same people, and considering the same events as being newsworthy. In addition, the press remained passive, because Saudi journalists did not inquire what was being left out of the news stories presented. Indeed, the foreign news flow to Saudi Arabia could have contained hidden bias and propaganda; a few interviewees asserted that such external sources pursue their foreign policy objectives through official international broadcasting such as the VOA and the British Broadcasting Corporation.

In the researcher's judgement, the importance given to the external sources of the Saudi Arabian news items was not justified and what was presented to the public reflected the perspectives of foreign governments rather than the Saudi government. Because of the perception that these sources had more knowledge and understanding of the Gulf conflict, the Saudi press had to assimilate the views of the USA and UK. Also relevant in this respect are the issues of geographic origin of news and the personnel to whom the Saudi press gave coverage.

7.1.2.2 The Geographic Origin of Gulf Conflict News

Given that the Saudi press depended in their news presentation during the conflict more on foreign than domestic sources, it is likely that this would influence the geographical perspective of its news coverage, i.e. it would concentrate on some areas of the world and ignore others. This is particularly significant given the frequent research findings that Saudi press material was more influential in topic areas about the conflict in the Gulf on which the Saudi readers were ill-informed before the Iraqi invasion and occupation of Kuwait. Indeed, it was clearly revealed (Chapter 5) that the Saudi Arabian press coverage of the Gulf conflict paid greater attention to stories originating in the Middle East, the USA, Western Europe and other foreign locations, than to those originating in Saudi Arabia, contrary to hypothesis No. IV. Figure 7.2 shows the frequency of geographical locations of Gulf news covered by the Saudi press over three periods [(70.17% to 29.83%) (76.47% to 23.53%) (78.82% to 21.18%)].

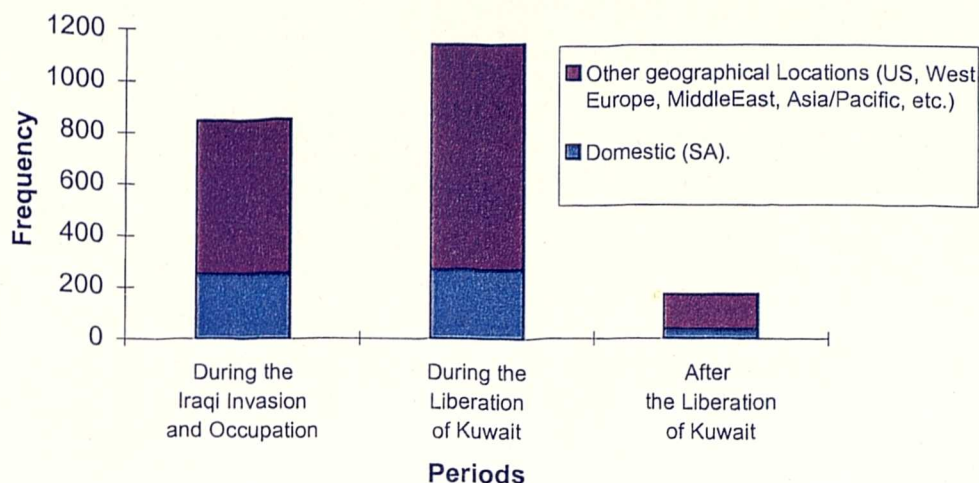


Figure 7.2 Frequency of Occurrence of the Saudi Press Geographical Sources of News during the Gulf Conflict

The content analysis research findings (Chapter 5) shed light on why the Saudi press paid attention to Gulf news located in foreign areas. Firstly, Saudi journalists felt an obligation to provide a world perspective to the Saudi government and Saudi society as a whole. In particular, Saudi readers, as Muslims, are interested in perspective of the Islamic world, the more so as Saudi Arabia, as the custodian of the Holy places, is viewed as a leader among the Islamic states.

So priority, also, was given to news from the Islamic states such as Egypt, Syria, the Gulf states, Indonesia, and Pakistan. This would suggest that the preconditions of greater regional/religious news exchanges already exist. States with mutual synergies of new topics perhaps need to work together more to improve news exchange mechanism. After all, in Saudi Arabia itself, which hosts foreign workers from many of these Islamic states, there would be a demand amongst this audience for more news from these 'home nations'.

Two factors explain the greater attention given to news from industrialised countries such as the US and UK. First, perceptions of these countries had already been formed through such influences as the Arabian-American oil company (ARAMCO) or the power of the VCR which has exposed audiences to programmes from abroad. Second, media and agency correspondents tend to be concentrated in commercial centres and major trade

posts in the colonial territories and the major capitals of the western Europe and North America. These are what Lyengar and Kinder called “news capitals” and it is their regular output rather than occasional news originating from ‘news provinces’ which is most influential in the world media (1987: 153-4). Therefore, news from the USA and western Europe received more attention from the Saudi press for historical and perhaps inevitable reasons.

Another reason for the dominance of American and Western news was the ‘chess game’ of politics. Saudi Arabia did not agree with the Soviet communist ideology, so it supported the capitalist states. Saudi journalists often have no other explanation for the absence of news from particular areas. News or events in Eastern Europe almost disappeared from the Saudi press. Our investigation (for the three study periods) revealed that Eastern Europe received the least attention from the Saudi press, which is remarkable given the break up of the Warsaw Pact that was taking place at the same time as the Gulf conflict. One reason, in Russia’s case, is its reaction to the Iraq aggression and its support of the Iraqi regime. For example, during the Iraqi invasion and occupation of Kuwait, the Saudi press presented only four items from Soviet Union and their theme was ‘possible withdrawal of Soviet military advisers from Iraq’. Even when Russia supported the UN resolutions and aggression, still only twenty stories were presented by the Saudi press during the liberation of Kuwait.

The major implication in this respect, is that ‘geographic proximity’, trade and political factors had an impact on the amount of Saudi Arabian press coverage the Gulf conflict. It might be argued that the coverage of geographical locations was a natural consequence of these countries’ involvement in the Gulf conflict and their interests in the region. During the bi-polar context of the Cold War, the Saudi press had clearly taken sides. It provided a ‘world-view’ that explained world events in terms of ‘good guy versus bad guy’. It was a black-and-white world, simple and straightforward in terms Saudi readers could understand. It helped position sides in the Gulf Conflict and eased the way for momentous changes in Saudi foreign policy, especially the arrival of American troops on sacred Saudi soil. Yet despite the massive potential for change, the very fact that Saudi journalists reverted after the war to old ways of reporting, even though the Cold War was almost

over and a 'New World Order' had arrived in its place, the inherent conservatism of Saudi society prevailed.

7.1.2.3 Personnel in Gulf Conflict News

Just as some geographical locations received more coverage than others, a few people merited the daily attention of Saudi journalists, while many others escaped their attentions entirely. It was found that the Saudi press coverage during the Gulf conflict relied heavily on other personnel than from the Saudi Arabian government; for example, from the Middle East, the USA and Asia. Again, this was contrary to hypothesis No. III.

Figure 7.3 shows the proportion of foreign to domestic personnel covered in news stories by Saudi press over the three periods [(84.01% to 15.99%) (84.14% to 15.86%) (88.10% to 11.90%)].

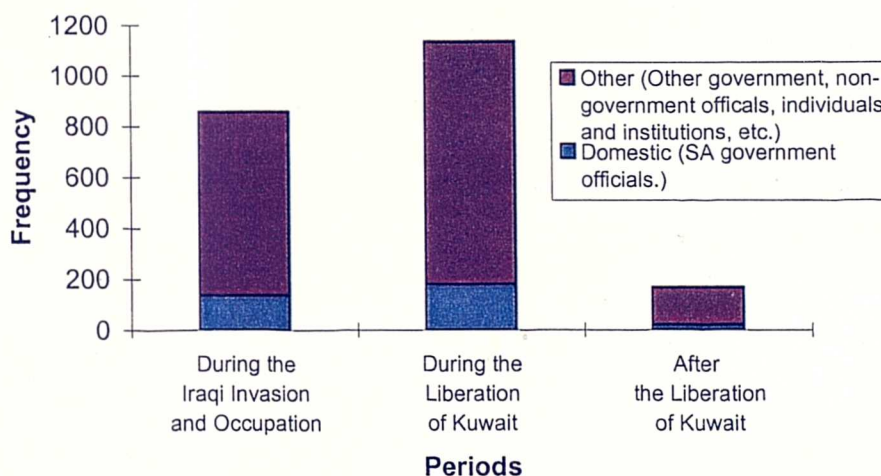


Figure 7.3 Frequency of Personnel Covered in News during the Gulf Conflict

In this matter, we looked at the origin of personnel, government authorities, individuals and institutes to see who was covered in news stories by the Saudi press (see Chapter 5. Tables 5.8, 5.21 & 5.34). The figures in these tables, which listed sources individually, showed that Saudi Arabian government personnel ranked first, since the state attracted

strong criticism, particularly in the Muslim and more importantly the Arab world, for welcoming Western forces to liberate Kuwait.

Multi regions and countries, more than governments involved in solving the conflict, ranked second. One significant note is that the USA itself ranked after the Saudi government. Again, as in the case of sources and geographical locations discussed earlier, the Saudi journalists did not give attention to Eastern Europe or other proponents of communism, such as Cuba and North Korea. Also, the Saudi Arabian press had a duty to concentrate on major elite figures such as foreign heads of state, political leaders and significant individuals and institutions, and publications such as *the Times*, *the New York Times* and the like.

The reason is clear that those public figures and publications, with their role in the conduct of government affairs and influence on public opinion, played a major role in influencing the course of the Gulf conflict until the Iraqi troops withdrew from Kuwait.

Another important objective was to involve the Saudi religious institutions and make them understand that the Saudi Arabian government did not wish to go to war with another Islamic state, but was forced into its stance by Iraqi aggression towards Kuwait. For example, General Schwarzkopf, Commander of the Coalition Central Forces said “. . . the Saudis themselves showed little interest in going on the offensive, so attacking the Iraqis from Saudi territory seemed out of the question. Khalid’s [Commander, Saudi forces] attitude reflected that of King Fahd, Prince Sultan, and the rest of the royal family. Sometimes Khalid would say, ‘Saddam has got to be destroyed,’ or, ‘we can not let him get away with this, but his next sentence was always, ‘But we can not attack our Arab brothers’ (1992: 436). Quoting SPA, *Okaz* newspaper reported in its issue No. 8988 on 26 February 1991 that the Saudi Council of Ministers has called for “the liberation of Kuwait with the minimum of losses among the joint forces and the Iraqi forces and to treat the Iraqi prisoners of war with dignity according to the teachings of Islamic sharia”.

This routine coverage of the political elite inevitably produced a large number of news stories. Their views were obviously regarded as having news value. But one problem was

that the Saudi press focused more on personalities than on social groups. For example, the UN was the subject, in the three periods, of only 1.63%, 1.74% and 1.15% of all news presented. Some stories referred to the UN resolutions but as a reference point rather than as the main theme of the news.

The Saudi press paid more attention specifically during the liberation of Kuwait (see Chapter 5, Table 5.21) to the allied coalition (ranked first) while the Saudi government authorities came second and the Middle East, notably Egypt, ranked third. The reason for this is that the Saudi press were more concerned to present the Saudi government's policy in peace time than in war time.

Much coverage during the Gulf conflict was given to elite to people such as the President of USA, Ulama (religious scholars) and public figures. It appears to have been the view of the Saudi journalists that reference to these names gave their news stories greater interest. In the light of the above discussion, the next section evaluates the Saudi press performance via its agenda.

7.1.2.4 The Saudi Press Agenda during the Gulf Conflict

Since the Saudi press is controlled indirectly by the government, the Saudi press is considered as an instrument of government policy. It is likely, then, that Saudi government policy would be carried out without any challenge from the press itself. More specifically, the coverage of Saudi government activities as well as those of other states' leaders who supported the UN resolutions would be positive in tone.

Five main types of news will be discussed to examine the Saudi press agenda. These are political and military/defence news, crime/law/justice, economic and religious news. They were chosen because they were the themes found most frequently in the newspapers surveyed. However, before going into more details, it seems appropriate first to review briefly the theme of news items revealed from the content analysis of the Saudi press during the periods of analysis.

7.1.2.4.1 Themes of the News Items of the Gulf Conflict

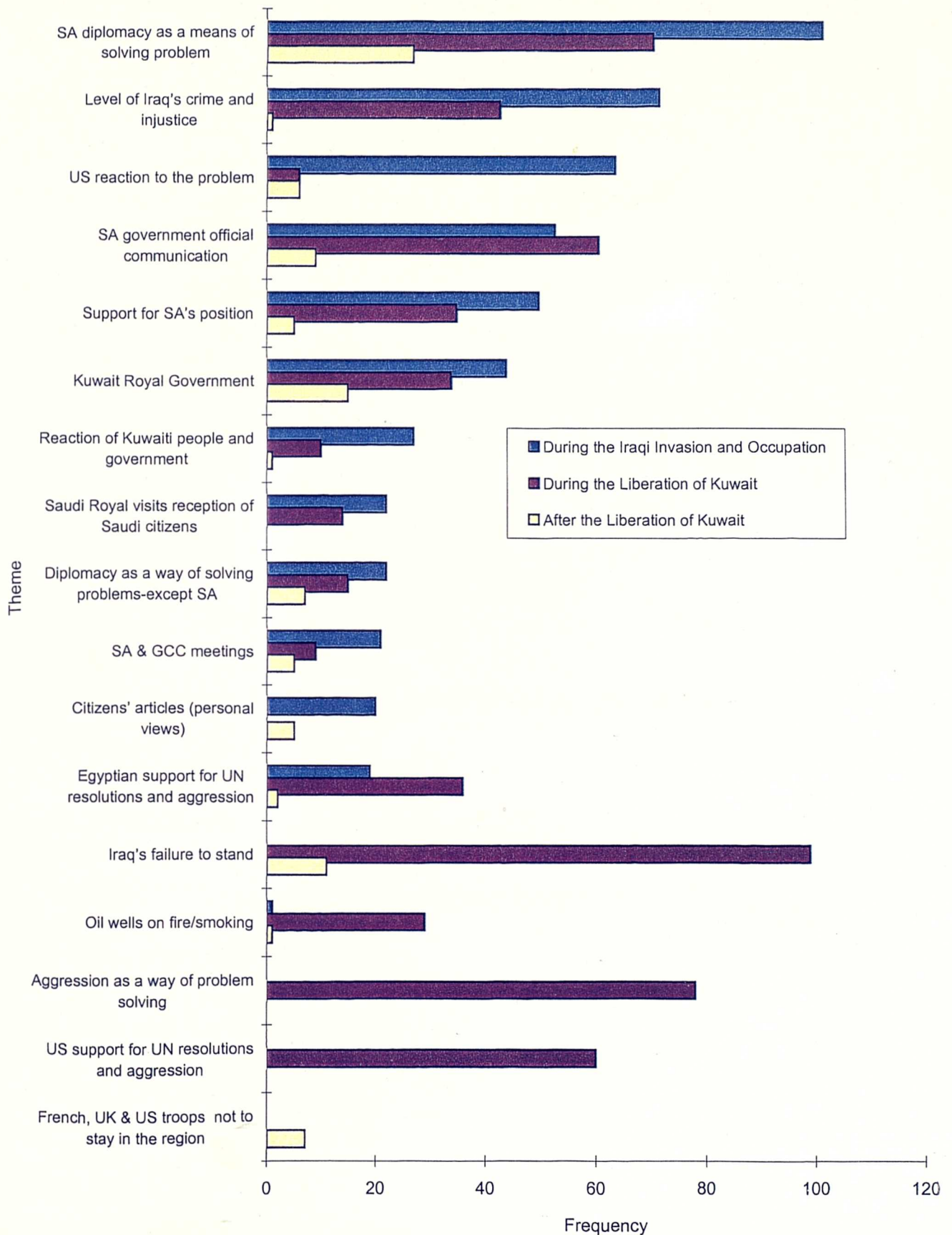
Hypothesis No. II suggested that within the Saudi press, individual newspapers would give similar levels of coverage to various themes within the news items presented. The data from the content analysis led to a rejection of this hypothesis and confirmed that there were differences among the Saudi press in the *number* of themes presented. Attention is drawn to Table 7.1 derived from the top ten themes for each period of the conflict shown previously in Chapter 5, Tables 5.7, 5.20 and 5.33.

