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The Portrayal of Arabs as Reflected in American Political Satire Shows

A Multilevel Analysis

Doctoral thesis presented by

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1. Study Overview

1.1 Introduction

For several years, examining the image of Arabs and Muslims reflected in the American media has been considered a rich field of research that has been tackled by many political communication scholars. Specifically, after the September 11, 2001, attacks on the United States, the research on the representation and stereotypes of Muslims and Arabs has grown in order to establish a better understanding of the collision between both cultures after such events.

However, Zimbardo (2014) argues that many of these rooted stereotypes have a longer history predating September 11 attacks, and they were depicted in films, news media, colonial literature, and the United States imaginary.

Moreover, from the very first day of President Trump's administration in 2017, the American policy towards religious and ethnic minorities was taking a different turn, with a less tolerated tone towards most of the minorities (Family, 2018). This tone of intolerance from the political administration has resulted in the elevation of the number of hate crimes against most religious and ethnic minorities living in the United States, especially Arabs and Muslims, with a 50% increase compared to September 11 aftermath (Giroux, 2017; Müller & Schwarz, 2018).

Furthermore, media throughout the world has always been playing an important role in shaping people's opinion especially regarding political issues. Nonetheless, media has always been powerful enough to manipulate the public opinion and shape the public discourse (Ansolabehere et al., 1993).

"Jesters do oft prove prophets." (King Lear, Act 5, Scene 3). In his drama Shakespeare, noted the fact that jesters of the king's court, whose role was telling jokes for entertainment and amusement, were actually considered kings' great advisors. A jester sarcastically mocked reality and made fun of everything in society, when no one else had the courage to speak, because simply they were hiding behind their jokes (Castillo 2015; Jaffa, 1957).

Consequently, studying the effect of infotainment, and political satire in particular, became an interesting area of research for many scholars recently, in order to examine its recurring effect on the public and how influential it could be on the political process itself (Baumgartner & Morris, 2006; Boukes et al., 2015, Boukes, 2019; Hoffman & Young, 2011; Hollander, 2005;

Meder, 2011). In addition, it is worth mentioning that, with regard to the popularity of such programs, scholars have mentioned that not only do these programs have a major effect on public opinion, but also some people even rely on them for their political information (Lamarre, 2013).

Likewise, analyzing political humor and defining the contexts and themes of such content, whether in cultural jokes, political cartoon, or even political satire shows, constitute a major field of research in the linguistics studies and semiotic analysis as well (Purcell et al., 2010; Brown & Gokmen, 2010).

Moreover, with the accelerating tone of intolerance of the American policy towards ethnic and religious minorities, it was essential for the researcher to analyze how American satire shows support or oppose such policy against Arabs in the discourse of their humorous content. In view of the fact that infotainment possesses a major role in shaping and influencing the political spectrum, being from the same cultural background as the ethnic group in question, it became vital for the researcher to analyze the content, images, and treatment of issues concerning Arab countries addressed in political satire programs.

Political satire programs are becoming very prominent and influential among audience members in recent years. According to Socialbakers (2020), the YouTube channel for the network “Comedy Central,” which is the home of many satirical shows, is considered the second highest YouTube channel with regard to number of audience, with over 3.5 billion total views and 6.5 million subscribers. In addition, in the United States, comedy show YouTube channels also ranked the highest in terms of the number of audience. Six out of the top 10 most viewed programs are comedy and political satire programs, namely, *The Ellen Show*, *Jimmy Kimmel Live*, *Saturday Night Live*, *The Tonight Show Starring Jimmy Fallon*, *The Late Show with Stephen Colbert*, *The Late Late Show with James Corden* (Socialbakers, 2020).

Several studies suggest the importance of social media in defining the audience perception, feedback, and interaction towards any given media content (Babcock et al., 2019; Turnsek & Janecek, 2019; Stevens & McIntyre, 2020). In other words, measuring user’s interactivity on social media can help determine the level of popularity and influence of any entertainment content. Consequently, discovering the level of audience engagement and interaction on different social media platforms with regard to the political satire shows under examination was another query of this research.

Taking this into consideration, the researcher's interest in this topic is driven by both cultural and social factors. This interest is associated with the fact that, being a Muslim, Arab woman living in the Middle East, the researcher belongs to the same cultural group under examination, and the image presented in different media platforms about this cultural group is a vital part of her cultural presentation as a whole. Hence, the examination of the portrayal was inevitable in order to propose a clarification for the reasons behind this image and to explore whether this portrayal has changed from the time of the early orientalist image about the Middle East to the time of the September 11 attacks, which was an actual turning point in the narratives of Arabs and Muslims representations in the media. This will consequently allow us to present some notions about how to change this deeply rooted image in the public consciousness. Moreover, the researcher has a special interest in the American entertainment industry, with all of its features, including its worldwide popularity and consequently its international influence through movies, TV series, and sitcoms, along with TV shows including late-night talk shows and political satire shows. Accordingly, the selection of American political satire shows to be examined was adopted in her research. In addition, the researcher's interest in political satire started when she was a graduate student during the Arab spring, as she discovered how influential political satire can be in every political aspect during this time of political changes in her country. Since then, her interest in political satire became more scientific and research oriented as well. Consequently, the researcher started working on her master's degree research with the topic of examining the influence of political satire on the political engagement of the youth in Egypt. Additionally, being an educator of the science of mass communication allowed her to encounter numerous researches discussing several broad topics including stereotypes in media and the level of its effectiveness, along with coming across studies regarding political satire and its influence. The previously mentioned elements played an important role in defining and selecting the topic of this PhD research.

1.2 Statement of Research Problem

The research at hand aims at examining the portrayals of the Arabs as presented in the American political satire shows, through a detailed content analysis of some satire shows and trying to define a more insightful understanding of how these satire shows deal with Arab issues from a political humor perspective.

1.3 Significance of the Research

A major backlash regarding the study of the presentation of Arabs in the American media is the misconception about Arabs and Muslims. Most of the studies tackling this field insist on categorizing both Arabs and Muslims as the same group (Mange et al. 2012). According to Sidani (2005), not all Arabs are Muslims and most Muslims are not Arabs; furthermore, according to Pew Research Center's 2015 Religious Landscape Study, only 12% of Muslims in the United States belong to Middle Eastern origins.

Another problem concerning this issue is that many of the studies have considered this field of political humor research from a linguistic perspective only (Bilici, 2010), and others have tackled it from a communication approach only (Hmielowski, Holbert & Lee, 2011).

Accordingly, the research at hand attempts to bridge the gap in the literature review, by examining the image of the Arabs as a separate cultural group. In addition, it tries to find a new perspective in the theoretical stand through using a mixed theoretical approach covering both linguistic and communication perspectives to draw the whole picture of this topic, through applying both quantitative and qualitative methodological approaches.

1.4 Objectives of the Research

The general objective of the study is to identify the image presented about the Arab world in general in political satire programs in the United States. In addition, the study at hand embraces several specific objectives that the researcher targets to fulfill. The objectives are as follows:

- Identifying issues that concern the Arab world, whether political, social, or economic, which are addressed through American political satire programs.
- Examining the different ideologies adopted by the satirical content of these programs, especially those concerning the Arab world.
- Measuring the degree of these programs' support of or opposition to the American foreign policy regarding Arabs issues.
- Defining the common stereotypes presented about Arabs and Muslims in these satire shows.
- Studying the role of humor and political satire in communicating stereotypes about Arabs and Muslims.

- Determining the level of popularity of the satire shows across different social media platforms.
- Examining audience's perception of the satirical content regarding Arabs and Muslims on social media.

1.5 Research Questions

- **RQ1:** To what extent do political satire shows cover Arab related news stories in comparison to Muslim related news stories?
- **RQ2:** What are the different topics concerning Arabs mentioned in political satire shows?
- **RQ3:** What are the different frames presented regarding Arabs and Arab countries in the American political satire programs?
- **RQ4:** What are the common stereotypes presented about Arabs in American political satire programs? How are Arabs portrayed?
- **RQ5:** What is the tone of jokes related to Arabs?
- **RQ6:** What is the degree of support for or opposition to the American foreign policies regarding Arab issues present in jokes?
- **RQ7:** Who is the target of Arab related jokes?
- **RQ8:** What is the level of audience interactivity and perception of Arab related issues on the social media platforms of political satire shows?

1.6 Research General Overview

The research at hand is based on a certain query, which is exploring the images presented about the Arab and Muslim world in the American political satire shows. Accordingly, in order to fulfill that essential quest, the research presents information on the subject matter, divided into several sections and organized as follows.

The theoretical framework of the research is divided into the following parts: the literature review and the theoretical application. The literature review discusses three main aspects: political satire, Arab media images, and Islamophobia.

The first aspect discusses the concept of political satire from a linguistic and a historical perspective. The study at hand tries to reach a definition of the term “political satire,” particularly in the context of contemporary politics and other topical issues. The connection between the word satire and politics is usually apparent in the communication context. Finding a definition for political satire was the goal of many researches and scholars throughout the years, so the researcher managed to gather and record several attempts from scholars defining the concept of satire throughout the history.

In addition, the literature review presents the historical perspective of political satire, by showing the long history of political satire throughout the world and in different forms of satire. These forms include displaying the history of political satire in literary works by presenting several examples from different countries. The literature review also provides background information about satire in print media, which started as early as the 17th century, by providing examples and historical background of the satirical forms in print media in several countries.

Additionally, it discusses the history and contemporary political satire programs on television, providing examples from countries all over the world, in order to identify the idea of political satire as a form of art throughout media history and contemporary forms as well.

Moreover, the research tackles the role of political satire in the social media to have an overview of the changes from the perspective of satire that accompanied the changes in the media as a whole through the concept of social media.

Additionally, the researcher also managed to include a part in the literature review discussing the political satire in the Arab world along with discussing the aspect of American political satire shows distinctly as well.

Regarding the American satire shows, informational background about several political satire shows is introduced, especially those programs that will be tackled in the content analysis research, *The Daily Show with Trevor Noah* and *The Late Show with Stephen Colbert*, as they represent the core of the study and many previous studies were dedicated to this aspect entirely.

Moreover, the literature review discusses several aspects related to the concept of political satire, including the concept of infotainment, its definition, and its effects. Furthermore, the research deals with some broader aspects of political satire including the goals and ethics of political satire as well.

The second aspect of the literature review is concerned with the other core variable of the study, which is Arabs and their portrayals in the media. The literature review provides some historical

background on the difference between Arabs and Muslims as two separate cultural groups. The review also presents the history of Islam and Arabs, the origins of the well-known stereotypes they are known for especially in the American media, and the history of such images, including images about Arab women and how and why they originated. Besides, it mentions the facts that actually helped rooting these stereotypes including the famous *Arabian Nights* tales. These rooted images and negative stereotypes about Islam and Arabs are believed to be dating back to the 19th century with several orientalist who made wrongful and subjective unjustified assumptions about Arabs and Muslims.

The third aspect of the literature review identifies the concept of Islamophobia as new terminology that has been associated with Islam as a religion, which actually began to rise after the September 11 attacks and was the start of the “War on Terror” era in the American foreign policy history. Those events have actually directed the mainstream of media towards Islamophobia and anti-Arab racism, so the research is presenting the circumstances leading to this ideological dilemma.

Furthermore, the research is based on several theoretical frameworks as an application of the study. It relies on the framing theory developed by Entman (2004) as the theoretical framework, in order to examine different frames used to present Arab related issues. In addition, the study relies on critical discourse analysis and Maslo’s (2016) “Model of Satirical Political Humor” to identify the proposed ideologies presented in the political satire programs concerning Arab’s issues.

Regarding the methodology applied in the study, the researcher relied on the triangulation or mixed method approach. In order to achieve the triangulation in the study, the researcher used a mixture of quantitative content analysis and qualitative textual analysis.

The content analysis was applied to examine images, frames, and issues presented about Arabs in political satire programs. In addition, in order to examine the stereotypes and ideologies embedded within the jokes, the qualitative textual analysis was applied to examine these variables.

Moreover, the methodology included a comparative analysis of the whole data gathered, both quantitative and qualitative, to assess the differences in approaches used for tackling Arab related issues in the shows along with examining the differences in each category analyzed in the coding scheme.

Furthermore, the jokes from the political satire shows under investigation were qualitatively analyzed using Maslo's model (2016) for the satirical message model. In addition, the comparative study was used to evaluate the stereotypes and ideologies used across the satirical shows under investigation and identify the different treatments applied in the humorous context of the jokes.

In addition, in order to analyze audience interactivity on social media platforms including Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, and Instagram for the two political satire shows under investigation to measure the most interactive social media platform in terms of users' interaction, the researcher relied on a collective statistical data available upon request from Socialbakers, a company specialized in social media data mining and statistical analysis. The data retrieved was then developed by the researcher and statistically analyzed to fit the objective of the research.

Likewise, a comparative analysis was conducted across the data from all social media platforms for each satirical show separately to comprehend the differences between these different platforms and measure the level of users' interactivity accordingly.

Furthermore, in order to have a general overview on the audience interaction with the jokes mentioning Arabs and Muslims on political satire shows, a textual analysis was carried out on the first displayed comments on a selection of posts from the four social media platforms: Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, and Instagram. The selected posts are the most commented posts related to Arabs or Muslims.

The researcher is hoping through this study to reach a comprehensive idea about the portrayal of Arabs as presented in the American satire shows, through the thoughtful analysis of the related literature, reviewing and applying the methodological procedures and theoretical framework mentioned above, in order to finally come up with the complete image that is presented about the cultural group of Muslims and Arabs.

Hence, this work will stand as a new challenge for the researcher who belongs to this culture and ethnic group to propose new ideas that help reshape the images and erase the stereotypes about Arabs and Muslims that have been culturally inherited in the public consciousness for years.

2. Theoretical Framework

2.1 Political Satire

2.1.1 Definition of political satire

The word satire is originally driven from the Latin word “*satura*,” which means a simple stage show with musical accompaniment performance (Lockyer, 2006). From a linguistic perspective, Oxford English Dictionary (2015) defines the word “satire” as “the use of humor, irony, exaggeration, or ridicule to expose and criticize people’s stupidity or vices, particularly in the context of contemporary politics and other topical issues.” In addition, the connection between the word satire and politics is usually apparent in the communication context.

In this regard, Finding a definition for humor was always a query for scholars as it is one of the basic human instincts (Spiegel, 2013). That is why one of the very early definitions of humor dates back to as early as the Greek civilization; Socrates, one of the famous ancient Greek philosophers, has always used his Socratic irony to state his ideas. He relied on using a statement, which means the opposite of its literal meaning, to draw the attention of the listeners, in order to arouse their minds to think, which is really what satire or humor does. In his definition of humor, Spiegel (2013) argued that “laughter arises from the simultaneity of pleasure and pain resulting from envy and malice” (p. 10).

In addition, Plato in his dialogues stated, “humor is finding delight in suffering and misfortunes of others” (as cited in Beerbohm, 1921). Likewise, according to Aristotle’s definition of wit, “the ludicrous is to be found in some defect, deformity, or ugliness which is neither painful nor destructive” (as cited in Macmillan, 1895).

Similarly, Bain (1888) argued that humor could be in the joy we find in ridiculing other people, ideas, political institutions, and inanimate objects. Bergson (1911) also mentioned that humor can be a social corrective action, because it can be a punishment for unsocial persons, for being in a position more superior to the person being laughed at.

In a similar manner, some early definitions of humor described humor or laughter as an absurdity situation involving the realization of the incongruity between the reality and the changed situation especially if this situation involves inconsistent complex assemblage (Beattie, 1776; Kant, 1790; Schopenhauer, 1819). Similarly, humor was described as

presenting the contrast between an idea or a thing and what it is supposed be, or a thing presented in a different playful context for its reality (Leacock, 1935; Willmann, 1940).

However, Martin (2010) argues that what makes jokes funny is dependent on multiple factors, such as the context and the intent of the joke teller. It depends on “who is telling them and for what purposes.” Political satire has always been a way for the people to criticize their ruler or government through hard times and even during prosperous times; mocking the regime was part of the cultural heritage of almost every country, which is usually characterized as dark humor, because of its linkage to the problems facing people in any given society.

In this regard, scholars argue that political comedy focuses on the personal traits of politicians and their actions rather than policy itself; in addition, psychology researches indicate that messages delivered with humor are both memorable and persuasive (Berg & Lippman, 2001; Moy et al., 2004).

Consequently, most of the definitions of political satire, even the earlier ones, agreed to the idea that political satire should include differentiation between two opposite situations (Leacock, 1935; Martin 2010; Willmann, 1940). Usually the situations are the reality and the humor criticizes this reality. Similarly, Holbert et al. (2011) argues that, for political satire to accomplish its goals, it needs to have comparative occurrences between what is present and what the satirist is hoping to create in humorous manipulation.

Another definition of political satire was stated by Holbert et al. (2007): “it’s a sort of programming in which audiences expect political messages that deal with implicit political content rather than the transmission of overt statements of political fact” (p. 24).

Also by definition, according to Duffy and Page (2013), political satire programs on TV are usually characterized by the use of linguistic, visual, and auditory exaggerations in order to mock political figures and newsmakers. Similarly, Cao and Brewer (2008) also define a political comedy show as “a television program that emphasizes humorous coverage of current issues and parodies of political figures” (p. 94).

However, another recent definition for satire by Test (1991) stated, “satire must have the concept of attack and judgment as well as the existing notion of being funny and entertaining” (p. 83)

Although political satire might appear as an entertainment type of programming as it depends on comedy and criticism of political figures, events, and news media, scholars deal with it as a sort of soft news vs. traditional hard news (Stewart & Littau, 2008; Stroud & Muddiman, 2013).

Baum (2002) has mentioned that soft news usually features lower level of public affairs content and focuses mainly on drama, sensationalism, human-interest themes, and personalities, which explains the tendency to characterize political satire programs as soft news.

However, political satire TV shows were just a development for a long history of endeavors including paintings, cartoons, books, plays, and newspapers, all under the same mission of criticizing politics in their societies.

2.1.2 History of political satire

As mentioned earlier, satire was never a new notion to the humorous culture; however, using politics in the satirical context dates back to the ancient history of theater with the beginning of comedy as a genre of drama in Greek civilization (Ali, 2009). Comic plays presented on the theater at that time were not mainly for the purpose of laughter; although they included that theme, they were depicting many social and political problems in the society and were used to mock some public figures (Reda, 2007).

However, many scholars argue that satire as we know it was originated in Greece; two Roman satirists, Horace and Juvenal, gave it a meaningful form (Highet, 1962; Lockyer, 2006; Miller, 2017). Horace's satire was mainly characterized by being a cure for the audience from their ignorance. Through providing truth about any social or ethical problems in a compelling way, his satire was meant to leave them with a smile. On the other hand, Juvenal's satire was the opposite to his predecessors; it was full of vulgarity and aggressiveness, and its aim was slightly different, as it was meant to punish or to put an end to any follies behavior in society (Miller, 2017, p. 3).

Dagnes (2012) argues that "when society is responsive to political criticism as an inherently liberal notion, satire will flourish" (p. 80). Dudden (1985) also stated that fear is the enemy of humor; people who are afraid of their political system find it hard to laugh about it because fear brings people together in a state of conformity. However, history is full of examples reflecting the fact that satire can flourish under suppressive regimes as well. In fact, numerous literature works exposing the faults of the government or disapproving sociopolitical conditions of everyday life in countries under oppressive regimes were published only because censors were unable to comprehend the intent of the author or at least prove it (Geenen, 2009).

2.1.3 Political satire in literature

The English literature is full of examples of political satire. One of the very first attempts to include political satire in literature was *The Canterbury Tales*, which is a collection of 24 stories written by Geoffrey Chaucer in the 14th century (LeBoeuf, 2007). The tales were about thirty pilgrims traveling from London to Canterbury church and were mainly moral and reflective but in a humorous way. These tales are an example of early satire works that targeted the problems in English society during the 14th century, and they were intended to expose the hypocrisy of the Catholic Church and the government in England.

Similarly, the works of Shakespeare are a perfect example of the use of sarcasm. In his memorable play "*Julius Caesar*," Act 3, Scene 2, Marc Anthony was giving a speech during Caesar's funeral and he mentioned that Brutus is an honorable man, but Anthony was being ironic because Brutus actually participated in killing Caesar, although he was supposed to be his best friend. This piece of literature is one of the most notable examples of verbal irony in Shakespeare writings (Rockwell, 2006).

Moreover, the distinguished "*Don Quixote*," a Spanish novel by Miguel de Cervantes, is considered one of the notable satire works in Spanish literature; it was published in two volumes (1605-16015). The story follows the adventures of a nobleman who reads so many romances that he loses his sanity and decides to set out to revive chivalry, undo wrongs, and bring justice to the world. This novel is depicting many themes and has many remarkable quotes like the phrase "tilting at windmills" to describe an act of attacking imaginary enemies, which originates from an iconic scene in the book (Rivero Iglesias, 2012)

During the 18th century, an Irish satirist, Jonathan Swift, wrote one of the notable works of satire criticizing the government for not being able to solve the problem of the Irish famine. In his article "*A Modest Proposal*," he suggested serving children as food to solve the problem and he explains this by saying, "for preventing the children of poor people in Ireland, from being a burden on their parents or country, and for making them beneficial to the public." (Swift & Wilson, 2000, p. 2).

Russia, previously known as a part of the Soviet Union, was a home for many satirical works as the 19th century gave birth to some of the finest satirical writers like Ivan Krylov with his satirical fables, which are tales with moral lessons depicting nonhuman creatures (animals, plants, animated objects, etc.). Krylov used to criticize the political situation in Russia with his writings. There is also Nikolai Gogol who wrote the famous satirical play "*The Government*

Inspector” (1836). The play is a comedy of errors, satirizing human greed, stupidity, and political corruption of Imperial Russia.

In the 20th century, literature also witnessed remarkable examples of satirical works; “*Animal Farm*” by George Orwell (1945) was a novel reflecting events leading up to the Russian Revolution of 1917 and then the Stalin era in the Soviet Union. It is a story told by animals in a farm, which stands as a famous example of the literature in which censors did not comprehend the covert satirical meaning of the novel.

In more recent literature works, the novel “*Catch-22*” by Joseph Heller (1961) is also considered one of the most notable war satire novels in the 20th century. It criticizes the war, the political commands, and the terrible conditions that exist during wartime. The novel is set during World War II, in the United States military air force bombardier camp, telling the experience of captain “Yossarian” and the other aviators in the camp during the hard times of war under a fictional bureaucratic stipulation called Catch-22.

Historically, Arabic literature is full of examples of satire; in the pre-Islamic period, poets spoke to their tribes, exhibiting their glory and pride through their prose. They also used poetry to attack their opponent tribes or even someone they disagree with using satirical style by exploiting their weaknesses and demerits (Mubeen, 2008). Throughout all the post-Islamic period, poets used satirical literature to criticize the ruler or anyone who may show a disagreement with them.

One of the most notable writers in the old Arabic literature was Al-Jahez, who had numerous contributions to the Arabic literature in different fields but is mostly known for introducing a new style of humor and satire to the Arabic literature (Mubeen, 2008). He enriched the Arabic literature with a number of valuable satirical works like *Book of Misers*, *Book of Eloquence and Exposition*, *Book of Animals*, *Book of Jokes*, and other writings which were all using humorous style to deliver the intended meaning (Meisami & Starkey, 2003).

2.1.4 Political satire in print media

Lockyer (2006) argues that satire’s main incentive is anger as most of the satirical works, especially in journalism, are targeting political and public figures using a negative tone to criticize their dishonesty, absurdity, and most importantly their corruption.

In this regard, print media had a long history of using political satire, which started by the political cartoons flourishing by the 18th century. Greenberg (2002) argues the following:

Political cartoons are considered a visual news discourse, with their ability to reinforce common sense and thus enable the public to actively classify, organize, and interpret in meaningful ways what they see or experience about the world at a given moment. (p. 182)

Seymour-Ure (2001) also mentioned that political cartoon has a unique ability to convey the unsayable through caricatures, stereotypes, symbols, analogies, and most importantly humor.

Similarly, Liebel (2015) argues that the image of the cartoon can be a more reflecting technique of the dominant worldview, because the cartoonist, who presents opinions and judgments in the form of jokes, by using the device of humor, can reach a level of freedom that is not always reachable by other professionals in writing. The reason is that combining images with ideas can open up possibilities that written texts do not have, enabling an attack, a criticism, or an irony in a more subtle level than words can achieve.

In the British journalism, the 18th century witnessed the beginning of one of the most famous visual illustrations or political cartoons known as “*The Emblematical Print on the South Sea Scheme*” by William Hogarth. The cartoon represented the disastrous stock market crash of 1720 known as the South Sea Bubble, in which many English people lost a great deal of money. Richetti (2005) described these illustrations saying, "English graphic satire really begins with Hogarth's work with his pictures combining social criticism with sequential artistic scenes."

In the United States, the first newspaper cartoon that ran in the Pennsylvania gazette (1754) was the famous “Join or Die” cartoon depicting a snake torn into pieces with the first initials of the American colonies on each piece. This cartoon was mainly a call for a union by the American people against the French, the Indians, and the British. Later during the civil war, American political cartoons started to flourish as satire became a mean to criticize events and political decisions related to the war.

By the year 1871, “*Puck*” the first humorous American magazine started publication, and it was considered the first magazine in the United States that contained colorful cartoons, caricatures, and political satire of the issues of the day. The successful magazine ran for decades until it ceased publication in 1918.

Across Europe, satirical publications were also an inherited form of public discourse; it was mainly an escape mechanism for the people of these countries to express their dissatisfaction of the ruling regimes and the public affairs in their society.

During the 19th century, with the innovation in the printing press and the mechanism of printing illustrations, France was considered a pioneer in the field of satirical newspapers. In fact the French cultural arena witnessed the publication of one of the world's earliest comic papers "*La Caricature*" in 1830, and also it was the homeland for the world's first satirical daily newspaper "*Le Charivari*" from 1832 to 1937. This newspaper consisted of four pages, where it published caricatures, political cartoons, and reviews. However, in 1835, when the government banned political caricature, *Le Charivari* began publishing satires of everyday life.

Accordingly, political satire newspapers, which progressed in the beginning of the 20th century, had an impact on public opinion and was a key factor in what is called the symbolic resistance to the entire political system. The term "fake news" was first used in a weekly newspaper called *Le Canard Enchaîné*, which means "the chained duck." It was founded in 1915 and is still published till this day criticizing all the political events in France and in the world. In the first edition, the editorial page stated that readers had enough of serious news and that it was time to present some fake news; however, the information presented was real but in a critically amusing manner (Depasquale, 1978; ElGabry, 2014; Lockyer, 2006; Terdiman, 1989).

In addition, during the 19th century, in England *Figaro in London*, an English comic paper began a weekly publication in 1831; despite its extreme popularity, it ceased publication in 1838 to be revived in 1841 as *Punch: The London Charivari*. It was through *Punch* that the word "cartoon" came to mean a comic drawing (Gretton, 1997). Similarly, the middle of the 20th century witnessed the well perceived British satire magazine *Private Eye*, established in 1961, which has been commonly known for satirically criticizing political figures and British public affairs with numerous articles, gossip stories, and political cartons, which made it one of the highest circulated magazines in the UK for five decades (Macqueen, 2011).

In Italy, during the fascist regime in the early 20th century, one of the earliest publications that allowed the Italian satirists to express their ideas was an antifascist satirical magazine named *Becco Giallo* or the "Yellow Beak," published from 1924 to 1926 (ElGabry, 2014).

In Spain, during the 19th century, there were several satirical publications in Spanish and in Catalan. For example, *La Flaca* was a Spanish weekly satirical magazine published from the year 1869 till 1876 after having its name changed for four times and having trouble with the censorship. Other examples include *L'Esquella de la Torratxa*, published in Catalan from 1879 until 1939, and *Cu-Cut*, a social political satirical illustrated magazine published from 1902 to

1912. Later, during the 20th century, the weekly satirical magazine *El Be Negre*, which means “The Black Sheep” in Catalan, was published in Barcelona between the year 1931 and 1936. Similarly, “*La Codorniz*,” a Spanish weekly satirical magazine was published from 1941 until 1978. The Spanish print media had a long history of satirical publication that used to criticize the social and political status of the country for decades. By the year 1939, when Franco’s dictatorship started and lasted for almost four decades, satirical publications in Catalonia and also in Spain managed to avoid the strict censorship and continued to publish magazines and newspapers for years.

During the late 20th century, the United States witnessed a new satirical publication, which was considered one of the most influential satire media for years. *The Onion* started publication in 1988 and ceased publishing the printed version in 2013. However, the magazine is still running the online version, and now it relies heavily on the user-generated content by publishing jokes and political cartoons executed by audience members.

In the Soviet Union, political satire had only one form, which is jokes told in privacy. These jokes were virtually the only remedy for the dull, ideologically sterile reality of socialism. It was dangerous to tell political jokes in public, as people can be imprisoned sometimes for mocking the government or the leader. Still, this era witnessed a form of legal satire in the weekly published magazine *Krokodil* (1922), which means “crocodile.” The magazine was not allowed to criticize the communist party or its senior members; however, it was given the permission to mock political figures and events like average Soviet middle-bureaucrat and the problems produced by drinking on the job by Soviet workers. *Krokodil* magazine also ridiculed capitalist countries and attacked various political, ethnic, and religious groups that allegedly opposed the Soviet system (Denisova, 2016).

2.1.5 Political satire in TV

With emergence of television in the 20th century, many European countries produced many successful political satire shows. Crego (2011) mentioned that the British television established the route for televised satirical content with numerous productions across the years. One of the earliest television satires was England’s *The Frost Report* (1966), a sketch comedy show with a large cast. The targets of the show’s satire were numerous and varying. One of the most famous sketches was a critique of the English class system (LeBoeuf, 2007). Since then, a number of successful political satire shows have emerged in the United Kingdom. One of most

popular satire shows was *Not the Nine O'clock News* (1979), which depicted satirical sketches on celebrities, politics, and news items.

Another successful show was *Spitting Image* (1984) which raised the bar for comedy shows as it depicted celebrities, people in the news, and, most importantly, politicians using puppets and voices to portray and mimic them in a comic way. This show was later considered a starting point to many satirical shows across the world, which took the same format of using puppets to produce similar satirical TV shows. Many well-known figures and politicians like John Major and Margaret Thatcher, both being former British prime ministers, were famous targets of the show. In recent years, examples of successful political satire shows include *Have I Got News for you*, a satire show in the form of political quiz on news from the previous week, mocking every party, politician, and celebrity through a series of questions, along with *Mock the Week* which is one of the successful political satire shows in the UK as well.

In France, *Les Guignols de l'info* (News Puppets) is considered one of the oldest and most significant satirical shows. The show's format is based on a puppet mocking and criticizing the politicians and public figures in France, which started airing on 1988 (Doyle, 2012); it was named back then *Les Arènes de l'info* (News Arenas). The show was using a similar format to that of the British show *Spitting Image*.

Political satire in Spanish TV is quite recent. Although the dictatorship of Franco ended in the year 1975, the dictatorship censorship was still strict, and no political criticism was allowed. Consequently, the satirical TV shows did not start until the early 90s, with the start of the private TV in Spain. One of the most significant political satire shows was *Las Noticias del Guñol* which started airing in 1995 on Canal +. This satirical puppet show relied on the same format of the politicians and public figures lookalike puppets to criticize their behavior and wrongdoings. In addition, *Caiga Quien Caiga* (aired in 1996) was also considered one of the earliest attempts in the Spanish satirical programs spectrum. The program mocked the news and current affairs by reporting them in a humorous and satirical context (Crego, 2011). Similarly, in Catalonia, *Persones Humanes*, a satirical TV program that aired from 1993 until 1996, was a huge success among the audience.

Recently, *Polònia*, a political satire program, has been broadcast on channel TV3 since 2006 on the Televisió de Catalunya in Catalonia. This show is considered one of the highest rated shows, with average of 630 thousand viewers per weekly show (Ferré-Pavia et. al, 2016).

Likewise, in Russia, also taking after the famous format of the satire shows depicting politicians and well-known figures as puppets, *Kukly* was a political satire show that started airing in 1994. The show featured puppet versions of Russian politicians and was very popular across the country for years until it was canceled by the network in 2002, after mocking President Putin.

China and South Korea are not far from Russia; political satire almost does not exist in both countries, being two of the major communism countries, because media is under full control of the government. In China, however, political satire is rising but only on the Internet.

2.1.6 Political satire in social media

Historically, satire has been used to raise awareness of social and political critical issues in any given society. Although the act of creating a satirical content was usually connected to professional satirists and to the media, in recent years, satire has advanced and changed its discourse to fit as a new public genre that is not limited to media and comedians (Becker & Waisanen, 2013).

