
A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Master Degree in Mass Communication

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Kingdom of Bahrain
June 2016
Abstract

Journalism is considered a cornerstone in defending national, security and stability issues, and safeguarding the country and citizen's top interest, when considering its power to form and influence public opinion. Constructive, aware and responsible words are means of enhancing, solidifying and prospering society. The reformist project of His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa supported freedom of expression, adding more achievements to it. Due to journalism being a major partner in comprehensive development and enhancing the spirit of citizenship, belonging and prioritising the national interest of the Bahraini people, this study attempted to identify the intellectual and subjective structures of journalism in the Kingdom of Bahrain, and the extent to which its writers commit to responsible freedom, through content analyses of columns in Akhbar al-Khaleej and al-Watan newspapers in the period from June 2013 to June 2014, based on the theory of social responsibility and the surveying methodology, utilising content analysis as a tool. After analysing 277 articles, the study revealed interest in current affairs, contemporary issues and addressing political and security issues first and foremost. The study indicated the use of classic Arabic (fus-ha), and the considerable lack of critical and analytical articles, as well as the lack of diversity in using different titles, introductions and conclusions. Additionally, external powers were a topic that predominantly influenced these articles, and government officials were mainly targeted. The study also revealed that some writers' efforts to address new topics in their articles were at a larger rate than writers who wrote in reference to basic or secondary topics from their previous articles. The study revealed the writers' tendency to appeal to reason over emotion, and that the majority write from a single point of view, in addition to the absence of documentation, since most articles lacked references. The study's results have also indicated the use of diverse referencing frameworks, and writers assuming a positive direction at a higher rate. Results also revealed daily writers' inclination towards the liberal direction in their articles, while those who wrote less frequently did not clearly exhibit this trend in their articles. Most daily writers neglected responsible freedom by dividing the people of Bahrain into sectarian factions, through the use of exaggerated words describing failure and pessimistic phrases in their comments, and utilising most of their articles for political propaganda. Writers mostly used external parties as effective influences in their writings, lacking diversity in addressing all parties. The study also revealed an example of contrast between a writer who did not write freely to address the Bahraini society, choosing instead to write about other countries, while another writer practiced responsible freedom in openly criticising the targeted parties for the sake of public interest, striking a balance between praise and criticism.