Chapter 5 showed some themes that were common to two or more periods, while others were confined to a single period. Thus, over the conflict as a whole, a total of 17 major themes can be identified. The data in Table 7.1 indicates the major themes of the press news items for the samples analysed in the three periods. The theme appearing most frequently was diplomacy to resolve the situation. Perhaps surprising is that the second highest frequency score was for criticism of Iraq's crime and injustice, voiced while the peace negotiations were in the early stages. In that respect, the press agenda contained contradiction.

During the liberation of Kuwait, contradiction also existed. The themes appearing the most frequently were the Iraqi collapse, and aggression as a way of problem solving, though the Saudi Arabian government was engaged in diplomatic moves to stop the war if Iraq accepted the UN resolution. After the liberation of Kuwait, as during the Iraqi invasion and occupation period, the theme achieving the highest frequency score was the Saudi government's diplomacy, in the terms of 'diplomacy justification' as a means of solving problems. One explanation is that there was pressure from Saudi or allied governments to justify their stance.

Equal coverage of themes, as the content analysis shows, was not achieved. Undoubtedly, the news favoured Saudi and allied countries. It is not surprising that the press did not give equal opportunity to the enemy's point of view; it was not an election campaign, but a war campaign. Evidence on this matter is clearly as a result of the propaganda operation on both sides, conveying different messages but with the same purpose.

Table 7.1 The Major Themes of News items during the Gulf Conflict



Kalb quoted Walter Lippmann who worked for the Committee on Public Information, the first USA propaganda and censorship agency, during World War I, that “We must remember that in time of war what is said is always propaganda and what is said on our side of the front is truth and righteousness” (1994: 7). A good example was Lacey and Longman who referred to Maggie O’Kane’s investigation into the reporting of the Gulf War in December 1995. She accused George Bush and Margaret Thatcher of going to war based on a propaganda ‘lie’ (Lacey & Longman, 1997: 7).

This propaganda lie involved the claim that more than a quarter of a million of Iraqi troops were massing on the Saudi border to take over the Saudi oil fields. Subsequently, satellite photographs showed an empty deserted space where thousands of troops should have been billeted. The photographs were and are classified for security reasons, although other commercial satellites have photographed the Middle East. Lacey and Longman quoted O’Kane as saying that “There was no massive build-up. But by then, the war was fought and won and it did not matter that the ‘proof’ of Saddam’s bloodthirsty intentions was a fraud” (1997: 7).

Whatever the truth of these claims, the anti-Saudi messages conveyed in the Iraqi media (see Chapter 4) which would have taken some time to prepare, suggest that Saddam did in fact, have hostile intentions towards the country.

7.1.2.4.2 Political and Military Gulf Conflict News

The findings of the content analysis in relation to hypothesis I which stated that political and military/defence developments in the Gulf conflict would be more newsworthy than any other Gulf news topics, their type of news would be largely be domestic rather than international and foreign, and generally positive rather than negative in the tone, revealed mixed results (see Figures 7.4, 7.5 & 7.6).

Certainly, the political and military/defence developments in the Gulf conflict were regarded as more newsworthy than any other Gulf news topics, but the news was largely

international and foreign, rather than domestic, and generally positive rather than negative in all the three periods. However, for more explanation we shall take each of these two news topics separately for more clarification of the most important issues of the Saudi press agenda.

7.1.2.4.2.1 Political News of the Gulf Conflict

There is no doubt that Saudi journalists found themselves in a challenging situation because of the Iraqi invasion and occupation of Kuwait as well as under pressure from both the Saudi government and Saudi society in the mission that they were assigned regarding reporting the events. One major problem, as identified by both media academics and journalists, was the lack of information available to them, and the fact that they could not work without political permission. This situation is contrary to the journalistic principles, where news values takes precedence over other considerations.

Thus, the Saudi press themselves were required to adopt the official focus which focused on peace negotiations, even though the response of the international community to Iraq's annexation of Kuwait made it increasingly likely that war was imminent.

However, during the period of the Iraqi invasion and occupation, most immediately striking, as the content analysis revealed, was the prominence of political stories. Foreign political news topics predominated. One reason, as indicated in previous discussion in relation to the source of news, was that the Saudi press depended on foreign sources more than on Saudi officials or the SPA, because of a lack of editorial resources to write background stories. In addition, for Saudi journalists, the major criterion of news value was reference to elite nations and people. The Iraqi occupation had involved the USA, Western Europe and Egypt more than any other countries, and the concern was to present their points of view.

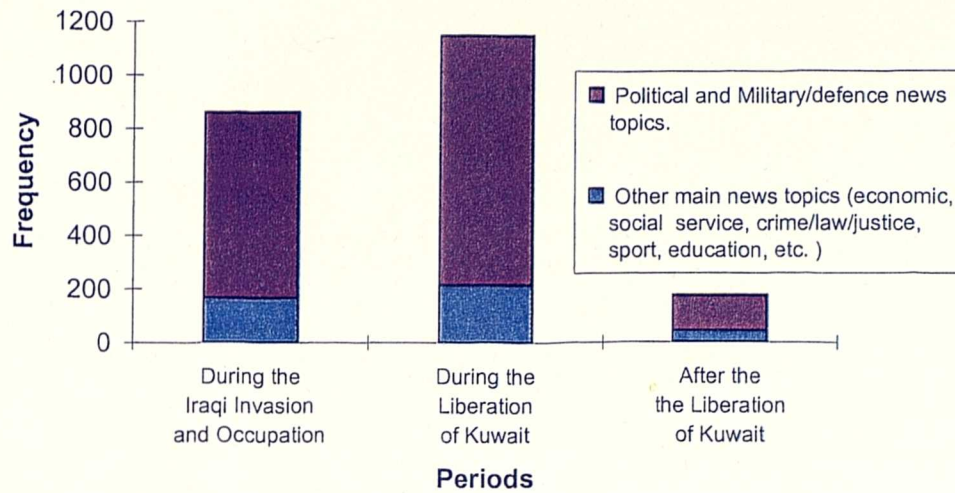


Figure 7.4 Frequency of the Saudi Press Main News Topics during the Gulf Conflict

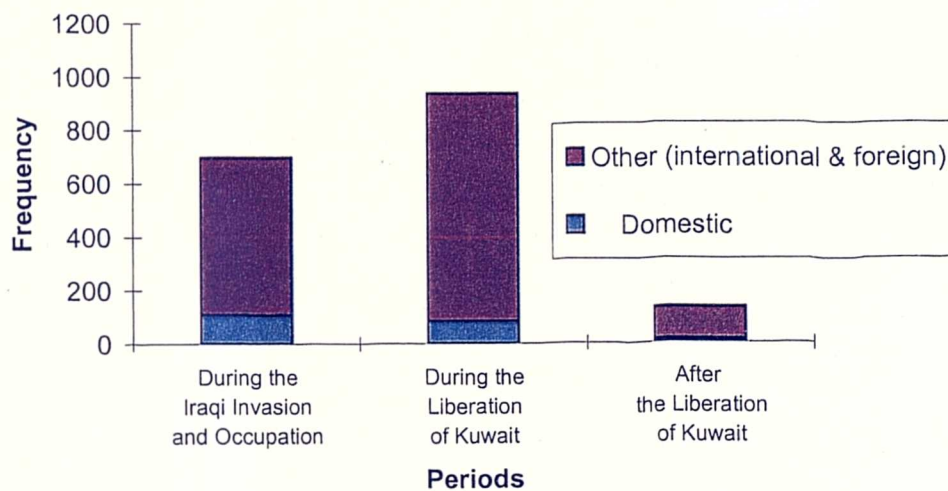


Figure 7.5 Frequency of the Saudi Press Type of Political and Military/ Defence News during the Gulf Conflict

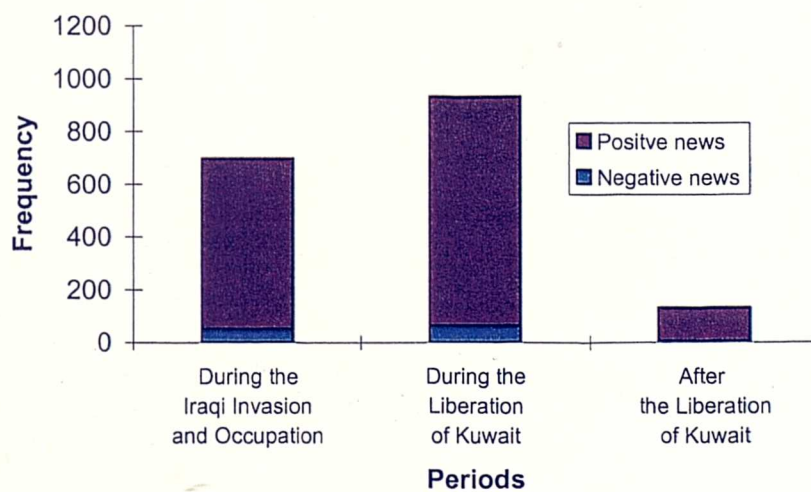


Figure 7.6 Frequency of the Saudi Press Tone of Political and Military/ Defence News during the Gulf Conflict

In addition, reference to Kings and presidium members or other notable public figures such as Bush, Baker, Secretary Cheney, Colonel Powell, General H. Norman Schwarzkopf, Margaret Thatcher, John Major and Mikhail Gorbachev were important for the Saudi press because they were believed to be good source of information and to have credibility in the public eye.

Support for the Saudi Arabian position from different countries, organisations and individuals abroad was also presented as good news. International peace movements as a way of solving the problem, summit meetings of the five permanent members of the UN, and news about the failure of peace initiatives by France, Russia, UN Secretary General DeCuellar and the EC were reported. By so doing, the press was demonstrating the Saudi government's involvement with these international initiative. To illustrate this point, coverage of the Saudi press of the views and movements of world leaders can be summed up in these words from a Saudi paper: "all world leaders and personalities have tried everything possible up to the last moment and they felt that every single chance of maintaining peace has been shut by Saddam" (*Okaz*, issue No. 8845, 6 October, 1990). The paper went on to add that "the conclusions reached by the whole world was sufficient to convince the collaborators and those deceived from the Arab world, to rethink their positions for the last time and before it is too late to do so. All that the world leaders have tried to achieve in search of peace and in search of solutions has collapsed. The world has become convinced that the only way to deal with people like Saddam is to use force and force only. Saddam alone must bear the responsibility and the consequences of going down this road which he has imposed on the world" (*Okaz*, issue No. 8845, 6 October, 1990).

The reason for Saudi press concentration on foreign political news was clear. As well as the political, military and economic status of these sources, there was concern for the criterion of 'timeliness' and, hence, the press needed to utilise the technology of rapid communication, with which the US sources were better equipped than the Saudis, as indicated by J/9 and J/11 in relation to CNN which has an advanced media equipment (see Chapter 4).

The focus on foreign political news does not mean, however, that the Saudi press ignored the Saudi government. Saudi Arabia played a major role in solving the Gulf conflict as a part of the international community. It is to be expected that any national press will highlight the role of the country's leaders in world events. So the Saudi press gave positive coverage to the King, the Crown Prince, the Ministers of Defence, Foreign Affairs and the Interior, as well as princes and other Saudi authorities, including religious leaders. In this respect, the press in relation to Saudi political and military/defence news most often placed the King at the centre of news (60%), reporting his trips within the country, meetings with foreign ambassadors and correspondence with other national rulers. In addition, public addresses by the King, the Crown Prince, and the Minister of Defence were extensively covered. Such speeches are considered Saudi government policy. Thus, the only comments reported in reaction to local or international events were from major Saudi figures. In this way, the government would influence the press agenda, which in turn would shape public opinion at home.

Cultural proximity, too, was an important criterion in the Saudi press reports of other countries' reactions to events. Saudi diplomacy as a means of solving the problem was a major focus of attention. Egypt received attention since it was a part of the Arab Unity Council but it disagreed with the Iraqi aggression. For example, *Okaz* wrote in its leading article "This is the Egypt that we know" (issue No. 8815, 6 September, 1990).

During the liberation of Kuwait, however, the prominence of political stories ranked second, since the air campaign led to military/defence news being allocated greater space (see Chapter 5). Nevertheless, foreign political news accounted for 39.29% of all news topics presented. As was the case during the Iraqi occupation, foreign countries' political moves were highlighted in this period, for example news about the US reaction, President Bush and John Major's statements about Gorbachev's peace plan; support for the UN resolutions and counter-aggression by the world wide community, including Russia, which had previously refused to use military action as a way to solve the problem; and Iran's stance on the return of prisoners from the Iraq-Iran war.

After the liberation of Kuwait, political news remained first on the Saudi press agenda. One remarkable political news report was that the Crown Prince of Jordan had said that "Saddam will not stay in power" (*Okaz*, issue No. 8995, 5 March, 1991) though King Hussein had supported the Iraqi invasion. This statement can be seen as a pragmatic attempt, once it became clear that Iraq could not win, to build bridges with the victors for Jordan's future benefit. One more note is that after the liberation of Kuwait, the theme of news in the Saudi press in general changed to Saudi diplomacy as a means of solving the problem, Kuwait's Royal government and the diplomacy of other countries. Kuwait was liberated and the tone was one of congratulation. So the press as well as the public was to copy the government policy, rather than interpret events and set its own agenda. This was due to the political and religious values that leaders must be obeyed.

The performance of the Saudi press toward the Gulf conflict can be compared with that of countries which have different political structures but had the same interests to solve the Gulf conflict. The American Networks such as CBS and NBC, for some sixty days before Iraq's invasion, were discussing the Iraqi regime, the power of Saddam Hussein in the region and the risk to resources on which the US depended. The aim of these reports seemed to be to prepare the nation for war, as part of the USA government's Psychological preparations to gain public support. The US press discussed the issue openly and confidently manipulated public opinion in the name of national interest. The Saudi press could not do this. As indicated by the Saudi academics and journalists (MA/3, MA/5 & J/5) the Saudi press lacked the experience to analyse the trend of events, and to convey psychological messages. It might be thought, however, that a government controlled press might be more capable of preparing for war than a democratic one. That this was not the case reflects the government's own lack of media awareness and the reactive nature of its policy towards Iraq. Saudi Arabia's hope and concern, up to the last possible moment, was to avoid becoming embroiled in a regional conflict. By the time it accepted the inevitability of the conflict, it was too late to engage in psychological preparation, even if it had a sufficiently sophisticated understanding of the use of the media to enable it to do so.

Closely related to political news was the bureaucratic- technical discourse of the diplomats and diplomatic experts. Indeed, there were three groups involved, specifically the US President Bush; Gorbachev, who strongly opposed the use of military force; and Saddam Hussein and his allies who insisted there would be no withdrawal from Kuwait. The news about the USA in the Saudi press concerned its support for the UN resolutions and the US's unshakeable position toward the Iraqi aggression. Russia did not get priority in the Saudi press; recognising that Russia is a nuclear state and superpower, the press dealt carefully with its position, offering little news until Russia agreed finally with UN resolution 678 on the use of 'all necessary means' to liberate Kuwait, passed on 29 November 1990.

But the discourse was different during the Iraqi invasion and occupation. This shows one difficulty the peace movement faced. If there had been more coverage of Russia's stance, not only in the Saudi media but in the world media, more force may have been given to the argument in favour of an alternative solution short of war. For although the Saudi press had long since taken 'sides' within the context of the Cold War, Russia remained a significant international player - as Primakov's frequent visits to Baghdad during the war revealed. We know now that the Soviet Union was on the road to internal collapse, plus that Soviet military authorities during the war were becoming increasingly alarmed at the ability of coalition air-forces to penetrate largely Soviet-designed Iraqi air defences. But the analytical shortcomings of the Saudi press ensured that none of these complexities would gain attention. The nation was about to go to war and the Soviet Union was sympathetic to 'the other side'; it thus warranted less attention than the contribution of 'friends' and allies, such as US and UK.

7.1.2.4.2.2 Military News of the Gulf Conflict

An issue that concerns both journalists and the military is the 'right to know'. The former believe that military tasks, movements and changes in military policy must be presented to the public; the latter is concerned primarily with operational security. However, during the Gulf conflict, a new information policy emerged not only for the Saudi press but also for

all journalists and broadcasters who participated during the course of the conflict. The military requirement, as pointed out previously, was that journalists' reports be pooled, and submitted to the Joint Information Bureau in Riyadh. In relation to the Saudi journalists, there was a Saudi press information policy that had to be obeyed.