Crittenden et al. (2011) argue that even though satire has been around for decades, recently the delivery platforms of satire underwent dramatic changes. The satirical discourse has been used exclusively by professional satirists using different media platforms; however, with the emergence of social media as a platform for self-expression and content creation, satire became available to be used by anyone. Accordingly, the easy accessibility to social media allowed for a new level of opinion leaders who are based on different social media platforms discussing political issues using a satirical discourse.

In the age of social media, users are expected to be active participants. This active user's behavior on social media asserts that individuals are both creators and recipients of messages shared across social media. In addition, scholars argue, "message recipients engage in the deconstruction of messages in order to gain understanding of the message intent. Thus, creators must understand the literary deconstruction process so as to create messages that can be deconstructed as intended" (Fichman & Dainas, 2019, p. 15).

During the early days of media satirists who played the role of opinion leaders, they were more likely to be professionals employed by different media outlets, and they acted as the gatekeepers of media content, through managing the flow of information from the media source to the general population (Al-Rawi, 2019).

Nonetheless, the changes in the political arena have been a major contributor to the social media revolution. On the other hand, the new technological advantages in mobile marketing, live blogging, and online video and user-generated content have led political satire to invade social media and its different platforms.

Consequently, political satire is no longer the scope of the influence of the professional satirists, and cartoonists are no longer considered as opinion leaders, as now any individual who creates their own satirical content is considered an influencer (Berry & Sobieraj, 2013).

Recently, with the line between the professional satirist and the amateur satirist on social media being almost blurry, Crittenden et al. (2011) suggested a model differentiating between the different types of satirists as opinion leaders:

The first type is the traditionalist, who is a professional satirist who usually focuses on the message itself regardless of the type of satirical presentation. The model argues that the traditional satirist relies on the counterfactual message implied within the satire to lead public opinion on a specific issue as an opinion leader.

The second type is the creator, who is also a professional satirist who owns the essential skills to participate in the world of social media. Although this kind is more like the traditionalist, the term “creator satirist” can be used to refer to any satirist who has an implied message within his humorous content and also holds the skill set to deliver his satirical messages using social media technologies.

The third type of satirists is referred to as the rookie, who is a nonprofessional satirist using his skill to create a satirical content, without actually having a message or proper discourse of this content to create any sort of criticism.

Finally, there is the technologist, who is a nonprofessional satirist using the medium to deliver the intended humor on social media.

Crittenden et al. (2010) argue that, within the context of satire, having any kind of technological expertise “does not compensate for literary skills that enable the delivery via artistic use of language in the discourse inquiry” (p. 178).

This raises a question about the role of satire or sarcasm on social media with regard to cyber conflict resolutions. Ghosh et al. (2021) argue that sarcasm is a way of self-expression that is used in any argumentative space, which became more competent on social media platforms,

where users tend to communicate, express their feelings, and resolve their conflicts, even political ones, using sarcasm.

The contemporary development of media technologies and social networks in recent decades has allowed for the production and diffusion of information more rapidly and in larger quantities than before. However, these changes in the discourse of information dissemination have allowed the prompt and lavish spread of false information and fake news as well. Kedar (2020) defines fake news as “false stories that appear to be news, spread on the Internet or using other media, usually created to influence political views or as a joke” (p. 135). Satire, on the other hand, establishes a different type of fake news, which relies on humor to criticize political issues and media treatments (Albright, 2017).

Qiu et al. (2017) mentioned that the realm of fake news has recently dominated the social media, where low quality information, regardless of whether it is from credible source or not, becomes viral on social media in no time, being frequently considered more credible than mainstream media. Tandoc et al. (2017) argues that fake news on social media can be categorized into these categories: (1) news satire, (2) news parody, (3) fabrication, (4) manipulation, (5) advertising, and (6) propaganda (p. 140).

As mentioned, another display of fake news is satire. Fake news as satire is regularly a news broadcast or newspaper article presented humorously for political criticism and entertainment, so sometimes the satirical context of the story can be mistaken for being factual news (Kedar, 2020). Consequently, audience must distinguish a professional satirist from an amateur Internet user who spreads fake news and jokes online (Allcott & Gentzkow 2017).

It is worth noting that, due to the global circumstances of the Covid-19 pandemic, during the international lockdown of most facilities throughout the world, most of the satirical programs have been filming their episodes from the host’s residence, instead of having it in the a studio with live audience. The show is even conducting regular guest’s interviews online. As a result, the general format of these satirical shows has turned into the format of amateur satirical videos on social media platforms.

In Arab countries, with suppressive political systems and censored media systems, freedom of speech is not accepted as normal practice in the mainstream media (Amin & Galal, 2015).

As a result, numerous satirical shows that are aired on television have actually started out as amateur videos on social media. Hosts of these videos relied on presenting a satirical content,

criticizing social and political problems in their communities. Consequently, social media became a platform for freedom of expression, not just for social interaction (Elmously, 2016).

2.1.7 Arabic political satire

In the Arab countries, there are numerous examples of political satire TV shows that criticize the government and the ruling party in each country. According to Sørensen (2009), “political satire usually needs some incongruity and absurdity in order to thrive” (p. 15). In other words, there must be something wrong with the political system or the political leaders might not be honest with their people for political satire to flourish in any country. Fayed and Moftah (2010) argue that satire under oppressive regimes is a form of resistance; if the ruler is dictatorial, this leads to oppression, and that is how satire is created.

Consequently, with the troubled political systems in the Arab world that have been ruling for years, political satire was inherited in the Arab culture for a long time. Throughout several decades of suppressive regimes, Arab culture had its share of the production of numerous books, poetry, drama, newspaper articles, and cartoons as a way to express people’s disagreement or objection to any political regime or ruler. However, the flourishing of political satire programs in the Arab world started prospering after the Arab spring and the fall of several dictators in the region (ElMor, 2015).

Lebanon, which is considered one of the pioneers in the field of political satire shows in the Arab world, has a number of satire shows with several sketches depicting political figures and mocking political conditions in the country. Perhaps the satirical show, which goes by its Arabic name *Bas Mat Watan* and airs on LBC satellite channel, is considered the most famous one. The show’s name has context-bound words to imply a dual meaning: the word “*Watan*” in Arabic means “home country,” and the word “*Bas Mat*” in Arabic can give the meaning “smiles” if it is read as one word or “just died” if it is read as two words. This also carries imbedded evaluations: one of them is positive if it is “smiles,” and the other is negative if it is “just died.” Thus, even the name of the show has a dual message presented by satire, which is giving you the serious facts while making you smile about it. In Tunisia, the satirical show *Political Logic* is aired on Al Tunisia satellite channel (ElMor, 2015), and *Les Guignols du Maghreb* (Maghreb Puppets) is also another well-known political satire show aired on TV.

Syria and Palestine have their share of political satire shows on TV as well. The Syrian satire shows *Maraya* (Mirrors) and *Bokat Daw* (Spot Light) are well-recognized satire shows, with

numerous sketches portraying and mocking the political conditions in the country. In addition, *Watan Ala Watar* (A Home Country on a String) is a Palestinian satirical show that also uses context-bound words to imply a dual meaning, as the word “*watar*” in Arabic means both string and tension. The show was first aired on TV in 2009 criticizing the government, Fatah and Hamas parties, and all the political leaders’ speeches that were aired at the time (Dick, 2007; Sienkiewicz, 2013).

In Iraq, Ahmed El Basheer, a young TV reporter, started a political satire show on YouTube in 2011, taking after the same format of *The Daily Show with Jon Stewart* at the time. El Basheer was criticizing the government and political conditions in Iraq. After the huge success of the show on social media, he moved to television screens; the show by the name *El Basheer Show* started airing on an Iraqi satellite channel reviving the same success it had on YouTube.

On the contrary, Freedom House, a nongovernmental organization concerned with human rights and freedom of press across the globe, in its freedom of press report issued in 2018, pointed out that Saudi Arabia is considered one of the most repressive media environments in the world. The government has full censorship over media content; even privately owned media institutions are working under strict governmental control regarding any political content. Hence, political satire programs do not have any remarkable outcome in the Saudi Arabian media.

However, criticizing the government and making fun of the political and social issues in society had its way to people through social media platforms, where numerous Saudi amateur satire programs are being streamed on YouTube regularly. These shows are written, produced, and hosted by a new generation of Saudis who are attempting to address the youth and discuss social and political problems in their country. *Eysh Elly* (What Is It?) is a political satire program on YouTube, which is considered one of the top 10 YouTube channels in Saudi Arabia with 30 million views in 2020 (Socialbakers, 2020).

Egypt, on the other hand, had its share of satirical shows on TV. Probably one of the most renowned political satire shows in Egypt was *Al Bernameg* (The Program). After the 25th of January revolution in Egypt, 2011, this satire program first aired on the Internet as an amateur video on YouTube, called then B+. The show took after the same format of *The Daily Show with Jon Stewart*, and it made five million views on YouTube with seven videos only within two months.

Following the success of the show on the social media, the show was aired on CBC, an Egyptian satellite channel, and it was the highest rated program in the Arab world after only two episodes. The show was hosted by Bassem Youssef, a cardiac surgeon, who was named in 2013 one of the “100 most influential people in the world” by Time magazine, and Jon Stewart the host of *The Daily Show* back then called him the Jon Stewart of Egypt after hosting him on the show several times (Younis, 2014; Elmously, 2016).

Although Bassem Youssef’s satire show is considered one of the most prominent political satire shows in Egypt, he was not the first in this track. In 2009, Ahmed Adam, an Egyptian actor and comedian, started a new political satire show, *Adam Show*, on Al-Haya Egyptian satellite channel. In his show, Adam started criticizing all political and social problems in Egypt at the time and mocking famous political figures and officials by using humorous monologues and comments on many of the events and incidents that took place during the airing of the show. The show has been successful on TV airing for six seasons.

In 2010, Mohamed Azab, a famous comedian who was famous for his impersonation of famous public figures, actors, and singers, decided to start a political comedy program called *The Azab Show*. The show was based on criticizing and mocking entire Egyptian cabinet, with Azab impersonating the government officials in a humorous way. The Show was banned from airing after making a funny impersonation of the Egyptian prime minister back then, but it was later aired after the January 25 Revolution (Younis, 2014).

As previously mentioned, the majority of the satirical shows in most of the Arab countries are dominated by males. In this regard, women’s representation as hosts for satirical TV shows in Arab countries is not observable, with an exception of a satirical show presented in Egypt by a featured puppet, representing a middle-aged women called *Abla Fahita*; not even a real women!

2.1.8 American political satire

In the United States, since the popular satirical show *Saturday Night Live* started on the network of NBC in 1975, depicting politicians in comedy skits has been a regular feature of the program, and the show’s parodies of presidents and presidential debates became a cultural tradition (Ladd, 2013, p. 24).

Another famous political satire show is *The Daily Show*, a political satire television program that uses fake news stories and real guest interviews to mock the content presented on traditional television news programs (Brewer & Marquardt, 2007). *The Daily Show*'s punch line on the Comedy Central website was "one anchor, five correspondents, zero credibility," adding, "keeping up with news is hard, but watching *The Daily Show* is easy." Years later, that was changed to be "the world's fakest news team."

The Daily Show started airing in 1996, on the Comedy Central cable channel, and it was hosted by *Craig Kilborn* until 1998. In 1999, *Jon Stewart* became the host of *The Daily Show*; since then, *The Daily Show* became a TV phenomenon featured on cover stories on Newsweek and entertainment weekly magazines. Stewart became a celebrity such that he was invited for hosting the Oscars in 2006 and 2008. In the show, most of the satire focuses on the news media rather than directly on politicians; actors in the show impersonate news anchors and reporters depicting them as clueless (Ladd, 2013).

Although this show is a comedy show and has entertainment purposes, over the years it has interviewed many American politicians and presidents like Former Presidents Jimmy Carter and Bill Clinton; Senators Hillary Clinton and John McCain; and several celebrity icons such as Tom Cruise, Tom Hanks, and George Clooney. Even President Barak Obama has been a guest for several times on the show before and after being elected as president. By the end of 2015, *The Daily Show* welcomed a new host, *Trevor Noah*, who replaced Stewart after 16 years as the host of this successful show. Noah sustained the humorous format of the fake news and interviews of *The Daily Show* and won several awards for his work on the show.

This show was considered an initiative for many satire shows that took after the same format of fake news and mocking traditional news stories for years.

The Daily Show is considered one of the most influential Television programs in the American history mainly because of its sweeping popularity and its obvious effect; in fact, although the show is based on presenting fake news and mocking real ones, *Jon Stewart* was named by the Time Magazine as the most trusted news' man in America (Dagnes, 2012).

Dozens of studies and research papers were conducted to measure the effect of *The Daily Show* on the political life, also examining the characteristics of its audience and how they are affected by this show on both behavioral and cognitive levels. The results of these studies suggested the dominating effect of the show on candidates' recognition and selection among young audience, as well as the role of the show as a major source of political information for a vast number of

audience members. In addition, politicians, who are usually a subject of criticism, in spite of being laughed at in this show, were aware of how influential this show is on the voter's decisions (Baumgartner & Morris, 2006; Baym, 2005; Hoffman & Young, 2011; Landreville et al., 2010; Meder, 2011; Stewart, 2007)

With *Jon Stewart* being the host of the show, representing the dominating feature of talk show hosts, being a white, middle-aged male, he was representing the majority of the satirical programs hosts' commonly known features; the mentioned features are also normalized in the domain of TV talk show hosts in Europe and in Arab countries as well (Brooten, 2007). At some point, the show was favoring several American policies they are supposed to mock in their coverage. However, now Trevor Noah, being the host of show with his South African origins, being a black man and an immigrant, is everything Stewart was not. The question became, did the editorial policies of the show started to change with the change of the host of the show, or are they still the same even with the political environment itself totally changing?

The Colbert Report was another Comedy Central satire program that focused on news media through criticism. Stephen Colbert has been hosting the show (2005-2014) after being a correspondent on *The Daily Show with Jon Stewart* for several years. *The Colbert Report* has been remarkable for its slipperiness of form (Day, 2013), because, just like any other satire show, it focused on providing news in an opinionated, self-commentary way to criticize the supposed objectivity of the media news. Through his performance, Colbert provided his audience with tools that allowed them to be critics on their own and start questioning subjects and issues presented in media that were taken for granted for long (Holcomb, 2009). Recently Stephen Colbert has been hosting another satirical show on CBS television network, *The Late Show with Stephen Colbert*, which started airing in 2014. The show is considered an extension to *The Colbert Report* show, using the same format and dealing mainly with political and social issues on the news from a satirical perspective.

Larry Wilmore, also a former correspondent of *The Daily Show with Jon Stewart*, started hosting another Comedy Central's political satire show, *The Nightly Show with Larry Wilmore* (2015-2016). The show took after the same format of *The Daily Show*. Similarly, *The Opposition with Jordan Klepper* is a satirical program intended to criticize news and ridicules politics; it premiered on Comedy Central in 2017. The show is hosted by comedian *Jordan Klepper*, a former correspondent on *The Daily Show* as well.

For years, American presidents were a subject of ridicule by many satirists, by mocking their behavior, public statements, or decisions. Mainly because satirists usually add fun to the politics spectrum and simultaneously allow the audience members to criticize those in power and highlight the deficiencies in any political system, because along with political dissatisfaction the popularity of political satire rises (Dagnes, 2012).

That is why many scholars focused their attention on examining the effect of political satire on audiences' political attitude and perception, in addition to candidates' evaluation and political participation. Furthermore, by examining how influential political satirists can be, it was found that viewing political satire shows can have a negative effect on political candidate evaluation and it allowed for a more cynical perception regarding those in power especially for young audience (Baumgartner & Morris, 2006; Boukes et al., 2015; Elmously, 2016; Hoffman & Young, 2011; Hollander, 2005; Meder, 2011).

Similarly, Lichter et al. (2014) analyzed political satire programs and their jokes about politicians in the United States from 1992 to 2012, especially those about the American presidents. Bill Clinton was found to be the most joked-about president from 1992 to 2012.

Similarly, President Bush was the target for many satire shows' jokes for years, especially after September 11 attacks and the war on Iraq. On the other hand, Barack Obama, due to the calmness he is characterized by, was found to be the least joked-about President since 1992 (as cited in Harris & McGeough, 2017).

2.1.9 Infotainment

In recent years, media has witnessed hybridization in the structure of news media, where a mixture between entertainment and information reconstructed the discourse of news and entertainment, forming what is known as "*infotainment*"; in addition, the blend between the discourses of politics and entertainment caused the term of "*politainment*" to surface (Thussu, 2007).

Scholars argue that the distinctiveness between the language and practices of news discourses, entertainment, marketing, and politics has been lost. Consequently, these blends have grown deeply inseparable, and the study of these discourses became of an interdisciplinary nature (Baym, 2005; Brants, 1998; Thussu, 2007).

Scholars argue that infotainment of political discourse in the United States emerged when the American television industry changed its realm of serious political news to a new form of entertainment (Jones, 2004; Reilly, 2012). In this form, the widely known format of news, where serious political subject and themes are being discussed, is now replaced by entertainment programming discussing all the issues in the political arena. Likewise, Jones (2004) suggested that “this shift has been instrumental in blurring the boundaries between serious and entertaining discourses, placing politics squarely at the center of new debates surrounding the function and value of entertainment in civic culture” (p. 18).

Accordingly, several definitions have been provided for the term “*infotainment*.” Brants (1998) stated that infotainment “mixes political informative elements in entertainment programmes or entertainment characteristics in traditionally informative programmes” (p. 327). Similarly, according to Carrillo and Ferré-Pavia (2013), infotainment is “mixed in nature, where genuine information combines with traditional entertainment” (p. 3).

In addition, Boukes (2019) defines infotainment as “an umbrella term that covers the fusion of entertainment and journalism within different media genres; it is a linguistic blend of information and entertainment.” (p. 2).

However, other scholars argue that infotainment bears more in its connotation than the mentioned mixture between information and entertainment; in fact it blurs the line between what is serious and what is entertaining, and what is considered as news and what is not, through a blurred presentation of facts and opinions, within the same context (Jones, 2004; Delli Carpini et al., 2001)

Similarly, Boukes (2019) argues that infotainment as a phenomenon can be understood from two perspectives: the fact that news coverage is now entertaining, and entertainment is covering political topics. Through the ongoing ratings battles across media platforms, the discourse of news reporting has been altered towards more lighter and sensational styles. In other words, news coverage became less politically oriented and became more focused on the personalization of news, human-interest stories, and arousing features in order to maintain and elevate audiences’ interest in news coverage.

Similarly, Williams and Carpini (2020) argue that the basic distinction between news and entertainment is now obscured because the content of the news has now changed. The discourse of news broadcasts or newspapers is now concerned with celebrities, fashion, lifestyles, television shows, and movies reviews, in addition to vast amount of topics that are usually

categorized as entertainment or infotainment. Moreover, this shift in the news discourse has led to the shift from categorizing the different media content as politically relevant media with reference to its genre, factuality, or source to categorizing it by its utility in terms of what it does and its potential use. In other words, defining a statement as political information is relevant to what it says, who says it, and how it is said.

Regarding the effect of infotainment on engaging the public, Davis et al. (2020) suggest that fields of print media, broadcast television, documentaries, and user-generated content in the online videos shifted to the narratives of infotainment because of its remarkable influence on the audience engagement and its role in enhancing their understanding of any perceived content.

This significant influence is extended in a way that even corporate organizations are now trying to imitate these narratives in their social media outlets by using infotainment as a way of promoting their brands and accentuating their genuineness (Krohn, 2019).

2.1.10 Satire as infotainment

In a similar context, Baym (2005) mentioned that political satire shows like *The Daily Show with Jon Stewart* are considered as “a hybrid blend of comedy, news, and political conversation” (p. 262), where the show uses techniques drawn from genres of news, comedy, and television talk to revive a journalism of critical inquiry and advance a model of deliberative democracy, so it can be better understood not as *fake news* but as “*alternative journalism*” (p. 263).

Justin (2008) argues that in a period when the media and political industries can no longer be trusted to present authentic, accurate, and credible information, political satire programs expose the “images as truthiness” narratives presented in the news as irrational. Satire works on revealing that there is often no truth in the images produced by the media.

Similarly, there are several plausible explanations for the correlation between satire news viewing and attitudes about television news credibility. For example, Stewart and Littau (2008) suggest that, in the USA, young viewers who tune into *The Daily Show* or *The Colbert Report* TV shows are doing so as a direct reaction to perceived shortcomings of other television news programs.

Although the main approach of political satire shows, when dealing with political information, is mainly comedy, satirical shows can play an important role in redefining news and shaping public opinion (Baym, 2005; Thussu, 2007; Landreville et al., 2010)

Researchers argue that satire plays a role in shaping people's awareness and can have an effect on their attitude towards public figures. Consequently, politicians have realized the importance of political satire as a source of framing and shaping public opinion, so it became beneficial for the popularity of politicians to appear on such programs. In this regard, scholars agreed on the notion that increased exposure to satire shows can affect the audiences' political knowledge and allow them to have more insightful encounters with political personalities and candidates (Forgette & Russo, 2013; Klein, 2013; Landreville et al., 2010; Xenos & Becker, 2009; Young, 2004).

Matsa (2010) argues that, in a world of fast occurrences and a vast amount of information offered on a daily basis for audience members, satire plays a role in gratifying the need for education, pleasure, and awareness in an inclusive approach, allowing people to access all this diversified information and comprehend it effortlessly. In addition, "the most contemporary and influential seems to be comedic satirical shows on television, and its influence appears closely related to the special characteristics of the medium" (p. 8).

In addition, scholars argue that satire shows hold a special connection with their spectators, along with having a substantial impact on viewers' political engagement and political perceptions, and can have an influence on their knowledge about public affairs (Baumgartner & Morris, 2006; Cao & Brewer, 2008)

Moreover, studies have defined a new role for comedy or political satire programs, which is political education. New researches conducted mainly on a sample of college students have provided evidence for the role of political satire programs in the cognition and recalling of political knowledge and information for young audience (Xenos & Becker, 2009). This is a completely new role for the comedy TV shows, which are supposed to be entertaining in the first place; now they are playing a role in the political knowledge formation of the youth (Hollander 2005).

That is why several politicians, including the presidential candidates in the United States, made several appearances in different satire shows, during their ongoing campaigns, apart from their usual appearances in political talk shows or news programs (Holbert, 2013; Ferré-Pavia, 2013; Thussu, 2007).

Holbert et al. (2005) defined political satire shows as “programming in which audiences expect political messages that deal with implicit political content rather than the transmission of overt statements of political fact” (p. 516). This corresponds to Entman’s new definition of frames as “selecting and highlighting of facts of events and issues and making connections among them so as to promote a particular interpretation, evaluation and/or solutions.” (Entman, 2004).

2.1.11 Goals of satire

Historically, Greek philosopher Aristotle described comedy, in terms of its goals, as something that is not supposed to deal with concrete social roles or contemporary community problems directly. However, its only goal is to demonstrate the morals behind mocking the misconduct of any social behavior and encourage people to laugh at it regardless of the correctness of this act, as long as it arouses pleasure (Hokenson, 2006, p. 28).

Satire main aim is mocking and criticizing corruptive practices, along with exposing the hypocrisy of politicians or public figures. Elliott (1960) stated that “the purpose of satire is to expose folly, lies, and moral or political corruption. The targets of satire are often governments, politicians, the military or the church, the upper or middle classes, the class system, or the conventions of social life”(p. 273). In most of the political satirical programs, in order to maintain the audience attention, satirists manage to keep the target of the joke in focus. Usually, the satirist character is promoted to be a truthful honest person, who hates lies and cheating, and is also supposed to make his life purpose is to expose faults, double standards, and exploitation of the political system.

One of the main goals of political satire is mentioned by Becker and Waisanen (2013). They argue that, in a political mediated setting, political satire can enhance the understanding and encourage the political analysis of any situation. Through the introduction of political information within entertainment molds, it can shed light on social problems while making people laugh. Thus, political comedy can be considered a backdoor into righteousness, as its main goal is to analyze the problem and criticize it in an amusing manner.

Sullivan (2019) suggested that there are three main reasons why people need political comedy. Firstly, in recent years, political satirists are considered as the truth-tellers in a highly tensioned political environment. Secondly, political jokes became a part of the public discourse with regard to political issues. Finally, political satirists have proven that they can have an influence

on voting behavior, maximizing the salience of some political issues, and amplifying specific qualities of politicians as well.

Similarly, the humor paradigm involves the theory of superiority as one of the reasons that defines what makes something humorous. Gruner (1997) suggests that people usually laugh at others' misfortune, clumsiness, and stupidity especially if the latter are considered superior to the former. This explains why jokes about politicians and people in power who fell in a moral or cultural fault can make people laugh more than if any normal person faced the same situation. Gruner elaborates the superiority theory as a statement that provides an explanation of the relation between humor and power.

On the contrary, the relief theory of humor suggests another purpose for humor, which is to reduce nervous energy and ease up the tension and stress accumulated in our minds from the daily interactions we have. Morreall (2009) succinctly describes the notions proposed by the relief theory with regard to political satire: "political humor provides relief and a channel for venting frustrations and fear within a domain that so often seems dysfunctional, contentious, and ridiculous" (p. 15).

Finally, another theory proposing the goal of humor and laughter is the incongruity theory. According to Berger (1993), the incongruity theory proposes that people usually laugh at what is odd and strange; in other words, humor is elevated when people face something unexpected in a normal situation, which explains why the political cartoons mocking the physical features of politicians are considered funny: they involve abnormality.

The previously demonstrated theories elaborate how humor discourse operates and for what reasons. Lynch (2002) argues that "all three theories must be celebrated and the dismissal of them or unnecessary addition of adjunct motivations confounds the conceptions necessarily" (p. 425). Each one of these theories provides important intuitions about how humor is created and perceived, giving us a more nuanced understanding.

To sum up, Meyer (2000) states that all the processes of understanding humor result in bringing either fusion or division among people. Sometimes, the humor and laughter are a result of a sense of superiority; in other situations, it is meant for relieving tension or laughing at something that involves a social and cultural norm being mocked and criticized, after being a taboo for years. Either way, all these elements, which are the goals of satire and humor, can be easily applied to the political arena.

Regardless of the main goal of the political joke, one of the main elements of satire is the satirist's judgment; through the satirist's approach, the joke can be either used as a weapon or used for moral cause. Test (1991) argues that satire has been used for all sorts of motives, the good ones and the bad ones. "Satire can be used by either a malicious or moral person. It has been used in all kinds of cultures and systems of government. It has been used to attack governments and to bolster governments; it has been used to attack religion and to defend religion" (Test, 1991, p. 28)

Political satire has always been a way for the people to criticize their ruler or government through hard times and even during prosperous times; mocking the regime was part of the cultural heritage of almost every country, which is usually characterized as dark humor. However, during the time of war, for instance, the intended target of political satire is usually the enemy.

During World War II, newspapers were full of satirical cartoons insulting and criticizing the enemy on the counter front. Similarly, in cinema, movies were used as a major propaganda tool to present the local army men as heroes and to mock the enemy troops. Charlie Chaplin, the famous comedian, made a movie mocking the German Nazi dictator Adolf Hitler named *The Great Dictator* (1940); the movie was a huge success at the time, because people usually laugh harder at others more than at themselves (Freedman, 2009).

On the other hand, Dimitrova et al. (2003) suggested that sometimes laughing at the enemy during wartime is not always the case. Shortly after the September 11 terrorist attacks and the United States war on Iraq, television satirists such as Jon Stewart, who was the host of *The Daily Show* at the time, and Stephen Colbert, who hosted *The Colbert Report* back then, were among the few critical voices speaking out against this war. The content of their shows was mainly mocking the government and its military policies with regard to this war.

Satire usually emerges when political discourse is in crisis and when it becomes essential to use satirical comedy to impose political pressure on deception and abuse of power (McClennen, 2011). The Arab spring, which defines several revolutions that broke out at the same time in late 2010 and 2011 in the Middle East region, used political satire as a weapon to face the ruling regimes and to overthrow them. Protesters in Egypt, Tunisia, Libya, and Syria used jokes, graffiti, and even humorous protest signs during the Arab spring revolutions, along with many amateur videos on the Internet and social media mocking the government and the rulers of these countries (Ellaban, 2014a).

Likewise, “Occupy Wall Street” movement in the United States used to mock famous investors in Wall Street during their protest in 2011 against social and economic inequality worldwide; protesters used satire in their signs that were asking for equality but with humorous phrases.

Therefore, at the time of crisis, when the media is trying to manipulate the facts in order to contain the crisis, satire was always the sound of truth even if it was in a humorous way. With examples like World War II and “Occupy Wall Street,” not only was political satire used to mock the enemy, it also created a social cohesion for different groups in society. Thus, as long as politics exists, no matter what the political system is, whether a democratic or even a tyrant system, satire will always be the people’s weapon to face wrong and define right.

2.1.12 Ethics of satire

As mentioned earlier, one of the purposes of humor is to laugh at the misfortune and stupidity of the superior others, as well as laughing at everything that is odd or unfamiliar. Therefore trying to set a definition for what can be ethical in political satire has been rather challenging discourse for many scholars.

Similarly, DeSousa (1987) reports that, for a joke to be funny, it usually thrives on being surprising, outrageous, irreverent, and sometimes immoral. Usually, rules and constraints, which are created by the cultural and social norms, can risk diminishing, suffocating, or altogether killing humor. Similarly, Peifer (2012) suggested that forcing any ethical boundaries on political satire would be quite challenging because politicians are public figures and cannot seal themselves from mocking. “This ultimately means that when comedy lampoons politicians, it is not seen as cruel, but rather as a humorous observation against the powerful – hence the satiric mandate of anti-establishmentarianism” (p. 264).

Although political satire’s main role is exposing media’s bias and lack of objectivity, sometimes political satire loses its objectivity in the process. Usually political satire programs are famous among audience because they respect the audience’s right to know by focusing on the faults and failures of the political system. Unfortunately, political satire shows often fail to meet the standards of the social responsibility theory of media and the code of ethics.

Honesty, objectivity, balance, justice, respecting privacy, respecting the law, working to benefit the society, and excellence in performance are some of the standards which are common in most of the media codes of ethics in most countries (Ellaban, 2014b). However, political satire can sometimes use inappropriate language in order to criticize someone. In addition, humor

can be employed as a weapon to attack and undermine others; pronouncing judgments and critiques about people, ideas, and institutions, it can also be accused of hurting people or harming their reputation just to make audience laugh, which in some cases can be affecting the public opinion as well (ElMor, 2015). The problem is that most comedians and entertainers struggle to know if they had crossed the line, because usually socially constructed boundaries in dominant cultures are often vague and continually shifting (Peifer, 2012).

Some scholars agree upon the fact of a value-free perspective of jokes and humor; they define jokes as being neither moral nor immoral. Therefore, it is hard to force a rule or law of ethics or morals on them (Conolly & Haydar, 2005). In contrast, other scholars adopt the idea of morality in humor, not to censor it, but such comedy can be oriented in a direction that promotes a healthy society and democracy (Ellaban, 2014b).

Smuts (2010) argues that “telling jokes, encouraging jokes, and laughing at jokes are actions with clear ethical significance; they are all capable of producing harms as well” (p. 346). In this regard, Gaut (1998) suggested that humor still has an ethical dimension in its discourse. Usually, people favor humor detached from any ethical considerations. That is why humor cannot be accepted as a way of offending or bullying others, so it is normal not to detach humor from its ethical discourse (p. 51).

Borden and Tew (2007) argue that political satire frequently lacks a productive dynamic, as political satire is more likely to attack rather than to mend, to highlight problems rather than to propose solutions, “to interrupt discussion with laughter rather than to sustain it by articulating common values” pp. 312). However, the content of some satirical programs, with its excessive use of mockery and ridicule tones, might eventually cause the public to undermine the respect for the political process and create distrust of political leaders and institutions, which will eventually lead to political cynicism that could discourage any political engagement.

Although political jokes are usually intended to capture the public dialogue, sometimes the joke might take an unintended track, by sparking nationwide outrage and condemnation. In numerous occasions, a comedian might use an offensive tone in their joke, of which the public becomes intolerant, and suddenly, instead of shedding light on the problem, the joke teller becomes the problem itself. When this happens, the comedian’s mistake requisitions the news cycle, where he/she becomes the focus of attention and changes the course of political debate at the same time (Blank, 2013).

Peifer (2012) suggested some general morals or principles that can help guide any comedian in their quest to display the truth. Some of these principles are “human dignity,” “truth telling,” and “non-maleficence.” Applying the principle of respecting human dignity, the comedian should disqualify humor that pokes fun at people’s unique shortcomings, weaknesses, and oddities or even mocks stereotypes, ethnic groups, and minorities. For the truth telling principle, the comedian should be responsible for presenting the known facts of a situation through his jokes, but without misleading audience with dishonest characterization.

Finally, the principle of non-maleficence is simply the essence of the ethical practice of media, by which no harm, abuse, or pain should be caused to the innocent. For that, this principle should be taken into consideration when a joke is being told in any political satire show because aggressive humor can damage reputations, causes, and simply hurt feelings.