During the Iraqi invasion and occupation, military news ranked second amongst Saudi journalists' concerns. It is no surprise that it should rank after political news. One reason is that diplomatic negotiations for peace were going on. Another important point was that the debate among Arab nations as well as religious scholars in Saudi Arabia and the Organisation of Islamic Conference had not yet finished. In other words, editors regarded the military news as 'political news' since news presented during this period included the impact of US technology in the Gulf conflict, movement of troops into the region, possible withdrawal of Soviet military advisors from Iraq, and military capacity such as ships, aircraft, etc.

As the UN resolutions and initiatives of the US, UK, France and other countries, and even Russia, failed, the possibility of fighting emerged. As one paper said, 'American Navy prepares to bombard Kuwait' (*al-Yaum*, issue No. 6457, 18 February, 1991). The objective of the Saudi press then was to send a message to Saddam Hussein to withdraw from Kuwait. No mention of aggression as a way of solving the problem, e.g. Allied air attack, bombing, etc. appeared in the papers.

The most striking feature of the press content during the liberation period was the prominence of military/defence items, accounting for 41.99% of all news reported. Of items on this topic, 92.53% were positive, i.e. favourable to the UN resolutions. When the war started, political news ranked second. The Saudi Arabian press concentrated first on Iraq's failure to stand against the allied forces, e.g. news about Iraqi prisoners, destroyed aircraft, air bases, etc. (note the war began on Iraqi territory not in Kuwait). The second type of military story presented the coalition forces' activities, such as news about the allied air attack on Baghdad and the bombing of military targets.

The effect of the extensive military news during the war was that citizens became afraid that Iraqi Scuds might reach Riyadh, so many people tried to escape either to the west or south of Saudi Arabia. So, news of deaths was a significant theme during the war. For example, during the liberation of Khafji, the Saudi press announced those who had died from the Saudi Military and reported Government officials' visits to their families. The bombing of the Baghdad shelter, on 13 February 1991, was a significant event showing the important role that mass communication, particularly television, can play during a war. The incident was reported by CNN's Peter Arnett on his satellite phone and later using pictures from independent television news [ITN]. Macgregor explained that "a dozen crews had been taken there that morning and stressed it was a shelter [not a Bunker] and made it clear that bodies were being removed" (1994 :243). Indeed, during war time, there is no certain guarantee against mistakes' but military mistakes mean people's deaths. The point here is that the reporting of this event showed that the military was not able to exercise full control of information; events will inevitably be reported by other sources because technology gives them physical access to information that the military might have preferred to withhold (Macgregor, 1994: 265).

As the bombing continued, reports came from Baghdad via CNN that allied bombs had killed and wounded a number of civilians. This posed a dilemma for the press; events such as the bombing of al-Amariya were difficult to justify; they appeared inconsistent with the official message that the role of the foreign forces was to oust Saddam from Kuwait or that the war was not being fought against the Iraqi people. If this was not what was happening, Saudis might question whether the political decision to allow foreign forces into Saudi territory was justified.

The leader of the "Peninsula Shield" and the leader of King Abd Al-Aziz 20th Squadron say: "the size of the Iraqi chemical weapons is exaggerated and they are technically backward" (*al-Yaum*, issue No. 6318, 2 October, 1990). This was also confirmed by a British expert who believed that Iraq does not possess the technology of chemical weapons (*al-Yaum*, issue No. 6429, 21 January, 1991). This indicates a lack of a real understanding by the leaders of the extent of the chemical weapons programme. The publication of such

statements reflects a belief on the part of the papers that this issue was not important and there was no need for alarm.

Another example, even though it reflects the situation of journalists in Saudi Arabia, is the permission to publish in one of the inside pages on 16th January 1991 an item of news quoted from the Reuters News Agency which said that “an American senator had said that Saddam has made his intentions four months before his army carried out the invasion of Kuwait” (*al-Yaum*, issue No. 16, February, 1991). This item, however, implicitly accuses the Saudi Intelligence Service of being less efficient (less intelligent) and it also accuses the journalists in the paper, who after all were Saudi nationals, of being insensitive.

So one implication that can be drawn is that the objective during the Gulf war was to support the coalition goal of liberating Kuwait but an additional objective of the foreign forces, namely those of the US and UK, to eliminate Saddam Hussein’s military machine, particularly his chemical weapons programme, was not acknowledged in the Saudi press.

The war was one in which the allied forces with their modern weapons defeated Iraqi forces which lacked communication and mobilisation of soldiers and military supplies to the battlefields. The presentation of news about human and material Iraqi losses is important to the political decision makers and those with an interest in the outcome of the Gulf conflict, but might be distressing to the general public about the crimes of the Iraqi regime and its refusal to abide by the United Nation resolutions and its irrational behaviour are all important to preclude world opinion, and especially Saudi public opinion, from thinking about the losses that had resulted from the air and land campaigns, things which could stir up unfavourable Arab opinion. For example, under the heading, “Saddam and his Aggressive Tendencies”, *al-Yaum* commented: “Anyone following the initiatives and announcements by the Iraqi leader since the beginning of the Kuwaiti crises, and even before that, can easily see the aggressive tendency that dominates the thinking of the Iraqi leader and which govern his behaviour and shape his political moves” (issue No. 6411, 3 January, 1991).

This does not mean that there was no news about the Iraqi casualties and those who were killed on the Iraqi side during the conflict, but where these were reported, the emphasis was on undermining Saddam's credibility. For example, the leading article of *al-Yaum* under the title "Saddam Fears Confrontation", confirmed that "high ranking army specialists cast doubt about Iraq's capabilities in terms of equipment and quality of its military personnel. The Iraqi suffers severely from a lack of distinguished leadership because Saddam has executed a large number of high ranking officers including those who planned Kuwait invasion" (issue No. 6350, 3 November 1990). Iraqi had, by 28 February 1991, lost "3708 tanks and 42 military divisions while the number of war prisoners has reached 175,000" (*al-Yaum*, issue No. 8285, 1 March 1991). Despite all these losses Saddam remained in power.

After Kuwait's liberation, the Saudi press reported Iraq failure, military negotiations between Allied forces, and Iraqis in Basra. In addition, the prospect of the Western military returning to their own countries was reported prominently, as the presence of foreign military forces in the region was a sensitive issue religiously as well as politically, being viewed as 'occupation by indirect means'. This matter, coupled with the sensitivity with which the presence of foreign troops on Saudi soil is seen, led *al-Riyadh* newspaper in its issue No. 8290, 8 March 1991 to report that "the British Prime Minister, Mr. John Major, had announced in the House of Commons on 7 March 1990 that the British forces will start to withdraw from the Gulf region in two days and this will be followed with the withdrawal of the Tornado fighter planes a few days afterwards".

In this period the Saudi press also reflected generally on the nature of Arab politics which appeared to have no means for bringing about change, other than violent conflict. One article highlighted this point by contrasting Arab history with that of certain Western states. For instance, it said "Thatcher was elected three times for the office of Prime Minister in Britain but when the British people felt that she had been in office for too long and change is needed, they voted her out of office [This is in fact inaccurate. Margaret Thatcher was by a Conservative Party internal 'coup'. She was not defeated at a general election]. This does not happen in the Arab world and the only means to effect change is through bloody

confrontations, imprisonment or physical liquidations” (*al-Riyadh*, issue No. 8217, 2 January, 1991).

7.1.2.4.3 Crime, Law and Justice News of the Gulf Conflict

Crime, law and justice are also factors which may contribute to legitimising or delegitimising the Gulf conflict coverage. In line with usual news practice, the more negative the consequences of an event, the more probable it is that it will become a news item, on the historic assumption that negative information tends to have a stronger newsworthiness than positive information. During Iraq’s invasion and occupation of Kuwait, there was emphasis on the negative attributes of Iraqi authorities and the injustice of their policies. The Saudi government was not featured, whether as mediator or commentator. News of Iraq’s crimes and injustice, both inside and outside Iraq, were ranked as the second theme of news items in the Saudi Arabian press.

During the liberation, crime, law and justice news ranked third, as it did during the invasion and occupation. The Saudi press focused on the Iraqi government’s crimes, such as foreigners being held hostage, terrorism, and the use of Iraqi people as human shields to protect Saddam during the allied bombing of Iraq. Examples of Iraqi crimes come easily from various sources such as the announcement by the American State Department which reported that “another four American citizens had joined some 110 other American civilians believed to have been kept hostages in Iraqi military cites and being used as human shields” (*al-Riyadh*, issue No. 8166, 2 November, 1990). Quoting President Bush, *al-Riyadh* also added, “this is something which even Adolph Hitler did not do”. According to another report, “A 24-year old Kuwaiti resistance fighter has said that an Iraqi soldier has killed four children in front of him and in front of their mother. He then threatened the mother by warning her that she would be the fifth to die if she made any resistance. Another young man’s mother was killed because he was accused of being a member of the Kuwaiti resistance. Another died after an electric current was passed through his genital organs” (*al-Riyadh*, issue No. 8167, 3 November, 1990).

Al-Yaum newspaper, quoting Reuters News Agency, which itself was quoting the Egyptian newspaper *Al-Akhbar* [The News], reported the arrival of 560 bodies the Egyptian soldiers killed in Iraq during 62 days. The bodies were transported by bus or aeroplane to Amman first and then flown to Cairo (issue No. 6292, 6 September, 1990).

As far as Saddam's terrorist activities abroad were concerned, it was reported that twenty-five Iraqis had been expelled from Turkey after being found engaged in hostile activities against Turkey" (*Okza*, issue No. 8872, 2 November, 1990).

After the liberation, the Saudi press voiced its concern about the Kuwait people who were missing. It stated that 33,000 Kuwaitis were missing; 22, 000 had been taken as hostages. News was reported about bodies found in the Sabah Hospital. The press also tackled what Saddam had done to his army, simply by the invasion of Kuwait. Some of the hostility towards Saddam was extended to those Arab countries which had supported Saddam in the name of Arab solidarity, and it was claimed that "the regimes, both left and right, are no longer fit to lead their people into the next phase" (*al-Riyadh*, issue No. 8137, 4 October, 1990).

These examples show that the press was primarily concerned to demonize Saddam and assign blame for the events of the conflict. However, they failed to question what would happen if Iraq had actually invaded Saudi Arabia or used chemical weapons or, as one journalist (J/3), said: 'What economic losses would Saudi Arabia have incurred if Iraq had overrun Saudi Arabia?

7.1.2.4.4 Economic News of the Gulf Conflict

Coverage of news relating to economic matters was on the Saudi press agenda but it ranked fourth during the Iraqi invasion and occupation as well as after the liberation of Kuwait, and fifth during the liberation period. The historical weakness of the Saudi press as specialists in economics, as well as the fact that economic analysis is not on the curriculum of Saudi departmental communications, would clearly contribute to the low

attention given to economic news. The journalists seemed unwilling and unable to tackle the economic implications of the conflict, such as when the Iraqis burned the oil fields and polluted the water of the Gulf, though a few articles appeared about rising oil prices and the effect of economic sanctions. There was also a particularly marked contrast in frequency of occurrence between the three previous news topics namely, political, military and crime/law/justice news and this topic, and most of the economic news was foreign (see Chapter 5, Tables 5.3, 5.16 and 5.29).

During the liberation of Kuwait, economic news ranked fifth. The main feature of the news in this period, compared with the invasion period, was the focus on the economic consequences of Iraq's firing of Kuwaiti oil wells. The total number of oil wells set on fire in Kuwait was estimated at 600. This is in addition to other oil installations (*al-Riyadh*, issue No. 8291, 7 March, 1990). Although these events themselves were negative, the news items are classed as positive, since their impact was to support the allied military operation, which was the definition of positive news adopted in this thesis. In an article in *Okaz* newspaper, for example, it was reported that a number of specialists in petroleum studies had told the paper that "the destruction of oil installations by the invading Iraqi forces and setting them on fire would in the end lead to the defeat of Saddam and his forces and would accelerate his downfall. This is particularly so because Kuwait is one of the major sources of energy that benefit the industrial countries and the developing ones on an equal basis" (issue No. 8956, 25 January 1991).

After the liberation of Kuwait, the Saudi press was more concerned with foreign than with local economic news. In this respect, the Saudi press can be accused of failing to inform Saudi society of the local impact of the Gulf conflict. There was a failure to consider such topics as how much Saudi actually lost because of Iraqi aggression, how much money was paid to Russia to persuade her not to interfere, and how the invasion might affect the Saudi national income in future because of the instability in the oil markets after the liberation of Kuwait. It did not, in this researcher's opinion, provide an objective account of the effect of Saudi politics in the region on the public. Saudi journalists seemed to lack a proper Saudi economic perspective of the conflict and gave preference in economic news to western, US and Egyptian stories. This is because neither journalists nor the public are

economics oriented, a situation which may perhaps be explained in terms of the country's sudden increase in prosperity following the 1980s, and the rise in oil prices, which brought a standard of living higher than in most of the developed countries. Lacking understanding of the finite nature of this resource, or experience of the complexities of modern economics, individual prosperity has not been accompanied by a similar increase in general awareness and in media awareness and as a result individuals squandered money without any appreciation of its value. Sudden wealth brought a trend away from traditional means of production, on creating a nation of consumers without any realisation of economic initiatives or opportunities available to them. In this situation, it is not surprising that the media should show less interest in economic than political and social issues, and should be deficient in economic analysis. Another reason for this lack of interest is that the centrally planned economic of Saudi Arabia, economic analysis and decision-making is regarded as solely a government concern. There is no tradition of economic analysis by the media, nor is such analysis encouraged.

7.1.2.4.5 Religious News of the Gulf Conflict

Religious news is considered as highly sensitive. Domestic, international and foreign religious news related to the Gulf conflict was, as can be expected, 'good news'. The heavy emphasis on religious news was largely international where Saudi Arabian authorities, including religious leaders, were involved. Even though religious news ranked sixth during the Iraqi invasion and occupation, it could not be avoided nor dismissed as 'meaningless' news, since almost all Islamic and Arab countries participated in the conflict and had the same faith as Saudi Arabia. Egypt was a good example of this. The Saudi press tried to prepare public opinion, both inside and outside, for the presence of friendly armed forces in the region, by mentioning that this was Islamically and constitutionally acceptable. In fact the government campaign helped to set the press agenda by encouraging the coverage of religious debate which would help to give its policies legitimacy in the eyes of the public. Thus, Islam was forced into the political crisis in the Gulf. As the Ambassador of the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques to the United Kingdom, Al-Gosaibi, says:

Islam was forced into the political crises in the Gulf even before anyone had conducted a thorough study of all aspects of the crises to reach an Islamic judgement on it. Each party to the crises has built its political stand in the light of political considerations and came up with divine explanations later. Those who opposed the invasion of Kuwait found some Islamic divine texts to support their arguments and those who supported the invasion also found texts in their favour, i.e. each group had selected texts from Islamic jurisprudence in line with what it was saying (1992: 127).

The government opened Islamic dialogue and the papers started to discuss the views of regional and international Islamic religious leaders. The language used was effective. For example the Saudi scholars' statements read that the duty of a ruler is to use all means to deter aggression and the incursion of evil as well as ensure the safety of the people and safeguard their wealth, honour and blood (Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, 1991: 41-2). The statements also contained highly emotive Islamic concepts. For example, a statement of the Board of the Senior Ulema in Saudi Arabia referred to vicious crimes, violation of sacredness, the enemy, and aggressive incursion against the Islamic world. Sheikh Abdul Aziz ibn Abdullah ibn Baz, the General President of the Islamic Science Research Ifta (tyranny) Call and Guidance Department, used words such as 'sinful aggression', 'gross injustice', 'spilled blood', 'robbed wealth', 'violated honour', and 'displaced innocent people'. The messages were supported by evidence from the *Holy Quran*. The Sheikh quoted from it: "And the wrong-doers will have no protector, nor helper" (Al-Shura, verse 8), "And whoever among you does wrong, him shall we cause to taste of a grievous penalty" (Al-Furgan, 25, verse 19). The Supreme Judicial Council also used the words 'aggression' and 'evil'. A message from the Acting General President of Affairs of the two Holy Mosques said "Saddam is mere lies and allegation" (Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, 1993: 42-44, 47).

Al-Yaum newspaper reiterated the call made in the Makkah declaration, which called for the resignation of Saddam, and it went on to say that "the regime in Iraq is against Islam and Muslims since it is based on a materialistic ideology which is opposed to the teaching of Islam" (issue No. 6420, 12 January 1991). In the same issue the leading article of the paper said: "the oppression of the Iraqi regime has reached the point whereby it has started

to ridicule the Islamic *ulama* and the conference currently being held in Baghdad under an Islamic banner to justify the invasion is a good example of this. Islam has nothing to do with Saddam's regime, his clique or of the actions of those who responded to the call of the aggressor and went to Baghdad to support him".

The *ulama* in Al-Azhar in Egypt confirmed that the Kingdom had every right to defend the holy places. It must be pointed out that the *ulama* in Al-Azhar have always maintained a distinguished place in the Islamic world and they are respected by all the Islamic *ulama* because of the excellence and high distinction of the Azhar university in Islamic jurisprudence and as a result the views of its *ulama* are taken very seriously in the Islamic world.

The office of the Conservative (Islamic) Sunni Society for the teaching of the Arabic language and Islamic religion in Mauritania declared: "we think that the decisions you have taken, [i.e. those of the Saudi government] on this subject are correct and objective" (*Okaz*, issue No. 8872, 2 November, 1990).

The language and tone of religious news, from credible organisations inside and outside Saudi Arabia, injected an atmosphere of accusation in the Saudi press. This suggests conscious attempts to use the press to get the Saudi Arabian people to support the King's decision. This could not have been achieved if the religious leadership had opposed it. The effect of the religious news and messages was to get Saudi citizens to show readiness to join the volunteer training centres and contribute to the defence of their country. In short, the Saudi government gained full support for the measures it took. The same was also the case during the war, with an emphasis on local religious scholars' directions to Saudi citizens. But after the liberation of Kuwait, the religious news was local, not international or foreign, due to the fact that the job had been done and there was no further need for justifications. The religious lobby shaped and reinforced the Islamic peoples' attitude to the allied coalition and thereby helped to transmit government policy and set the Saudi press agenda.

Considering the Saudi press agenda as a whole, the bulk of the stories dealt with familiar subjects and familiar activities and caused little surprise. The frequency of the main news topics, their tone, types and themes matched neither the rising or ebbing significance of the Gulf conflict, not the expressed major interest of either journalists or media academics. For example, political negotiations continued to be matters that received strong press attention, although there were no unusual developments in the reasons why Iraq invaded Kuwait. The Saudi press emphasised foreign affairs (political, military, economic) far more than subjects that might affect citizens, obviously because the foreign stories contained more dramatic developments of the Gulf conflict for one simple reason: foreign sources held keys to issues due to their power, economically and militarily. Similarly, many Saudi academics and journalists complained about an overabundance of conflict stories in which the Saudi press covered topics of little interest to the public, but omitted important information before, during and after the liberation of Kuwait. Such disparity between desired news and available news calls into question the performance of the Saudi press. The reason, according to the Saudi media academics and journalists, was that Saudi journalists are inexperienced and are unduly affected by the Saudi information policy. For example, they are bound by the article No. 26 "Freedom of expression in the information media is guaranteed with the national and Islamic aims and values which are observed by the Saudi information policy" (see Appendix B). Therefore, both the Saudi government and foreign sources such as Reuters, AFP, AP, UPI, shaped the Saudi press agenda simply by giving coverage of their news. So, the question raised is what were Saudi journalists' opinions regarding the conflict events (discussed in Chapter 4 and Chapter 6 in more detail). Thus, the next section will consider the Saudi journalists' leading articles presented during the course of the Gulf conflict, to see if there was any conflict between journalists' perceptions and practice.

7.1.2.5 Leading Articles of the Gulf Conflict

One of the best ways to look at the Saudi press journalists' opinions on any issue, during peace or war time, is in the leading articles. Since the Saudi press is considered a loyalty

press, their content to a great extent reflects directly or indirectly the government's point of view at least in a general sense.

With regard to hypothesis No. VI, which stated that the tone of the leading articles of the Saudi press would be more positive than negative during the Gulf conflict the data in Chapter 5, Tables 5.15 and 5.28 do not provide support for this with regard to the periods during the invasion and occupation and the liberation of Kuwait. Table 5.41 (Chapter 5) provides neither support nor opposition after the liberation of Kuwait. The data on leading articles' tone in Figure 7.7 illustrates the general conclusion on hypothesis VI during the three periods.

Since the leading articles' themes heavily emphasised 'negative' aspects during the Gulf conflict, the evaluation of the leading articles needs to examine to whom they were directed, and why.

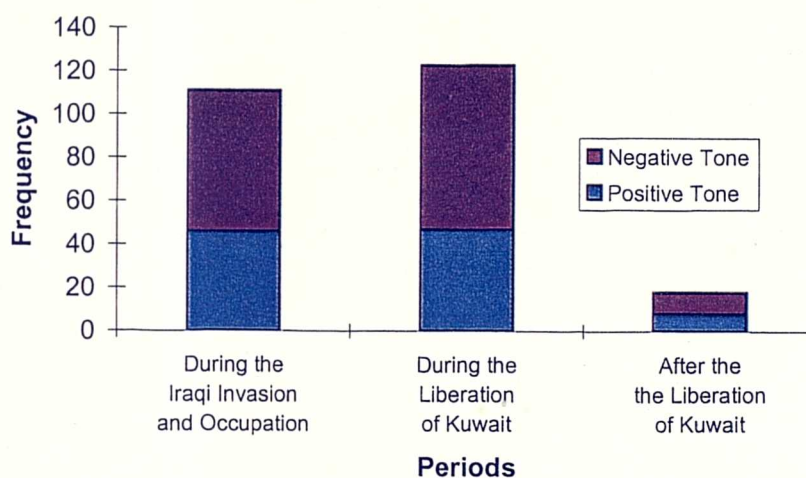


Figure 7.7 Frequency of the Saudi Press Tone of Leading Articles during the Gulf Conflict

During the Iraqi invasion and occupation of Kuwait, most of the leading articles were directed at the Iraqi government, mainly to Saddam Hussein, heavily emphasising the negative qualities and lack of integrity of the Iraqi authorities. The qualities of Arab leaders supporting the UN resolution were also emphasised. The Arab world was divided into two parts: those who agreed with the international stance on Kuwait, and those who

supported Iraqi aggression and opposed the US deployments and later participation of the western military. A good example of the latter was the report that “Muammor Gadaffi led a demonstration of an estimated half a million people in Tripoli in December 1990 [in support of Iraq]” (Helkal, 1993: 23).

In addition, the Saudi government, after attempting to persuade Saddam Hussein in ethical terms to withdraw from Kuwait, argued that this habit of invasion would lead all Gulf states to many problems that would take years to solve. It believed that Saddam’s goal was to take part of eastern Saudi Arabia, where vital oil resources are located.

In its leading article of *al-Riyadh* newspaper posed the question “Why did the International Forces deploy in the Gulf?” (issue No. 8092, 20 August, 1990). It answered this question by saying that “the international forces did not come to the Gulf secretly in the early hours of one morning, but they came in accordance with the law and on request from sovereign states with a standing in front of the Security Council and United Nations”. The leading article argued that accusations and sheltering behind excuses do not change facts or rights and that the complications resulting from Iraq’s invasion stem from such practices. Is there any way to roll back time and to respect international law by reinstating sovereignty to Kuwait? Or should events take their course, of which no one could predict the consequences? The main point this leading article made was that Iraq was in crisis. The paper went on to ask: what if events did not succeed to free Kuwait? The question posed at the beginning of the leading article, however, highlights the serious consequences of the Iraqi game and their collaboration with other agencies. Full details of this cannot be revealed at the present stage. What we can reveal, however, is that under the heading of “More than 19 Million Dollars of Iraqi Bribes to the Ba’th Party in Yemen: how was it leaked?”. *Okaz* newspaper reported that “the Iraqi ambassador in Sanaa, Mr. Abd Al-Hussein Al-Rafiqi, was busy conducting an investigation as to how this news was leaked to the press” (issue No. 8876, 6 November, 1990).

In the researcher’s view, it is the Arabs’ inability to comprehend the experiences of others (politically and in terms of media), a tendency to base their judgement on emotion more

than reason, that is our major and persistent problem. Lack of objective understanding could give rise to wrong and even deadly behaviours.

So disseminating information was necessary to prepare the public for further emergency situations. One way was to publish aggressive messages about the Iraqi authorities. As a result, the Saudi press engaged in personal condemnation of Iraq and described the Arab Nations as enemies of co-operation between themselves. The leading articles described Saddam, for example, as the 'Antichrist', and emphasised his 'preaching and lies', 'two faces', meaning double standard, 'hypocritical comments' and 'dictatorship'.

The Saudi press also described the Arab nation by first asking "Can Arabs overcome their own problem?" (*al-Riyadh*, issue No. 8078, 5 August, 1990) and making it clear that in their view the answer was definitely *No*. The leading articles started to blame the Arabs as one unit. For example: "Are Arab nations 40 years behind the times because of lack of co-operation?" (*al-Riyadh*, issue No. 8079, 6 August, 1990). This researcher believes this situation was due to the lack of trust and selfishness of the majority of leaders, and to political instability, overthrows, corruption etc. For example, in a commentary entitled "The Stupid Allies", the *al-Riyadh* newspaper says that "the 'fruition of Arab unity' was that of these countries (i.e. Jordan, Yemen and Sudan), agreed on the timing of the Iraqi invasion and on a big plot in which Saddam is the main player, supported by Ali Saleh and Hussein ibn Talal" (issue No. 8271, 15 February, 1991). The article analyses some of their moves and how these conspirators formed an evil alliance that threatened other Arab countries:

in terms of profit and loss, however, the three countries remained loyal to Saddam but that cost them dearly because they lost the support they used to receive from the Gulf States. Ironically they never fought a single war beside Saddam which proves that their support to Saddam was merely to serve their interests. In other words, it is a fragile opportunistic alliance that can be easily broken specially since these countries became pre-occupied with their own internal problems to the neglect of those of Saddam. They soon started rethinking what would happen inside them if the crises were to continue and if things developed contrary to what the leaders had anticipated, given that they were expecting a crisis of unparalleled proportion.

These countries had no realisation of the political and economic strength of Saddam vis-à-vis that of the Gulf States and the place of the Gulf, especially Saudi Arabia, in the international order.

The article then goes on to say that “what is even more strange than this was that Iraq and South Yemen (before being united with North Yemen) had a joint defence agreement with the former USSR (now the Russian Federation) and Jordan is living under the western umbrella but these agreements become null and void, just like Saddam’s disastrous adventure. The USSR became part of the opposition camp and it refuses to be drawn into any stupid confrontation” (*al-Riyadh*, issue No. 8271, 15 February, 1991). Thus, the Iraqi media’s reaction to the possibility of Russia sending a token force to the Gulf was hostile, accusing Moscow of betraying an ally and sabotaging the Arab cause (Cigar, 1992:13).

The spate of criticisms in the newspapers, by *al-Riyadh* newspaper, confirms our argument about the disunity and fragmentation of the particularly Arab nation. In its leading article it questioned “whether the Arab would waste another forty years and wondered whether the 1950s and 1960s climate have come back to dominate Arab politics again, an era which saw the echoing of dissenting voices and which divided the Arab nation into left, right, progressive, reactionary, imperialist agents and Israeli agents” (*al-Riyadh*, issue No 8078, 6 August, 1990). This disunity, it was said, was responsible for keeping the Arabs at the bottom of the ladder of civil societies in terms of influence and independence, instead of taking pride in a national home and occupying their rightful place in the peaceful and sometimes conflicting international arena. The present day climate, it was suggested, recalled that of thirty or forty years back when the minds of the leaders were clouded by slogans and Israel, the weak state in the region, was planning and preparing itself for the opportune moment to deliver a blow to the Arab heart and soul. That is exactly what happened and the results were catastrophic, leaving massive destruction in Lebanon and Arab countries torn apart more than ever. This is in addition to the feeling of defeat and apathy that prevailed afterwards, i.e. a state of emptiness, illusion and disunity had dominated the Arab family at that time and it was impossible to agree on any common stand.

A similar point was made in the leading article of *Okaz* newspaper in issue No. 8842, on 2 October 1990, under the title "The Sad Comparison". It wrote: "at the time when the boundaries between East and West Berlin were brought down with the will of the people and the determination and commitment to improve the well being of the German people in both sectors of the city, Saddam Hussein still talks about the historic interests and right of Iraq in Kuwait and its invasion and the humiliation of the Kuwaiti people. This leader and those like him have been the ones who are responsible for the backwardness of the Arab nation for tens if not hundreds of years".

The paper concludes by saying that "up to now we (the Arabs) have not caught up with the civilised world where life is more peaceful and more habitable for our children and for the future of our nation and its national security." The conclusion of the leading article is perhaps too optimistic. It is probably the outcome of the state of despair given the prevailing climate in that period when people with poor educational backgrounds became leaders and people from humble origins became decision makers and demanded the execution of those decisions (without abiding by them themselves) and the honest are accused of being dishonest in the eyes of the hypocrites of the Arab world.

The leading article of the *al-Riyadh* newspaper carried the title "The Arabs Are Like a Train Carrying a Load of Explosives" (issue No. 8079, 7 August, 1990) which paints an even clearer picture. It says: "it is as if the Arab people have no aspirations, opinion or social philosophy capable of replacing the use of "swords" with the use of the "pen", noise with serenity and a useful dialogue and a language that transcends the use of words to the wider knowledge".

Al-Riyadh continues its analysis of the Arab world situation in its leading article by pointing out that: "the tragedy of the Arab nation is that it has no political base because one of the results of the political manoeuvres and plots that dominated the region during the past forty years was the destruction of all political and economic bases and the consequences of this was the emergence of single party systems, single leaders and the alliance of opposition against international imperialism" (issue No. 8111, 8 September, 1990).

This evaluation is supported by the view of one political academic this researcher interviewed who claimed that “first the Gulf conflict between Arab and Arab is a political disagreement, not a cultural conflict. Second, the conflict is centred around the leaders. This kind of political disagreement can be solved if there is another political evaluation of the elements/facts of political interests” (PA)¹.

These extracts, highlighting the Arab tendency to engage in emotional rhetoric rather than political analysis, indicate that some academics and journalists, at least, are aware of a shortcoming of the Saudi press in this respect. It is possible to say that we need to use our minds instead of our emotions on sensitive issues. We need to analyse the content and give the truth its actual share in an environment characterised by friendship and respect based on mutual interests with the west so that individuals can live in a permanent and comprehensive peace in this world (One always hears this last expression before or after every political meeting in the Arab world). If these views are optimistic, we should have at least a minimum degree of peace so as to reduce the prevailing tension and to give peace another chance.

In short the themes related to the Arabian nations took the ‘question formula’ and were indignant/depressed in tone. One leading article commented on the Arab people’s “suspicious attitude” towards their leaders (*Okza*, issue No. 8813, 4 September, 1990). The reason for criticising the Arab nations as one unit was that Jordan, Sudan, Yemen, PLO and Tunisia did not oppose the Iraqi aggression.

During the liberation of Kuwait, it might have been expected that there would be more information about the outcome of the war, rather were reiteration of condemnations of Saddam from those who supported his invasion and occupation of Kuwait, but this was not the case. Such questions, this researcher argues, should have been tackled by the leading articles. For example: why did the political initiatives fail? What were the likely outcomes, and why? In other words, the language employed by the press was not significantly different from during the Iraq invasion and occupation. The leading articles

¹ (PA) Saudi Political Academic, King Saud University, Riyadh.

kept discussing Saddam's lack of credibility, arguing that he was a burden on his nation's wealth, and that he was in the eyes of international public opinion, including that of the Saudis, seen as the world's new Hitler. The main themes were to punish Saddam and his Ba'th regime. One major change during the liberation of Kuwait, was that the focus of the leading articles toward the anti-war countries, specifically Jordan, Yemen and Sudan, was on their leaders, as well as the chairman of the PLO, rather than on the Arab world as one unit, as it had been before the liberation. The aggressive language was expected since these figures were Saddam's allies. These four leaders were described as an 'allied conspiracy' (*Okaz*, issue No. 8266, 10 February, 1991); 'a hypocritical group' (*Okaz*, issue No. 8882, 2 November, 1991); 'Stupid allies' (*al-Riyadh*, issue No. 8271, 15 February, 1991) and 'Spineless screamers' accused of 'double standards' (*Okza*, issue No. 8286, 30 February, 1991); King Hussein of Jordan was described as 'one face of employment of mercenaries', and 'only one fraction in the accurate numbers equation and stupid since he got lost in Saddam's shelter' (*al-Riyadh*, issues Nos. 8263 and 8264, 7-8 February, 1991). The aggression toward this group was a response to the fact their press had started insulting the allied coalition, and particularly the Saudi government policy, as revealed in several leading articles, which tackled the misinformation of the Arab press.