As those principles are significant, the question of applying them remains controversial. From the researcher’s point of view, it would be hard to follow them in satire because, as mentioned earlier, what makes something humorous is a matter of judgment; although making fun of people’s misfortune or misconduct might be funny to a group of people, it most certainly will be hurtful for the ones who are being laughed at. In addition, comedians might see these ethical principles not as a guideline to the practice of comedy, but as constraints that might kill the humor.

2.2 Arabs and Muslims in Media

2.2.1 Stereotypes and orientalism

Bordalo et al. (2016) presented several definitions for stereotypes: “stereotypes are widely held but fixed and oversimplified image or idea of a particular type of person or thing” (p. 1). From a psychological perspective, they are defined as “mental representations of real differences between groups allowing easier and more efficient processing of information” (p. 1). Stereotypes are considered as omnipresent; they cover a wide range of characteristics like gender, racial groups, religious groups, political groups, demographic groups, and activities. Bordalo et al. (2016) argue that stereotypes permit a rapid and spontaneous evaluation of groups; however, because of the assessments’ spontaneity, stereotypes might cause inaccurate judgments and biased attitudes, which results in the most common behavior related to stereotype, which is discrimination against a specific group.

For years, the image of Arabs and Muslims has been stereotyped in the media from a negative perspective. Nonetheless, identifying these negative images and analyzing them, along with trying to discover the origin of these negative portrayals, were the quest of many researchers for years (Al-Olaqi, 2012; Eisele, 2002; Ridouani, 2011; Said, 2008; Shaheen, 1984, 1998, 2003).

Scholars argue that the negative image about Arabs and Muslims originated prior to the rise of the Islamic religion in the Middle East region, where Arabs were viewed as savages, primitive, and sexually immoral by the Byzantines, elevating even more after the rise of the Islamic religion in the 7th century. These negative perceptions about the Arabs and Muslims from the Byzantines were the first brick in the Western perception of Islam, which continued to elevate and become darker later on. This negative image was transferred to the American culture through European colonists (Said, 1978; Suleiman, 1989, p. 257).

In his renowned book *Orientalism*, Said (1978) states that the core of orientalism is based on the notion of Western superiority and eastern inferiority apart from the reality of the discourse of the East. He then gave several definitions of the word “orientalism” by stating that it is “a style of thought based upon an ontological and epistemological distinction made between ‘the Orient’ and ‘the Occident’” (p. 2). Then, he added that orientalism reflects the Western dominance over the East by stating that “corporate institution for dealing with the Orient - dealing with it by making statements about it, by teaching it, settling it, and ruling over it: in short, orientalism as a Western style for dominating, restructuring and having authority over the Orient” (p. 3).

Furthermore, Hafsa (2019) believes that orientalism is not based on historical occurrences only, nor it is a new notion, because based on the opposition between “West” and “East,” it is argued that orientalism was assembled over centuries and reinforced with sustained effort to preserve Western domination. Furthermore, the early hostility between Christian “Occident” and Islamic “Orient” was profound since the 12th century was a basic part of the structure of the idea of orientalism (p. 2).

In his claim, Said (1978) mentions how people misunderstood the idea of orientalism, as it is always referred to with regard to the evil plot enforced by the Western world on the East, when in fact orientalism can be viewed as a “distribution of geopolitical consciousness in aesthetic, academic, sociological, historical, and philological texts.” In other words, it is a way of drawing a cognitive map of the world” (p. 25).

However, this argument cannot provide a justification for the distorted image about the East, which has been reinforced for centuries by the Western countries.

In a similar context, Naber (2000) argues that categorization of Arabs, Muslims, and Middle Eastern peoples is not randomized, illogical, or even related to an awareness of this notion; actually it is based on the process of “neocolonialism.” Shohat and Stam (2014) define neocolonialism as “a process that employs contemporary ideological, media portrayals and popular narratives to ignore, displace, unravel, justify, uphold and explain racism, genocide, sexism, gender inequality, nationalism, colonialism and imperialism, as needed” (p. 48).

Accordingly, Naber (2000) suggests that the neocolonialism is used by the Western media to present media images, which eliminate differences between Arabs, Middle Easterners, and Muslims as separate groups and present them as one, to demolish their distinguishing identities. In addition, media also create an imagined ranked relationship between the superior white American and the inferior Arab Middle Eastern Muslim. Moreover, distorted images about these three groups are used to justify the intervention of the United States in Middle East affairs.

Mendieta (2006) suggested that the romantic folklore of orientalism thrived in the nineteenth century that continues to endure the famous images of the Middle East deriving in part from the popularity of the *Arabian Nights* stories, which portrayed the East as a land of exploration, mystical adventures, ancient treasures, magic, and fantasy. Furthermore, the romantic image about the mysterious, magical East was not only an image created by the orientalism, but also a negative image created by the Western colonialism that dominated the East and created a justification for this dominance. They saw the East as a land of ignorance, corruption, barbarity, and degeneracy, so it was the role of Western civilization to modernize these lands and introduce the civilization to these barbaric nomads (Said, 1978).

2.2.2 *Arabian Nights*

Most of the historical images about orientalisks are based on the famous tales of *One Thousand and One Nights* or *Arabian Nights*, which is a book of tales full of imaginative folkloric stories and legends based mostly in the Middle Eastern and Islamic countries. Although the exact origin of those tales and authors remain anonymous, those tales are considered a representation of the Arab Islamic culture and folklore throughout several centuries (Irwin, 2003). Although the tales are famously known for stories of genies, magic lamps, magic carpets, and many other fictional encounters, they are full of heroic stories, jokes, wisdom quotes, rhetorical debates,

and poetry as well (Marzolph, 2004). The *Arabian Nights* was first introduced to the Western culture by the French orientalist Antoine Galland in 1704. His translation introduced the tales as *Arabian Nights* entertainments, where he refined most of the stories and removed most of the explicit sexual content to cater the public taste. Since then, this version was considered the standard version and was then translated into English in the year 1706 (Shamma, 2005).

However, this was not the only version of the *Arabian Nights* tale presented to the Western culture. Richard F. Burton, a famous orientalist and Victorian writer and translator, presented an unexpurgated translation of the *Arabian Nights* in 1885. He insisted on mentioning all the sexual conducts that were removed in earlier translations (Bassnett 2000). Scholars argued that Burton's translation appears to portray the tales with the commonly known orientalist terms of entertaining fantasies that stand in opposition to the civilized Western society with its spectrum of reason and respectability. In the opening remarks of his translation, Burton describes the tales as a window to a world of dreams, mystery, and magic (Bassnett, 2000; Burton, 1900; Kennedy, 2000).

The first and main tale of the *Arabian Nights*, the tale of king "Shahriyar" and his wife "Scheherazade" who is the main narrator of all the tales, was based in India and Uzbekistan, where Scheherazade recited all the tales for *One Thousand and One Nights*. The rest of the tales are depicted in several Arab cities like Baghdad, Basra, and Damascus, Cairo, and many others, presenting folkloric, cultural, and sometimes exaggerating overview of the Orient (Lyons, 2010).

2.2.3 Arabs media images

For several years, Arabs have been stereotyped in the media, especially in Hollywood, with mainly negative stereotypes such as being nomadic, barbaric, violent, mystical, hateful, prejudiced, and sometimes even misogynistic, discriminating against women (Shaheen, 2003).

Scholars actually argue that those culture-based stereotypes of the Arabs date back to the orientalism era during the 19th century, when several travelers, later named orientalists, traveled to the Middle East to explore its culture and provided an unjustified, inevident description of the Arabs and their culture in the Middle East region. Most orientalists agreed on one aspect describing the Arabs, simply referring to them as "the others" (Al-Olaqi, 2012; Shaheen, 1998)

Said (2008) argues that this line of thoughts is called orientalism, by dividing the world from an imaginative geography perspective, defining the larger and the different part as the "Orient"

and what is called “our world” as the west which was considered to be the superior, more intellectually advanced, part of the world. Taking after these ideological representations and narrative stereotypes about the Arabs, Hollywood cinema has depicted Arabs as incompetent people living in the deserts and tropical oases, having imaginary props like magic carpets and genies, with men being depicted as devious sheiks or corrupt sultans and women being always presented as sexual objects being “harem” girls. Studies even compared the negative images of Arabs in Hollywood movies to the depiction of Jews in Nazi propaganda materials, by presenting both in the context of the villain (Al-Olaqi, 2012; Ridouani, 2011; Said, 2008; Shaheen, 2003).

Eisele (2002) argues that, from the early years of the Hollywood film industry, movies with the oriental theme were very a popular type among film makers and audiences as well, which played a vital role in shaping the public’s perception of the “Orient” For successive years. In addition, Hajji (1995) describes three dominant subgenres that were evident in the oriental movie genre; these subgenres were “sheik films,” “foreign legion films,” and “Arabian nights,” with the latter being the most popular. All these subgenres shared the same narratives when it comes to images about the Arab world; they were mainly showing the Orient as deserts and sandstorms, with animals reflecting this geographical presentation being camels and Arabian stallions. Moreover, the oriental city was always depicted as exotic, dangerous, and mysterious. In addition to the technical aspects of image creation, various visuals focused on the contrasts between the Arab character and the way it is presented, with all Arabs having beards, head covers, and certain clothes with barbaric attitude, and the European character with its modern wardrobe and sophistication in behavior and attitude.

Historically, one of the earliest depictions of the *Arabian Nights* theme was the silent movie *The Palace of a Thousand and One Nights* (1905) (Figure 1). However, the popularity of the oriental themed movies did not accelerate until the early 20s of the 20th century, when the movie *The Sheik* (1921) came out (Figure 2); this movie laid the base for the oriental movies and “the sheik” movies as a subgenre, mainly because of its huge success that was very influential on the public perception of Arabs as a cultural group (Eisele, 2002).

Moreover, after *The Sheik* movie, the narratives presented about the Middle East in Hollywood remained the same for several decades. By presenting Arabs and Muslims as the same cultural group most of the time, these narratives were a reflection of the influence of the orientalist literature including operas, plays, and novels. “These literary texts connected the Middle East with specific elements including abduction and enslavement of women in a harem, identity

twists and the depiction of the East as a place of both terror and redemption for sins.” (Eisele, 2002, p. 71).

In recent years, especially during the aftermath of September 11, Arabs’ representations in the media did not change much; in fact, it got much worse than these images. Shaheen (1984, 1998, 2003) mentioned in his studies Arabs’ representations in the media during the 70s and 80s. The image of the barbaric, nomadic, wealthy, fanatic sheiks dominated the media images; in addition, women were frequently depicted as belly dancers. These images have altered lately to be mainly depicting Arabs as terrorists and ignorant, violent, and heartless people. In addition, he analyzed all of the Hollywood featured movies that depicted Arabs, including *The Sheik* (1921), *Disney’s Aladdin* (1992), and *Rules of Engagement* (2000). Analysis has demonstrated that all of these featured movies depicted Arabs in specific molds that are evident in all Arab-depicting movies analyzed; images included Arabs presented as religious fanatics, murderers, rapists, and of course oil-rich sheiks, and women are always victimized in these movies and depicted as abused.

Elayan (2005) conducted a study on a sample of Hollywood films from 1994 to 2000 trying to depict the representation of Arabs and Arab Americans in those movies; the results showed that Arabs were usually portrayed in a negative way as aggressive or hostile or involved with terrorism. Similarly, in a textual analysis of the of President Bush’s public statements, from September 2001 till January 2002, the results showed that his statements included all the stereotypical words that framed and constructed Arabs as “the enemy,” by calling them evil, bloodthirsty, and animalistic terrorists (Merskin, 2004). With regard to the political conflict with Osama bin Laden and Saddam Hussein, the American government, by defining them as “the face of evil,” opened the route to simply identifying any one from Middle Eastern descendants as the enemy or as evil (Fish, 2001).

Figure 1. Movie poster of *The Palace of a Thousand and One Nights* (1905).



Source: IMDB.

Figure 2. Movie poster of *The Sheik* (1921).



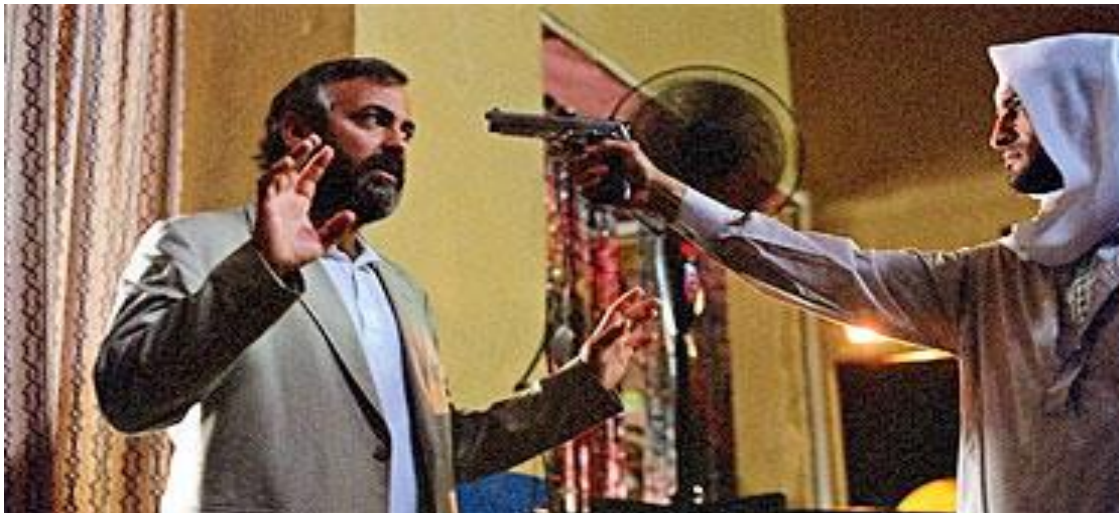
Source: IMDB.

Figure 3. Scene from the movie *Rules of Engagement* (2000).



Source: IMDB.

Figure 4. Scene from the movie *Syriana* (2005).



Source: REX/Snap Stills.

The previously exhibited four movies are a depiction of how the images about Arabs in featured movies have changed through time. With almost a century between the first movie and the last one, the images changed from the orientalist perception of Arabs with the sheiks and women as belly dancers living in the harem in the palace of the king, or victims of abuse that need to be saved, to the modern images that developed to a more violent appearance of the Arabs as violent terrorists that are always engaged in destructive behavior.

Shaheen (2012) argues that the motivation of character violence in the movies *Rules of Engagement* (Figure 3) and *Syriana* (Figure 4) is very different. The violence in *Rules of Engagement* is a vicious attack on the United States symbolized in its embassy in Yemen from characters who are not personified, only appearing to be Arabs from the way they are dressed

as exhibited in the scene in hand. In “*Syriana*,” on the other hand, violent characters in the movie who are Muslims and Arabs are actually personified with a background and motivation for violence for each character. They are actually depicted as victims of the geopolitical conflict going on in the Middle East, with several forces trying to maintain its power and domination over the region and use these characters to fight their own wars for them.

Even though this is actually a subtle argument when it comes to the transformation in the depiction of Arabs in Hollywood movies, presenting a violent Arab character with motivation for this violence does not actually abolish the image of the stereotypical portrayal of the angry violent barbaric Arab that has been presented in Hollywood for years.

In a similar context, according to a study by Lind and Danowski (1998), a content analysis of three major American television networks, ABC, CNN, and PBS, from 1993 until 1996, found very little coverage of Arabs and Arab culture. In fact, most coverage was associated with war, violence, threats, and the Arab-Israeli conflict. Consequently, the lack of honest, fully informative media representation can play a role in the reinforcement of stereotypes along with the lack of direct interaction with the subject matter.

However, Alsultany (2012) argues differently that the American media, especially TV drama, is not always presenting Arabs as terrorists or the so-called enemy, but they are taking on a mood of representation, which relies on balancing the good and bad images of Arabs and Muslims, in what is called a sympathetic representation of Arabs and Muslims. For instance, in 2004, the TV series *24* was accused of misrepresentation of Muslims as terrorists; during the following seasons, if the episode involved a Muslim or Arabic character playing the role of a terrorist in the story line, a positive character for an Arab or a Muslim had to be included. Sometimes, Arabs were portrayed as fighting terrorism alongside the USA government, for instance, in order to balance the discourse of the representation so as not to be accused of racism (Alsultany, 2012, p. 14). Similarly, Smith (2013) examined the correlation between the American public having favorable attitudes towards Muslims and the media framing of Islam in a positive way. Findings supported this hypothesis as a result of the adapted policy by the media to face possible discrimination against Muslims in the United States, which has elevated in recent years.

Regarding satire and comedy depicting Arabs and Muslims, those comedy shows became a common feature of the post-September 11 era, with many stand-up comedies and skits featuring Arabs or Muslims related jokes. A study analyzed the jokes presented by American

stand-up comedian Jeff Dunham featuring a puppet called “Achmed the Dead Terrorist.” The puppet is shown as a skeleton with black bushy eyebrows, wearing a turban and having the stereotypical beard often associated with Muslim males (Culcasi and Gokmen, 2011). The study highlighted the fact that Dunham’s jokes relies on the audience’s disposition and understanding of terrorism as a threat, Islam, and American efforts in Iraq to get laughs (Purcell et al., 2010).

In 2005, the Danish newspaper *Jyllands-Posten* published 12 controversial cartoons depicting Prophet Muhammad, with all the known stereotypes about Islam. For instance, one cartoon showed him with a head turban with a bomb on it and another one with him standing with a dagger in his hand with two women completely covered in black in the background. On the one hand, the cartoons were perceived as an insult to the primal symbol of the Islamic religion and caused a mass anger in the Muslim world, which led to protests and even calls for boycotting Danish products in many countries with Muslim populations. On the other hand, the Danish government refused many calls to close the newspaper, as this would have been against freedom of expression (Tonder, 2011).

2.2.4 Arab women images

As mentioned earlier, the initial images about the Arabs in media originated from what was written about the Middle East in the colonial literature and orientalist literary texts.

Accordingly, Eisele (2002) stated that the prototype about Arab women in Hollywood was borrowed from the discourse of the famous *Arabian Nights* presented to the Western civilization through orientalists during the colonial era. These narratives, related to the mysterious majestically exotic females in the Orient, were introduced to the public as a publicity campaign by the major colonial powers in the twentieth century, Britain, France, and other European countries, in order to inspire their citizens to leave the modernized West and go to this mysterious land to serve there, where most of the Middle East and North African regions were under their control. Consequently, writers and filmmakers in the Western media inspired the image of Arab women from the *Arabian Nights* themes and presented the portrayal of the mysterious and exotic Middle Eastern woman to the Western world. This portrayal was carved in the Western collective consciousness about Arab women for decades (p. 76).

With regard to the images presented in the early days of the film industry in Hollywood, Shaheen (2003) argues that in these films women were always presented as sexual objects being harem girls, which was presented in movies like *The Sheik* (1921), *The Thief of Bagdad* (1940), and *Arabian Nights* (1942). Similarly, Yunis and Picherit-Duthler (2011) identified the portrayal of Arab women in early Hollywood movies as follows: “the Arab women character was always depicted as erotic, sexy, silent, nearly naked and for the most part portrayed as slaves to Arab men. If a harem woman is individualized and given an identity, she became a seductress.” (p. 35).

The media images of Arab women can be categorized into several types; according to Naber (2000), Western media reinforces three stereotype images related to the Arab Middle Eastern Muslim women. The first image is that women are always the victims of the irrationally violent behavior of Arab men. The second image is that Arab women are an overly oppressed group in the society in comparison to white European and American women; this media image implies that they are victims of the Islamic and Arab oppressive culture which controls women. These images justify the continuous intervention in the Middle East for centuries by several Western countries, on the grounds that Arab and Muslim societies are cruel and backward and therefore in need of the Western civilization to help them to be civilized and free nations, or what is known to be the “white man’s burden” in the Middle East (Melman, 2002).

In addition, Naber (2000) suggested another common image about Arab women, which is the image of the absent women. In comparison to the stereotypes of Arab men, which are very vivid and excessive in the media, the stereotypes of Arab women are much harder because of their absence in most of the narratives related to Arabs in Western movies. For instance, this absent image was present in several iconic movies depicting Arab characters; for example, the “absent Arab woman” can be seen in *The Sheik* (1921), *Raiders of the Lost Arc* (1983), *Sahara* (1983), and *True Lies* (1994). These movies depicted Arab men as the commonly known Arab stereotype, being barbaric, violent, and terrorist, with complete absence of any Arab women character. This absence of any female Arab character around Arab men implies the idea of the secondary social level of Arab women when compared to white American women abided by male presence to be a heroines in any narrative.

In this regard, Saliba (1994) argues “that the absent Arab women image juxtaposes Arab men with white women, while Arab women are entirely absent from the scene” (p. 127). For instance, in her analysis of the images of women in the Gulf war, Saliba showed that Arab women were entirely absent in all the images, headlines, and news casts related to the event;

on the other hand, several images focused on portraying white American women in the military in comparison with Arab and white American men.

In this regard, Joseph (2007) suggested a justification for the “absent Arab woman” image in Western media, as media relies on specific patterns of mass appealing narratives, where it degrades the “bad guy” in the narrative in comparison to the main character. In the case of Arabs, per se, Western media dehumanizes the Arab character, showing it as a rough, barbaric person without romance, love, a woman in his life, or even motherhood. In addition, women are presented within a rigid sociopolitical Western media agenda, where they are involved in terroristic act or are the female encounter of an Arab terrorist’s character, as a helpless wife, mother, or daughter.

To sum up, the evolution of the Arab women images was concurrent with that of the Arab images throughout the years. Yunis and Picherit-Duthler (2011) argue that the image of Arab women has transformed from an erotic image to another extreme one. When Arab men were portrayed as barbaric fanatic nomads, Arab women were then portrayed as erotic, mysterious, seductive, sexual objects. Although, through the years, these two images have changed, where Arab men are now mainly terrorists and violent, Arab women are no longer portrayed as enchanters of men; on the contrary, Arab women are now, if present in the image, are portrayed as sexless and victimized, wearing nothing but black and living in the shadow of a terrorist.

Even in recent Arabs representations, where Hollywood movies are presenting a nearly unprejudiced image about Arabs, like *Kingdom of Heaven* (2005), *Munich* (2005), and *Salmon Fishing in Yemen* (2013), although Arab men are presented in a positive way, not the well-known barbaric terrorists, Arab women are still invisible in these narratives as well.

2.2.5 Islam media images

According to Rane (2010), most of the images about the Islamic world are generated from the mass media, and most people in Western societies rely on the media, especially on television, for their information about Islam and Islamic countries. These media-generated images are far from the ideological and cultural diversity Muslims have, and the limited interaction between Western and Islamic societies attributed to the audience vulnerability to such media-generated images.

Historically, it is argued that the origin of the negative stereotypes about Islam and Muslims is as old as the medieval Christian writings between the 7th and 13th century, and they continued until the colonial and postcolonial era (Morey & Yaqin, 2011). The early Christian writings about Islam were classified as prejudiced, misinforming, and full of lack of knowledge driven from the feeling of rivalry, contempt, and superiority, as by that time Islam was viewed as Europe and Christianity's main civilization enemy (Morey & Yaqin, 2011, p. 9).

Scholars refer to the context of the early Christian writings about Islam as not being based on a real study of Islam and with no reference to any Islamic source, but only an attempt to present a narrative about Islam and its adherents based on biblical references. These hostile images about Islam in the early Christian writings were mainly used to dissuade Christians from converting to Islam, because at those medieval centuries, Islam was at its golden age, with military success, wealth, and mastery of arts and sciences, and thus started to be appealing for many (Morey & Yaqin, 2011; Tolan, 2002).

As mentioned earlier, the image about Islam continued to be negative through the colonial and postcolonial era. According to Said (2008), those images became stronger and more culturally inherited during the orientalism era and through the European colonial writings of the Islamic world, which may have marked the beginning of the misconception about Arabs and Muslims as the same group. The historical images in those Western writings about Islam are similar to those of Arabs, viewing them as barbaric, violent extremists and uncivilized others (Tolan, 2002). In addition, the lack of sources and information about Islam as a religion and the Arabs as an ethnic group in those orientalist's writings contributed to the misconception about Muslims and Arabs, being considered as the same cultural group (Mange et al., 2012). Sidani (2005) noted that not all Arabs are Muslims and most Muslims are not Arabs; furthermore, according to Pew Research Center's 2015 Religious Landscape Study, only 12% of Muslims in the United States, for example, belong to Middle Eastern origins.

Moreover, Naber (2000) argues that Arabs and Middle Easterners are often categorized as the same group, which results in blurring the cultural, historical, racial, and linguistic differences between Arabs and non-Arab Middle Easterners. Similarly, Shaheen (1984) stated that most people confuse Arabs with Muslim, considering them the same. Arabs simply are an ethnic group who share the same language, which is the Arabic language, along with other cultural heritage aspects. In the same context, there is a misconception that Iranians and Turkish, for example, are Arabs, but in fact they are not; they do not speak Arabic and they are not Semitic as Arabs.

Moreover, another misconception is that all Muslims are Arabs and all Arabs are Muslims; in fact, some Arabs are Muslims but not all of them, and of course not all Muslims are Arabs. The Islamic world extends beyond the Arab world, which extends through northern Africa and Asia. According to Pew Research Center (2017), in a report published about the Muslim population around the globe, the Middle East–North Africa region has the highest concentration of Muslim population in the world with 93% of its inhabitants being Muslims, probably because the religion originated in this area in the seventh century. However, Muslims in Middle Eastern countries are only 20% of the world Muslim population, whereas the majority of the Muslim population around the world (62%) live in the Asia-Pacific region, including large populations in Indonesia as the highest Muslim-inhabited country in the world, where 88% of the population are Muslims.

In addition, India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Iran, and Turkey are also countries with a high Muslim population. In fact, according to this report, more Muslims live in India and Pakistan (344 million combined) than in the entire Middle East–North Africa region (317 million). On the other hand, Muslims in the United States are only about 1.1% of the total United States population. Similarly, Muslims are still a relatively small share of Europe’s population with only 5% of the total population of European countries being Muslims.

Several studies have depicted the excessive media coverage of Islam and Muslims. Since the September 11 attacks, it is noted that this media coverage had certain frames dominating it, which include images of Muslims as violent, intolerant, oppressive, and threatening (Manning, 2006; Poole, 2002).

In an analysis of the coverage of the *New York Times* and the *Washington Times* American newspapers regarding Muslim related topics, like the veiling of Muslim women and the cartoon controversy of the Prophet Muhammad; Schonemann (2013) found that the coverage in both newspapers contained negative stories about both topics, with a notable generalized pattern of prejudice against Arabs and Muslims with the continued construction of both Arabs and Muslims as the enemy.

Similarly, the articles about Islam in the news magazines of the *Time* in the United States and *The Economist* from the United Kingdom were analyzed by Yusoff et al. (2013), and the results showed that negative representation of Islam was the dominant theme of their coverage.

Elsamni (2016) argues that the repeated negative representation of Islam in the media consequently allows for labeling all Muslims as a unified community with similar ideologies and characteristics, that is, the violent, aggressive people the media is promoting.

However, the negative media coverage of Islam and Muslims existed prior to the September 11 attacks. Rane et al. (2014) argued that these negative representations were present back during the Iranian revolution in 1979 and the Gulf war in 1991, with images like the bearded fanatic Muslim men and the oppressed veiled women dominating the media depiction of Muslims and Islam.

2.2.6 Islamophobia

The simple and obvious definition of the word is the fear of Islam and Muslims; however, scholars argue that the term “Islamophobia” has a more profound definition than just being afraid of something (Lee et al., 2009; Rane et al., 2014). López (2015) explains how Islamophobia is a form of rejection that differs from the known religious intolerance, defining the term as follows: “Islamophobia is hostility towards Islam and everything identified as Islamic or Islamophilic, based on the belief that Islam is an enemy, a threat that must be countered.” (p. 2). Similarly, Lee et al. (2009) defined Islamophobia as “the condemnation of Islam in its entirety as extremist while denying the very existence of a moderate Muslim majority” (p. 94).

Other scholars declare that Islamophobia is considered one of the most dangerous forms of prejudice, by discriminating against individuals based on the religious belief in Islam (Allen, 2007; Bunzl, 2005). Imhoff and Recker (2012) also mentioned that Islamophobia is usually confused as a prejudiced view of Muslims with a legitimate critique of Muslim practices based on secular grounds. Thus, Islamophobia is characterized as a neologism simply to express racism and prejudice (Love, 2009; Salaita, 2006).

However, López (2011) argues that the term Islamophobia has been identified since the end of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century; it first appeared in 1910 in an article by a French African ethnographer named Maurice Delafosse mentioning that France should not fear Muslims in West Africa during French colonialism in Africa (p. 10).

Since September 11, 2001, attacks, Islam in the United States, as well as many European countries, had to face a new era of racism and discrimination, simply because the men who

hijacked airplanes to carry out the attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon were Arabs from Muslim countries.

According to the civil rights organization report (2003) after the attacks, the federal government started a massive investigation and law enforcement attention on any one who is perceived to be an Arab. Arab Americans, Muslims, and even ethnic or religious groups who might look like an Arab or Muslim, such as Sikhs and other South Asians, also underwent these intensive, sometimes violent, investigations for being involved in those terrorist attacks.

The report points out that most of the practices employed in the name of fighting terrorism by the government included acts of racial profiling, which included the questioning and detention of young Arab or Muslim men in the United States.

In addition, the selective application of the immigration laws to citizens from Arab or Muslim countries consequently led to public hostility and street-level racial profiling towards these two ethnic and religious groups. Along with the media playing an intense role in this social profiling, the racism and discrimination towards Arabs and Muslims have not decreased throughout the years following the aftermath of the September 11 attacks, and the anti-terror profiling has just kept flourishing.

Furthermore, the civil rights association hypothesizes the phenomena of fear of Arabs and Muslims, especially when it comes to flying a plane, known as “flying while Arab” or “flying while Muslim” phenomena, which indicates that having an Arab or a Muslim on a plane is usually considered as the same threat (Mange et al., 2012).

Bargh et al. (1996) demonstrate an explanation of the aggressiveness towards any social group through the priming of social categories theory, which defines how an automatic aggressive behavior could be triggered towards any social category that is known for its aggressiveness.

In that case, Muslims, for being known as terrorists and violent extremists, usually trigger an aggressive and hostile behavior towards them just for belonging to this social group. Abu-Ras and Suarez (2009) conducted a study to examine the relationship between race-based stress, including racial harassment and discrimination, and PTSD (posttraumatic stress disorder) in a sample of New York Muslim men and women after September 11.

The results of the study show that the dominant feeling for both men and women was simply “feeling less safe” after the events of September 11 with men stating that they mostly suffer racial harassment and women stating that they were more likely to express fear of being in public places because of how they are dressed or how they look.

According to Pew Research Center (2017), in a survey about Muslims' perception in European countries, Europeans citizens from all over the continent were asked about whether they viewed Muslims favorably or unfavorably. The results showed that countries like Hungary, Italy, Poland, and Greece have a negative perception of Muslims, while the perception of Muslims is positive in other countries including the United Kingdom, France, Germany, and several other countries in Western and Northern Europe.

From a psychological perspective, Lee et al. (2009) developed the Islamophobia scale (IS) as a self-report measure of an individual's fear-related attitudes towards Muslims and the religion of Islam. The scale relies on several variables for Islamophobia.

The variables of the study include religious identity and race demographic variables, levels of agreeableness and openness to express more fear of Muslims and Islam, and the variable of emotional stability (p. 94).

There are several factors that contribute to the phenomena of Islamophobia; one of the main contributors are the mass media, social media, and Hollywood movies (Rane et al., 2014; Shaheen, 2003), through the continuous framing of Muslims and Islam in negative frames always related to violence and terrorism. These frames cultivate the negative image about Muslims in people's minds especially when they are heavy users of media and have limited interaction with real Muslims, or do not have any knowledge about Islam as a religion (Rane, 2010).

In an opinion poll conducted by the Council on American-Islamic Relations (2006), the results suggested that many Americans associate Muslims and their religion with fear-related terms, such as terrorism, violence, war, fanatic, and radical. Similarly, Lee et al. (2009) stated that the level of Islamophobia, especially in the United States and Europe, is rising, with the percentage of Americans who believe that Islam aids stoking of violence against non-Muslims been elevated since the aftermath of September 11.

Disha et al. (2011) also suggested that hate crimes against Arabs and Muslims have increased dramatically after September 11 attacks in the United States especially in states that have higher rates of Arab and Muslim populations.

In fact, there are several known forms of Islamophobia; a report by the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (2012) defined some of the known forms of the Islamophobia. The report included some overt forms like physical violence, hate speech, and even demonstrations of

discrimination, in addition to banning of minarets construction and banning of hijab in public places in some countries.

Moreover, another form of Islamophobia, included discrimination in workplace and educational institutions and random selection at airports. On the other hand, it may include the covert forms of media framing, destructive criticism on social media, and exclusion.

As mentioned earlier, media has played a vital role in the rooting of Islamophobia. However, the terroristic groups fighting under the so-called Islamic flag have played a more essential role in the elevation of such hate and fear towards Islam and Muslims, by connecting most of the terroristic attacks through the past years to those terroristic groups like Al Qaeda and ISIS, who usually present themselves and their violent attacks as defending Islam against the “infidels,” as they call anyone who is not an Islam inherent. These acts have certainly helped connecting Islam to violence and terrorism in the public discourse and of course the media, which consequently also marked the act of “War on Terror” announced by the United States after the September 11 attacks as code name for antagonizing anything that is related to Islam.

In conclusion, Arabs and Muslims have been the target of misrepresentation in all media outlets for decades, especially the American media. As mentioned earlier, political satire is considered a genre of media that has a notable effect on audience. Accordingly, the research at hand tries to assess the portrayal of Arabs as presented in American satire shows in recent years.

2.3 Theoretical Application

2.3.1 Theory in use

The study at hand relies on the framing theory as the theoretical framework along with the critical discourse analysis, in order to examine different frames used to present Arab related issues and to identify the proposed ideologies presented in the political satire programs concerning Arab’s issues.

Framing is often considered by scholars as an extension to the agenda-setting theory (Chong & Druckman, 2007; Entman, 2004; Scheufele & Tewksbury, 2007), which was first proposed in the 1970s by McCombs and Shaw, as a part of what is known as “the Chapel Hill study.” The theory identified agenda setting as “the role of news media in influencing the salience of topics on the public agenda” (McCombs & Shaw, 1972, p. 181).

Although the framing theory might fall under the umbrella of the agenda setting, the framing model focuses on how the media deals with the different manipulations of a certain issue presented by the media. In this regard, scholars argue that the framing theory ought to be perceived as a distinct model from the agenda setting.

The framing does not focus on the role of the media in highlighting the salience of a given topic for the public; however, it includes a cognitive function and information processing by the audience as to how a certain topic or an issue is characterized and how it is manipulated through different media presentations (Scheufele & Tewksbury, 2007; Yusoff, 2015).

Goffman (1974) initially provided a definition for what is called the general frames, which he called “primary frameworks” of any given society or culture; these frames are basic cognitive structures which guide the perception and representation of reality for people and allow them to make sense of the world. This is considered one of the earliest attempts to define the cognitive aspect of the framing process.

Likewise, Gitlin (2003) defined the cognitive structure of frames as “principles of selection, emphasis, and presentation composed of little tacit theories about what exists, what happens, and what matters” (p. 46).

Framing theory has been considered one of the essential methods of measuring media news and as one of the basic media effect models (Scheufele & Tewksbury, 2007). Since then, Robert Entman has given several definitions of the framing process, stating that “to frame is to select some aspects of a perceived reality and make them more salient in a communicating text, in such a way as to promote a particular problem definition, causal interpretation, moral evaluation, and/or treatment recommendation” (Entman, 1993, p. 54).

In addition, Entman (2004) defined four roles that media frames carry out especially news frames: “defining effects or conditions as problematic,” “identifying causes,” “conveying a moral judgment,” and “endorsing remedies or improvements.” In addition, he offered a modified definition of the framing process by stating that “framing is selecting and highlighting of facts of events and issues and making connections among them so as to promote a particular interpretation, evaluation and/or solutions” (Entman, 2004, pp. 4–12). Some Scholars actually argue that Entman’s latest definition of framing and the four main news frames should become a standard reference in framing research (Chong & Druckman, 2007; Schwartz, 2004).

Kellow and Steeves (1998) analyzed the news frames used by the government-controlled radio station (RTL) in Rwanda in 1994. The findings of the study showed that those frames used by the radio station actually contributed to the incitement of the Rwandan genocide in 1994, during the Rwandan civil war, which involved mass killing of thousands of civilians by the government and by civilians as well. The study used four prepackaged frames to define news frames used by the media: “the risk and danger frame,” “the powerful and wicked frame,” “the victim’s frame,” and “the violence frame.”

According to Schwartz (2004), the prepackaged frames defined by Kellow and Steeves (1998) can be considered as corresponding to the news function defined by Entman (2004).

It has been stated that the “the risk and danger frame” and “the powerful and wicked frame” can be both corresponding to Entman’s first function of a news frame, which is defining the problem, since those frames can be considered as threats and those threats are the problems. The victim’s frame also emphasizes the victims and can correspond to Entman’s second function of a news frame, defining the effect of the causal agent of the problem, so the victims are the effect of the causal agent of the problem.

In a similar context, Neuman et al. (1992) provided a definition of “news frames” by stating that “they are conceptual tools which media and individuals rely on to convey, interpret, and evaluate information” (p. 60). In addition, he defined the five most commonly used frames in the news media: The first frame is the “attribution of responsibility frame,” where the media presents an issue or topic and relates its cause or solution to be the responsibility of the government, an individual, or a group. The second frame is “human-interest frame,” which relies on the emotional aspect of any issue or topic highlighted by the media; this frame mainly personalizes and dramatizes any topic to maintain audience’s interest. The third frame is “conflict frame,” where the media highlights all sorts of conflicts in any news story, whether it was between individuals, groups, or institutions, which is considered one of the main reasons that make a news story appealing to the audience, as they are always interested to follow stories of conflict, in politics, sports, and even show business.

Another commonly used frame is “morality frame” which presents the issue or topic from a religious or moral perspective. Finally the news media commonly uses the “economic frame,” where the media presents any given event, problem, or issue in terms of the consequences it might have economically on an individual, group, institution, region, or country.

In this regard, Chong and Druckman (2007) argue that one of the purposes of framing research is to identify frames in the media that enable researchers to identify trends regarding certain issues presented in the media, and also to compare coverage across different media outlets.

Accordingly, in order to examine the actual usage of these five news frames, Semetko and Valkenburg (2000) conducted a content analysis on nearly 1,522 television news stories and almost 2,600 newspaper stories that were aired and published during May and June 1997, respectively.

The results of this analysis showed that “the attribution of responsibility” frame was the most commonly used frame in the news and that the other frames used were ordered, respectively, as the conflict, economic consequences, human-interest, and morality frames. However, the use of any frame relied on the type of topic and the outlet itself, where serious newspapers and television news programs were more likely to use the attribution of responsibility frame, while the entertainment news and programs tended to use the human-interest frame.

However, Nelson et al. (1997) argued that the use of any of these frames might vary according to several variables that include the degree of the censorship practiced by the government over the media in any country. In addition, the ideological and cultural references of this country can play a role in defining the frames used in the media, as what might be acceptable in one culture could be a taboo in another. Similarly, the popularity of an event can be an indicator of the frame used; likewise, the type and source of news along with the different patterns of media practices can be determining variables in choosing the frame used for covering any given event.

2.3.2 Framing of satire

Brewer and Marquardt (2007) argue that political satire programs use issue frames in mocking the news media and political topics, by presenting a content concerned mainly with covering public affairs, politics, world affairs, news stories, and guest interviews. Ferré-Pavia (2013) also defined political satire as a genre, stating that “satire appears as a dialectical macrogenre that confronts truth with its parody, represents conflict and sets about designing characters, which, on simplification, can end up as Manichaeian. Simplification, exaggeration and duality bring it close to the characteristics of persuasive material or propaganda” (p. 60).

Several studies suggested that political satire shows use an integration of old and new political information and constructs to formulate their political jokes about political figures and institutions, through offering long and informative segments covering political issues in depth

for several minutes while combining this with humorous elements (Hoffman & Young, 2011; Landreville et al., 2010; Baym, 2005).

In addition, satire shows usually tend, just like the traditional news, to tackle policy and public issues rather than focusing only on the caricatures of public figures, to the point that those treatments play a role in the salience of political issues for the public. However, the key difference between satire shows and traditional news, when covering the same event, is the goal; news programs are meant to be informative, while political satire shows' main goal is to be humorous (Hoffman & Young, 2011, p. 160).

Accordingly, scholars have suggested that an increasing proportion of audiences relies on political entertainment as a source of political information and news (Dagens, 2012; Hollander, 2005; Xenos & Becker, 2009). Hence, an approach towards the study of the framing, priming and agenda-setting theories as a theoretical background for the nontraditional news formats, like the political satire programs, was proposed by many media scholars (Stroud & Muddiman, 2013; Stewart & Littau, 2008; Williams & Delli Carpini, 2000).

Those studies have suggested that audience members might use information they get about different issues, events, and personality traits that are emphasized in the political entertainment content, even in a humorous context, in their political judgments. In other words, these issues became primed in the minds of the audience through the exposure to political satire shows (Baym, 2005; Holbert et al., 2005).

In a similar context, Young (2013) mentioned that the political movement of "Occupy Wall Street" in the United States in 2011 was covered in the news media as illegitimate. However, in political satire shows such as *The Colbert Report* and *The Daily Show with Jon Stewart*, it was characterized as legitimate by using the same frame but in a satirical context; they were mainly criticizing the news media coverage of this political movement, in addition to how it was handled by the government. Consequently, through their humorous coverage, they actually gave the movement a sense of legitimization and support.

Boukes (2018) argues that traditional news media mainly relies on agenda-setting research; however, with the growing importance of political satire, which is now blending with political journalism (Baym, 2005), it could also have an agenda-setting impact.

Hence, the research at hand will rely on the framing theory to analyze the different frames used by the political satire shows in the different manipulations and jokes used to tackle issues related to the Arab countries and American policies regarding Arabs.

2.3.3 Critical discourse analysis

According to Fairclough (2005), discourse refers to “linguistic and other semiotic elements (such as visual images and ‘body language’)” that define the relation between linguistic and semiotic elements as being parts of the social process (p. 922).

In order to be able to examine any discourse, Howarth and Stavrakakis (2000) defined discourse analysis as “the practice of analyzing empirical raw material and information as discursive forms” (p. 4). Usually, it refers to the analysis of text in all its known forms, whether it was written text, spoken interaction, or multimedia text on television and the Internet. Fairclough (2005) also suggested that it is further used in analyzing other forms of communication practices, like speeches, reported interviews, and debates.

Van Dijk (2002) mentioned that critical discourse analysis works within a specific domain, which he calls a “theoretical triangle.” This triangle describes three levels of analysis, namely, discourse, cognition, and society. First, discourse covers all the communicative events, written or spoken. Second, the cognition involves personal and social cognition, beliefs, and goals. Finally, society consists of the local societal and political structures, groups, institutions, systems, social relations, and processes.

Furthermore, critical discourse analysis refers to “an analytical framework for studying connections between language, power and ideology” (Fairclough, 1995, p. 23). In other words, ideology is considered a semiotic phenomenon and should be understood and analyzed through language discourse, written or spoken (Gardiner, 1992).

In addition, Fairclough (1995) stated that the reflection of an ideology through language requires the analysis of three dimensions of “language text”: the spoken or written words, the “discourse practice” which refers to text production and interpretation, and finally the “sociocultural practice.”

The concept of “ideology,” however, was defined by Mayr (2008) as “denoting systems of ideas, beliefs and practices ... working in the interests of a social class and/or cultural group.” Similarly, van Dijk (1997) views “ideology” as “the mental representation that forms the basis of social cognition of the shared knowledge and attitudes of a group” (p. 29).

According to this definition, the concept of ideology in any sociocultural domain is usually developed by dominant groups to legitimate their authority for the sake of getting the utmost benefit they could get, by telling people what their “position” is and what to think about social issues.

Furthermore, van Dijk (1997) argues that ideologies feature the criteria that define the membership and group access (Who are we? Who belongs to us?), actions and aims of this group (What do we do and why?), the norms and values that a group holds (What is good and bad for us?), and relative social position to other groups (Where are we?), as well as the special social resources of the group (What do we have?) (p. 26).

Van Dijk (2006) also stated that the adoption of ideologies usually carries the connotations that all positive meanings are always associated with the in-group of the speaker and all negative attributes are ascribed to the outgroup trying to attack them, through highlighting others’ defaults and negative traits.

This explains the strategy he later proposed, which he called the “ideology square,” that defines how an ideology operates in any social context, by emphasizing what he called “*Our* good things” and “*Their* bad things” while deemphasizing “*Our* bad things” and “*Their* good things,” to simply deliver the concept of superiority of this ideology and whoever belongs to it and the basis of differentiation between “Us” and “Them.”

2.3.4 Critical discourse analysis in media

Meyer and Wodak (2000) describe the concern of the critical discourse analysis as clarifying the implications and connotation of any political, institutional, media, and gender discourse in which explicit forms of struggle and conflict are embedded.

According to Mayr (2008), most media performances are likely to function ideologically, because of the established routine practices in their institutions. Hence, analyzing the media content has been the core of many critical discourse studies, by trying to expose the ideologies that underlie the media content (O’Keeffe & McCarthy, 2010).

Caldas-Coulthard (2003) argues that reporting news occurs within a social and cultural context, because, in reporting news, the newsmakers are not just stating a factual event, yet a news report is an ideologically framed report of the event. For example, when analyzing the media discourses in Western countries, politicians tend to refer to the world to be divided into two,

the modern and civilized free world represented by the Western countries and “the others” which is a negative label for eastern, less civilized countries (Chilton, 2004).

2.3.5 Humor discourse analysis

Carrell (1997) defines the nature of humor discourse as follows: “humorousness is a binary category representing a stimulus’s theoretical capacity to induce a humorous response, while funniness is a gradable category indicating the degrees of appreciation of a humorous text, differently perceived by individuals” (p. 12).

With regard to the discourse of satire, Simpson (2003) developed a theoretical model to discuss the proprieties of the satirical discourse. In his model, which is given the acronym “SMUT,” Simpson defined four principal components: The first component is the setting, which consists of the surrounding circumstantial conditions that help in the construction of the satirical discourse.

The second is the method, which involves three phases, namely, setup, incongruity, and resolution, to produce a satirical text.

The third component of the model is the uptake, which is creating the intended effect of the humorous text by uttering the conditions of the contextual surroundings of the intended topic. The final component of the SMUT model is the target of satire, which consist of three subcategories, namely, episodic target, where the target of the satire is a particular action or event that took place in the public sphere; the personal target, by which the satire is targeting an individual’s personality and behavior; and the experiential target which is focused on features of the human condition and experience as opposed to specific episodes and events (p. 70)

Coulson (2001) argues that both humor and satire are a representation of an artistic form that is only fulfilled in the consciousness of the audience members. The process of understanding humor is explained as follows: “a language input triggers a search through long-term memory for a frame that will anchor the message-level representation” (p. 37).

In addition, satire presumes that the receiver of the joke must have background information on the topic in order to be able to fully understand the intended meaning of the joke.

Satire main goal is attacking evil, overconfidence, prevailing pride, triumphant human treats. It usually attacks those orthodox proprieties, which are hidden incongruities accepted by negligence, habit, or social custom.

In addition, the discourse of satire involves mocking irrationality convinced that it makes sense, creating the humorousness context from its foolishness.

Nevertheless, the most important part of its discourse is that it is considered as a kind of unmasking the ugliness revealed in its true colors and masquerading as merit (Abioye, 2009).

Furthermore, one of the elements of the satirical discourse, as discussed by Hasan (2011), is the verbal aggression. In that context, the verbal aggression in satire includes, among others, criticism, abuse, tirade, cursing, and lampoon.

Usually, by using offensive language or ridicule, the aggression in the satirical discourse might target a person, place, or thing often in verse form. In the same context, the abusive verbal attack on a person is usually direct and unstructured. A tirade is generally verbally attacking a group, an institution, or a certain behavior. It is often abusive or at least bitter or polemical. Lampoon may be thought of as a specialized version of invective in that it is a satiric attack on an individual (Test, 1991, p. 121).

Attardo and Raskin (1991) argue that, in any satirical discourse, a basic element ought to be apparent, which is the target of the joke; in this regard, the target of criticism can be either a person, a group, or an action that the satirist perceives as a malfunction in the social discourse. Moreover, in satire, the selected target is criticized because of its inadequacy in terms of the social standers and norms that should be reached from the critic's point of view.

Another basic element of any satirical discourse is the corrective purpose that is conveyed through a critical approach, which either ridicules or attacks those circumstances that need improvement from the satirist's point of view.

Attardo (2010) discussed the elements that contribute to the study of humor, where most of the theories discussing humor are sociolinguistic approaches, to describe the essence of the humorous phenomena within their social context.

Different disciplines deal with humor from different perspectives; in phycology, for instance, scholars deal with the different manifestation of humor; on the other hand literary scholars deal with it as different literary genres such as "jokes," "anecdote," and "tales," so the scope of the research might differ accordingly (p. 46).

Scholars have agreed on the fact that it is not possible to understand a joke or humor distant from its social or historical context (Caldas-Coulthard, 2003; Chilton, 2004). In this regard, Maslo (2016) argues that, in satire shows, in order for a joke to be understood, the listener/viewer needs to have background information about the situation, which is referred to as the “blend theory,” where two mental inputs are displayed.

The first input is the factual event /personality /information, while the other input is the creative and humorous contribution of the satirist, which is counterfactual and the receiver allegedly has a background on. Through the blending of both inputs, the discourse of the joke could then be understood.

Similarly, Raskin (1985), in his analysis of jokes, defined three semantic oppositions that a joke consists of: real vs. unreal, normal vs. abnormal, and possible vs. impossible, where the discourse of any joke is characterized by having two oppositional aspects for it to be funny.

In addition, Booth (1983) stated that listeners/viewers of any joke develop some sense of accomplishment and involvement, by which they apply their life experience and hence form a personal understanding of this humorous message.

Abioye (2009) argues that satire is based on criticizing real people, usually public figures who are the usual target of political satire in particular. Satirists start their jokes by describing a distressing or ridiculous situation, sometimes both, using a mocking tone with amusement.

In addition, the discourse of satire includes a set of cautiously selected words that are intended to shock the receiver in order to divert their awareness towards the spiteful facts or people the satirist has in mind. “In this process, the satirical discourse relies on the usage of satirical tools including irony, humor, disgust, exaggeration, scorn, abusive, dislocation of meaning, scare quotes, taboo expressions, etc.” (p. 140).

However, some jokes are not always acceptable in some social contexts or societies, as Davies et al. (2008) argued that every society has rules about what could be joked about, in reference to the incident of “the cartoon crisis” of Prophet Muhammad; for example, Muslim communities do not tolerate any jokes about any of their religious beliefs. Not only religious, but also ethnic humor is mostly described as negative.

Likewise, Weaver (2011) argues that jokes sometimes, when placed in a certain context, could embody racism and serve the ideological function of offensiveness towards a particular group.

Generally, a satirist main quest is calling for a broad-spectrum of values such as freedom, gender equality, and justice. Furthermore, the satirist role does not only call for these universal values, but also stand for calling the specific values of the community where he/she belongs, whenever these values are being violated by the ruling government or political party.

However, Maslo (2019) suggested that every culture has its own specific values that are widely agreed upon by members of the community as cultural values.

Nevertheless, some cultural norms and values could be widely accepted and appreciated in one society and opposed in another society, which is why a satirist should be very careful when tackling the values of the society in his jokes.

In this regard, Howitt and Owusu-Bempah (2005) discussed the notion of racist jokes as playing a role in presenting an ethnic culture as insignificant and reinforcing race ideology to be laughed at and not something to be valued.

Similarly, Medhurst (1990) mentioned that humor is associated with power; there are those who laugh and make the jokes and those who are laughed at, and in that case, ethnic minorities were the least powerful party.

Maslo (2016) suggested that counterfactuals oppose the actual state of matters; however, rhetorically, they are aimed at potentially revealing the truth. Political satire can be considered as an encounter between truth and falsehood, which is known as the blending theory or conceptual integration theory.

Fauconnier and Turner (2002) define the blending process as “a process of combining two (or more) mental spaces into a final ‘blend,’ which is an intersection of the two, and, besides their respective inputs in terms of contents, the blend generates new insights into the topic at hand” (p. 45).

Moreover, the discourse of satire usually includes counterfactual statements, which, according to Coulson and Pascual (2006) should be considered as the most essential part of satire. The abstract combination of two scenarios into an irrational scenario in the blend is a commonly used argumentative tactic in the satirical discourse, which sometimes can be perceived as absurd, yet it is informative and entertaining at the same time.

In this regard, counterfactual notions are usually culture specific, that is, what a given community general record in in their collective experience. Fauconnier & Turner (2002) define

mental spaces as “small conceptual packets constructed as we think and talk, for purposes of local understanding and action” (p. 59).

In other words, counterfactuals are reflected by the understanding of the reviver of the satirical text and their ability to connect it to life experience, collective knowledge, and sometimes long-term memory, in order to finally be able to evaluate the satirical discourse and understand the intended meaning of the joke.

However, not everybody understands the same revived content similarly, because even if the received information is common, the individual’s existing knowledge, understanding, and worldview is different.

Entman (1993) also stated that frames are structures in our brain that are built up by experience and activated by speech. Consequently, Lakoff (2014) argues that all words are defined relative to conceptual frames. When someone hears a word, its frame is activated in the brain, so a specific word mentioned can trigger a specific topic; for instance, the word “offside” triggers the notions related to sports, specially football.

These conceptual frames are usually common among individuals who speak the same language and belong to the same culture or ethnic group. Coulson (2001) mentions that, rhetorically, a frame stimulates its preferred perception by linking information to corresponding “culturally familiar symbols” present in the audience’s knowledge structures “that guide individuals’ processing of information” (p. 29).

In addition, in his analysis of humor, Grice (1957) defined some concepts that lead the receiver from understanding what is said to understanding what is actually meant by the speaker. He stated that the humor context may contain meaning potentials beyond the actual words used.

Kotthoff (2002) similarly added that, in the joke or humor, structure of information is usually processed in a way that allows the receiver of this joke to expect absurdity and surprise, as well as non-contextualized narrative developments, by creating “sense in nonsense,” just to be funny.

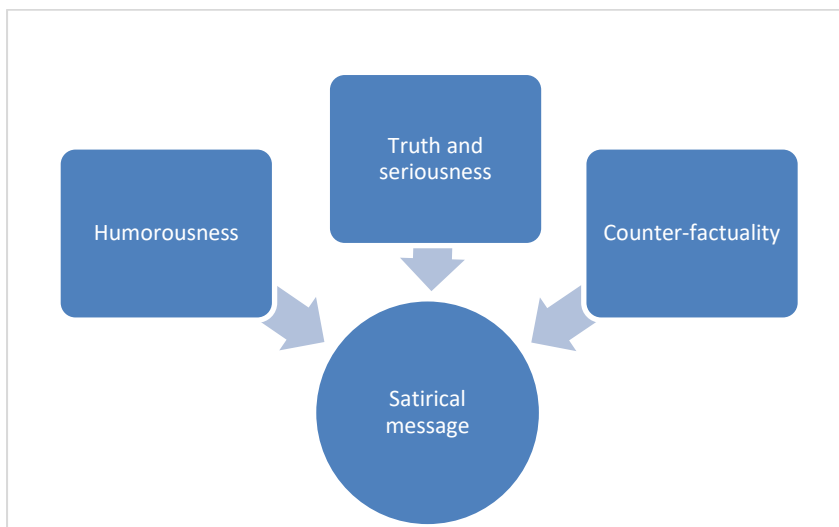
Quintero (2007) suggested that satire could not function without a familiar base where audience can compare the humor they see to the ordinary or the reality they are accustomed to. Hence, a satirist presents an alternative reality either explicitly or implicitly; usually, this ideal reality presented by the satirist is assumed to be aiming for improvement or restructuring of the harsh reality we are living in.

In addition, “whether that standard is incontrovertibly right does not really matter, but what does matter is that the satirist and the reader share a perception of that standard” (p. 3).

Maslo (2016) proposed a model for defining how a satirical message is formed. The “Model of Satirical Political Humor” (Figure 5) features the components of satirical message, where the *truth and seriousness* are the starting point and then they are filtered through *humorousness* and *counterfactuality*, eventually resulting in a *satirical message*.

Hence, the mentioned filters are the creative methods of the satirist to deliver his intended meaning and raise public awareness through a funny format.

Figure 5. Model of Satirical Political Humor.



Note. All diagrams in the thesis are done by the author (2021).

How the media disguise their ideological positions through presenting specific attitudes and opinions within the explicit media content, was the query of several researchers as pointed out by Pan (2002); hence, the research at hand is following the same inquiry by trying to identify the implicit ideologies presented in political satire programs specially those related to Arabs.

3. Methodology

3.1 Mixed Method Approach

The current research relies on the triangulation or mixed method approach that was defined by Creswell (2011); that is, the researcher collects, analyzes, and integrates both qualitative and quantitative data in a single study (p. 271). In order to achieve the triangulation in the study, the researcher used a mixture of quantitative content analysis and qualitative textual analysis.

The content analysis as the data collecting technique was defined by Kerlinger and Lee (2000) as “a method of analyzing communication content in a systematic, objective and quantifying manner in order to examine the research questions proposed for the study” (p. 139).

Moreover, this research relies on gathering and analyzing the jokes presented in American political satire shows to discover the image presented about Arabs in such programs.

In addition, content analysis is considered both quantitative and qualitative data collecting technique. According to Potter and Levine-Donnerstein (1999), analyzing a content that relies on the interpretation and judgment of the coders probably lies in the pattern content analysis, where the coder analyzes not only the manifest of the given content, but also the latent and the underlying meaning of the content.

Scholars suggest that individuals tend to process information differently, especially when the received information is ambiguous (Balcutis & Dunning 2006; Kunda 1990; Long & Toppino 2004).

Accordingly, Young and Tisinger (2006) argue that satire is often considered as ambiguous, biased information that requires viewers to apply cognitive effort to understand the joke, so the interpretation of such information can differ from one person to another.

In other words, within the same content, people usually interpret the information that benefits them, and what might be funny for one person can actually be offending for another (LaMarre et al., 2009).

In addition, in order to examine the stereotypes and ideologies embedded within the jokes, this research relied on qualitative textual analysis to examine those variables.

Textual analysis is defined as “seeing texts in terms of the different discourses, genres and styles they draw upon and articulate together” (Fairclough, 2003, p. 3), which was applied in this research by analyzing the jokes of political satire shows under examination in a qualitative manner.

Anagondahalli and Khamis (2014) argued that “the object of a textual analysis is not the meanings of the texts, but rather the construction of those meanings through the text” (p. 5). Furthermore, Fairclough (2003) illustrated that textual analysis requires the interpretation of both implicit and explicit meanings constructed within the text, adding that interpretation of any text is a judgmental process that relies on understanding what the speaker/writer internationally means with his/her text (p. 11).

Similarly, McKee (2006) discussed the elements associated with textual analysis, arguing that cultural context is a basic element in understanding the intended meaning of any given text (p. 52). That is to say, this cultural relativism explains why the same joke can be funny for different reasons according to the different cultural context of both the speaker and listener.

In addition, it is arguable that, in order for a joke to be understood, the listener/viewer needs to have background information about the situation, as it is rather challenging to understand a joke or humor distant from its social or historical context (Maslo, 2016; Raskin, 1985).

Hence, the researcher relied on her multiculturalism background as an Arab Muslim person along with her massive knowledge of the American culture in the qualitative analysis of the jokes. Thus, the jokes are analyzed from a perspective of someone sharing the same historical and social context of the subjects of the jokes while having a different social context from the audiences of these political satire programs.

3.2 Comparative Analysis

After analyzing the data of the selected shows separately, the researcher conducted a comparative analysis of the whole data gathered, both quantitative and qualitative, to assess the differences in approaches used in tackling Arab related issues in the shows along with examining the differences in each category analyzed in the coding scheme. In addition, the comparative study was used to evaluate the stereotypes and ideologies used across the satirical shows under investigation and identify the different treatments applied in the humorous context of the jokes.

3.3 Social Media Analysis

The research at hand relied on analyzing different social media platforms including the official pages of both shows under investigation, *The Daily Show* and *The Late Show*, on Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, and Instagram. These four social media sites were selected because they are considered the most interactive social media sites according to Alexa (2020).

The social media sites mentioned were selected because of their global popularity, as scholars argue that, in recent years, social media sites have reached almost 4 billion users worldwide, which is almost 45% of the global population (Kemp, 2019; Alexa 2020). Moreover, through an analysis of social media uses and gratifications, Pelletier et al. (2020) argue that, in terms of usages, Facebook is the most preferred social site by marketers because of its high usage and users traffic; however, users actually preferred Twitter as a social platform for informational purposes, while for social and entertainment purposes they preferred Instagram. Similarly, according to Kircaburun et al. (2020), Facebook as a social media platform is considered one of the highest ranked sites in terms of number of users because of its appealing interactive factors that fits all ages. Finally, according to Alexa (2020), YouTube was the second highest visited site in 2021, with total users of 2 billion overall; with regard to Facebook, the social platform was the sixth top visited site in the world in 2020 with a total number of users reaching over 1.6 billion.

Through the analysis of these social media platforms, the researcher studied not only the content of the jokes related to Arabs and Muslims in political satire shows, but also the reception and comments from the audience on these jokes.

The analysis was measuring the average users' interactivity on the mentioned social media platforms and the level of popularity of the two satirical shows examined in the study. Accordingly, the researcher carried out an analysis in order to identify which one of these platforms have the highest interactivity in terms of total number of fans on each platform, in addition to the average number of user interactions per post and per day on each of the official social media pages.

Moreover, the analysis was carried out to discover the general distribution of audience interaction throughout all the platforms, including the comments on posts, likes, shares, views, and retweets across the four mentioned social media pages.

In addition, the analysis examined the average number of daily posts on each social media platform and the type of posts that have the highest audience interaction.

Furthermore, a textual analysis was carried out on the first displayed comments on the four most commented posts related to Arabs or Muslims on the four social media platforms for each of the two shows under investigation. The total number of comments analyzed is $N=140$ comments: Facebook ($N=40$), Twitter ($N=30$), YouTube ($N=36$), Instagram ($N=34$).

Bhaumik and Yadav (2021) argue that analyzing the comments of users on social media provides an insightful understanding of the person's thoughts, feelings, and perception of the content they are commenting on it. Consequently, analyzing the comments of users was essential to have an overview on the audience perception towards the satirical content of the posts on the social media accounts of both shows.

The textual analysis on comments was carried out based on several aspects including the display of the comment and whether it was text only, emojis only, or a mixture of both text and emojis, which are graphic symbols representing facial expressions, gestures (e.g., thumbs up or waving), objects (e.g., vehicles), and even actions (e.g., running or dancing) used to reflect a specific sentiment or as a substitute for linguistic text (Tian et al., 2017, p. 12).

Moreover, the analysis is examining the relevance of the displayed comments to the post. Agreement or disagreement of the comment with the issue or topic of the joke is also analyzed to measure the degree of support of or opposition to the joke displayed on the post.

In addition, the researcher relied on the Contextual Polarity in Phrase-Level Sentiment Analysis developed by Wilson et al. (2005) to examine the sentiment polarity of the comments. Furthermore, the researcher analyzed the stereotypes with regard to Arabs or Muslims mentioned in the comments. Finally, Arab countries and individuals mentioned in the comments were examined.

3.3.1 Socialbakers

Socialbakers Analytics is a company specialized in generating marketing information by monitoring and mining social media profiles data on Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Pinterest, YouTube, and Instagram. Additionally, Socialbakers offers several information services that include performance indicators, which can measure fan growth, track key influencers, and analyze engagement rates and interactions across all social media platforms.

The statistical analysis of the four social media platforms was conducted with the assistance of raw data provided by Socialbakers upon request from the researcher. The data reached was covering the average user interactivity on the social media platforms of both shows within a timeframe of a month from 25 July 2020 to 25 August 2020. The data was then developed by the researcher to fit the objectives of the research through dividing them into themes and conducting a statistical analysis that reflects the main aim of the study. Along with conducting a comparative analysis on the data provided from all four social media platforms under examination, tables of analysis and figures were developed accordingly by the researcher for a better display of the results.

3.4 Universe of the Study

The universe of this study includes, first, the topic area which includes the analysis of jokes related to Arabs and Muslims mentioned in American political satire shows in order to find out how they are presented and how political satire treats the issues and news related to Arabs and Arab countries.

Several scholars agree on the importance of political satire programs as a source of political information for audience, as statistics have shown that audience members between the ages of 18 to 40 learn about political events, political candidates, and political campaigns from watching comedy shows rather than regular news (Haigh & Heresco, 2010; Hollander, 2005; Xenos & Becker, 2009).

Hence, it became essential to investigate the content of political satire shows due to its notable impact on the political perception for audience.

Second, the timeframe for the shows stands from January 2017 until January 2021. The timeframe focused on the time of President Trump's administration. This timeframe was selected because of the policy adopted by the Trump's administration, which holds a tone and attitude of intolerance against everything and everyone who is not American. As studies have shown, Since Trump was elected as president, the number of hate crimes against most religious and ethnic minorities living in the United States was notably elevated. Particularly, those against Muslims and Arabs have elevated twice compared to Obama's administration and increased by 50% more compared to the Bush administration, which witnessed the aftermath of September 11 (Müller & Schwarz, 2018).