Quoting its own sources, the *Okaz* newspaper comments on the idea of "a conspiracy on some parts of the Kingdom and other Gulf states" (issue No. 8846, 7 October, 1990) saying that the idea of a conspiracy was the brain child of King Hussein who had in recent years felt that his throne in Jordan was engulfed by threats and internal problems in addition to the Israeli threats. This is in addition to the increase in the might of the Iraqi army and the expansionist tendencies of the Iraqi leadership. As a result he sought to find an alternative throne for himself, either in Al-Hijaz or in Iraq, but the plot had failed and Saddam was defeated and demoralised. The situation was such that there was a congruence between the idea of King Hussein and Saddam's hatred of the Gulf states and his interests in the region. To carry out their plan, the two leaders had co-opted the other three partners in the plot, namely Sudan, Yemen, and the Palestinian Liberation Organisation. King Hussein visited Israel in 1989 and offered to sign a joint treaty with Israel in return for Israeli silence about his plot to redraw the political map of the region. He also supplied Iraq with chemical weapons. The Jordanian authorities killed one of their

secret agents in Paris after his role in the plot was leaked out. Likewise, Arafat severed dialogue with the United States for the same purpose. Knowledgeable sources in Amman, in Jordan, were reported to have confirmed that the Palestinian organisations, including the PLO, had agreed to make Jordan the Palestinians' substitute home. They had also agreed to unite their positions to ensure Jordan's stability as their substitute home, especially following "the failed plot, in which King Hussein took part, of making Kuwait the Palestinians' substitute home" (*al-Riyadh*, issue No. 8140, 7 October, 1991).

Saddam saw this as deviation from a previously agreed plan which called for the partitioning of the Kingdom and which would give King Hussein al-Hijaz (the west of Saudi Arabia) and which would subsequently make him officially known to his people as "Al-Sharief Hussein". Saddam also believed that this announcement at that particular time, i.e. 11th of August, as tantamount to the rescinding of the agreement for partitioning the Kingdom" (*Okaz*, issue No. 8841, 2 October, 1991).

After the relief of the liberation of Kuwait, there was no difference in the number of positively and negatively treated themes. The leading articles highlighted the defeat of Iraq and they accused Saddam of causing the war, of destroying his country, and enumerated his crimes. In addition, a few called on the Arabs in general to learn from the conflict and for a new way to build themselves again.

Another point is the absence of the collective pronoun, 'we'. The leading articles discussed the UN's resolutions, outcomes of GCC meetings and how these meetings affected the outcome of war, and how these organisations contributed to the cause or effects of the conflict. Such questions or debate in the leading articles would have informed particularly elite people who relied on the leading articles for assessment of the situation in Saudi Arabia. Questions like 'was there another country involved in the cause of conflict and particularly the war?', 'Was the problem started first between OPEC and Iraq and why?', 'Was Iraq driven to invade Kuwait and why?' should, one can argue, have been tackled and should have been on the Saudi press agenda before the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait or after the liberation of Kuwait.

In fact, however, the Gulf conflict was presented not as a general conflict, but as aggression by an individual. Attempts were made to characterise the war as the only possible solution, which had been forced on the UN by Saddam's invasion of Kuwait and his refusal to action accordance with the UN resolutions.

Moreover, the leading articles responded to Saddam Hussein's characterisation of the war as a 'holy war', by explaining in more details the reasons for Iraq's invasion of Kuwait. In this respect, J/4 believed that the Saudi press had refuted Saddam's claims but another journalist, J/5 disagreed since he thought the Saudi press had used Iraq's method (propaganda) to reject the Iraqi claims on the simple ground that they were 'not based on information'. The majority who were interviewed agreed with J/5 as inferred from their comments on Saudi journalists' lack of skills, management experience and organisation structure as well as the lack of information from the government.

Therefore, the leading articles set the terms by which political judgements were reached and political choices made, particularly with regard to Arab countries, almost all of which agreed with the Saudi government and international law. It was not, in this researcher's opinion, part of the government agenda nor the public agenda to adopt an aggressive stance toward the Arab nations, but after Arab media, in Jordan and Sudan critiqued Saudi Arabia, the government allowed the press to respond in like manner. The political judgements did not only reflect Saudi government speeches and statements. Aggressive words or questions were used, such as 'Can Arabs overcome their own problems? "Are Arab nations 40 years behind the times because of lack of co-operation?"' And in the same vein, the press contradicted itself by attacking Saddam Hussein's behaviour using aggressive words such as 'two faced Saddam', and 'the promoter of lost causes' (*al-Riyah*, issue No. 8105, 2 August, 1990); 'Iraq and the death of restraint' (*al-Riyadh*, issue No. 8108, 5 August, 1990); 'Saddam is pretending to be the sole representative of Islam' (*al-Riyadh*, issue 8109, 6 August, 1990); and 'Antichrist', 'Saddam's preaching and lies to his own people' (*al-Riyadh*, issue No. 8111, 8 August, 1990). It seems to me that this approach assumed that the readers were ignorant and had no other sources of information. The point is that the Saudi press was saying one thing and other foreign media were saying something else, e.g. highlighting Saddam's ability to produce nuclear and

chemical weapons, and the Saudi press did not understand that Saudis, at least the elite, knew the real situation from other sources such as CNN and BBC, and could judge the situation more objectively.

One point that could be made is that during the military build-up in the region there was no doubt that war would take place and the Saudi press news and leading articles should have prepared the Saudis for the war, but instead, they confined themselves to reiterating opinions that had been already agreed, not only locally but also in the international community. So, to serve the public interest or to be objective, the balance of leading articles contained in this respect was not directed to the general public. It gave the Saudi government in view of the situation, which in fact needed no publicity, as the same view was already held by numerous countries, organisations and influential public figures, inside and outside the country.

It seems clear, then, since the Saudi press in regard to the leading articles was affected by the news contents gathered from foreign sources, the news about the Iraqi aggression and the military task became a major force in the Saudi journalists' leading articles day by day.

This raises the question of how faithfully and wisely did Saudi journalists interpret the conflict's events. The content of the leading articles did not convey the reality and the public desired to be told the reality; not, merely that Saddam's behaviour was evil, which was already agreed, but what was actually happening. Instead, the content analysis revealed the coverage was fragmentary. It focused on what was 'newsworthy' in the eyes of journalists, contrary to the principle that the press should be objective and timely. The issues the press was raising should have been in the news papers before Saddam invaded Kuwait.

So, the coverage of political, economic, and crime issues could be criticised because many pertinent issues were not presented; for example, whether Western armies in the region were bad or good; how vulnerable were tourists to attack; whether there was any alleviation of the environmental damage caused by the burning oil wells. Such problems

were important but no objective coverage of them appeared in either the news content or in the leading articles.

Measuring the performance of the Saudi press is one way to draw preliminary conclusions about how it portrayed the reality of the Gulf conflict. The Saudi press did not portray the Gulf conflict accurately judging by comparison with other news sources such as European and US sources. This suggests a need to study media other than the Saudi press, but it has been agreed that the western press exists in a climate of freedom of expression, so direct comparison would be unjust. The views expressed by Saudi media academics and journalists were enough to justify our argument so far. Two major themes were derived from those who were interviewed. First, since Iraqi intentions were tackled by the Western media, not by the Saudi press in the first instance, this gives us an indication that the Saudi press was not accurate and informative enough. Second, during the Iraqi invasion and occupation until the war started, the Saudi press, as well as society as a whole, had no idea how to stand up against the Iraqi radio propaganda (see Chapter 4). So, the Saudi press was not prepared, like that of the West. Consequently, the information given to readers was not relevant to their previous knowledge. For example, information about Saddam Hussein, for the majority of the public, was not known or tackled in the Saudi press. In short the Saudi press during the Gulf conflict simply reported what it saw; it did not interpret the situation, it presented the ideology of the ruling class including that of the allied leaders, but it did not present a balanced view or debate the issues openly. In an area where illiteracy is high, and as the Spiral of Silence Communication Theory suggests, the public accepted at face value what they took to be the reality presented by the Saudi press or as seen on the T.V, where there were no alternative sources of information with special reference to the Gulf events, even from the allied media. To read between the lines of the news stories would require a degree of education and political sensitivity which, on the whole, are lacking among the Saudi readership.

One reason for this is the youth of the Saudi population. Analytical studies carried out by the Department of General Statistics of the Ministry of Planning have shown that Saudi men and women below 15 years of age constitute up to 49.2 percent of the total population whereas those whose ages are 64 years and over constitute only 3.3 per cent of

the population. The average age of the individual in Saudi Arabia therefore is 15.4 which indicates the young nature of the Saudi population and consequently the likely inexperience of those who would be in charge of dealing with the thorny issues of local, regional and international media and above all with the deciphering of the political messages and their allegory (*al-Riyadh*, issue, No. 10529, 22 April, 1997).

The role of news and information is not simply to attack one country and ignore another's faults and intentions, since modern conflict contains more than one face. The Saudi press, with the power gained from its relationship with the Saudi government and privileged access, should have tackled not only the causes of the conflict but also why it existed in the Gulf region. In addition, we can not be certain about the effect of factors or information presented in either the news or leading articles on the public at large for two reasons. Firstly, it was not to be expected that the Saudi press could change overnight the image of Saddam that had been created in the public mind over the previous eight years, as a result of the Iran-Iraq war. Secondly, the Saudi press had to counter the manipulation of the Arab media by Saddam Hussein himself.

The point that should be noted, supported by many Saudi media academics (for example MA/5) is that the Saudi press behaved in a similar way to the Iraqi media, in presenting and trivialising matters directed to the Gulf States' governments.

This study of the coverage of the Gulf conflict by the Saudi press has revealed that reference to frequency, threshold, meaningfulness, consonance, elite, etc. played a key role in the way the Saudi press selected its news. More came from foreign news services, and locations, personnel etc. than from Saudi sources, as was shown in Chapter 5, summarised and presented in Appendix F.

But, this limited the role of the local gatekeeper. The obvious newsworthiness to Saudi Arabia of the rich and powerful countries such as the US and UK played a role in convincing the Saudi journalists to select their news items. We reject to some extent the research hypothesis that the function of the Saudi press system was in line with the authoritarian press model. The findings show that the Saudi press printed more foreign

than local political, economic, and personal news. At the same time, economic, social service and other issues related to the Gulf conflict received less attention. Journalists believed that coverage of political and military issues in regard to the events would be of more interest to the public and have more impact.

Another consideration, however, given that the Saudi press is a loyalty press, was to avoid criticism of the government and its allies. So, although in general, political and military news, particularly from foreign sources, was extensively covered, mistakes such as the bombing of al-Amariya which had unfavourable implications, were not tackled.

Conclusions

The views of academics and journalists are important for understanding first, how each member thinks, especially since most of them have studied in the west and are familiar with western media theories and because they teach in Saudi universities, whereas the journalists represent the link between society and the state and between the international arena and society. Secondly, it must be emphasised that the mere agreement of this group to meet the researcher is a strength of this study, since no other Saudi or non-Saudi researcher before has had the chance to meet all these scholars to discuss media questions. This gives an indication of the value of the views expressed by all these individuals which served the aims of this research and may help to develop the press in Saudi Arabia in future.

The main difficulty faced during the course of the study was the fact that the meeting of all these scholars took place six years after the liberation of Kuwait, despite the fact that I believe the real struggle in the Gulf started after the liberation of Kuwait, as indicated by the launch of the "Operation Desert Fox" 16-20 December 1998, whose aim was to take out Iraq's weapons of mass destruction (thought, this was one reason, as presented in Chapter 1, for the conflict in the Gulf area). As a result of the elapse of so much time since the events with which this study was concerned, the researcher had to press hard to know what was in the mind of the interviewees, besides putting across various

psychological, political and media hints, to obtain real answers. From this we were able to highlight the unvoiced views about the actual press treatment of the Gulf conflict, even though this took place six years after the end of the war. However, it is possible to say that the agenda of the Saudi press during the Gulf conflict dictated the participants' views about the performance of the Saudi press during the conflict and in this thesis we were able to present the agreement and disagreement in opinion about satisfaction and dissatisfaction of the press treatment of the conflict. The findings of this investigation could be stated as follows:

First, in relation to the actual state of the Saudi press, the Saudi press before the Gulf conflict was very narrow in its perspective. As a result of the involvement of journalists and media personnel with political and military policies, foreign journalists and advanced broadcasting technology, they gained a wider view of events and of the journalists' role. Despite the close resemblance of many of the regimes with the socialist model, which was in the last stage of its collapse, the one-sided presence of the American media in particular gave the chance to the Saudi press and broadcasting to watch and learn how journalists interact with events and how to deal with the official spokespersons and press conferences. This, in turn, helped to reduce the gap and suspicion between the journalists and the military during the coverage of events and the search for information, as did the dominance of CNN and its prominent presence on Saudi television's Channel Two (the English service channel).

This dominance played a major influence, since the western media philosophy is based on western culture, belief in freedom of expression and giving those with different opinions the right to express them, whether those opinions concern the treatment of the Iraqi invasion, the role of the allied forces in the liberation of Kuwait or things that the Saudi media, including radio, television and press, cannot do because they require high human and financial resources. One of the events, as mentioned previously, shown by CNN, was that of some of the Saudi women demonstrators who took to the streets in their cars in Riyadh to protest at the banning of woman from driving cars. This was unacceptable to the religious leadership and never commented upon by the government. Another example,

is the showing of some religious rituals and singing, which was seen by owners of satellite dishes.

Most of the media academics and a few journalists have pointed out that the Saudi press was completely unprepared for the Gulf conflict, but the important thing is the final results. The successful propaganda of the Iraqi press before the war had shaken the feelings of the Arab nation, but Saudis needed the media to deal with urgent military, political and economic issues instead of merely engaging in nationalistic rhetoric. Instead of dealing with people's current concern, the media channels became absorbed in showing the huge human and financial support previously given by Saudi Arabia to the states which were now "enemies", which made people question the relevance of their information to their personal needs. Naturally, given this situation, the political decision makers and the state security apparatus were far from comprehending any possibility of Iraq becoming the dominant force in the Gulf region. This indicates the absence of the press and this may be due to the weakness of the press institutions, as will be shown later. As a result, the enlightened and more educated Saudis moved to other media sources such as CNN and the BBC in the belief that these sources were more advanced and capable of providing them with a better service, better analysis and better contextual reporting.

Second, in relation to the *political dimension* and its relationship with the Saudi press, we became aware from the answers that were given to us that it is impossible to separate the function of the press from the state's general policy. It is a written press policy. The Saudi Press Agency played an intermediary role between the Saudi government agenda and the work of the chief editor, a key player in the government campaign, as the gate keeper in the Saudi press. The Editor-in-Chief is the one who decides what to publish and what not to publish and at the same time he is wholly accountable before the state legal prosecutor. This prestigious position of the Editor-in-Chief is accorded to him because he is appointed by the Saudi Ministry of Information, and after the approval of the highest authorities. The thinking behind this is a perceived need to make sure the newspapers follow the path planned for them to preserve the nature of Saudi society as a conservative Islamic country.

The best example of the strong relationship or the tie between the press policy and the state policy is the fact that the Saudi press did not mention the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait until after some time had passed and after the official line of the state started to emerge. In addition, no critique was made of Saddam's behaviour before his invasion of Kuwait. In other words, the political decision preceded the press decision and, as a result, the Saudi citizens heard the news in more detail about the invasion either from the television stations of the neighbouring countries in the Gulf region or Egypt or from radio services like the BBC Arabic service. Although some participants praised the soundness of the Saudi government's judgement, and its wise policy in not rushing into a decision on this matter, others pointed out the dangers of such a policy and the lack of credibility of the local channels which one participant has compared with the *Tylenol*² capsules incident in the United States.