Similarly, the number of hate crimes was reported to have reached over 1,000 hate crimes in the last quarter of 2017 only. Those crimes targeted Muslims, Arabs, African-Americans, Latinos, and all sorts of immigrants (Giroux, 2017).

In addition, one of President Trump's first executive orders was the "Muslim travel ban," which is blocking citizens from Arab and Muslim countries including Iraq, Iran, Yemen, Syria, Libya, Somalia, and Sudan, all considered Muslim-majority nations, from entering the United States, in what is marked to be the start of his anti-Muslim and anti-Arab racist policies (Family, 2018). Thus, analyzing how American satire shows support or oppose such policy against Arabs in their content was the core of investigation in this study.

However, it is worth mentioning that, from March 2020 with the announcement of Covid-19 as a pandemic by the World Health Organization (World Health Organization, 2020), the world started its battle with the Covid-19 pandemic and all news media focused its coverage on news about the pandemic, its infection rates, and the toll of deaths all over the world (Hart et al., 2020). Consequently, political satire shows, which rely on the news coverage to create their jokes, also changed their focus to the same issues concerning the news of the pandemic; hence, the jokes mentioning Arabs and Muslims were very few during this period.

3.5 Sample

This research relies on a multistage sampling for the content analysis. First, the researcher defines the programs to be included in the sample, and the second stage includes defining the jokes that are only Arab or Muslim related (from 2017 to 2021) to be used in the content analysis.

3.5.1 Sampling methodology

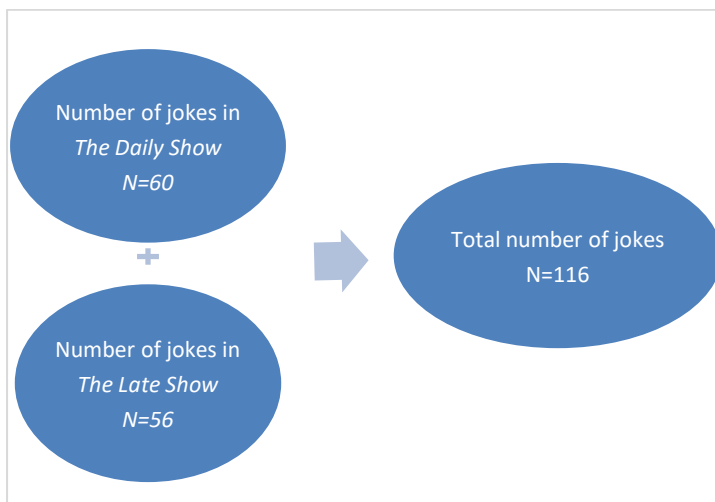
The first stage of the sampling defined the political satire programs to be investigated. The researcher relied on viewers' rating in choosing the programs to be examined. According to the Nielsen Company (2018), a leading company for market research and audience ratings, with regard to American national broadcast networks in 2018, *The Late Show with Stephen Colbert* was rated the highest viewed satire program among adult Americans aged 18–49 years.

In addition, in 2018, with regard to cable television, *The Daily Show with Trevor Noah* was categorized as the highest rated satire show. Both shows employ two different formats: the first includes jokes about real news stories and events, and the second includes real guest interviews; the current research analyzes the jokes only.

The second stage includes jokes selection for investigation. The sample was selected using keywords including “Arab,” “Muslims,” “Middle East,” and several Arab countries names from LexisNexis Academic database, from which the script and full text jokes of *The Late Show* were retrieved.

However, *The Daily Show* was not available in the database because it is a cable show, so the researcher used the keywords to search within the episodes of the show. The total number of jokes analyzed for both shows is $N=116$: *The Late Show with Stephen Colbert* ($N=56$), *The Daily Show with Trevor Noah* ($N=60$) (Figure 6). The distribution of the jokes during the sampling timeframe was as follows: 2017 ($N=35$), 2018 ($N=30$), 2019 ($N=31$), 2020 ($N=20$).

Figure 6. Sample distribution.



3.6 Unit of Analysis

All jokes mention Arab or Muslim countries or individuals, and by joke we mean both visual and narrative jokes. The visual joke is that including an image or a video commented on by the host in a humorous context, and the narrative joke is where the host of the show has a humorous monologue about a topic or an event without any visual aids (Haigh & Heresco, 2010).

3.7 Constructing Categories

According to Wimmer and Dominick (2014, p. 168), the construction of content categories can be achieved by several ways, including emergent coding and a priori coding. The research at hand relied on the emergent coding where the categories are established after a preliminary examination of the data. In addition, the researcher relied on some previous studies that examined some relevant categories as well. Williams et al. (2004) constructed specific categories to examine the tone of jokes used in the late-night shows during Iraq war. The categories included three variables describing the tone of each joke: positive, negative, and neutral. The mentioned categories were used to identify ideologies of humorous messages in the jokes examined. Similarly, Haigh and Heresco (2010) defined categories to examine the focus of monologue jokes in late-night shows on Iraq war as well. The study examined categories including individuals, events, and issues. Accordingly, the researcher relied on a similar coding scheme for the jokes analysis and added several categories in order to examine the research questions of the study.

The categories are as follows:

- **Type of the joke:** This category includes visual and narrative jokes. The visual jokes include an image or a video as subcategories, to identify the dominant visual aids for the jokes. In addition, the narrative joke is where the host only has a monologue about a topic or an event without any visual aids.
- **Tone of the joke:** This determines whether the tone is positive, negative, or neutral, which is defined in the coding scheme as follows: If the context of the joke is making fun or blaming the American policies/attitudes/actions, it is a negative tone. Moreover, if the context of the joke is supporting the American side and making fun of the Arabs' policies/attitudes/actions, then it is a positive tone. If the context is just presenting the joke without focusing on a specific party to mock or make fun of, it is a neutral tone.
- **Focus of the joke:** This determines whether the joke focuses on individuals, issues, events, or countries, or it involves multiple categories, that is, involving more than one option from the same category it focuses on.
- **Frames used in a joke:** This defines the different frames used for the joke. The coding scheme defined the common used frames in media, to be analyzed:
 - The issue frame, where the focus of the joke is on the issue itself.

- The attribution of responsibility frame, where the joke presents an issue or topic and relates its cause or solution to the responsibility of the government, individual, or group.
- The human-interest frame, which includes presenting the emotional aspect of any issue.
- The conflict frame, where the joke highlights all sorts of conflicts in any news story.
- The morality frame, where the joke presents issue or topic from a religious or moral perspective.
- The economic frame, where the joke presents any given event, problem, or issue in terms of the economic consequences it might have on an individual, group, institution, region, or country. Furthermore, this category involves the joke presenting more than one frame, which will be the option of multiple frames.
- **Topics related to Arabs:** This category was also used as a coding category, where the research analyzes the different topics related to Arabs mentioned in the shows, determining whether they are social, political, economic, war, accident related, or miscellaneous topics, which were defined in the coding scheme as any other topics that do not fall in the previously mentioned categories.
- **Individuals mentioned in the joke:** The coding scheme defined the following characters as individuals that could be involved in the news story: first, President Trump; second, an American government official, who is a person working in the government; third, an American public personality, who is defined as any person who is a well-known personality but does not work as public official in the government; fourth, an Arab leader, Arab government official, or Arab public personality. In addition, the story may involve multiple persons.
- **Character Focus in the joke:** This category involves the option of Arabs as the characters in the joke are identified to be an Arab; the option of Muslims, where the characters in the joke are identified to be Muslims as a religious group without mentioning their country; and, finally, the option of “not identified,” where the characters in the joke are not precisely defined as Arabs or Muslims.

- **Arab countries targeted in the joke:** This category involves options of the Arab countries that are involved in the jokes in both satire shows, with a category involving ISIS as an option to identify the number of times this terroristic group was targeted in jokes. In addition, a variable of N/A was added to refer to jokes that did not mention a specific country.
- **Stereotypes:** This category analyzes the common stereotypes or misrepresentations about Arabs mentioned in the jokes.
- **Joke description:** This category includes a summery for the topic of the joke.
- **General comments:** As the analysis is conducted both quantitatively and qualitatively in this research, this category contains the researcher's notes and comments on each joke being analyzed.

3.8 Validity and Reliability

Wimmer and Dominick (2014) argued that it is essential to carry out preliminary testing for any measurement used in the study in order to ensure its reliability and validity. When the used measurement poses these two qualities, then it can be considered as useful (p. 57).

3.8.1 Validity

Joppe (2000) defined validity as follows: "it determines whether the research truly measures what it was intended to measure or how truthful the research results are" (p. 1). Likewise, Figenschou (2010) added that, "in content analysis, categories should be exhaustive, mutually exclusive, and each variable must be measured with categories that are the highest level of measurement possible" (p. 17). Thus, the researcher carried out a pilot study on 10% of the sample to assess the validity of the coding categories used in the study. In addition, the coding categories were peer-reviewed prior to the coding process, and afterwards the coded data were also peer-reviewed to ensure that the acquired results were serving the purpose of the study, thus ensuring their validity.

3.8.2 Reliability

Regarding the definition of reliability, Drost (2011) stated, “Reliability is the extent to which measurements are repeatable when different persons perform the measurements, on different occasions, under different conditions, with supposedly alternative instruments which measure the same thing” (p. 106).

In other words, reliability can be achieved through the overlapping of coding process where coders code the same content and agree to the same coded categories of the coded material (Campbell et al., 2013).

Accordingly, for the quantitative analysis, in order to measure the reliability of the coding sheet used (Appendix (B)), two postgraduate students, one male and one female, assisted in the coding process. Both coders are enrolled in the master’s program in media at the Arab Academy for Science, Technology and Maritime Transport in Cairo. Generally, humorous content is rather challenging to code, simply because what might be funny to someone may not be funny to another.

Consequently, the researcher first made sure that the secondary coders have similar cultural background and inclusive knowledge about the American culture as well, to make sure that they are familiar with the political satire as a genre, in addition to ensuring that they would understand the jokes they will analyze.

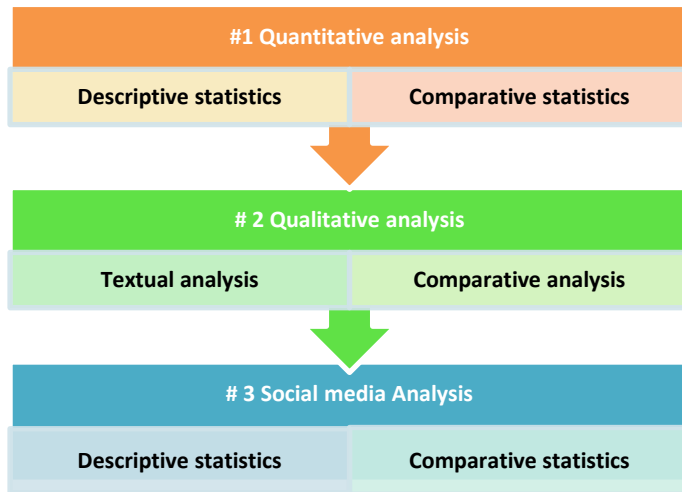
Second, coders received a two-day training on the coding scheme of the research (available in Appendix (C)) to ensure their understanding of the nature of the study and their ability to comprehend each category sufficiently.

The researcher was the primary coder of the entire sample of 116 Jokes; the secondary coders coded 20% of the sample on a random basis to ensure the reliability of the measures used in the study. Inter-coder reliability was assessed using Holsti (1969) formula at a reliability coefficient of 0.84.

3.9 Data Analysis

The research at hand relied on a multilevel analysis of the data; as shown in Figure 7, the analysis consisted of three levels: first, the quantitative analysis; second, the qualitative analysis; and third, the social media analysis.

Figure 7. Multilevel data analysis.



3.9.1 Quantitative analysis

This research relied on nonparametric statistics; accordingly, several measurements were applied to reach the study objectives and answer the research questions. The researcher relied on descriptive statistical analysis by using simple frequencies, for the nominal interval data, to analyze categories in the coding sheet under investigation in each satirical show separately.

Moreover, the researcher conducted a comparative analysis for the quantitative data in both shows under investigation through applying Contingency Table statistical analysis to examine the data gathered across the two shows simultaneously.

3.9.2 Qualitative analysis

Regarding the qualitative analysis, the researcher carried out the qualitative analysis for the whole sample with reliance on the Maslo’s model (2016) for satirical message and the qualitative textual analysis for the jokes under investigation. The analysis was carried out through breaking down each joke into three parts: seriousness, humorousness, and counter factuality, and then analyzing each part separately.

Moreover, a qualitative comparative analysis was carried out to analyze the common topics mentioned in both shows, in addition to extracting the stereotypes in both shows along with the ideologies adopted in the sample jokes.

3.9.3 Social media analysis

The researcher relied on collective statistical data available upon request from Socialbakers, a company specialized in social media data mining and statistical analysis. The data retrieved was then developed by the researcher and statistically analyzed to fit the objective of the research.

In addition, the researcher developed tables and figures to exhibit the analysis results of the total overview of the different social media platforms for both shows under examination, with regard to the audience interaction.

Finally, a comparative analysis was conducted across the data from all social media platforms for each satirical show separately to comprehend the differences between these different platforms and measure the level of users' interactivity accordingly.

4. Results and Data Analysis

4.1 Quantitative Analysis

From January 2017 until January 2021, *The Daily Show with Trevor Noah* aired a total of 473 episodes ($N=473$), with only 12% of the episodes containing Arab related jokes; the total number of jokes analyzed was 60 ($N=60$). On the other hand, *The Late Show with Stephen Colbert* aired 571 episodes ($N=571$), with only 10% mentioning Arab related jokes; the total number of jokes analyzed was 56 ($N=56$). Accordingly, the sample consisted of 116 jokes in total ($N=116$).

4.1.1 Arab countries mentioned in *The Daily Show with Trevor Noah*

As shown in Figure 8, the sample jokes mentioned specific 12 Arab countries. Most of those mentions were in reference to the United States and its involvement with these countries; however, some of these countries were mentioned solely as they were in the news, and the joke was making fun of the news story itself. The total frequency of Arab countries mentioned in the unit of analysis was $N=58$.

The highest mentioned Arab country in the sample jokes was Syria with $n=16$, which is reasonable because Syria has been a hotspot in the Middle East for several years now, especially after the rise of the Islamic state in the region and the civil war going on for years now, in addition to the fact that the United States became politically and militarily involved in this country since then.

The second highest mentioned country was Saudi Arabia scoring $n=13$. For years, Saudi Arabia has been considered a close ally of the United States in the Middle East for several political, economic, and military considerations. Hence, the high number of mentions in the jokes is rather logical. Furthermore, the year 2018 marked the incident of the assassination of the Saudi journalist Jamal Khashoggi, which was excessively covered in the news, involving President Trump's reaction to the event as well.

Moreover, Iraq ($n=10$) was the third highest mentioned country especially by the end of 2019 and beginning of 2020. With Iraq serving as a battleground during the accelerated tension between Iran and the United States, *The Daily Show* referred to these military operations as Iraq war 2.

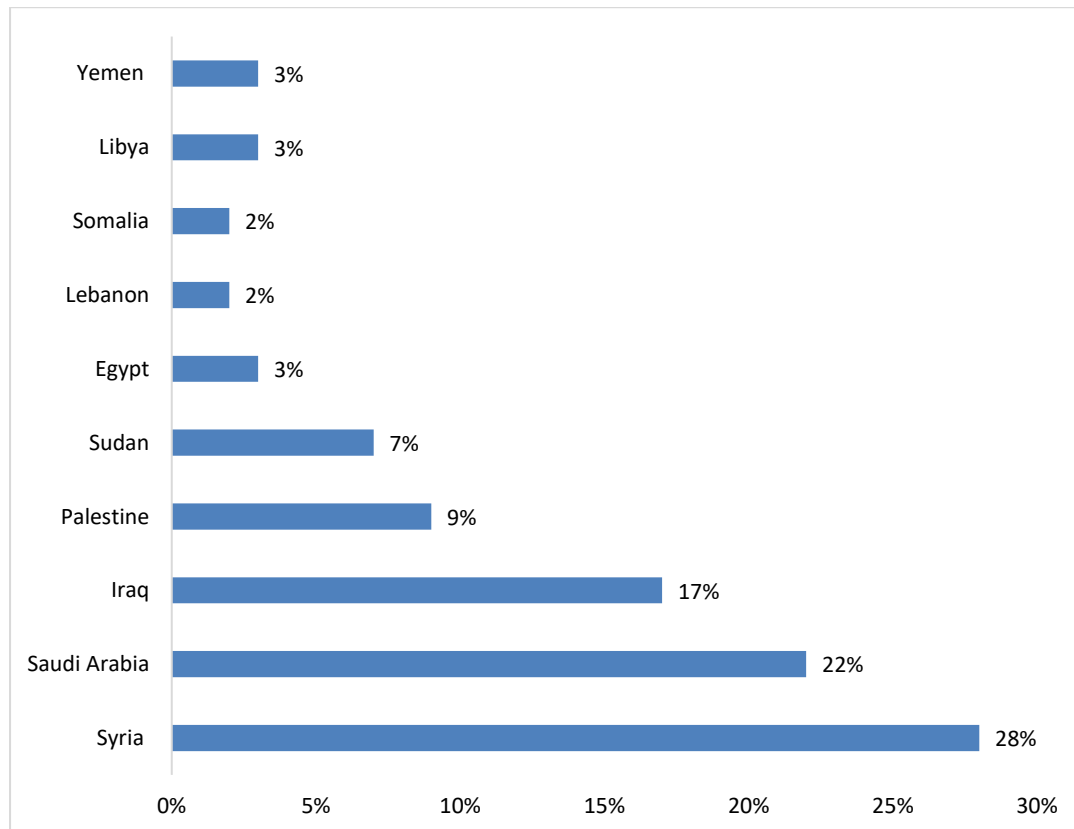
Likewise, Palestine (with score of $n=5$) was mentioned in several occasions during the show. This can be attributed to Palestine's long history of conflict with Israeli and the involvement of the United States in the peace operations in the region, which makes Palestine an important part of the American foreign policy.

In addition, Trump's actions actually accelerated the tension between both sides by announcing Jerusalem as the capital of Israel, so it was comprehensible that it was mentioned several times on the show.

Sudan ($n=4$), on the other hand, with its revolution and the overthrowing of its dictator, was mentioned several times on the show, while Egypt along with Yemen and Libya was mentioned only two times. Finally, Somalia and Lebanon were mentioned only once each.

On the other hand, the variable of N/A used to refer to jokes that mentioned Muslims or the Middle East in general without specifying an exact Arab country. The frequency of that variable was $N=10$. In addition, ISIS was mentioned $N=12$, which is considered relatively high, as the Islamic state has been responsible for many terroristic acts around the world in recent years, and the United States has been fighting it in the Middle East since then.

Figure 8. Arab countries mentioned in *The Daily Show*.



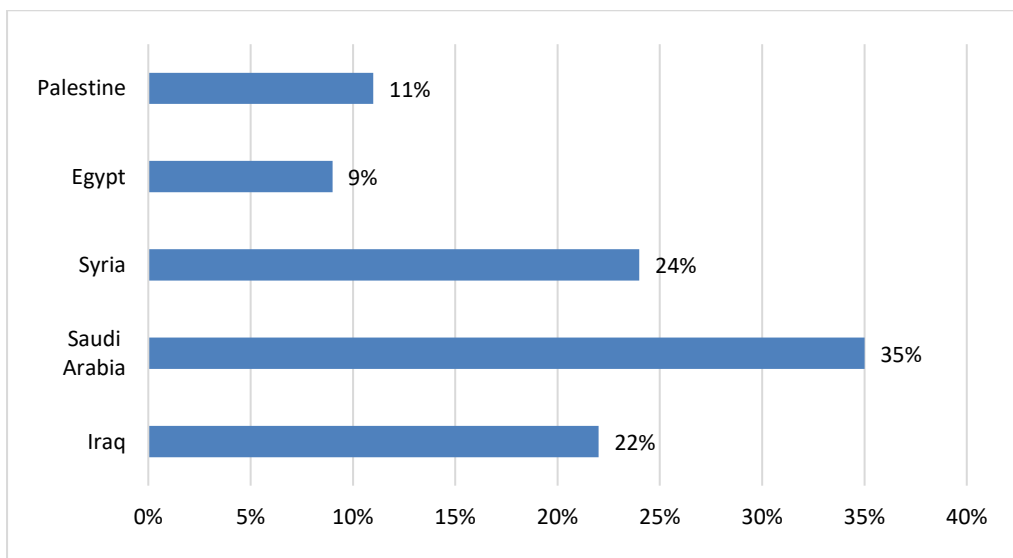
4.1.2 Arab countries mentioned in *The Late Show with Stephen Colbert*

As shown in Figure 9, the sample jokes mentioned specific five Arab countries only. Although there is a great difference between the total numbers of the mentioned Arab countries in both shows, those five countries were actually common between the two shows, in addition to being the most mentioned. Besides, they are all present in the jokes of the show in reference to the United States and its connection with these countries. The total number of Arab countries mentioned in the jokes was $N=46$, while the variable of N/A scored a total of $N=12$, and ISIS was mentioned $N=9$.

The highest mentioned Arab country in the unit of analysis for *The Late Show* was Saudi Arabia (scoring $n=16$). With Trump starting his first trip to the Middle East by visiting it, in addition to all the events and presidential statements following the Khashoggi assassination, along with the military weapons deal with the United States, Saudi Arabia controlled the greatest share of the Arab countries mentioned in this show.

Moreover, Syria ($n=11$) was the second highest mentioned country in the jokes, for the same reasons of *The Daily Show*. Furthermore, Iraq scoring ($n=10$) as the third highest mention was mainly because of its role as a battleground for the military operations between Iran and the United States. Then, Palestine comes next ($n=5$), for also being a part of the long lasting Arab-Israeli conflict in the Middle East. Finally, Egypt was mentioned four times in miscellaneous news stories.

Figure 9. Arab countries mentioned in The Late Show.



4.1.3 Type of joke in *The Daily Show with Trevor Noah*

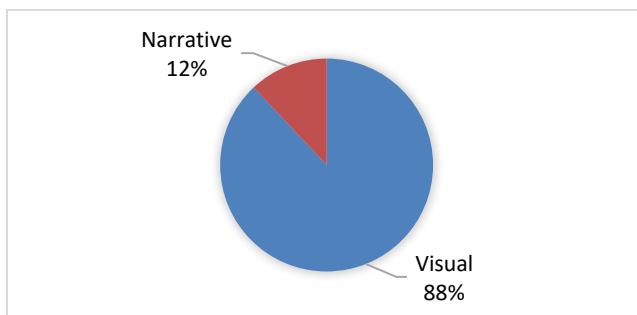
Regarding the type of jokes under investigation, the categories are divided into two types: visual and narrative (Figure 10). The visual joke includes videos or photos, and the narrative joke is a part of a monologue narrated by the host of the show. For *The Daily Show with Trevor Noah*, the total number of visual jokes was $n=53$, and that of the narrative jokes only scored $n=7$.

This result mainly reflects the context and format of *The Daily Show* as a satirical program, as it relies on visual illustrations along with the joke itself to deliver its intended message.

In addition, the total number of visuals used in the sample examined from *The Daily Show* is $N=104$, divided between images ($n=51$) and videos ($n=53$), with a quite similar proportion of both visuals.

As mentioned, visuals are considered a basic element of the program's format. Thus, it is important to note that videos used on the show are usually part of news bulletins, where the host comments on them with a joke criticizing the news or making fun of it. In addition, photos used by the show usually appear next to the host in the frame. Generally, they are not authentic but rather manipulated using Photoshop to criticize people or situations involved in the news story.

Figure 10. Type of Joke in *The Daily Show*.



4.1.4 Type of joke in *The Late Show with Stephen Colbert*

Regarding the sample jokes under investigation, the total number of narrative jokes did not show a significant statistical difference from that of the visual jokes in this show, as narrative jokes scored $n=29$ while visual jokes scored $n=27$. Unlike *The Daily Show*, the format of this show relies on a twelve-to-fifteen-minute monologue delivered by the host of the show.

Usually, it includes several jokes within the same monologue divided between narrative jokes and jokes commenting on news headlines or news bulletins.

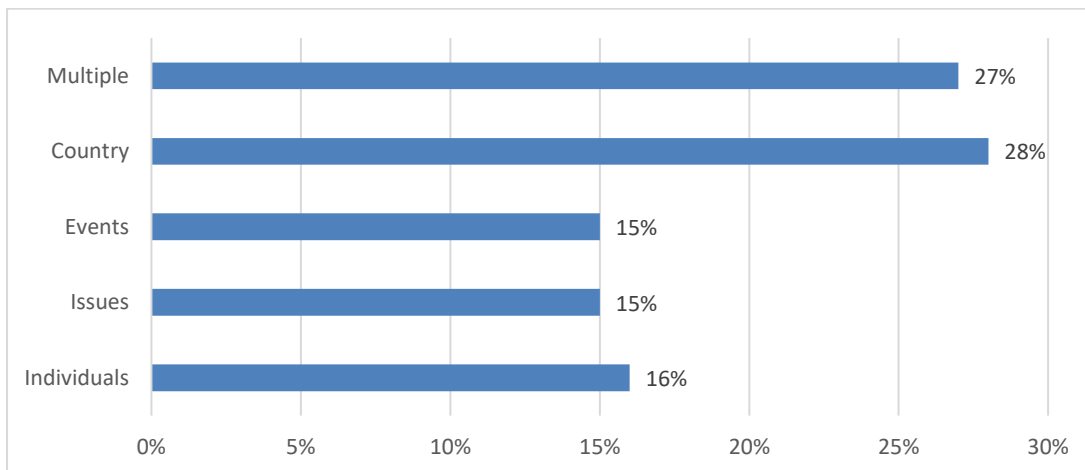
Similarly, there was no significant difference in the total number of different types of visual illustrations of the show, as images scored $n=19$, being mostly images of public figures or politicians criticized by the jokes, while videos scored $n= 17$, being usually parts of bulletin news commented on and criticized by the host.

4.1.5 Focus of joke in *The Daily Show with Trevor Noah*

As shown in Figure 11, findings from the sample of *The Daily Show with Trevor Noah* jokes illustrated several variables as the focus of the joke. Statistically, the highest mentioned focus was the country ($n=47$). This finding is related to the sample selection as the sample was purposively selected to meet specific characteristics. One of them was whether the joke is mentioning Arab countries; as a result, the focus of the jokes was mainly on Arab countries.

In addition, multiple foci scored $n=46$ as most of the jokes tackled several aspects as their focus. These multiple foci included the same joke focusing on the country itself along with a specific individual or an issue in the context of the joke. Similarly, “individuals” (scoring $n=27$) was mentioned as the focus of the joke several times, mainly because most jokes were focused on criticizing President Trump or any public figure and making fun of their actions or speeches. On the other hand, statistically, the variables of issues and events as the focus of the joke scored equally ($n=25$). In other words, the sample jokes included variety of issues and events related to Arabs, being the focus of criticism. These issues and events were mainly focused on political and war related topics. These findings indicate diversity in the content of the jokes in *The Daily Show*.

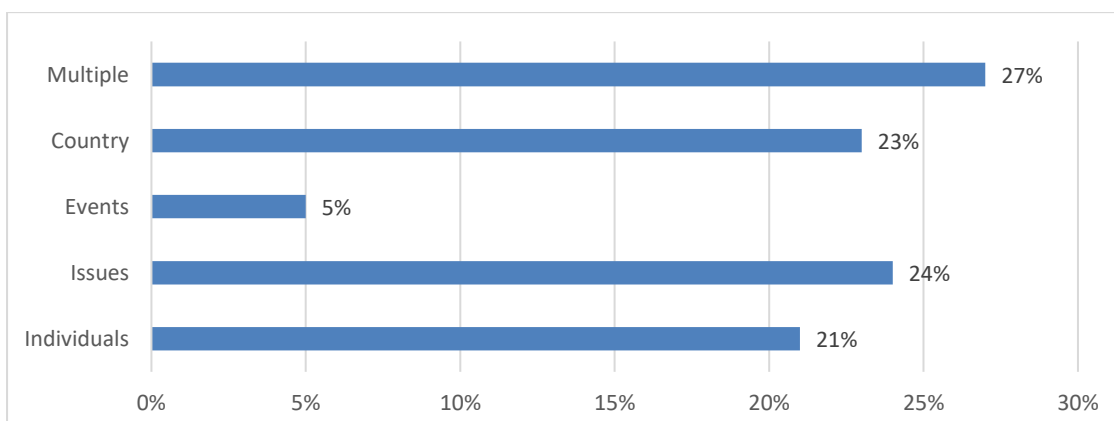
Figure 11. Focus of the joke in *The Daily Show*.



4.1.6 Focus of joke in *The Late Show with Stephen Colbert*

As per the statistical analysis of the sample jokes, the findings indicate that the multiple-focus joke variable was the highest mentioned in this category (Figure 12). Multiple foci scored $n=51$, which indicates that most of the jokes consisted of different aspects as their focus. In addition, the second highest focus of the jokes was the issue with score $n=47$, as the host of the show relies in his monologues on criticizing several issues within the same area in his jokes. These issues were mainly covering President Trump’s public speeches or tweets in addition to his actions and decisions. Similarly, the variable of the country as the focus of the jokes scored $n=45$. As mentioned earlier, focusing on a specific country to joke about is part of the criteria of the sampling process, where most of jokes relied on mentioning a specific country as part of the humorous content. “Individuals” was another variable mentioned excessively as the focus of the jokes, scoring $n=40$. Finally, “events” as a focus of the jokes did not have a statistical significance as it only scored $n=9$.

Figure 12. Focus of the joke in *The Late Show*.



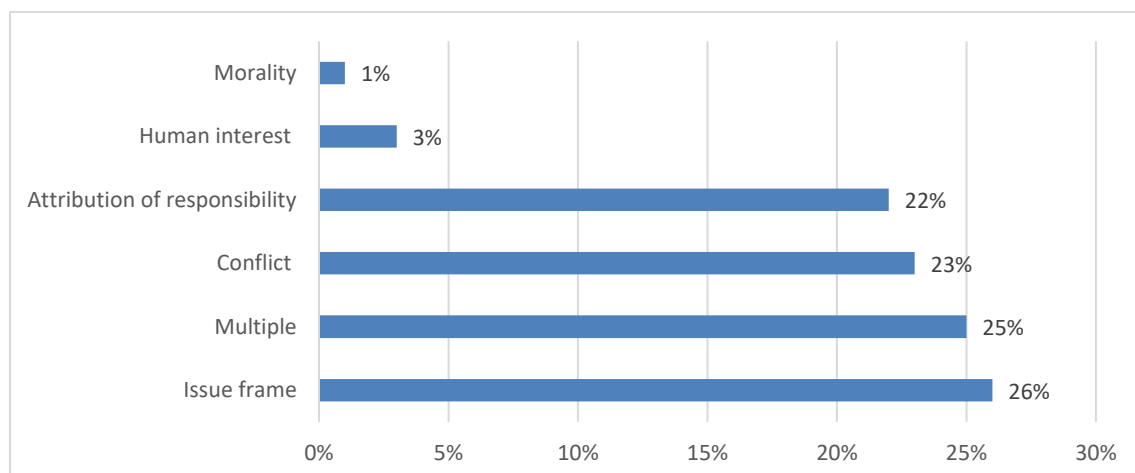
4.1.7 Frames used in *The Daily Show with Trevor Noah*

According to the statistical analysis, the issue frame was the highest used frame ($n=48$) (Figure 13). According to Brewer and Marquardt (2007), it is a common practice in infotainment to use the issue frame, by focusing on a specific topic mentioned in the news and reintroduce it using a humorous treatment. Hence, it was reasonable for *The Daily Show* jokes to follow the same practice and use the issue frame frequently.

In addition, most of the jokes under investigation relied on using different frames for the same joke; that is why the variable of multiple frames has the second highest score ($n=47$). The conflict frame ($n=44$) was also used excessively within the sample under investigation, mainly because of the geopolitical context of topics tackled in the jokes. Since the Middle East has been always a hotspot and battleground for several wars, involving the United States, for years, many of the jokes focused on the conflict going on in the Middle East and framed it within the humorous context of the joke. The frame of attribution of responsibility scored $n= 42$. The results showed that most of the jokes under investigation attribute the responsibility of any issue to a person or a country and criticize them accordingly. On the other hand, the human-interest frame scored only $n=6$, mainly because most of the issues related to Arabs were covering the conflict in the Middle East and the satire shows rely on hard news to create their jokes; hence, most news stories selected by *The Daily Show* did not mention many human-interest stories.

Finally, some other commonly used frames in the news media did not have any statistical significant results in this category, where the morality frame was mentioned once and the economic frame was never mentioned in the sample jokes under examination.

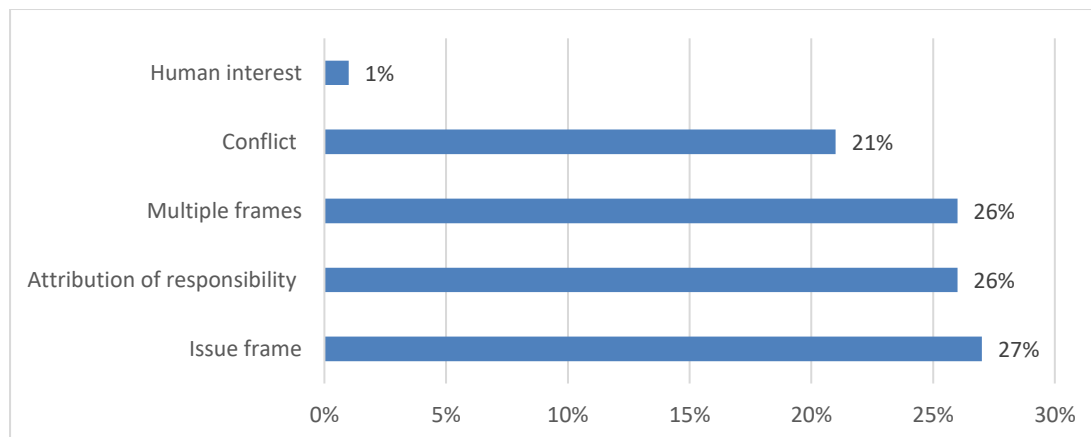
Figure 13. Frames used in *The Daily Show*.



4.1.8 Frames used in *The Late Show with Stephen Colbert*

The issue frame, just like *The Daily Show*, was the highest frame used in *The Late Show* ($n=54$), which reflects the same notion mentioned earlier, that infotainment programs tend to focus on the issue frame as the most common frame in their jokes (Figure 14). Attribution of responsibility frame scored the second highest ($n=51$), as most of the jokes relied on presenting the issue and relating its cause or solution to the responsibility of the American government, President Trump. Similarly, the variable of multiple frames, where the joke uses more than one apparent frame to deliver its intended message, scored $n=51$. On the other hand, the frame of conflict scored $n=42$, as the jokes in *The Late Show* did not focus frequently on the conflicts going on in the Middle East; instead, the jokes tackled the topics from a different perspective and focus on other frames. Finally, the human interest was used only once, and the morality frame along with the economic frame was never used, which provides an insight into the agenda and general treatment for the issues related to Arabs in *The Late Show*.

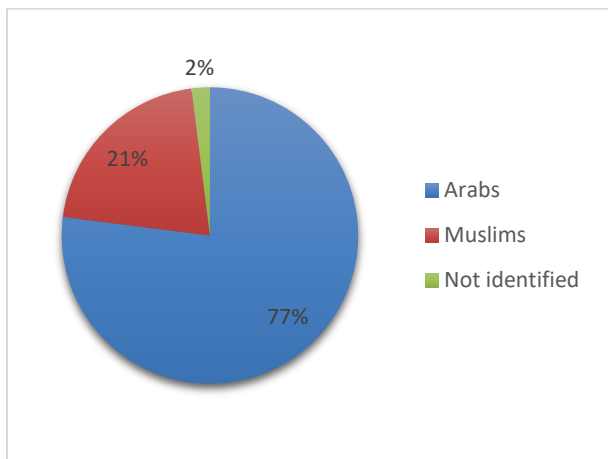
Figure 14. Frames used in *The Late Show*.



4.1.9 Character focus of joke in *The Daily Show with Trevor Noah*

The character focus of the jokes under examination was dominated by Arabs ($n=47$), mainly because the sampling procedure relied on selecting jokes mentioning Arabs or Muslims (Figure 15). Consequently, the Arabs mentions dominated the jokes more than the Muslims mentions which scored only $n=13$. On the other hand, some jokes mentioned Middle Eastern countries in general without identifying a specific character focus; those jokes were characterized under the variable “not identified” which was only mentioned once in *The Daily Show*. Accordingly, we can comprehend that all the jokes of the mentioned show highlights the main characters involved in the issue and differentiate between Arabs and Muslims as two separate groups.

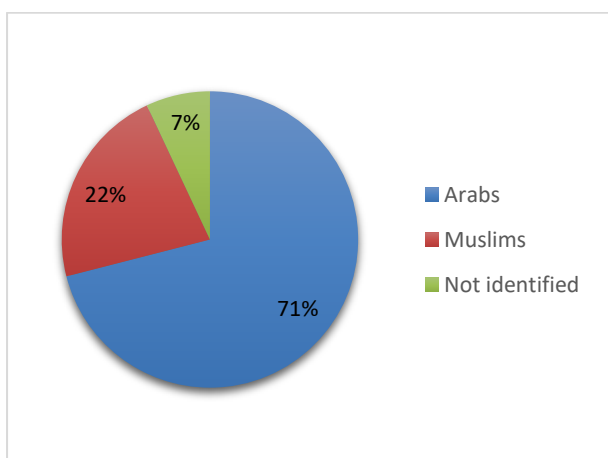
Figure 15. Character focus in *The Daily Show*.



4.1.10 Character focus of joke in *The Late Show with Stephen Colbert*

Regarding the variable of the character focus in the joke (Figure 16), just like *The Daily Show*, Arabs as the character focus in the jokes also dominated the sample jokes ($n=42$), while Muslims as the character focus of the jokes scored only $n=13$. Jokes that did not identify a specific character as the focus only scored $n=4$. This statistical difference is a reflection of the sampling technique, which relied on the purposive selection of jokes that focus on Arabs or Muslims. However, regarding the percentage of the unidentified characters, these jokes mainly relied on mentioning the Middle Eastern countries in general without identifying a specific character. One notable observation is that the jokes actually identified Arabs and Muslims as two separate groups, with clearly mentioning that this character is a Muslim or clearly referring to the person with his/her Arab nationality.

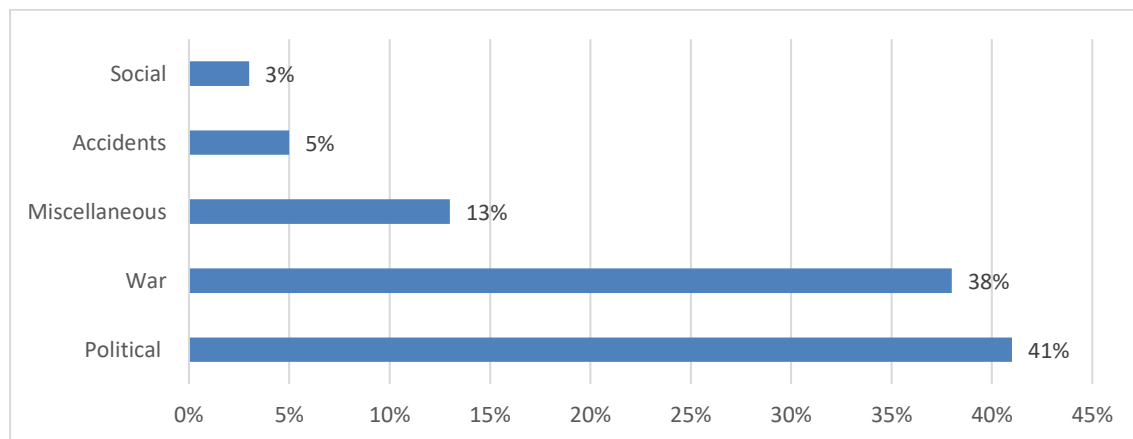
Figure 16. Character focus in *The Late Show*.



4.1.11 Topics related to Arabs in *The Daily Show with Trevor Noah*

As shown in Figure 17, the variable of political topics in the category of topics related to Arabs dominated the sample jokes ($n=25$). Taking into consideration the fact that this is political satire show, this is a reasonable result, as the prime focus of any political satire show will always be politics. Since the Middle East has been always a hotspot and a war zone for several years now, the war related topics were the second highest mentioned variable in the show ($n=23$). On the other hand, topics which were identified as miscellaneous scored $n=8$, which strengthens the diversification of context in *The Daily Show*. In addition, the variable of accidents related topics scored $n=3$. These were jokes mainly covering the assassination of Jamal Khashoggi, a Saudi journalist, and how the United States reacted towards this issue. Moreover, the variable of social topics related to Arabs scored only $n=2$. On the other hand, economic topics related to the Arabs were never mentioned in the sample jokes.

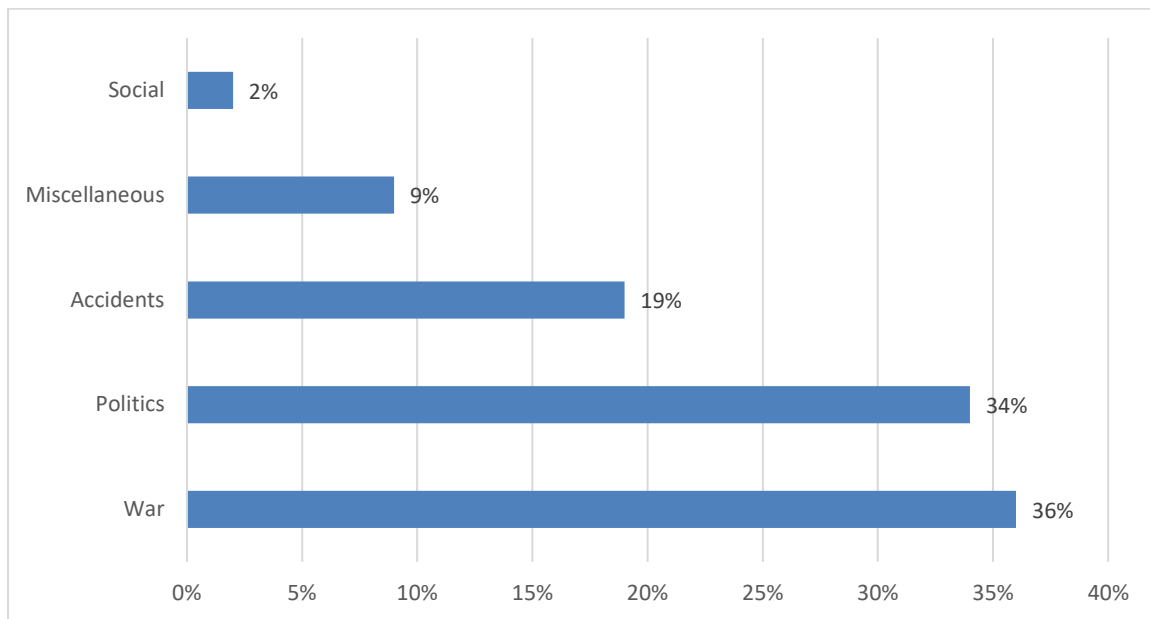
Figure 17. Topics related to Arabs in *The Daily Show*.



4.1.12 Topics related to Arabs in *The Late Show with Stephen Colbert*

Regarding the topics related to Arabs, as shown in Figure 18, war topics dominated the sample jokes ($n=21$). In addition, political topics were also mentioned frequently with score $n=20$. As mentioned earlier, politics and war topics are the primary focus of news in the world; consequently, political satire shows relied on these topics as their main theme for criticizing and mocking. Moreover, when it comes to Arab countries, these topics were the highlight of most Arab related jokes. On the other hand, accidents scored $n=11$, focusing mainly on the accident of Jamal Khashoggi assassination. Furthermore, miscellaneous topics scored $n=5$. Finally, social issues were only mentioned once, while economic topics were never mentioned in the sample jokes.

Figure 18. Topics related to Arabs in *The Late Show*

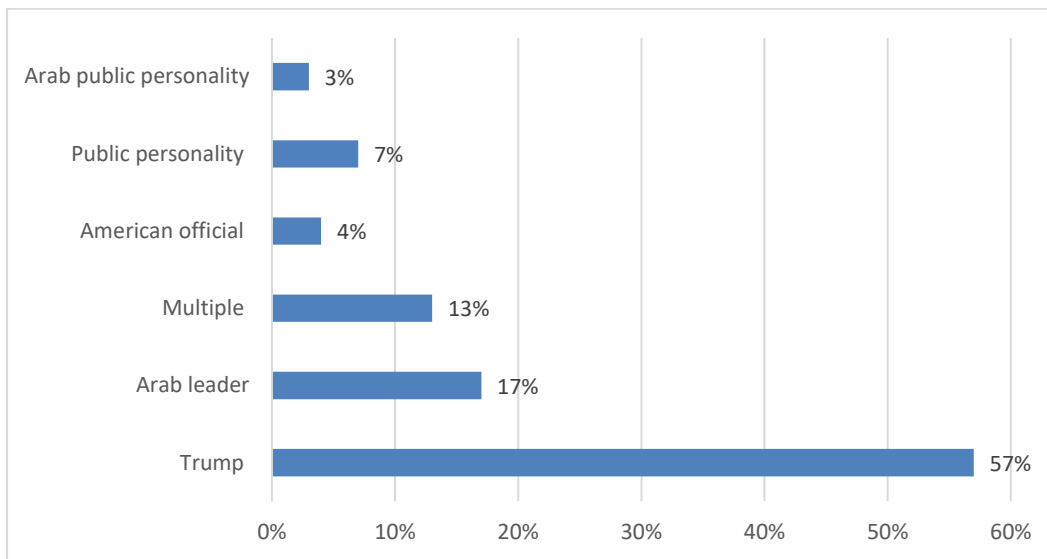


4.1.13 Individuals related to Arabs in *The Daily Show with Trevor Noah*

According to the statistical analysis, President Trump was the highest mentioned individual related to Arabs in the sample jokes ($n=43$) (Figure 19). This variable showed a great statistical difference from other variables. Being the head of state and responsible for presenting the United States' foreign policy all over the world, President Trump dominated most of the jokes in the sample under investigation. In addition, a vast number of jokes were focused on mocking President Trump's decisions, speeches, tweets, and personal characteristics as well. Furthermore, the variable of Arab leader scored $n=13$ as the second highest mentioned individual related to Arabs. Besides President Trump, Arab leaders were also one of the key elements of humor in several jokes related to Arabs. In addition, multiple individuals mentioned in the joke scored $n=10$. This is a result of numerous jokes relying on multiple characters as the focus of their humorous message.

In addition, the variable of public personality scored $n=5$, while American government official scored $n=3$. Moreover, Arab public personality scored $n=2$, with Jamal Khashoggi's case being the focus of several jokes in *The Daily Show*. On the other hand, there were zero mentions of Arab government officials in the sample jokes.

Figure 19. Individuals related to Arabs in *The Daily Show*.

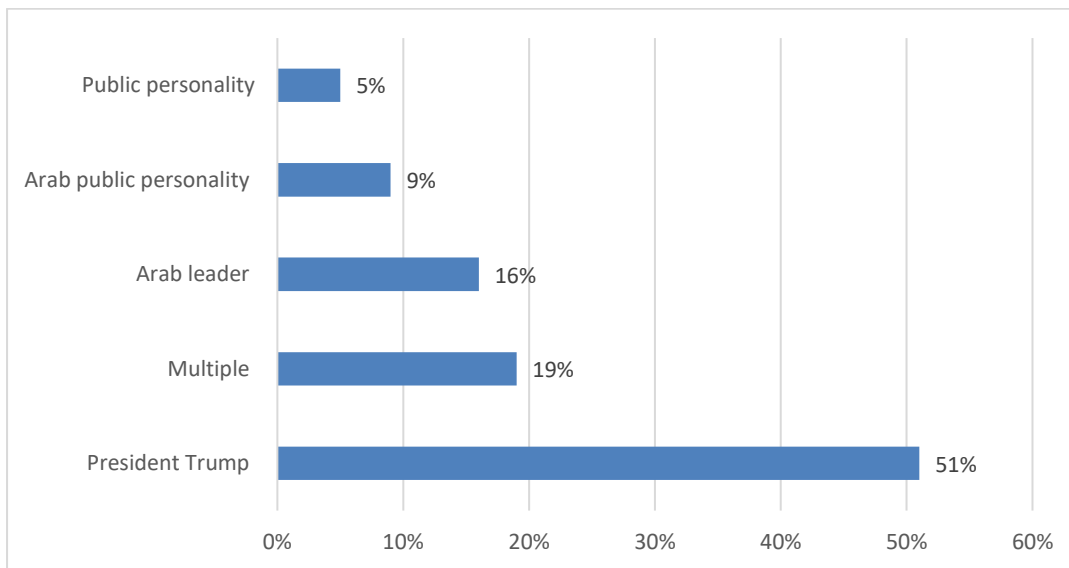


4.1.14 Individuals related to Arabs in *The Late Show with Stephen Colbert*

As shown in Figure 20, just like *The Daily Show*, Trump was the focus of almost all jokes related to Arabs in *The Late Show*. Accordingly, the variable of President Trump is the highest mentioned individual related to Arabs in the sample jokes ($n=44$). Moreover, the variable of multiple individuals mentioned in the joke scored the second highest ($n=16$) as *The Late Show* relied on jokes diversifying several individuals in jokes mentioning Arabs.

In addition, the variable of Arab leader scored $n=14$. Criticizing Arab leaders was the focus of quite a few jokes in the sample under investigation. Similarly, bringing up some Arab public personalities in the context was the key emphasis in many jokes, specifically, in the jokes about the Khashoggi case, which was mentioned several times in the show. Besides, the variable of Arab public personality scored $n=8$, and public personality scored $n=4$. On the other hand, there were zero mentions of Arab government officials and American government officials in the sample jokes.

Figure 20. Individuals related to Arabs in *The Late Show*.

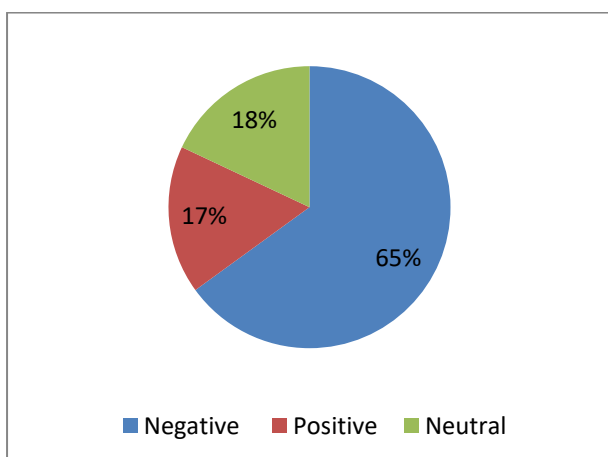


4.1.15 Tone of joke in *The Daily Show with Trevor Noah*

Regarding *The Daily Show with Trevor Noah*, the negative tone dominated the jokes ($n=39$) (Figure 21). As per the coding scheme of this research, a negative tone joke is the one criticizing and mocking the American policies or actions; thus, the majority of the jokes used the negative tone to make fun of the president and his political performance. On the other hand, the neutral tone of the jokes scored higher ($n=11$) than the positive tone ($n=10$).

This result indicates that this show presents jokes related to Arabs or Muslims from a neutral perspective regarding some incidents; for example, in the issue concerning the conflict between the Palestinians and the Israelis on the city of Jerusalem, and the United States announcing it as the Israeli capital, the tone of the joke was neutral.

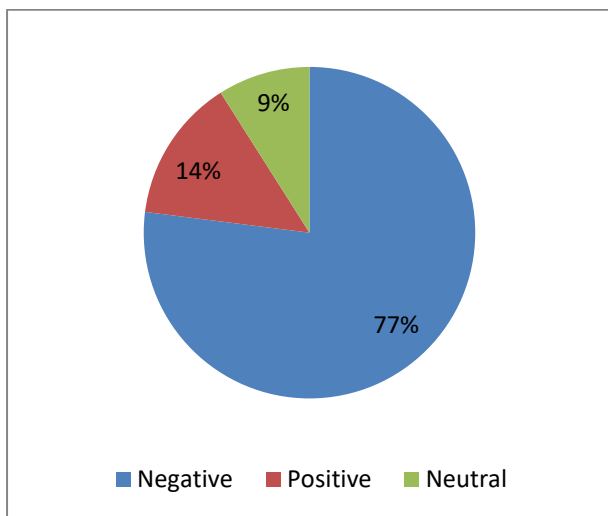
Figure 21. Tone of the joke in *The Daily Show*.



4.1.16 Tone of joke in *The Late Show with Stephen Colbert*

As shown in Figure 22, the majority of the sample jokes relied on the negative tone which scored $n=44$, while the positive jokes scored $n=8$. On the other hand, the neutral tone in the jokes only scored $n=5$. This result provides an indication about the approach of the show concerning issues related to Arabs and Muslims. Although it is criticizing the American polices, politicians, and public figures, the show is also mocking Arabs and Arab countries within its context and did not use a neutral tone in the jokes that often.

Figure 22. Tone of the joke in *The Late Show*.



4.2 Quantitative Comparative Analysis

This section displays the comparative analysis applied to the quantitative data gathered from the sample jokes in both shows, where each variable has been statistically examined across the two satire programs.

4.2.1 Arab countries mentioned in both shows

As for the analysis of this variable, a cross tabulation analysis was conducted to measure the difference between both shows with regard to the Arab countries mentioned in the jokes; see Figure 23.

Regarding Saudi Arabia, which was mentioned several times in the jokes examined, the analysis exhibited a statistical difference between both shows, as it scored higher ($n=16$) in

The Late Show than in *The Daily Show* ($n=13$). On the other hand, Syria scored higher in *The Daily Show* ($n=16$) than in *The Late Show* ($n=11$).

Both countries were the highest mentioned in the shows under investigation, although there are some statistical differences in the number of jokes mentioning them across the two shows.

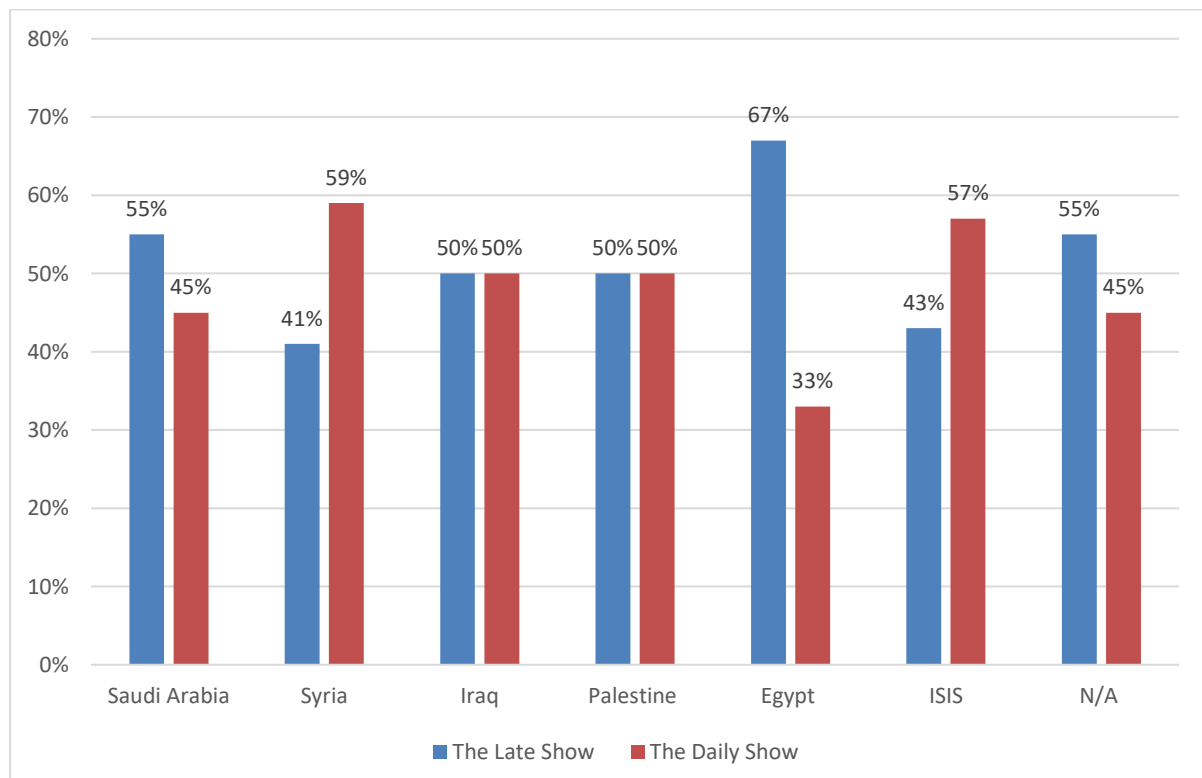
On the other hand, Palestine scored $n=5$ in both shows, and Iraq ($n=10$) scored equally in both shows as well, which indicates a contextual agreement of both shows in topics regarding both countries.

With respect to Egypt, although it did not score much in both shows, it scored higher in *The Daily Show* than in *The Late Show* in this category, with a statistical difference between both shows, as it was mentioned in *The Late Show* ($n=4$) twice as much as the number of mentions in *The Daily Show* ($n=2$).

As for ISIS, a statistical difference between both shows in mentioning the Islamic state was found, as it scored higher in *The Daily Show* in this category ($n=12$) than in *The Late Show* ($n=9$).

Finally, regarding the variable N/A, which indicates not mentioning a specific Arab country or Muslims, it scored higher in *The Late Show* ($n=12$) than in *The Daily Show* ($n=10$).

Figure 23. Arab countries mentioned in both shows.



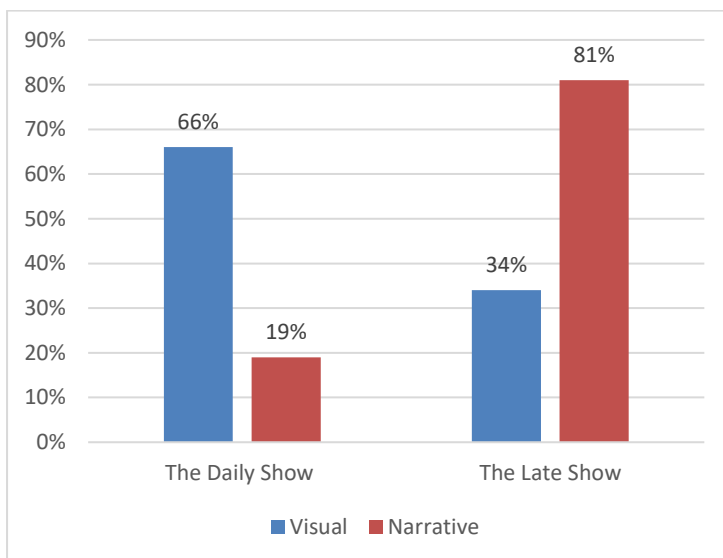
4.2.2 The type of joke in both shows

As shown in Figure 24, a significant statistical difference was found between the two shows when it comes to comparing the visual and narrative jokes. Statistically, *The Daily Show* scored higher in the visual jokes ($n=53$), while *The Late Show* scored only $n=27$.

On the other hand, *The Late Show* managed to score higher in the narrative jokes ($n=29$) than *The Daily Show* ($n=7$).

The mentioned significant difference is a clear reflection of the variance in the format of both shows, as each of the shows relies on a specific format to deliver the satirical message. Therefore, while Trevor Noah relied on commenting on the visuals to deliver his jokes, Stephen Colbert relied on his solo narrative skills, along with facial expressions and body gestures through which he made his jokes.

Figure 24. Type of joke in both shows.



4.2.3 The focus of joke in both shows

As per the statistical analysis of the sample jokes in both shows, when analyzing the variable of country as the main focus of the joke, *The Daily Show* ($n=47$) had a significant difference from *The Late Show* ($n=45$), which indicates that, although the variable of country as the focus of the joke was mentioned excessively in both shows, *The Daily Show* focused more on the Arab countries and the jokes highlighted them as part of the issue or event they are tackling (Figure 25).

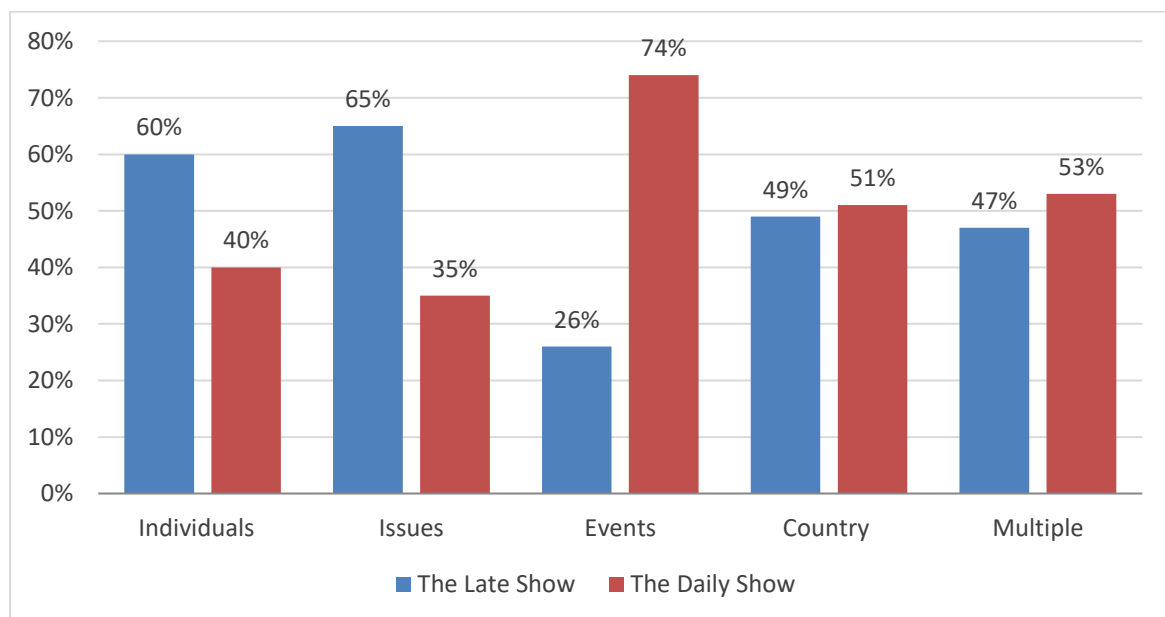
Regarding the variable of individuals as the focus of the jokes, *The Late Show* scored higher ($n=40$) than *The Daily Show* ($n=27$). As mentioned earlier, mocking the president and politicians or public figures is the core of any political satire program, and in that case, *The Late Show* focused on criticizing individuals to create humorous content.

On the other hand, issues as a variable in this category showed a statistical difference between both shows, as *The Late Show* scored higher ($n=47$) than *The Daily Show* ($n=25$). Unlike *The Daily Show*, *The Late Show* focused mainly on the issues in the content of the jokes, rather than focusing on events or countries, mainly because the host was not just making fun of a country or a person per se, but rather focused on the whole issue with all its aspects.

Moreover, the variable of events as the focus of the joke showed a significant difference between both shows. *The Late Show* scored only $n=9$, while *The Daily Show* scored $n=25$. This is due to the fact that *The Late Show* did not focus much on explicit events, unlike *The Daily Show* which focused several times on specific events in the context of its jokes.

Regarding the multiple-focus variable, *The Late Show* scored $n=46$ while *The Daily Show* scored higher ($n=51$).

Figure 25. Focus of the joke in both shows.



4.2.4 Frames used in both shows

When analyzing the statistical differences in the frames used in *The Late Show* and *The Daily Show*, as mentioned earlier, it was found that the issue frame was the most used one in both shows (Figure 26). However, compared to *The Daily Show* ($n=48$), *The Late Show* scored higher ($n=54$).

Apart from the statistical difference, both shows used the issue frame as the main one in presenting the treatment of the show. Unlike regular news stories, satire shows choose a specific aspect of issue and highlight it by making people laugh at this topic.

Similarly, the attribution of responsibility frame scored also higher in *The Late Show* ($n=51$) compared to *The Daily Show* ($n=42$). The jokes in *The Late Show* focused on finding someone to blame, criticize, or make fun of, rather than focusing solely on the issue itself.