Third, in relation to the *press treatment of the conflict*, encompassing the press practices, propaganda, and psychological treatment, the Saudi press reported the news, followed the events, and sent press correspondents to press gatherings, even though most of these efforts were personal initiatives from the press. A few participants mentioned the propaganda side and there was an exchange of insults between the Saudi press and the Iraqi press but less harsh words were used by the Saudis. The Iraqi propaganda, however, had much influence on the public in the Gulf, Arab and Islamic countries because the indigenous press lacked information. The participants, however, deny that Iraqi propaganda had any success in Saudi society. One reason, the researcher would argue, is the deep-rooted respect for the Saudi government, specifically the King, based on Islamic principles.

The *psychological* activities were a strong element associated mainly with propaganda work. Through the use of the radio the Iraqis were able to raise slogans such as 'freedom', 'compatriotism', 'Arab nationalism', 'Islam and the West', 'Jihad', 'European society and imperialism'. The Saudi people were not used to hearing such slogans and

². Tablets contaminated with poison had been distributed to chemists throughout the US. An investigation of the speed with which information reached the public revealed that some citizens were still unaware of what had happened, five days after the event. See Chapter 4, p. 92 for more details)

this influenced them psychologically, but this influence soon disappeared when the air war started. It would have become a major influencing factor if the Iraqi propaganda had been allowed to continue, but the bombing of Baghdad stopped that. A good example was given by Dr Al-Badr in a talk on psychological warfare, when he revealed that edited films from the war had been found, which had been doctored by superimposing the images of American men and women soldiers, to give the impression that they were inside the *Kaba* in Makkah city and these films were being circulated in south-east Asia and other Islamic societies. They were ready for distribution before the conflict began and, when the war started, the Iraqis started circulating them.

Fourth, in relation to the *religious dimension*, as it has been made clear above, the press experienced both planned and unplanned propaganda and psychological practices from the Iraqi side and the Saudi side (including the media of the allied forces, even though we did not deal with this subject at a great length) because of the strength of the Iraqi media, yet religious messages were also present. This is quite natural because the conflict happened on Islamic soil but took on political and ideological dimensions. Nevertheless, irrespective of the aims and correctness or incorrectness of these messages, it has long been accepted in both Muslim and Christian societies that religious arguments are invoked in support of war. Thus, religion was used as a means to achieve political goals.

In brief, the difficulty of the situation, and the dangers faced by the press and by the surprise invasion of Kuwait by Iraq, created doubt in the minds of the Arab and Islamic general public. It even deepened the inter-Arab conflict. In this regard, criticism may be raised of the press policy. Although the policy statement contains impressive rhetoric, in practice, the administrative leaderships of the press institutions were incapable of activating this policy in a manner proportional to the economic and diplomatic weight of the Saudi state. It was clear from the views of the majority of the participants that the Saudi media, the press included, did not change much after the liberation of Kuwait. They gave a number of reasons for this. It was said that the press institutions were weak in pre-planning, training, preparation and specialised cadre. At the same time, they were unable to attract specialists, before and after the invasion of Kuwait, to edit the media messages and to read between the lines, or to get near to the decision makers.

Very briefly, if all of the answers, arguments and findings given during the course of this study are taken together, we would arrive at one common factor, which is the need of the Saudi media (press, radio, and television) to rewrite its press policy, which has governed the press since the time it was been transformed from a privately owned press concentrating on literary and political subjects in 1963 to the present press institutions with more or less modern subjects. The activation of the press policy and its development to suit the changes of the present age and to enter the year 2000 will have an important role to play in political, economic and social policies locally, regionally and internationally.

To treat the press channels as a mediator between the decision makers and factions of society and adopting a two-way communication system from top (leadership) down (to public) and vice versa is the best choice, compared to a top down media only. This is the first important item open to discussion in the context of freedom of expression, based on reasonable debate to serve the nation's interest.

Secondly, the performance of the Saudi press during the Gulf conflict reflected a combination of the authoritarian press and loyalty press models. Although, its attention was given more to international news topics, sources, location, and personnel than those from Saudi Arabia, the tone of all news toward all those countries, including Saudi Arabia and Kuwait was positive and no criticism or question appeared toward the allied governments, including the Saudi government policy. This reflects what we explained in Chapter 2, the loyalty of journalists and what the Saudi press information policy meant (see Appendix B). But the danger is that, while Saudi Arabia is a respected country, the leader of the Islamic World, stable politically and to some degree economically, these conditions were under threat since a small group of journalists, with no experience of reporting or gathering news, themselves were in crisis. Their task was certainly formidable. The content of the press during the course of the Gulf conflict, and from opinions taken from both media academics and journalists, revealed a variation that can not be taken for granted during the Gulf conflict. Many questions would need to be answered concurring the Gulf periods, such as why did Iraq invade Kuwait? Were questions directed to Kuwait and the United Arab Emirates, which Iraq claimed had stolen its oil? Was Saddam capable of producing chemical weapons? Why did some Arab

leaders and their people blame only Saudi Arabia while Saudis were often involved financially and emotionally with any Muslim conflict or humanity? And so on.

This researcher then strongly predicts, based on the information presented previously, that if the Saudi government does not take the initiative toward reforming the Saudi press soon, the stability of Saudi Arabia will be in danger. The press, indeed, is one of the major pillars of the national institutional framework of Saudi stability. Accordingly, the following recommendations are suggested for the Saudi government and Saudi press:

Recommendations

The further development of the Saudi press is essential. The recommendations featured here provide many opportunities for a new maturity, which will enable the Saudi government, since it controls the Saudi press as well as broadcasting, to fulfil its responsibilities to the nation with increasing confidence, accuracy and effectiveness. With the Saudi government initiative, the press as we know is the fourth estate and this power needs an authority to keep it within the limits granted to it by society, because the press sometimes exaggerates to attract attention and by doing so may endanger national interests or exceed its social obligations.

Encouraging 'fair performance' among professional journalists is the aim of these recommendations, to help the Saudi press administrations to prepare their staff to achieve knowledge and skills to do their job based on a high standard of performance. Thus suggestions are made for three major institutions: the Saudi government's Ministry of Higher Education (Saudi Universities) and the Saudi Ministry of Information and the Saudi press organisations.

Recommendations for the Saudi Government

1. Since Saudis' minds are not trained on a mass basis through the process of education, it is dangerous to give the press unlimited freedom. It is difficult to have some form of

professionalism which if achieved would satisfy the needs of society and achieve unity and sovereignty. To this end, the Saudi universities which offer communication degrees should review their curriculum and develop it in line with world changes. In addition, a training centre in the Saudi press or in the Ministry of Information or through the Chamber of Commerce should be set up to train new staff to shoulder their responsibility to the Saudi society.

2. A Supreme Council for Information and establishment of a planning committee within the Saudi Ministry of Information are needed.

Firstly, the Supreme Council for Information established in 1980 should be brought within the control of the Ministry of Information. The reason for this first step is that, unlike the current council which is not full-time, the Ministry of Information is an active and effective organisation which interacts with events and an instrument of the government. Its major job would be to approve proposals prepared from a planning Committee in the Saudi Ministry of Information (more details will follow about this committee) and report it directly to the Cabinet for final approval. The Minister of the Interior, as president of the Supreme Council for Information, Ministry of Information, Ministry of Defence, the President of the National Guard and Minister of Foreign Affairs should serve on this. Also, the Editors-in-Chief of the Saudi press (seven people) should serve on this Council. The Council would discuss Planning Committee proposals, make any requests and comments before submitting them to the Council of Ministers for approval. As a result, the effectiveness of Ministry of Information as well as the Saudi press would be evaluated by this higher committee.

Second, *a planning committee* should be established in the Saudi Ministry of Information. The aim is to secure more effective co-ordination of studies and research, planning, promotion, communication and evaluation. The planning committee chairman should be the Minister of Information or his assistant. Specialists in politics, economics, military matters and psychology should serve on this committee. The planning committee would determine the press/broadcasters' necessary research, time schedule, objectives, and budget. The committee should set comprehensive national information policies linked to

overall social, cultural and economic development objectives. The committee might need to co-ordinate with bodies outside the government sector, such as the Departments of Mass Communication in all Saudi universities, and firms hired in an advisory role. Hiring employees who have taken survey courses in economics, management, and journalism and broadcasting to conduct survey studies is vitally important. In addition, an information centre should be developed that is equipped with the highest technology (including the latest digital technology) in the Saudi Ministry of Information. The planning committee's agenda/proposals will be presented to the Supreme Council for Saudi Information Committee members for discussion and approval.

However, before changes and the establishment of the two above committees, a conference should be held in which the Ministry of Information, all Saudi press organisations, the Ministry of Defence, and all these who are important in the press from varied disciplines should be invited to participation. Participation should also be invited from media experts from abroad. The aim is to discuss the Saudi press's function/performance and theory and practice in the age of global information. In addition, the role of media at war is an important area to be discussed. In short the first step in the process of the planning committee would be to answer '*What should we do and why?*'.

Recommendations for the Saudi Press

The Saudi press administration can begin without waiting for the recommendations addressed to the Saudi government to be achieved. The press strategy is crucial to the success of the performance of the press. However, many of the following recommendations to the Saudi press were inferred from the Saudi media academics and journalists interviewed. Thus, the press should do the following:

1. Establish departments in the press whose function would be to concentrate on political and other studies, especially international relations and economics;
2. Create new jobs in the organisational structure, such as a political advisor and a specialist in political studies;

3. Co-operate with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs concerning information of a political, economic, military and other nature;
4. Train journalists in the field of writing material of a political, economic and diplomatic nature;
5. Seek help from consultative cadres from the political, economic, media and military leaderships;
6. Make use of ambassadors and diplomats by offering them jobs after their retirement from diplomatic work.

These proposals could help to create an atmosphere conducive to effective reporting. They will also help the Saudi government or press before or when any new conflict occurs, such as the Gulf conflict, and enhance the credibility of the Saudi government and press in the eyes of public opinion, at home and abroad.

One last word to be addressed here is that the loyalty of the press based on emotion would be likely to affect the nation's stability. Stability needs a more reasonable, open mind, and wide vision to examine and discuss the realities facing Saudi Arabia.

Further Study

An attempt was made in this study to go beyond an investigation of the performance of the Saudi press during the Gulf conflict, Saudi media academics' and journalists' opinions of the Saudi press performance or the Saudi journalists' perception of their performance and the press function in society during the war time. Thus, further study is needed.

1. If these changes and recommendation presented in the present study are not made, an exploratory study based on 'focus groups' should be conducted to find out the exact reasons and problems affecting the Saudi Ministry of Information which are preventing them from implementing these suggestions and recommendations.

2. A study should be conducted to serve the military personal in the Saudi Ministry of Defence to find out their perception of the press during war time. The methodology used in the present study should be used again. Such a study should be done by the Saudi Ministry of Defence in order to gain a view from the military perspective.
3. A study should be conducted among the public, using the first part of this research' survey (see Appendix F) to identify their opinion toward the press function in Saudi society in peace and war time.
4. The present study was concerned only with press coverage during the conflict itself and did not examine the impact of such coverage on the Saudi people. It would be of interest, therefore, to study the long term effects of that coverage on Saudis' perceptions of the conflict and the people involved in it.

However, once this further study has been done, along with the recommendations presented earlier, obviously, much will have to change. The Saudi Ministry of Information and Saudi press will clearly benefit. The Saudi press, then, will function in a more accurate and objective way to serve the Saudi government and Saudi society as whole. As we enter the next millennium, the millennium of a 'global information society' characterised by new communications technologies (such as the internet) which will themselves present fresh challenges for the flow of information between government and people, nationally as well as internationally, the problems identified in this thesis about a conflict fought 9 years from the end of the century are, quite frankly, archaic in this new context. Patterns of change are likely to accelerate still faster and if we cannot resolve even the most fundamental of issues - such as the non-reporting of an invasion of a neighbouring state - the credibility of the Saudi media system itself is at stake. Because of its relationship to the Saudi government, the logical conclusion is that the very credibility of the Saudi government may be at risk unless we address these issues now.

Appendices

- A. UN Resolutions, Dates and Themes in Relating to the Gulf Conflict (2 August - 29 November 1990).**
- B. Saudi Arabia' Information Policy.**
- C. Questions to Saudi Media Academics and Journalists.**
- D. Definitions of Main News Topics.**
- E. Code Sheet.**
- F. Results of Research Hypotheses and Subhypotheses (I, III, IV, V& VI).**
- G. Questionnaire for Saudi Journalists.**

Appendix A

UN Resolutions, Dates and Themes in Relating to the Gulf Conflict (2 August - 29 November 1990)

Resolution #	Date	Theme
660	2 August 1990	Iraq must withdraw immediately and unconditionally.
661	6 August 199	Reaffirmed resolution 660 and imposed economic sanctions.
662	9 August 1990	Iraq to withdraw immediately and unconditionally.
664	18 August 1990	Iraq to permit and facilitate the immediate departure from Kuwait of Kuwaiti nationals.
665	25 August 1990	To bring to an end the occupation of Kuwait by Iraq.
666	13 September 1990	Foodstuffs to be supplied.
667	16 September 1990	Iraq is responsible for the use of any violence against foreign nationals.
669	24 September 1990	Recalled resolution 661 and made recommendations to the Security Council for appropriate action.
670	25 October 1990	Iraq continued to occupy Kuwait and violated all previous resolutions as well as international humanitarian law.
677	28 November 1990	Referred to the suffering caused to individuals in Kuwait as a result of the invasion and occupation by Iraq.
678	29 November 1990	Recalled and reaffirmed all the above resolutions and vowed to restore international peace and security in the area.

Note: Adapted from The Gulf War Reader: History, Documents and Opinions. (1991: 137-156) by Charles Krauthammer. Edited by Micah L. Sifry and Christopher Cerf, Time Book, USA: New York, Inc.

Appendix B:

Saudi Arabia's Information Policy¹

The information policy consists of the principles and the aims upon which information is based in the kingdom and which are required by it. This policy is considered a part of the State's general policy and it is defined in the following articles:

Article 1:

The Saudi Information abides by Islam in everything issued by it, keeps the doctrine of the ancestors of this nation, and it excludes from all its media everything that contradicts God's Shari'a which Allah enacted.

Article 2:

The Saudi Information seeks to oppose the destructive currents, the apostate directions, the hostile philosophies, the attempts of diverting Muslims from their faith and it unveils their falseness and brings to light their danger to individuals and societies in addition to resisting the hostile challenges of information according to the State's general policy.

Article 3:

The information media persevere to serve the society through engraining its precious Islamic values and establishing the magnanimous Arab customs and keeping its good inherited habits in addition to resisting everything that spoils its purity and serenity. Moreover, those information media make every conceivable effort to push forward the wheel of development in cooperation with the concerned establishments in this field.

Article 4:

The information media persevere to stand up for the Kingdom's Policy which is based upon keeping the sublime interest for the citizens particularly and those of the Arabs and Muslims generally through the adoption of this Policy and presenting it in an objective manner supported by documents and backed by attitudes and truths.

Article 5:

Internally and externally, the information media concentrate upon setting forth the distinguished and unique character of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and uncover the things which have been given to it by God, such as the blessing of stability and security in addition to the Kingdom's progress facilitated by God in different fields because of its decision to consider Islam a constitution for its regime and a code in life. Moreover, the information media show the blessing bestowed upon the Kingdom by the Grace of God regarding the service of Muslims' sacrosanctities and the great burden which it takes in this concern.

¹ From The Saudi Media: Evolution and Progress (June, 1993: 160-168) by Al-Qimam House for Mass Communication: Consultation - Research- Public Relations. However, the policy authorized by the Council of Ministers, concerns decisions number 78 (dated 14- 5- 1400, AH) and 82, (dated 4- 6- 1402 AH).

Article 6:

The information media strengthen the bonds of love and cooperation among the individuals of Saudi people through acquainting the citizens with the dear parts of their homeland and by means of showing the resplendent sides in each of them together with the elucidation of their integrity and mutual assistance in building this home country.

Article 7:

The information media deepen the sentiment of allegiance for the Saudi home country regarding both its land and entity in the souls of the citizens and enlighten them on the abilities and potencies bestowed to it by God in addition to acquainting them with its past and present feats and urging them to give it generously and to contribute earnestly in its progress and its civilisation in addition to protect it. Those media spare no effort to make the citizen know his fundamental duty in this concern.

Article 8:

The Saudi Information gives the family the importance it deserves and looks at it as the main cell in the society's structure and as the first school at which children receive their knowledge and guidance. In fact, it considers the family as a place where the personalities of the young are formed and their conduct is controlled. The Saudi information grants the family incessantly everything that helps it realize its message and solidity.

Article 9:

The Saudi information affirms that the child is clear and pure by nature and it is a fertile soil, and the image of the future society is seen through today's child. So, it has to give the recreational, educational, and directive programs the effort and importance they deserve. To serve this purpose, it must evaluate these programs upon studied, scientific, and pedagogical bases; in addition, to entrust them to those who are highly qualified in this field.

Article 10:

Although it is not doubted that women are equals to men, the information media take into consideration the depth of the woman's nature and the function entrusted to her by God. Depending upon this, they plan to favour her with specific programme which help her perform the functions that conform to her role in society.

Article 11:

The Saudi information favours the youths with a particular care which proceeds from the conscious comprehension for the dangerous stage which they undergo from adolescence until the legal age. Moreover, the information media devote to youths well studied programme which address their problems, meet their needs, protect them from any deviation and gave them a sound and strong preparation in religion, manners and behaviour.

Article 12:

The Saudi information pays attention to the information documentation through various audiovisual aids for everything connected with the Kingdom's history and culture. Furthermore, it takes care of keeping the documentation and registration materials of information in addition to acquiring everything available in the country or abroad concerning those information materials pertinent to the Kingdom and its legacy.

Article 13:

The Saudi cadres undertake researches and information studies in cooperation with the social and pedagogical institutions and the pertinent research centres.

Article 14:

The information media designate high standard educational programmes in diverse fields for the highly cultured categories; the matter which answers the cultural and intellectual needs of these groups, keeps them in touch with the advanced scientific life and acquaints them with the current intellectual cultures.

Article 15:

The Saudi information aspires to promote the standard of the information material in all its fields and encourages specialists to contribute to the field of their specialization. To serve the purpose, it excludes any production which does not reach on excellent standard. Such a matter is executed through qualified persons with a high standard of religion, knowledge, consciousness and fidelity, provided that they are offered proper circumstances which enable them to fulfil their assignment.

Article 16:

The Saudi information seeks to accomplish the eradication of illiteracy and getting rid of it, feels its important share of responsibility in treating it and employs a suitable portion of its efforts regarding this treatment. To fulfil this aim, it depends on pedagogical and scientific bases, and designates cultural programmes proper for all tastes and ages which elevate man's thought and conscience.

Article 17:

The Saudi information is convinced that standard Arabic is Islam's receptacle and it is the depository of its culture and the source of its legacy. Such being the case, the Saudi information strives for the following:

1. Directing the authors and script-writers to the necessity of abiding by the rules of standard Arabic syntactically and morphologically and the integrity in expression and soundness in word usage.
2. Directing the announcers, newscasters, symposiums directors and others to the necessity of using standard Arabic and to the avoidance of any pronunciation error whether it is syntactical or morphological, in addition to observing the rules of correct rendition, is consistent with Arabic's origins.
3. Paying attention to purify the information material presented through all information media of everything that abuses standard Arabic language, makes it loathsome, or lessens its importance.
4. Encouraging the specialized magazines which are issued in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia particularly and in the Islamic and Arabic world generally according to the information policy.
5. Upgrading the language of the folklore programmes which are presented in the colloquial dialect gradually and replacing it with the simplified standard language.
6. Encouraging programmes which serve the standard language, strengthen it with the educated people, and clear it in the souls of the common people in addition to backing up the plays and the series which are presented in it.
7. Contributing to teaching the standard language to those who are non-Arabic speakers from the citizens of the Islamic countries according to the most advanced, scientific, and pedagogical methods.

Article 18:

The Saudi information performs its share in backing up the cultural and scientific renaissance through the following media:

1. Encouraging researchers, scientists and intellectuals by every possible means including participation in publishing their production and opening up opportunity for them to set forth their activities publicly.
2. Taking care of the youthful talents and encouraging them both financially and morally and looking after them until they reach the expected standard.
3. Undertaking to hold intellectual symposiums, literary and scientific conferences, and meetings among the Kingdom's citizens and between them and their counterparts abroad with the aim of contributing to the scientific life, opening the doors of the constructive dialogue and presenting the Kingdom's scientific and cultural activity inside the country and abroad.
4. Encouraging the national publication houses and backing them up financially and morally in order to do their duty in publishing the serious Saudi books and putting the incentives which enable them to distribute Saudi books widely inside the Kingdom and abroad, in addition to the encouragement of setting up book exhibitions, the matter which elucidates the Kingdom's scientific rank and the high standard reached in science and intellectualism.

Article 19:

The Saudi information is convinced of the importance of the legacy and of the pressing necessity to vitalize it. So, the Saudi information undertakes doing its share in this regard by different means and especially the following measures:

1. Encouraging the publication of useful legacy, materially and spiritually, through various means of which the following are the most important:
 - a. Preparing programmes which acquaint citizens with the most important books and indicate they are available.
 - b. Supporting their verifiers (sic) either by printing the books at the expense of the State or by purchasing enough copies out of what is printed from those books.
 - c. Facilitating the measures of access to the legacy books for those who are concerned in them.
2. Counteracting all the attempts aiming at destroying the legacy or lessening its importance.
3. Encouraging programmes which take their material from the legacy books, especially in the field of stories, plays, series and literary biographies.
4. Displaying masterpieces from the legacy books, acquainting people with the efforts of our ancestors in the various fields of knowledge, and informing them about the glorious achievements realized by their forefathers and asking them to connect the present time of this nation with its respectable past.

Article 20:

The Saudi information media make every conceivable effort to confirm the ties of fraternity, mutual assistance, and joint liability among the Muslims. They seek to combine their hearts with each other by means of acquainting them with the Islamic peoples and their countries in addition to making the spiritual and material abilities known together with enlightening them on the good that may prevail them all as a result of their cooperation and mutual assistance.

Article 21:

The Saudi information calls the Arabs to:

- a. Joint liability, cooperation, unanimity on rightness, and remoteness from everything that serves their bonds.
- b. Defending their causes and their critical problems on various occasions and urging them to do their duty . . . [in standing] up for the religion of Islam besides defending it since God has bestowed the honour of Islam upon them.

Article 22:

The Saudi information makes sure that the call for God among Muslims and other peoples is existing and eternal until God inherits the earth and everything on it. Embracing this belief, it accomplishes its share in carrying out this great duty, following the manner of judiciousness and religious exhortation in its calling for God, depending upon addressing the mind and avoiding everything that might arouse, rancour of others.

Article 23:

The Saudi institutes of information work with their counterparts in the Islamic world generally and the Arab world particularly to adopt a unified information . . . [ideological] which serves Muslims' earthly and heavenly interests, respects their civilized and ideational unity and makes their hearts on intimate terms.

Article 24:

The Saudi information affirms the respect of individuals' rights concerning their properties and the rights of groups regarding their common things. At the same time, it acts to ingrain the spirit of social reciprocal responsibility among the individuals of the nation, together with developing the natural disposition of cooperation and sacrifice in the souls and notifying the citizens of their direct responsibility toward their society.

Article 25:

The Saudi information relies on objectivity in displaying the truths and on remoteness from exaggeration and alterations. Furthermore, it deeply appreciates the honour of the word and the necessity of protecting it from futility and it avoids everything that might stir grudges or awaken dissensions and hatred.

Article 26:

Freedom of expression in the information media is guaranteed within the national and Islamic aims and values which are observed by the Saudi Information.

Article 27:

The Saudi information turns in its exterior relations towards a humanitarian direction built on respect for man's ability to lead a life of liberty in his native land and disapproves of all kinds of aggression which affect the rights of the people and the individuals. In addition to that, it struggles against the expansion ambitions, backs up the truth, justice, and peace and opposes injustice and racial discrimination.

Article 28:

The Policy of Information affirms the importance of preparing cultured and experienced manpowers which are capable of realizing the aims of the Saudi information, in addition to taking care of these capabilities by constant guidance and training.

Article 29:

The Saudi information encourages the production of good local information materials corresponding with the Policy of Information.

Article 30:

All the information Institutions in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia shall abide by this Policy and by the regulations and the rules issued for its implementation.

Appendix C

Questions in the Research Study: To Saudi Media Academics and Journalists

The main questions planned for the interviews are listed below. However, it should be noted that these were semi-structured interviews; prompts and supplementary questions were added as needed. Moreover, interviewees' comments sometimes raised issues beyond the scope of the original schedule, which it was interesting to follow up. These are reflected in the interview report in Chapter 4.

Q1. Like any other area in the Arab World, the Gulf region is rather more reactive than proactive (militarily, economically and socially) towards threats. The press is faced with the task of interpreting the environment and what is really being planned or prepared. So, do you believe that before the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait and Iraq's subsequent threat to the rest of the Gulf States, the Saudi press had identified the threat, particularly in view of conflict preceding the military occupation? If the Saudi press did not identify the threat, what was its role during the political conflict and why? And, do you think the press covered the conflict thoroughly by publicising the common view point, and/ or, predicting the future trends of the conflict and why?

Q2. After the Iraq invasion and occupation of Kuwait until the liberation of Kuwait, do you believe that the Saudi press performance was changed? To what extent was the Saudi press able to present relevant news and information and why?

Q3. It is inevitable that a clash would develop between the optimism of the Saudi press and the stubbornness of the Iraqis on how to get out of the conflict. How did the Saudi press interact with, or to what extent was it opposed to, the Iraqi press, since each press followed its respective government policy? Why did it react in this way?

Q4. CNN breaks the news first, wherever, whatever and under any circumstances that it can. It is argued that is a primary source of news and information and affects not only international public opinion but also the decision - makers of governments over the world. So, the Saudi press during the Gulf conflict, particularly in the actual war, faced a challenge from CNN in making and presenting the news. To what extent did this challenge affect the Saudi press in its coverage and why?

Q5. It is commonly believed that the military and the press view each other with suspicion. The military desire to act away from the press, while the press always desire to cover events fully and get the facts. To what extent do you think this statement is true? If otherwise, how do you conceive the relationship between the military and the press and why?

Q6. Do you think the Saudi press performance was changed as a result of the social, political, economic and psychological impacts of the Gulf conflict, particularly after the liberation of Kuwait and why?

Appendix D

Definitions of Main News Topics

News items were classified according to their predominant subject-matter, into 12 categories. For coding purposes, the following definitions were used:

1. **Political news** is defined as news referring to the movements, meetings, actions and speeches of governments members or bodies, or of other groups, organisations, institutions and communities in relation to a political matter, e.g. the government stance on conflict-related issues.
2. **Military/defence news** is defined as news concerning the activities of the Ministry of Defence, officials and military officers, visits to military units and facilities, the Armed forces' preparation for mobilisation and deployment, allied operations, the military situation, casualties and prisoners of war.
3. **Economic news** is defined as news predominantly concerned with prices, financial/trading reports of companies, government revenues and expenditures, loans and subsidies, foreign debts and the imposition and effect of economic sanctions.
4. **Social service news** is defined as news concerning the efforts of statutory and voluntary agencies in the fields of health care; medical, food or other aid given in cases of accident and emergency; advice and counselling.
5. **Crime/law/justice news** is defined as news concerning crime committed by individuals or groups against persons or property; vice; the failure of individual or groups to function co-operatively within society, the depiction of certain groups as anti-social, dishonest or corrupt.
6. **Sport news** is defined as news announcing or reporting any professional or amateur sporting matter, contest or festival, describing the preparations for such an event; discussion of sporting rules and trends and announcement of the transfers (e.g. signing, retirement of sporting personalities).
7. **Education news** is defined as news concerning education policy, educational achievements, or the activities of any public or private educational institutions, including the opening or closure of such institutions or disruption of their programme as a result of the conflict.
8. **Ecology/environment news** is defined as news concerning plant and animal life, habitats, and natural or human- induced conditions affecting them, e.g. temperature changes, pollution of air, land or water.
9. **Nature disasters/accidents** are defined as incidents beyond human control, or unforeseen events, leading to destruction of property, personal injury or loss of life, e.g. fire, drought, flood, earthquake, famine etc.
10. **Religious news** is defined as news concerning religious observations and festivals, discussion of religious obligations, and reports of the pronouncements and judgements of religious scholars.
11. **Multi-issues** are defined as items which contain elements of two or more of the above categories, such that no single category clearly predominates.
12. **"Other"** items are defined as articles or items which do not fall within the scope of any of the aforementioned categories, such as poetry, reports of cultural activities, news about popular personalities such as singers, "human interest", etc.

Appendix E

Code Sheet²

1. Tick the newspaper selected : *Riy* ()
Oka ()
Yau ()

2. Write the Date, Month, Year of newspaper issued (for one week from / / to / /).

3. Tick the period of study: Before the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait..... ()
 2 July 1990 - 1 August 1990

 During the Iraqi invasion and occupation of Kuwait ()
 2 August 1990 - 16 Jan, 1991

 The liberation of Kuwait ()
 17 Jan 1991- 28 Feb., 1991

 After the liberation of Kuwait ()
 1 March, 1991- 30 March, 1991

1. Encode Main News Theme, Type (domestic, International or Foreign) and tone. Is it Positive (P) or Negative (N)?

Main news topic	Domestic type of news		International type of news		Foreign type of news	
	P	N	P	N	P	N
Political						
Military/Defence						
Economic						
Social Service						
Crime/Law/Justice						
Sport						
Education						
Ecology/ Environment						
Natural disasters/accident						
Religious						
Multi-issues						
Other						

² . Reduced for the original size.

5. Encode the Geographic Locations of News Story. Is it related [R] to the Gulf conflict or not [N]?

Geographic origin	R	N	R	N	R	N	R	N	R	N	R	N	R	N
Saudi Arabia														
Eastern Europe														
Western Europe														
North American														
Latin American														
Africa														
Asia/Pacific														
Middle East														
Multi- region														
UN														
Unidentifiable														

6. Encode the Source of News Story. Is it related [R] to the Gulf conflict or not [N]?

Source	R	N	R	N	R	N	R	N	R	N	R	N	R	N
Own Staff														
S P A														
Reuters														
AFP														
TASS														
AP														
UPI														
Other media- home														
Other media foreign														
Private Citizens														
Public Officials														
Multi Sources														
Other Agencies														
Unidentifiable														

7. Write the theme of leading article or headline if it reflects a theme of the leading article related to the Gulf Conflict

Theme	Name of newspaper ()

Appendix F

The Results of Research Hypotheses and the Subhypotheses (I, III, I V, V & VI)

The Results of Research Hypotheses and Subhypotheses Studied during the Iraqi Invasion and Occupation of Kuwait

Newspapers	Hypotheses #	Low Limits	Upper Limits	Observe Percentage against the Null hypotheses	Results	Conclusions
<i>Riy</i>	Ia. 1	79.91	83.73	20.68	SD	S
<i>Oka</i>	Ia. 2	78.4	87.72	16.94	SD	S
<i>Yau</i>	Ia. 3	75.69	84.87	19.72	SD	S
<i>Riy, Oka & Yau</i>	Ia	78.09	83.35	19.28	SD	S
<i>Riy</i>	Ib. 1	7.09	14.69	89.11	SD	R
<i>Oka</i>	Ib. 2	18.41	30.13	75.73	SD	R
<i>Yau</i>	Ib. 3	7.88	16.26	87.93	SD	R
<i>Riy, Oka & Yau</i>	Ib	12.68	18.06	84.63	SD	R
<i>Riy</i>	Ic. 1	89.88	96.12	7	SD	S
<i>Oka</i>	Ic. 2	90.98	97.36	5.83	SD	S
<i>Yau</i>	Ic. 3	87.78	94.98	8.62	SD	S
<i>Riy, Oka & Yau</i>	Ic	91.83	93.79	7.18	SD	S
<i>Riy</i>	III. 1	14.15	22.61	81.62	SD	R
<i>Oka</i>	III. 2	12.28	21.6	83.06	SD	R
<i>Yau</i>	III. 3	8.7	16.3	87.50	SD	R
<i>Riy, Oka & Yau</i>	III	12.85	18.97	84.09	SD	R
<i>Riy</i>	IV. 1	29.73	40.03	65.12	SD	R
<i>Oka</i>	IV. 2	31.58	43.83	62.29	SD	R
<i>Yau</i>	IV. 3	13.12	22.3	82.29	SD	R
<i>Riy, Oka & Yau</i>	IV	26.77	32.89	70.17	SD	R
<i>Riy</i>	V. 1	50.47	61.33	44.10	SD	S
<i>Oka</i>	V. 2	53.22	65.48	40.65	SD	S
<i>Yau</i>	V. 3	24.43	35.01	70.28	SD	R
<i>Riy, Oka & Yau</i>	V	44.78	51.48	51.87	SD	R
<i>Riy, Oka & Yau</i>	VI	32.27	50.61	58.56	SD	R