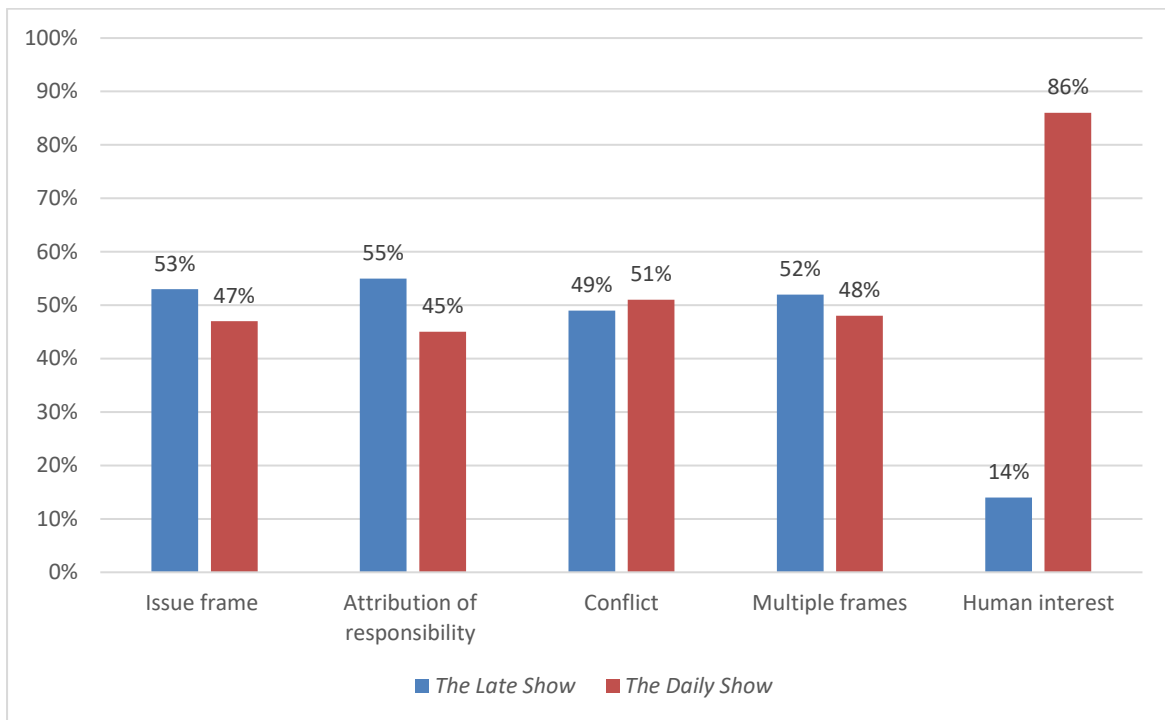
On the other hand, the conflict frame scored higher in *The Daily Show* ($n=44$) than in *The Late Show* ($n=42$). This statistical difference is apparent since *The Daily Show*'s treatment of jokes focused more on the conflict going on in the Arab world.

Regarding the multiple frames, *The Late Show* scored higher ($n=51$) than *The Daily Show* ($n=47$). Both shows relied on several frames within the same context, which indicates that the humorous message can be deployed within different contextual schemes.

Meanwhile the human-interest frame was used in *The Daily Show* with a statistical difference of $n=6$, while *The Late Show* scored only $n=1$. Unlike *The Late Show*, the jokes of *The Daily Show* involved some news stories that covered variety of topics, not only focusing on political issues and news about war, but also covering some topics that focus on human-interest stories related to Arabs.

It is also important to note that the morality frame was never used in *The Late Show* while the economic frame was never used in both shows, which provides us with an understanding of the media agenda of both shows and how they selected a specific treatment for the issues related to Arabs, where most of the frames used were related to conflict and attribution of responsibility.

Figure 26. Frames used in both shows.



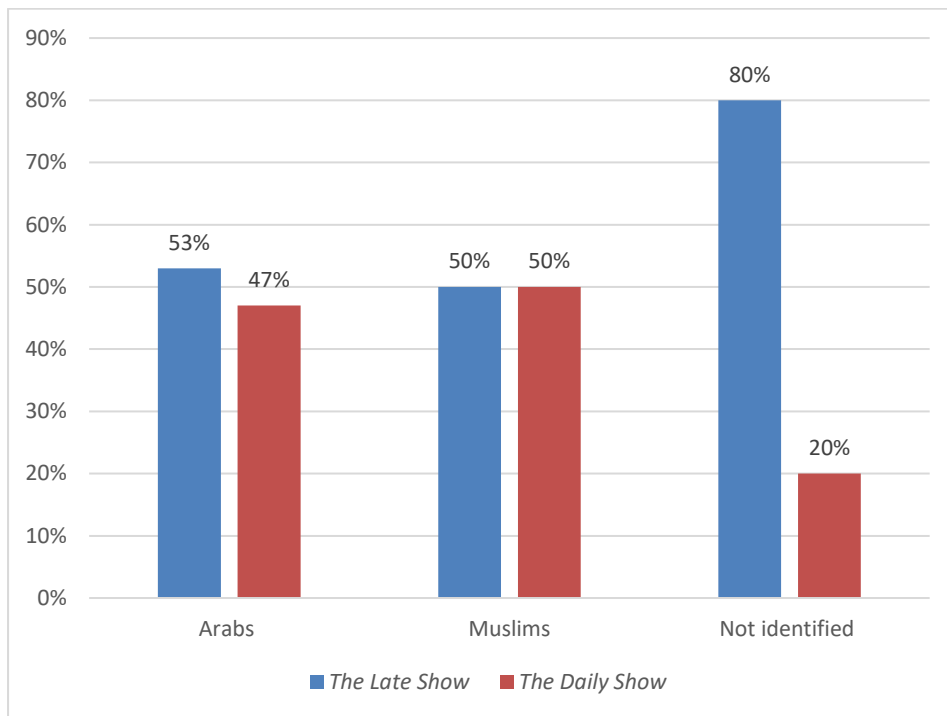
4.2.5 The character focus of joke in both shows

Regarding the variable of Arabs, statistically, the scores of both shows were close (Figure 27) with *The Late Show* slightly higher ($n=47$) than *The Daily Show* ($n=42$). As mentioned earlier, this is a result of the sample selection; the jokes were mainly selected because they mentioned Arab or Middle Eastern countries.

On the other hand, the variable of Muslims as the character focus of the joke did not show any statistically significant difference between the two shows, as both scored $n=13$, with 50% each. These results emphasize that both shows deal with Arabs and Muslims as two separate groups.

With respect to the variable where the focus of the joke was not identified, whether Arabs or Muslims, the analysis shows a statistically significant difference between the two shows, as *The Late Show* scored higher ($n=4$) than *The Daily Show* ($n=1$). Several jokes in *The Late Show* mentioned Middle Eastern countries and focused on neither a specific Arab country nor Muslims.

Figure 27. Character focus of the joke in both shows.



4.2.6 The topics related to Arabs in both shows

Regarding the statistical analysis for the topics related to Arabs in both shows, as mentioned earlier, war and politics related topics dominated both shows compared to other variables. It is worth noting that the United States was always a part of the mentioned topics, as the United States has been a key player in most of the wars going on in the Middle East recently.

Moreover, the United States possesses several powerful allies in the Arab countries, so the United States' involvement in the Middle East is an essential part of the American foreign policy. Consequently, war and politics were the two highest mentioned topics related to Arabs in the sample jokes.

As shown in Figure 28, statistically, regarding the war related topics, *The Daily Show* scored slightly higher in this category ($n=23$) in terms of total mentions than *The Late Show* scored $n=21$. Similarly, politics related topics were mentioned more in *The Daily Show* ($n=25$) than in *The Late Show* ($n=20$).

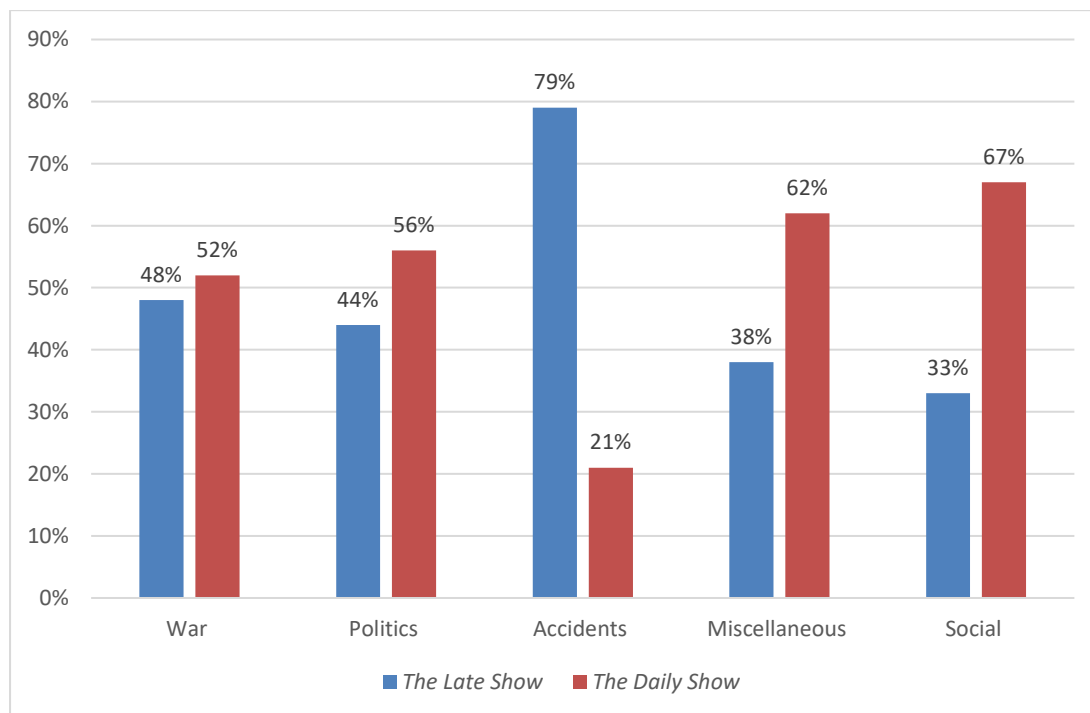
Furthermore, the variable of accidents showed a statically significant difference between the two shows, as it scored higher in *The Late Show* ($n=11$) than in *The Daily Show* ($n=3$). This result indicated that *The Late Show* focused more on the Jamal Khashoggi murder and mentioned it in the jokes of the show considerably more.

On the contrary, regarding the miscellaneous topics, *The Daily Show* exhibited a more statistically significant difference ($n=8$) than *The Late Show* ($n=5$). This result emphasizes that *The Daily Show* tackled variety of issues along with the political and war topics and showed more diversity in the topics than *The Late Show*.

Furthermore, although the social topics were not mentioned excessively in the sample jokes, *The Daily Show* scored $n=3$, while they were mentioned only once in *The Late Show*.

Finally, economic topics were never mentioned in the sample jokes under investigation in both shows. This result reveals some important insights about the type of topics selected in both shows, as news about the economic status of Arab countries was never the focus of any of the jokes related to Arabs.

Figure 28. Topics related to Arabs in both shows.



4.2.7 The individuals related to Arabs in both shows

Statistically, President Trump was the highest mentioned individual related to Arabs in both shows (Figure 29); nonetheless, this variable did not show a significant difference between both shows, as it scored $n=44$ in *The Late Show*, while it scored $n=43$ in *The Daily Show*.

As mentioned earlier, Trump was considered a very rich subject for criticism and mockery in both shows. Apart from disparaging him as a political leader and criticizing most of his actions

and decisions, both hosts frequently impersonated Trump on their shows on a regular basis, making fun of his voice, his language structure, and his body gestures in all of his speeches.

Similarly, Arab leaders were mentioned excessively in both shows as well, with *The Late Show* scoring higher ($n=14$) than *The Daily Show* ($n=13$). Typically, when mentioning Arab countries, it is normal to mention Arab leaders representing those countries.

However, one Arab leader had the greatest share of mentions in the sample jokes in both shows, Prince Mohammed bin Salman, the crown prince of Saudi Arabia and the de facto ruler of the country.

This is mainly because of his connection with the Jamal Khashoggi assassination, an accident that was tackled several times in both shows.

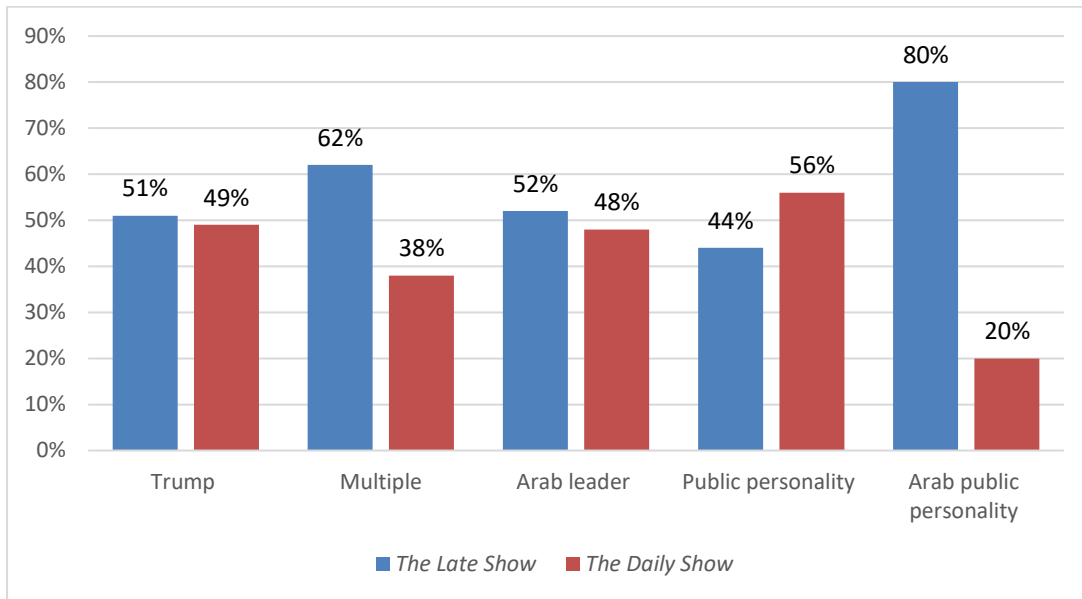
Moreover, the variable of multiple individuals related to Arabs in the same joke exhibited a significant difference between both shows, with *The Late Show* scoring higher ($n=16$) than *The Daily Show* ($n=10$).

Regarding the variable of public personalities related to Arabs, *The Daily Show* scored higher with $n=5$, while *The Late Show* scored $n=4$. On the other hand, regarding the variable of Arab public personalities, *The Late Show* exhibited a significant difference by scoring $n=8$, while *The Daily Show* scored $n=2$.

Within the sample jokes in both shows, the only Arab public figure mentioned was Jamal Khashoggi, the Saudi journalist and Washington post columnist who was assassinated in Turkey by what is known to be an operation led by the Saudi government in 2018.

Finally, in a notable observation, the variable of American government official was found three times in *The Daily Show*, while it was never found in *The Late Show*. In addition, Arab government officials were never mentioned in both shows in the sample jokes under investigation.

Figure 29. Individuals related to Arabs in both shows.



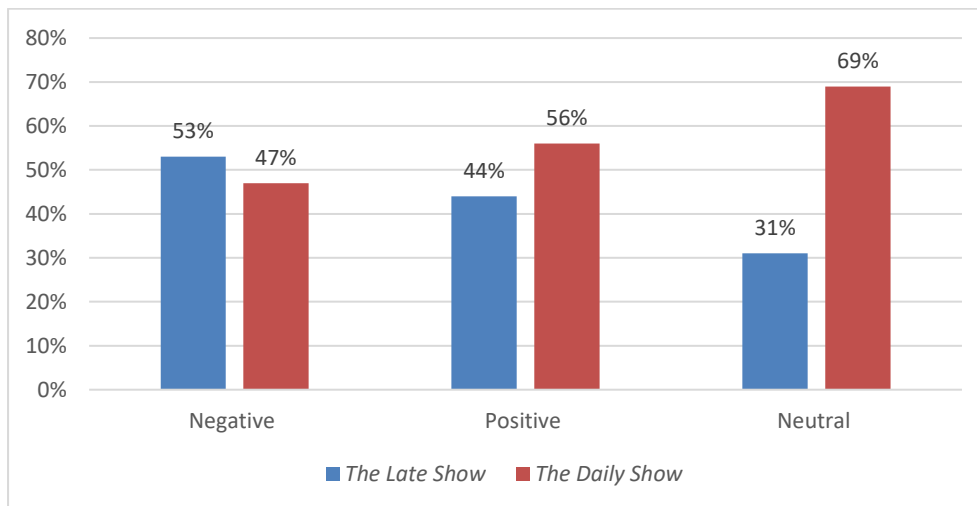
4.2.8 The tone of joke in both shows

As shown in Figure 30, statistically, even though the negative tone in the jokes dominated both shows, *The Late Show* scored higher in the variable of the negative tone ($n=44$) than *The Daily Show* ($n=39$). Although the percentages in both shows are close, *The Late Show* still excessively relied on criticizing the American policy in the context of the show rather than displaying a neutral tone, which explains the next result. A significant difference was found in the jokes with neutral tone in both shows, as *The Daily Show* scored higher ($n=11$) than *The Late Show* ($n=5$).

Even though *The Daily Show* displayed a higher number of jokes in the sample under investigation, the distribution of jokes across different tones was more diversified in *The Daily Show* than in *The Late Show*. In addition, the data showed a statically significant difference in the positive tone of the shows as well, as *The Daily Show* scored $n=10$, while *The Late Show* scored $n=8$. It was noted that the difference between both shows is not very high regarding the positive tone in the jokes.

Both shows displayed criticism and mockery of Arabs in several jokes; nonetheless *The Daily Show* scored higher in the neutral tone, which might indicate that *The Daily Show* can have some neutral perception regarding Arabs if the joke is about a topic that have more than one side.

Figure 30. Tone of the joke in both shows.



4.3 Qualitative Analysis

The researcher carried out a qualitative comparative analysis of the sample using textual analysis (Fairclough, 2003) in addition to using Maslo's Model of Satirical Political Humor (2016). The two frameworks were used to analyze the jokes by applying the model on each joke in order to establish a better understanding of the discourse of the jokes, in addition to identifying the common stereotypes and ideologies adopted in the context of the sample jokes. The discourse of each joke is classified, according to Maslo's model of satirical message, into three components: the seriousness, the humorousness, and the counter-facts of the joke. The classification of each joke under examination, for the qualitative analysis, is exhibited in Appendix (D).

4.3.1 Qualitative comparative analysis

The researcher carried out a qualitative comparative analysis of the sample to analyze the different ideologies and stereotypes embedded in the context of the sample jokes in both shows.

4.3.1.1 Common topics in both shows

Apart from the differences in discourses of both shows under examination and the different treatment of jokes, the two shows shared several topics related to Arabs in their coverage within the timeframe of analysis. The common issues mentioning Arabs or Muslims in both shows are all characterized as political and war related topics. In addition, those topics had an excessive coverage by the news media and were chronologically consistent in both shows and in the regular news coverage as well.

One of the common topics mentioned in the two satirical shows was President Trump's first executive order, also known as the Muslim travel ban. The law proposed by Trump was banning citizens from seven Major Muslim countries from entering the United States even if they have a visa. This executive order faced a lot of condemnation and had several mentions in the two shows mocking and criticizing this unbalanced decision made by Trump.

Similarly, Trump's first trip to the Middle East after his presidency was a common topic mentioned in both shows, as the jokes were making fun of everything in this trip starting from his perception of the Arabs, his speeches, and finally all the activities he participated in during his tour.

Another issue related to the Arab world that was mentioned in both shows was the war in Syria and the fact that Trump was tweeting about it constantly: once when he was attacking the Syrian President Bashar al-Assad for bombing his people with chemical weapons and in another occasion when he was tweeting about threatening to attack the Russian forces in Syria.

Furthermore, by the end of 2019, stories about the end of war in Syria and the withdrawing of the American troops in Syria dominated the news media and consequently the satire shows, where several jokes were criticizing the military withdrawal and how the United States abandoned the Kurdish fighters, who were a trusted ally in this war. Another topic related to the Syrian war that was mentioned in both shows simultaneously was the killing of the ISIS leader al-Baghdadi in Syria, which marked the end of ISIS as prominent threat.

In addition, the Palestinian-Israeli conflict has been a part of the American foreign policy for decades. Accordingly, Trump's announcement of Jerusalem as the capital of Israel and the consequences of that announcement in the Middle East constitute a common topic mentioned in both shows under examination. Similarly, after the announcement of Jared Kushner, Trump's son-in-law, as the White House security advisor and as being responsible for the Palestinian-Israeli conflict, in addition to being responsible for the peace in the Middle East as a whole, several jokes were made in both shows about how incompetent Kushner was, and the jokes were criticizing the fact that peace in the Middle East was and will never be a one man job.

Moreover, the assassination of the Saudi journalist Jamal Khashoggi, who was a columnist for *The Washington Post*, was mentioned in *The Daily Show* and *The Late Show* in more than one episode. The topic was raised with several jokes that involved criticizing the role of the United States in refusing to acknowledge the role of Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman in this incident, as he was accused of the incitement of this assassination.

Additionally, Trump's retweeting anti-Muslim videos on his account faced a massive backlash from both shows criticizing his actions and accusing him of encouraging racism and violence against Muslims.

Another common topic in both shows was the escalating military tension between the United States and Iran that took place on the Iraqi lands especially after the assassination of Qasem Soleimani, an Iranian major general, by an American drone strike. Both shows referred to this incident as a second war in Iraq with all the consequences that followed it.

Finally, by the end of 2020, there were jokes focusing on a new archeological discovery in Egypt where several mummies were discovered. Both shows focused their jokes on how this discovery will be unleashing an ancient curse. In *The Late Show*, Stephen Colbert was begging not to make any more discoveries or open any closed doors, as the world is already suffering from a pandemic that changed the life on earth (in reference to Covid-19). Trevor Noah in *The Daily Show*, on the other hand, was joking about the possibility that digging graves and stealing dead people in the name of archeology might have something to do with the pandemic as well.

4.3.1.2 Stereotypes

One of the commonly perceived stereotypes about Muslims mentioned in the sample was the infamous "Muslims as terrorists" notion; it was present 5 times in the context of jokes related to Muslims and Arabs on *The Daily Show with Trevor Noah*. On the other hand, the jokes used in *The Late Show with Stephen Colbert* did not use this stereotype in their context.

It was noted that most of stereotypes about Muslims as terrorists were mainly implied by President Trump within his speeches, behavior, and even his tweets. *The Daily Show with Trevor Noah* was making fun of or even criticizing Trump for such implication. For instance, in a joke about President Trump's first executive order of the Muslim travel ban, he announced that this act is for protection from terrorism or people who want to hurt the USA. He even mentioned the September 11 example, not wanting it to be repeated, in reference to the fact that Muslims were responsible for those events.

Moreover, in another incident, Trump retweeted anti-Muslims videos posted by a British nationalist extremist accusing Muslims of being violent and terrorists. In that notion, Trevor Noah accused Trump of increasing Islamophobia and hate crimes with his actions, because if the head of the state is spreading these ideas, then everyone else in the country will consider this as a normal thing.

In addition, another common stereotype mentioned in both shows, *The Daily Show with Trevor Noah* and *The Late Show with Stephen Colbert*, is the famous *Arabian Nights* tales. The famous Arabic stories were mentioned four times, twice in each show, in jokes related to Arabs, as a cultural representation for Arabs in several occasions.

For instance, *The Daily Show* had a segment called “Arabian Fights” aired in November 2017, in reference to the conflict in Saudi Arabia between the Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman and his family members.

Then again, in September 2019, this time the joke was referring to the conflict in the Middle East between Iraq and Iran, after Iran allegedly attacked oil tanks in Saudi Arabia.

The Late Show with Stephen Colbert also mentioned the *Arabian Nights* tales several times in reference to the Arabs in his jokes. For instance, there was a joke about Trump’s first visit to Saudi Arabia and sharing a traditional sword dance with the Saudis, and then Colbert joked about the Saudis promising Trump he will meet the Genie from the lamp, in reference to the *Arabian Nights* tales.

In the second time, the tales were mentioned in a joke making fun of Trump mistaking a migrants caravan from South America as having people from the Middle East among them, and the joke continued that the caravan included characters from the *Arabian Nights* tale, like Ali baba and his 40 thieves, Aladdin, Jafar, and the Genie.

Moreover, both shows joked about the notion of Muslim women covering their heads with scarfs with some covering their faces as well. *The Daily Show*, for instance, joked about Trump’s first visit to Saudi Arabia and mistaking women who are dressed in black covering their heads and faces for ninjas. Likewise, *The Late Show* made a similar joke about Trump mistaking any one covering his head for a Muslim woman.

In addition, *The Daily Show* also criticized the British prime minister, who called Muslim women covering their faces as mailboxes. On the other hand, in a joke criticizing a new law in France banning Muslim women from wearing anything that cover their face, the jokes discussed the hypocrisy of this new law, as the French law is now obligating everyone to wear a face mask in public places as a part of the public precautionary measures due to the Covid-19 pandemic, while they are banning any one to cover their face if it was a for a religious reason, which does not make any sense.

Similarly, another common stereotype presented within jokes in both shows was related to how Muslim men have beards. Although it is not considered a real identification of Muslims, it was

used to refer to Muslims, as *The Late Show with Stephen Colbert* joked about how Trump imposed the Muslim travel ban and how he is always afraid of Islam to the extent that beards are now scaring him.

In addition, another joke was about the uprising conflict between the United States and Iran, where Colbert made fun of Trump for mistaking the Iranian president, who have a long beard, for “Muslim wizard”.

Not only were stereotypes related to Muslims, how they look or behave, but also they were reflecting how the American media perceive specific Arab Muslim countries. For instance, several jokes in both shows mentioned how extreme the law in Saudi Arabia is, where people are punished by cutting off their hands or throwing stones on them and also how they are all wealthy sheiks and princes.

In a similar context, Egypt was a subject of several jokes in both shows, with reference to its ancient Egyptian history and how it is famous for being a country of mummies.

In conclusion, the mentioned stereotypes in both shows, according to Maslo’s model, were part of the humorous context of the jokes, and the jokes highlighted these stereotypes, normalized them, and sponsored their promotion as a laughing matter, regardless of the seriousness and counter-facts presented in the jokes.

4.3.1.3 Ideologies

As mentioned earlier, the adoption of ideologies usually carries the connotations that all positive notions are always associated with the in-group of the speaker and all negative traits are attributed to the outgroup trying to attack them, by highlighting their defaults and their negative traits (van Dijk, 2006). Consequently, analyzing the ideologies adopted within the context of the jokes under investigation is based on a qualitative analysis of the results. The in-depth examination of the data highlighted some conceptual implementations in the humorous messages presented by both shows.

One of the first ideologies observed was related to the type of topics about Arabs tackled in the news and, respectively, in the shows; they were mainly political or war related topics. This defines the ideological perspective of these shows regarding Arab countries; the topics related to Arabs were a reflection of the United States foreign policy and the role it has been playing in the Middle East for decades. This notion was clearly reflected as all mentions of Arab countries were related to war fair or politics.

In addition, in order to examine how some Arab related topics were precisely mentioned, highlighted, and framed in both shows, the researcher examined some major events that took place in the Middle East within the timeframe of the analysis and did not find any mentions in both shows, by searching with specific keywords within several news outlets.

One major event is the war going on in Yemen since 2014 between the Houthi armed movement and the local government. The ongoing war involved several Arab countries, led by Saudi Arabia, launching air strikes to fight the Houthi rebels, with logistical and intelligence support of the United States (Council on Foreign Relations, 2020). Although the United States played a notable role in this war, both shows never mentioned it in their jokes throughout the timeframe under investigation.

Similarly, other major events that were covered excessively in the news and did not get any mentions in both shows include people protesting in Iraq against the Iraqi government and the Turkish military invasion in Syria and Libya. In addition, news spread about an Emirate princess who tried to escape from her father, Mohammed bin Rashid, the ruler of Dubai, but she was returned back held captive for a while. Later, the same Arabian leader faced the same scandal yet again, when his wife, princess Haya of Jordan, escaped with her children to London and filed for divorce.

All the mentioned events taking place in the Arab world were ignored by both shows, regardless of their news worthiness or their relevance to the United States, which proves the notion that infotainment programs have a certain agenda and can play a role in making any event invisible and, on the other hand, highlight other events and frame them as top news stories.

However, there were some exceptions; some events were mentioned only on *The Daily Show* and were ignored by *The Late Show*, like the protests in Lebanon and Sudan against the government, and later the Sudanese army stepping in and the Sudanese President Omar al-Bashir being ousted from power.

Finally, according to Williams et al. (2004), analyzing ideologies in humorous context could be conducted through analyzing the tone of the joke, whether it was positive, negative, or neutral. For *The Daily Show*, the negative tone dominated the sample jokes, with the host frequently criticizing and attacking Trump's administration and his policies.

However, a proportion of neutral tone jokes were exhibited within the sample, especially regarding some issues concerning the Palestinian-Israeli conflict and the Muslim travel ban in the United States, where Trump's policies were against Arabs and Muslims.

Accordingly, the ideology of *The Daily Show* revealed some compassion with Arabs and Muslims in several situations, apart from joking and mocking political figures and Arab leaders in other jokes.

In addition, the jokes were not mocking Arabs as an ethnic group precisely; instead, they were criticizing the political situations and misconduct of Arab leaders and politicians in some Arab countries.

On the contrary, *The Late Show* exhibited a rather different ideology when it comes to Arabs. Although the majority of the sample jokes were criticizing American policies, only four neutral tone jokes were mentioned in the sample, as *The Late Show* exhibited neutral tone regarding the Palestinian-Israeli conflict, which was accelerated after some of Trump's policies and decisions.

However, by analyzing the jokes from a cultural perspective other than the American culture, it was found that *The Late Show* was not so neutral after all. Although both shows were making fun of the Arab leaders, the host of *The Late Show* in his narrative monologues displayed nonverbal cues like his voice tone, facial expressions, and body gestures in his jokes about Arabs, which reflects the notion that he is making fun of Arabs as a cultural group.

4.4 Social Media Analysis

4.4.1 Analysis of audience interaction on social media platforms

The data analysis of the social media accounts is displayed as follows:

Regarding the analysis of the Facebook pages of both shows in terms of audience interactivity, the data gathered was measuring the total number of fans on each page. In addition, the analysis provided data about the average interactions per post through calculating the sum of interactions (reactions, comments, and shares) divided by the number of posts published on the same page during a specific time. This metric shows the evolution of reactions during the selected time range.

The reactions were counted on the day the post was made, and the analysis took into account all reactions to the post in question not including shared content reactions. In addition, measuring most engaging post types was conducted through distribution of the post types by the average interactions per post during the selected time range.

Furthermore, with regard to data analyzed from the YouTube pages of both shows, the analysis provided the total number of subscribers in the YouTube channel for each satirical show, in addition to the number of new videos uploaded by the YouTube channel during the selected time range. Similarly, the analysis includes distribution of interactions (likes, comments, shares) along with the absolute number of video views during the selected time range.

With regard to analyzing the Twitter accounts of both shows, the data provides the total number of followers for each account, the average number of tweets posted on their accounts through the selected time range, and the average interactions per tweet which are calculated through dividing the sum of interactions (replies, retweets, and likes) by the number of tweets published on the same profile during a specific time range.

Analysis of the Instagram accounts for both shows displays the total number of followers on the Instagram accounts of the shows, the average number of daily posts on each Instagram account, and the total number of posts made during the selected time range. Moreover, the analysis provides data regarding the number of average interactions per post, which is calculated by dividing the sum of the interactions (likes and comments) by the number of posts published on the same profile during a specific time range.

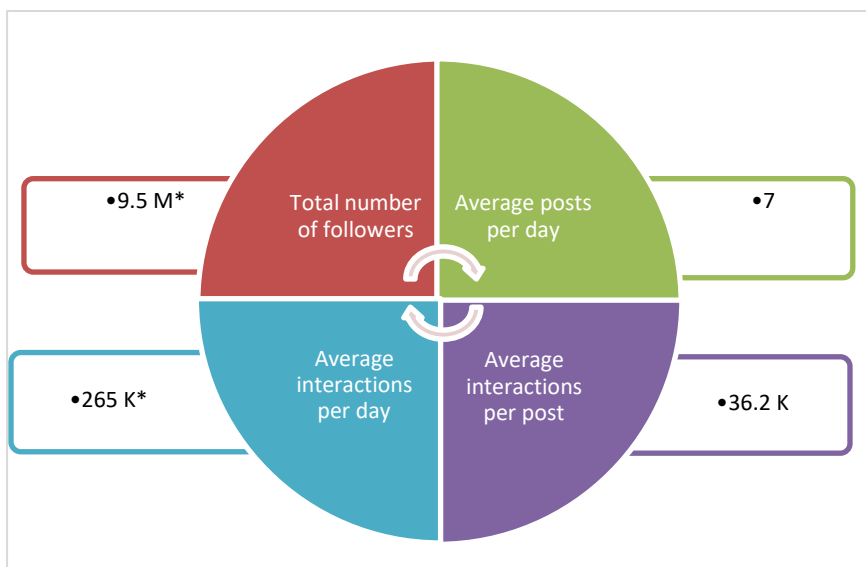
The following subsections present the complete analysis of the data gathered concerning the audience interactivity on the four social media platforms mentioned earlier. The analysis will be divided as follows: First, the data of every social media official account of each satirical show will be displayed separately. Second, a comparative analysis between the different platforms of every show will be displayed to compare the level of popularity and interactivity between all the platforms.