S= Support (Hypothesis is supported)

R= Reject (Hypothesis is rejected)

SD= Statistically significant

The Results of Research Hypotheses and Subhypotheses Studied during the Liberation of Kuwait

Newspapers	Hypotheses #	Low Limits	Upper Limits	Observe Percentage against the Null hypotheses	Results	Conclusions
<i>Riy</i>	Ia. 1	79.83	87.19	16.49	SD	S
<i>Oka</i>	Ia. 2	68.53	77.79	26.84	SD	S
<i>Yau</i>	Ia. 3	82.86	89.56	13.79	SD	S
<i>Riy, Oka & Yau</i>	Ia	79.02	83.52	18.73	SD	S
<i>Riy</i>	Ib. 1	4.3	9.9	92.90	SD	R
<i>Oka</i>	Ib. 2	11.03	15.23	86.87	SD	R
<i>Yau</i>	Ib. 3	4.69	10.17	92.57	SD	R
<i>Riy, Oka & Yau</i>	Ib	7.08	10.72	91.10	SD	R
<i>Riy</i>	Ic. 1	89.73	95.45	7.41	SD	S
<i>Oka</i>	Ic. 2	92.8	97.94	4.63	SD	S
<i>Yau</i>	Ic. 3	89.49	95.09	7.71	SD	S
<i>Riy, Oka & Yau</i>	Ic	91.64	94.86	6.75	SD	S
<i>Riy</i>	III. 1	14.72	22.36	81.36	SD	R
<i>Oka</i>	III. 2	13.08	20.92	83.00	SD	R
<i>Yau</i>	III. 3	9.01	15.43	87.78	SD	R
<i>Riy, Oka & Yau</i>	III	13.74	17.98	84.14	SD	R
<i>Riy</i>	IV. 1	29.66	34.42	67.96	SD	R
<i>Oka</i>	IV. 2	27.75	32.65	69.80	SD	R
<i>Yau</i>	IV. 3	13.87	21.27	82.43	SD	R
<i>Riy, Oka & Yau</i>	IV	21.06	26	76.47	SD	R
<i>Riy</i>	V. 1	37.4	47.28	57.66	SD	R
<i>Oka</i>	V. 2	43.55	54.13	51.16	SD	S
<i>Yau</i>	V. 3	32.1	41.54	63.10	SD	R
<i>Riy, Oka & Yau</i>	V	39.47	45.23	57.65	SD	R
<i>Riy, Oka & Yau</i>	VI	29.63	46.79	61.79	SD	R

S= Support (Hypothesis is supported)

R= Reject (Hypothesis is rejected)

SD= Statistically significant

The Results of Research Hypotheses and Subhypotheses Studied after the Liberation of Kuwait

Newspapers	Hypotheses #	Low Limits	Upper Limits	Observe Percentage against the Null hypotheses	Results	Conclusions
<i>Riy</i>	Ia. 1	55.17	79.31	32.76	SD	S
<i>Oka</i>	Ia. 2	56.05	83.49	30.23	SD	S
<i>Yau</i>	Ia. 3	76.72	93.14	15.07	SD	S
<i>Riy, Oka & Yau</i>	Ia	68.88	81.70	24.71	SD	S
<i>Riy</i>	Ib. 1	- 4.96	7.52	97.44	SD	R
<i>Oka</i>	Ib. 2	3.34	30	83.33	SD	R
<i>Yau</i>	Ib. 3	2.31	17.05	90.32	SD	R
<i>Riy, Oka & Yau</i>	Ib	4.22	14.10	90.83	SD	R
<i>Riy</i>	Ic. 1	100	100	00	SD	S
<i>Oka</i>	Ic. 2	100	100	00	SD	S
<i>Yau</i>	Ic. 3	87.43	99.67	6.45	SD	S
<i>Riy, Oka & Yau</i>	Ic	94.01	99.89	3.05	SD	S
<i>Riy</i>	III. 1	6.34	14.34	89.66	SD	R
<i>Oka</i>	III. 2	5.74	29.26	82.50	SD	R
<i>Yau</i>	III. 3	2.96	17.04	90	SD	R
<i>Riy, Oka & Yau</i>	III	7.00	16.80	88.10	SD	R
<i>Riy</i>	IV. 1	19.13	42.93	68.97	SD	R
<i>Oka</i>	IV. 2	13.66	41.34	72.50	SD	R
<i>Yau</i>	IV. 3	6.23	13.21	90.28	SD	R
<i>Riy, Oka & Yau</i>	IV	15.05	27.31	78.82	SD	R
<i>Riy</i>	V. 1	28.24	54.78	58.49	SD	R
<i>Oka</i>	V. 2	15.79	44.21	70	SD	R
<i>Yau</i>	V. 3	53.99	77.27	34.37	SD	S
<i>Riy, Oka & Yau</i>	V	40.49	56.23	51.59	SD	R
<i>Riy, Oka & Yau</i>	VI	32.61	78.51	44.44	SD	R

S= Support (Hypothesis is supported)

R= Reject (Hypothesis is rejected)

SD= Statistically significant

Appendix G

Questionnaire for Saudi Journalists

Dear journalist

I am surveying journalists' perceptions of the Saudi Arabian Press function in time of war and their satisfaction with its actual performance during the Gulf conflict (1990-1991). This research is a part of my academic research for a Ph. D thesis and will also influence the development of new journalistic functions as well as the role of the Saudi press performance in conflict or/ and peace time.

Your answers will help further the knowledge and development of the functions of newspapers.

The survey should take less than 15 minutes to complete. All replies will be confidential, and will only be used for the purpose of this research.

Thank you in advance for your contribution to my research.

Sincerely

**Abdrahman M. Al- Kahtani
Institute of Communications Studies
University of Leeds
Leeds LS2 9JT
UK**

This survey is divided into three parts. The first part asks about your perceptions of the function of Saudi press in war time. The second part deals with your views and satisfaction on of the performance of the Saudi press during the Gulf conflict, with reference to the Gulf war. Finally, the third part deals with general characteristics about you so your answer can be compared with others who are taking the survey.

Part 1 - Your perception of the function of Saudi press in war time.

1- Listed below are some statements about the essence of the function (performance of press. For each of the following statements, please indicate if you are strongly agree (SA), agree(A), undecided (U), disagree (D), strongly disagree (SD). (please make circle around your indication)

1. The press should be accurate and objective.

SA A U D SD

2. The press should seek to fully report as many sides of the issue as possible.

SA A U D SD

3. The press should convey information to the public.

SA A U D SD

4. The press should be a credible reference source.

SA A U D SD

5. The press should expose crime and the depth of war.

SA A U D SD

6. The press should inform readers of forthcoming events.

SA A U D SD

7. The press should provide background information to help readers understand events.

SA A U D SD

8. The press should publish pictures that help explain or clarify the written story.

SA A U D SD

9. The press is a community's most important instrument for bringing together all elements of the war events.

SA A U D SD

10. The press should emphasise local and military news.

SA A U D SD

11. The press should print stories that are interesting and informative although not necessarily timely.

SA A U D SD

12. The press should depend on information releases distributed by publicity officials.
SA A U D SD
13. Information should be a factor in the selection of what news and information ought to go into the press.
SA A U D SD
14. The press should be able to sacrifice some accuracy in reporting if it means getting the news out before any of the other news media.
SA A U D SD
15. The press should present a variety of political, social and military issues directly or indirectly related to the war.
SA A U D SD
16. The press should assist in the promotion of worthy causes.
SA A U D SD
17. The press should try to print some "good" news.
SA A U D SD
18. The press should provide citizens with more information about the danger to the country in case of attack by the enemy such as bombing of cities, chemical warfare, tricks, . . etc.
SA A U D SD
19. The press should offer its opinions on war events through its leading page.
SA A U D SD
20. The press should protect its readers against propaganda and false statements.
SA A U D SD
21. The press should help authorities avoid publishing content that might violate the public trust.
SA A U D SD
22. The press should interpret stories that appear in local and foreign mass media.
SA A U D SD
23. The press should attempt to guide public opinion after impartially presenting the different sides of an issue.
SA A U D SD
24. The press should print only those photographs which have news value.
SA A U D SD
25. The press has no obligation to separate fact from opinion.
SA A U D SD
26. The press should promote public service.
SA A U D SD
27. The press should be required to correct all printed errors, deliberate or unintentional, as soon as possible.
SA A U D SD

28. The press should be responsible to follow up officials' mistakes and inform the public about them.
SA A U D SD
29. The press' function - as a mass medium - should be different from that of the electronic media (that is, radio and television).
SA A U D SD
30. The press should support and advance the policies of the government.
SA A U D SD
31. The press should promote what the people want during the war time.
SA A U D SD
32. The press should present material that is not morally and religiously objectionable during the war time.
SA A U D SD
32. The press should be the voice of its readers.
SA A U D SD
34. The press should entertain readers.
SA A U D SD
35. The press should run photographs that don't offend the readers.
SA A U D SD
36. The press should be neat and attractive in appearance.
SA A U D SD
37. The press should inform its readers about political and military developments during the war time.
SA A U D SD
38. The press should refrain from use of information that might damage the national image of Saudi Arabia or the allies.
SA A U D SD
39. The press should be a crusader.
SA A U D SD
40. There ought to be an agency of some kind to see that the press acts in the right direction
SA A U D SD
41. The press is more a public utility than a private enterprise.
SA A U D SD
42. The press should follow the Saudi Arabian policy and not be dictated to by anybody during the war time.
SA A U D SD
43. The press' regulation should come from the press' journalists.
SA A U D SD

44. The press should have access to all meetings of government and others who have influence in order to act as a mediator.
 SA A U D SD

Part 2 - Your views and satisfaction with the performance of the Saudi press in the time of the Gulf conflict.

- 45a. How would you rate the job the Saudi Press did in covering the Gulf conflict, particularly during the time of actual fighting? (please choose only one):
- (a): Excellent []
 - (b): Good []
 - (c): Fair..... []
 - (d): Not good []

45b. Please specify why you chose this answer _____

46. Which Saudi media most adequately covered the Gulf conflict, particularly during the time of actual fighting? (Please choose only one):
- (a): The Saudi Arabian Radio []
 - (b): The Saudi Arabian Television..... []
 - (c): The Saudi Arabian Press..... []

47. Human beings within the information age use a variety of knowledge sources. The local press was one source of information about political, military and economic development and other subjects during the Gulf conflict. Do you believe, from your own experience that the press was the first source through which you followed developments?

Yes []
 No []

48. Which of these was the main source of information and news about the Gulf conflict for you? (Please choose only one):
- (a): The Saudi Arabian Radio _____ []
 - (b): The Saudi Arabian Television _____ []
 - (c): The Saudi Arabian Press _____ []
 - (d) : Other source (e.g., CNN, BBC, VOA) _____ []
- Please state which source : _____

49. During a conflict any country follows a different information policy and deals with the press and broadcasting organisations differently than during the peace time. As a result, the press might not give the readers all information and news; which of the following factors limit the press information and news? (Please tick as many boxes as appropriate).

- Insufficient information and facts available to the press organisations []
- Conformity to the new information policy[]
- Co-operation with the government in treatment of the crisis to compilation of its military strategies and tactics[]
- The benefits that the enemy could gain in their military plans and psychological operations[]
- Other[]

50. How necessary was the requirement by military authorities that the media “pool” their reports to be submitted to the ‘Joint Information Bureau’ (JIB) to be examined and censored by military information officers during the Gulf conflict and particularly during the fighting? (please choose only one).

- Very necessary []
- Somewhat necessary []
- Somewhat unnecessary []
- Unnecessary []

51. From the point of view of military commanders there are many reasons why sources of military information, communiqués and news should be controlled by the military and should not be seen by citizens or given to journalists for publication. In your opinion, which of the following justifications are valid? (Please tick as many boxes as appropriate).

- A journalist would normally tend to publish stories which excite and attract the reader []
- A journalist often takes refuge in the concept of ‘objectivity’ []
- A journalist may be considered as a ‘spy’ []
- A journalist is not capable of dealing adequately with war issues and the cannot fully treat even a tiny part of these issues []
- A journalist thrives on conflict rather than conflict resolution []
- Other reason []

52. What were the reasons for dissatisfaction with press coverage the Gulf conflict by S. A. Journalists? (Please tick as many boxes as appropriate).

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> . Not informative enough | <input type="checkbox"/> . Too much space devoted to the war |
| <input type="checkbox"/> . Boring | <input type="checkbox"/> . Unethical news |
| <input type="checkbox"/> . Repetitive | <input type="checkbox"/> . Did not always keep to the facts |
| <input type="checkbox"/> . Too little coverage | <input type="checkbox"/> . Not very balanced |
| <input type="checkbox"/> . Not always trustworthy | <input type="checkbox"/> . Not up- to - date |
| <input type="checkbox"/> . Too much speculation | <input type="checkbox"/> . Other reasons; (please specify below) |

53. Please rank the main news topics that should be devoted space by the press in terms of their importance to the Saudi Arabian society during the Gulf war time. (Write 1 next to the topic/issue you think most important, 2 next to the second and so on, until number 12).

Main News Topic	Rank
Military/Defence	
Politics	
Religion	
Economics	
Crime/Law/Justice	
Natural Disasters/Accidents	
Social Services	
Ecology/Environment	
Science/Technology	
Sports	
Education	
Culture/arts	

54. There was a difference of opinion between the analysts and the critics regarding the publication of Saddam Hussein's speeches and their effect on European, American and Arab countries (e.g., CNN) during the Gulf conflict. Which of the following two views do you accept?

Publication helped the world to understand better that Saddam was the aggressor as well as prompting the world take the necessary steps to intervene []

Publication helped Saddam gain support from some Arab nations for his invasion of Kuwait, and created suspicion about the ability of Arab leaders and their governments to solve the problem and convince their respective people and the world of their policies []

55. Report of negative events such as coalition planes being shot down, the bombing of a bunker/shelter in Baghdad that resulted in heavy civilian casualties, coalition pilots captured by Iraqi , coalition air attacks on Iraq forces along with the road to Basra when Iraq forces were with drawing from Kuwait, Saudi Military dead in the al- Khafji; What would be the outcome if these were concurrently reported? (Please choose only one).

- Reporting all negative events could support the Saudi government and its mass media, by reducing the likelihood of the audiences looking at other media, which might present the outcomes of the event in a way that led to perturbation in the military and the nation as a whole..... []
- Reporting all negative events could lead to lack of confidence in both sides of the government and mass media and more confusion and attention could occur in the military force and nation []

56. How closely are you now following the news and the results of the Gulf conflict? (please choose only one).

- Very closely []
- Fairly closely []
- Not too closely []
- Not at all closely []

Part 3 - About You

What is your title?

How many years have you been in the academic or journalist profession? Please tick only one box

- 15 or more years
 5 - 14 years
 Less than 5 years

Have you ever worked in an academic institution or press organisation different from the one you are currently employed by? Please tick only one box

- No
 Yes, on the "university" side
 Yes, on the agency/ consulting side
 Yes (other, please specify)

What is your highest level of formal education? Please tick only one box

- Below High School
 High School
 BA/BSc
 Diploma
 MA/MSc
 PhD
 Other, Please specify

What was your major field of study?

Here are basic demographic questions.

SEX. (a). Male

(b). Female

AGE	20-24 <input type="checkbox"/>	25-29 <input type="checkbox"/>	30-34 <input type="checkbox"/>
	35-39 <input type="checkbox"/>	40-44 <input type="checkbox"/>	45-49 <input type="checkbox"/>
	50-54 <input type="checkbox"/>	55-59 <input type="checkbox"/>	60 - or more <input type="checkbox"/>

Are there any other comments or suggestions that you would like to make regarding the subject of war and media or the development of Saudi press functions in society during war time?

Please return this questionnaire to your head of department or to the secretary

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