4.4.1.1 Audience interaction on Facebook for *The Daily Show*

As shown in Figure 31, which displays an overview of the total users' interaction on the official Facebook page of *The Daily Show with Trevor Noah*, the total number of followers on the page is 9.5 million users, which is a considerably large fan base. It is worth noting that the top 50 most followed Facebook pages include only one TV show, which is *The Simpsons* with 59 million followers (Social Blade, 2021).

In addition, the average number of daily posts on the official page is seven posts; this number is an average number across a time range of one month. Therefore, probably this average could increase or decrease over a larger timeframe; however, it can be an indicator for the overall daily activity on the page. Moreover, the data analysis provides an overview on the average users' interaction per post on the Facebook page, which reaches 36.2 thousand interactions for each post, including reactions, comments, and shares. Finally, the average users' interactions over different posts on the Facebook page in a given day can reach up to 265 thousand interactions overall.

Figure 31. Facebook users' interaction overview, The Daily Show.



Note. In all the following demonstrated numerical data, “M” stands for million and “K” stands for thousand, which reflect the numbers displayed on social media platforms.

The following demonstrated data is a reflection of the distribution of post types on the official Facebook page of *The Daily Show*. As shown in Figure 32 and Table 1, the posts of the page are divided into four types: videos, photos, statuses, and carousels. Videos display segments of the show, with each video representing a separate segment.

Videos scored the highest with a percentage of 79% of the posts on the page over the examined period. In addition, photos accounted for 20% of the posts on the official page of the show on Facebook. These photos are sometimes manipulated photos which the host comments on during the show or photos for the host with quotes or a jokes from the episode.

Moreover, the posts sometimes include statuses that are usually jokes about a current topic, in addition to carousels with several photos related to the same topics. Both types of posts equally accounted for 0.5% of the total posts on the Facebook page of *The Daily Show*.

Table 1. Distribution of post types on the Facebook page of *The Daily Show*.

Facebook post type	Count over timeframe	Percentage
Videos	143	79%
Photos	36	20%
Statuses	1	0.5%
Carousels *	1	0.5%

*Carousels are several photos displayed in the same post.

Figure 32. Distribution of post type per day on Facebook, *The Daily Show*.

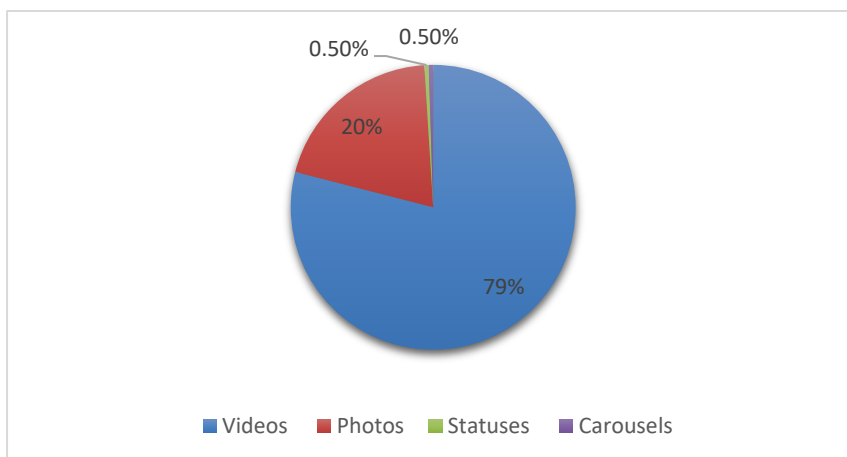
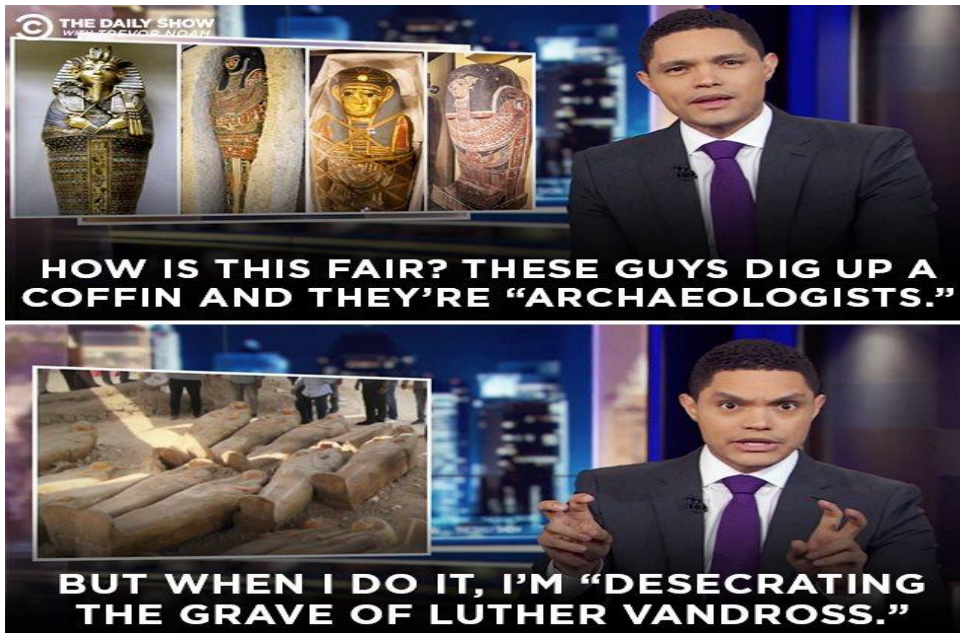


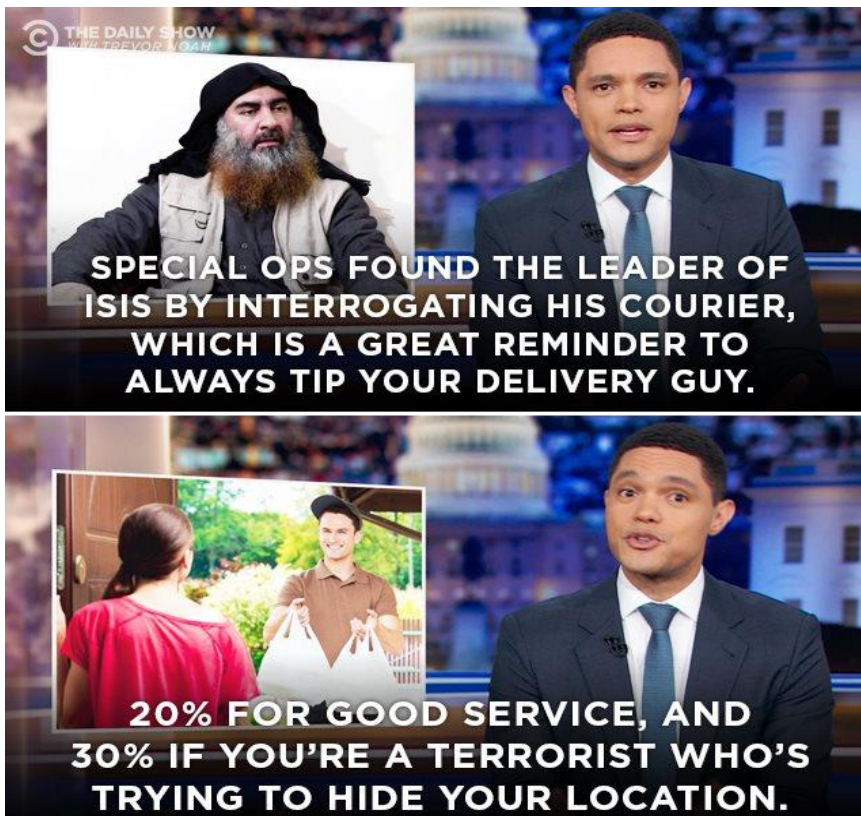
Figure 33 and Figure 34 are examples of Facebook posts for *The Daily Show with Trevor Noah*.

Figure 33. A photo posted on *The Daily Show* official Facebook page.



Source: *The Daily Show* official Facebook page (2021). The photo is a part of a segment that included a joke about 20 ancient Egyptian coffins discovered in Egypt.

Figure 34. A photo posted on *The Daily Show* official Facebook page.



Source: *The Daily Show* official Facebook page (2021). The photo is a part of a segment about the murder of the ISIS terrorist al-Baghdadi and how he was found by the USA.

As shown in Figure 35 and Table 2, the users' interactions are divided into three types: reactions, comments, and shares. The highest type of interaction from users on the Facebook page of *The Daily Show* is the reactions, accounting for 75% of the total interactions.

These reactions consist of seven different animated emoticons, the classic Like, Love, Haha, Care, Wow, Sad, and Angry, that people use to express how they feel about a certain post. Moreover, the shares are the second highest interaction, with a percentage of 19%. People share posts on their personal pages, on other people's pages, or even across different social media platforms. Finally, commenting on the posts on the Facebook page scored the lowest, with only 6% of the total interaction on the page.

Table 2. Distribution of interaction on the Facebook page of *The Daily Show*.

Type of interaction	Count of interaction	Percentage
Reactions	5.9 M	75%
Comments	476 K	6%
Shares	1.6 M	19%

Figure 35. Distribution of interaction on the Facebook page of *The Daily Show*.

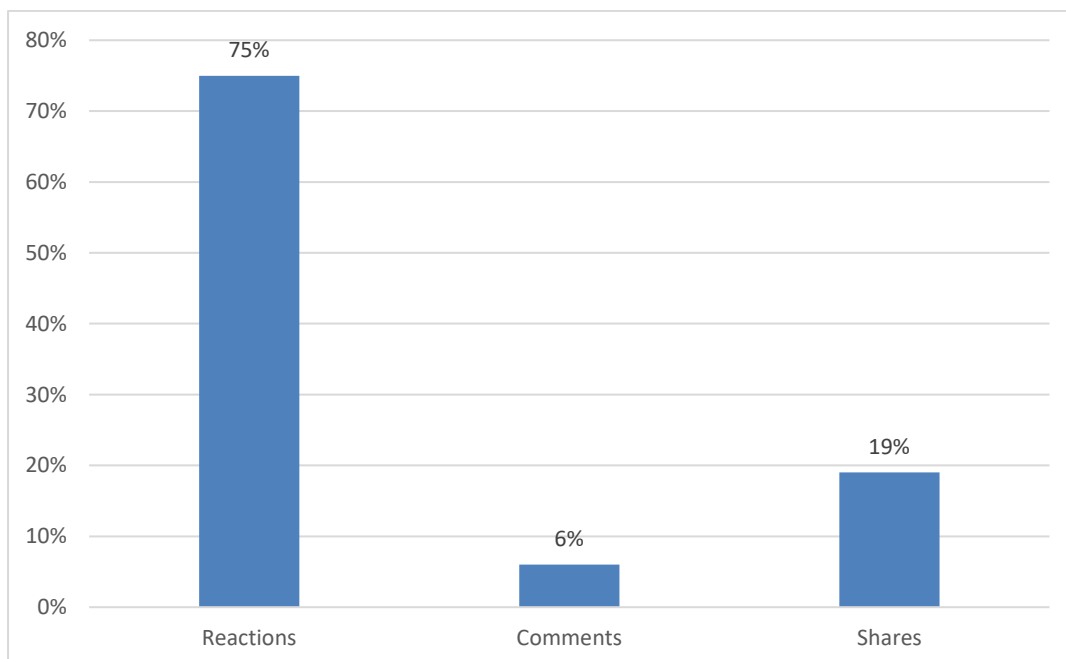


Figure 36 and Table 3 exhibit the most engaging types of posts on the official Facebook page of *The Daily Show*. By engaging, we mean the types of posts that have the highest level of interaction from the users, whether by reactions, comments, or shares. According to the statistical analysis, the most engaging type of posts is photos, with 77% of the total interaction with all types.

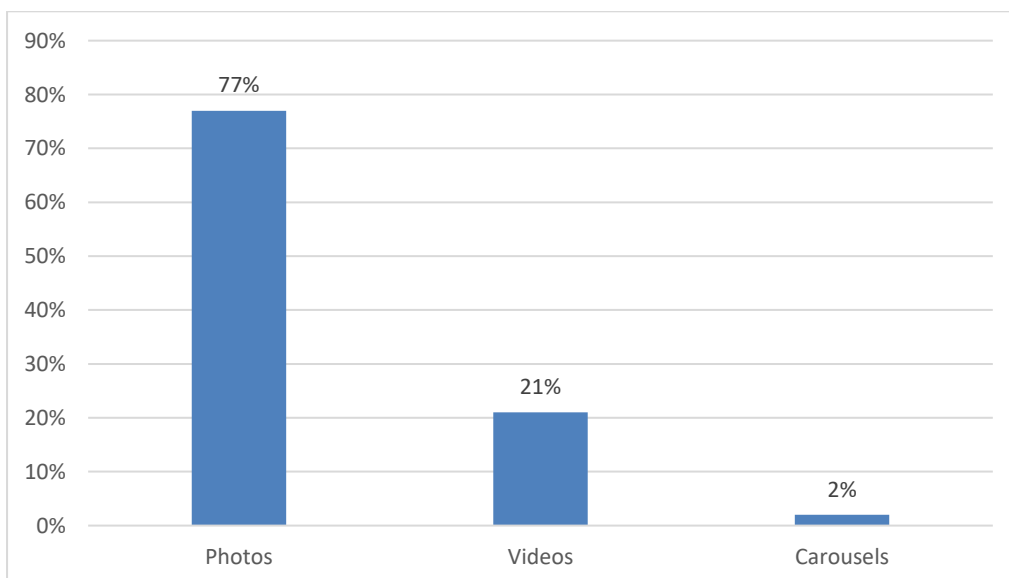
Although photos are not the dominant type of posts on this Facebook page, it was the most engaging and popular type on the page. In addition, videos accounted for 21% of the total interaction of users on the page.

Although most of the posts on the official page are videos, they did not score much when it comes to users' interactions. Finally, the Carousels were the least type of posts that Facebook users interacted with.

Table 3. Most engaging post types on the Facebook page of *The Daily Show*.

Type of post	Average interactions per post	Percentage
Photos	94.2 K	77%
Videos	25.9 K	21%
Carousels	2.5 K	2%

Figure 36. Most engaging post types on the Facebook page of *The Daily Show*.

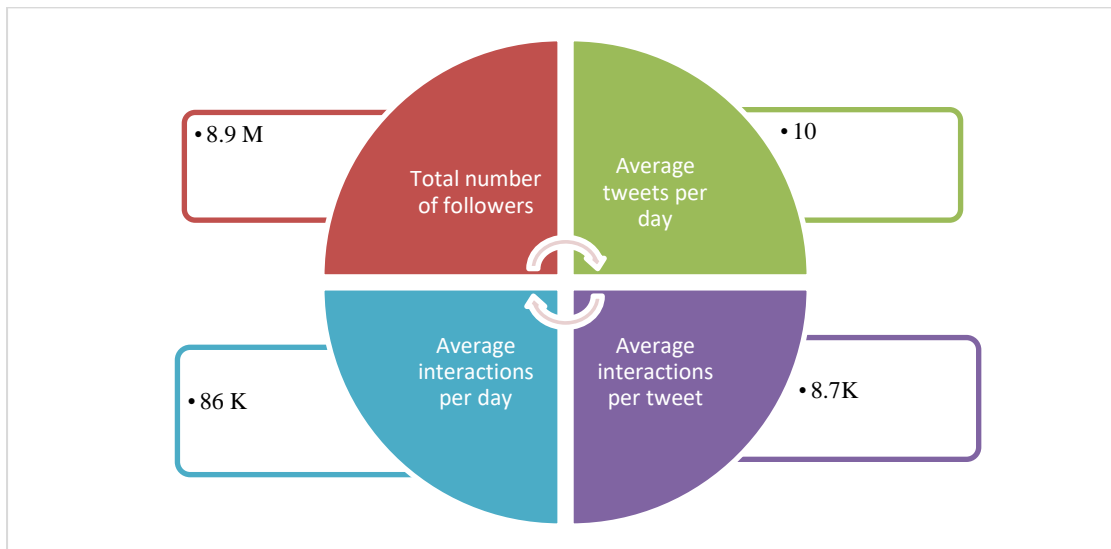


4.4.1.2 Audience interaction on Twitter for *The Daily Show*

Regarding audience interaction on the official Twitter account of *The Daily Show with Trevor Noah*, Figure 37 provides an overview on the users' interaction and the popularity of the show on this social media platform. The total number of followers on the official Twitter account is 8.9 million.

In addition, with regard to account activity, the official account has an average of 10 tweets per day over a month timeframe; the tweets may include photos of segments of the show in addition to links to the episodes or statuses reflecting a joke about a current issue. Furthermore, the official Twitter account of the show has an average of 8.7 thousand interactions per tweet; the interactions are divided between retweets, likes, and replies. Finally, as exhibited on the figure, the average interactions on the Twitter account per day is 86 thousand overall.

Figure 37. Twitter users' interaction overview, *The Daily Show*.



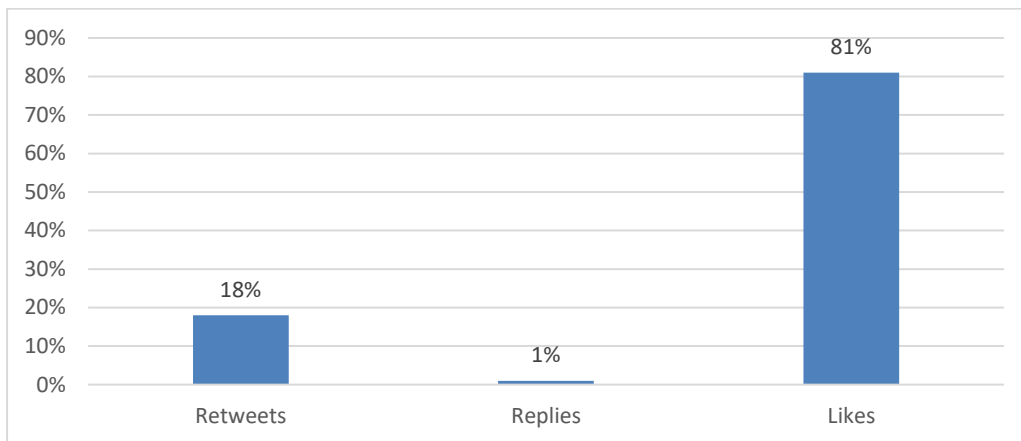
Furthermore, as shown in Figure 38 and Table 4, the distribution of users' interactions on the official Twitter account of *The Daily Show with Trevor Noah* over a timeframe of one month is as follows: the likes of the account tweets scored the highest among all types of interactions, with 2.1 million likes on the account overall.

The second highest interaction type is the retweets, with a total of 453 thousand retweets. Finally, the least type of interaction by the users was replying to the tweets of the official page, with only 33.3 thousand replies overall.

Table 4. Distribution of audience interaction on Twitter, *The Daily Show*.

Type of interaction	Count of interactions	Percentage
Retweets	453 K	18%
Replies	33.3 K	1%
Likes	2.1 M	81%

Figure 38. Distribution of audience interaction on Twitter, *The Daily Show*.

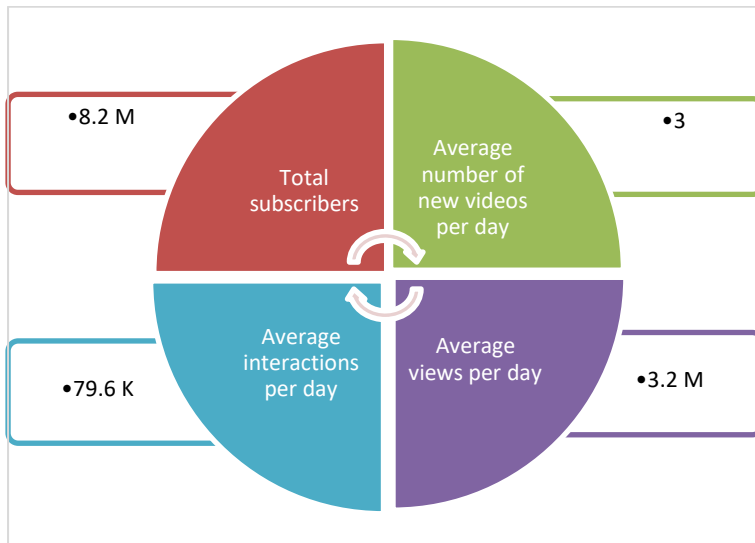


4.4.1.3 Audience interaction on YouTube for *The Daily Show*

According to the statistical analysis of the users' interaction on the official YouTube channel of *The Daily Show with Trevor Noah*, as shown in Figure 39, the overall audience's interaction with the channel is as follows. First, the total number of subscribers to the YouTube channel of the show is 8.2 million. However, this is not the only indicator of the channel popularity or users interactivity; there is also the average views per day which is 3.2 million, including viewers who may not be subscribers to the channel but still watch the videos regularly.

Additionally, the average interactions with the videos in a given day can reach up to 79.6 thousand, including likes, dislikes, and shares. Finally, the average number of new videos posted per day on the official channel is three.

Figure 39. YouTube audience interaction overview, *The Daily Show*.

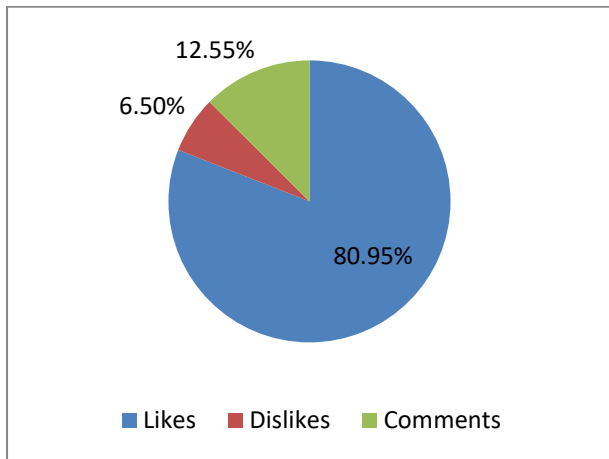


On the other hand, the distribution of interactions with individual videos on the YouTube official channel of *The Daily Show* is shown in Figure 40 and Table 5. It can be seen from the figure that the likes are the highest type of interaction used by the audience as they reached up to 1.9 million in a timeframe of one month. Additionally, comments came second, reaching 300 thousand. Finally, the dislike interaction, which is a sign for disagreement with the content of the video posted, was the least type of interaction, with 155 thousand dislikes overall.

Table 5. Distribution of audience interaction with YouTube videos of *The Daily Show*.

Audience interaction	Total number of interactions	Percentage
likes	1.9 M	80.95%
Dislikes	155 K	6.50%
Comments	300 K	12.55%

Figure 40. Distribution of audience interaction with YouTube videos of *The Daily Show*.

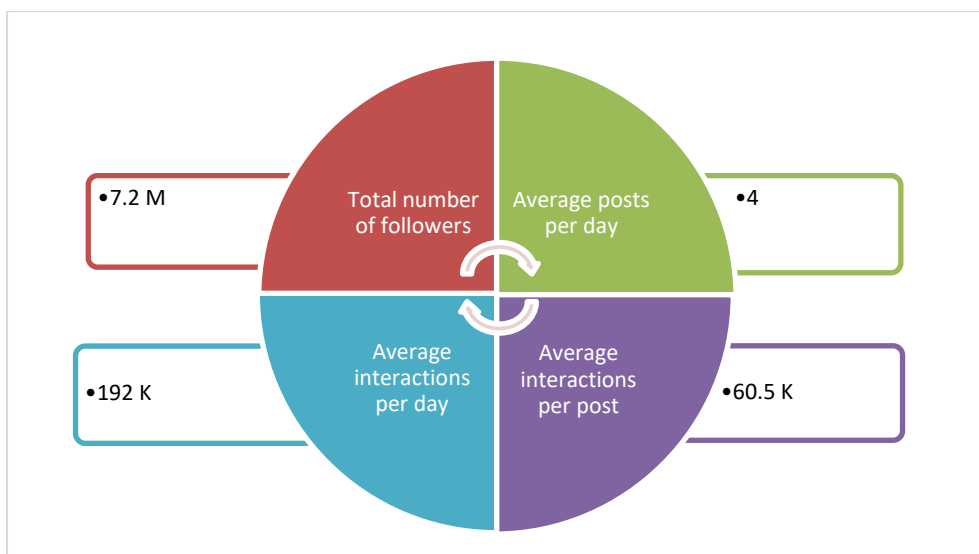


4.4.1.4 Audience interaction on Instagram for *The Daily Show*

As shown in Figure 41, the overview of the users' interaction on the official Instagram account of *The Daily Show with Trevor Noah* provides some general information about the level of users' interactivity and popularity of the show on the social media platform. The total number of followers of the official Instagram account is 7.2 million, with an average of four new posts per day divided between photos, videos, and Carousels.

In addition, the average interactions per post in a given period of a month is 60.5 thousand interactions overall. Moreover, the average interactions on the account different posts can reach 192 thousand interactions totally.

Figure 41. Instagram users' interaction overview, *The Daily Show*.



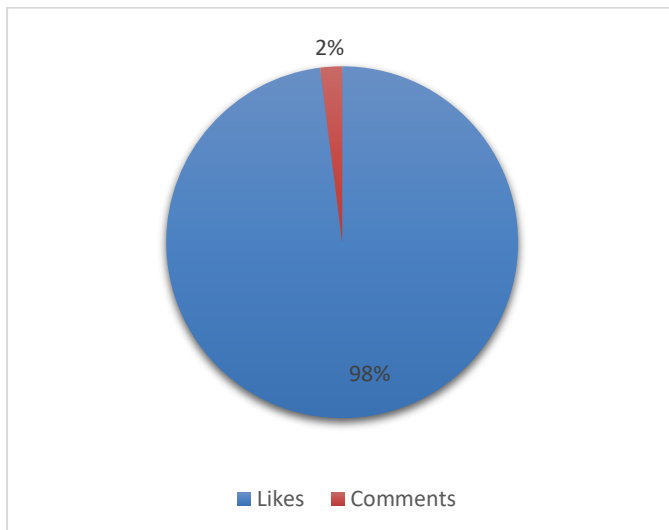
Furthermore, the distribution of users' interaction with individual Instagram posts is divided between reactions and comments as shown in Figure 42 and Table 6. Reactions are seven different animated emoticons that people use to express how they feel about a certain post, that is, the classic Like, Love, Haha, Care, Wow, Sad, and Angry. The reactions were the highest used interaction on the official Instagram account of *The Daily Show* with a total number of 5.6 million reactions.

In a notable observation, the statistical difference between the total numbers of both types of users' interactions is quite large, as the number of comments was only 120 thousand over the same timeframe. This might provide an indication about the audience activity behavior on this social media platform, as they tend to react silently, without adding any comments that reflect their opinion, whether it was supporting or opposing the content of the post.

Table 6. Distribution of users' interaction with Instagram posts of *The Daily Show*.

Audience interaction	Total number of interactions	Percentage
Likes	5.6 M	98%
Comments	120 K	2%

Figure 42. Distribution of users' interaction with Instagram posts of *The Daily Show*.



According to

Figure 43 and Table 7, the distribution of different types of posts on the Instagram account of *The Daily Show* is as follows. Videos constitute the dominant type of posts, accounting for 54% of the content posted. Moreover, the posts that contain photos were the second highest type, with 45% of the total posts. Finally Carousels, which are posts that contain several photos, were actually quite rare, as they were only posted once within a timeframe of one month.

Table 7. Distribution of post types on the Instagram account of *The Daily Show*.

Instagram post type	Count of posts	Percentage
Videos	51	54%
Photos	43	45%
Carousels	1	1%

Figure 43. Distribution of post types on the Instagram of *The Daily Show*.

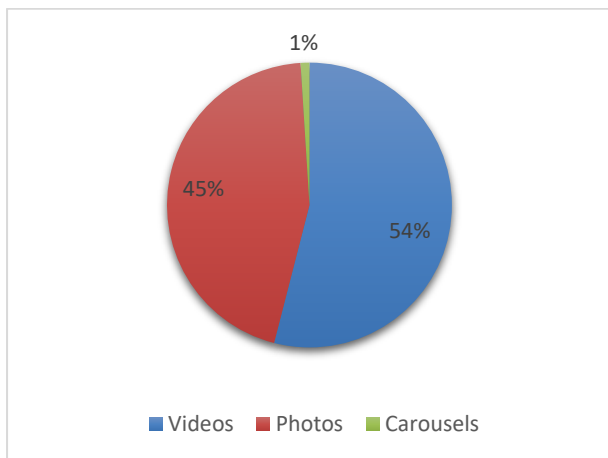


Figure 44 is an example of Instagram posts for *The Daily Show with Trevor Noah*.

Figure 44. A photo posted on *The Daily Show* official Instagram account.



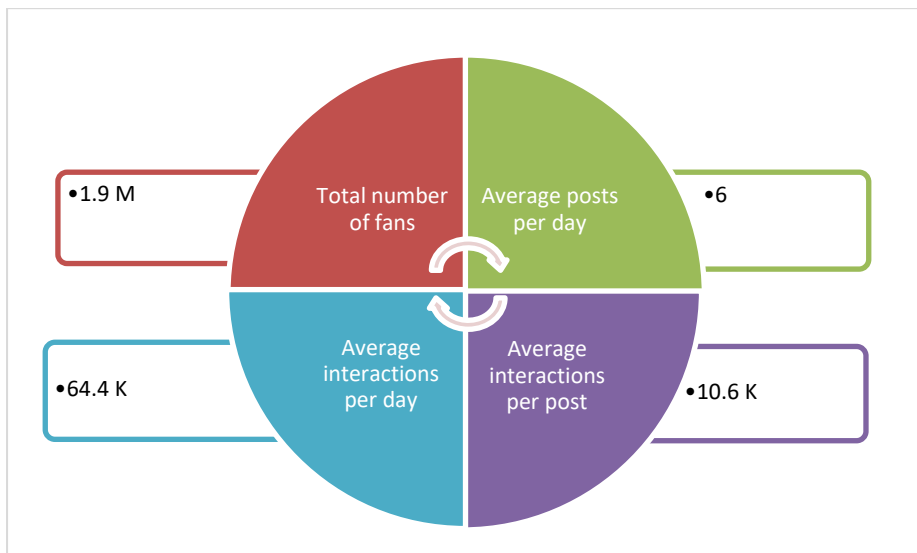
Source: *The Daily Show* official Instagram account (2021). The lower part is a photo of President Trump with the Saudi king and the Egyptian president holding a glowing orb; the upper part of the photo shows Trump standing with his staff members in the White House around him, and the photo caption is a joke about Trump being dressed as the orb for the Halloween.

4.4.1.5 Audience interaction on Facebook for *The Late Show*

An overview on distribution of the users' interaction with the official Facebook page of *The Late Show with Stephen Colbert* is exhibited in Figure 45. The total number of fans of the Facebook page is 1.9 million, which is much fewer than the total number of fans of *The Daily Show* on the same social media platform. The average number of posts on the Facebook page reaches up to six posts per day on a given timeframe of one month; these posts are divided into photos, videos, statuses, and shared links of the episodes on the page.

In addition, the average interactions per post on the official page of the show is 10.6 thousand divided between reactions with emojis representing them, comments on the posts, and shares of the posts. Finally, the average interactions with posts on the page are 64.4 thousand per day.

Figure 45. Facebook users' interaction overview, *The Late Show*.

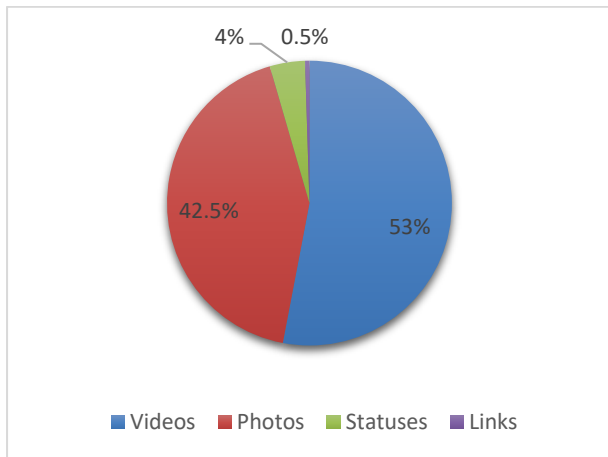


As shown in Figure 46 and Table 8, the distribution of different types of posts on the official Facebook page of *The Late Show* is as follows: the dominant type of posts is videos, accounting for 53% of posts; photos also scored a little high, with a percentage of 42.5% of the total types of posts on the page. In addition, statuses were posted only seven times during the timeframe under examination, and finally a shared link of an episode was posted once during the timeframe.

Table 8. Distribution of post types on the Facebook page of *The Late Show*.

Facebook post type	Post type count	Percentage
Videos	97	53%
Photos	77	42.5%
Statuses	7	4%
Links	1	0.5%

Figure 46. Distribution of post types on the Facebook page of *The Late Show*.



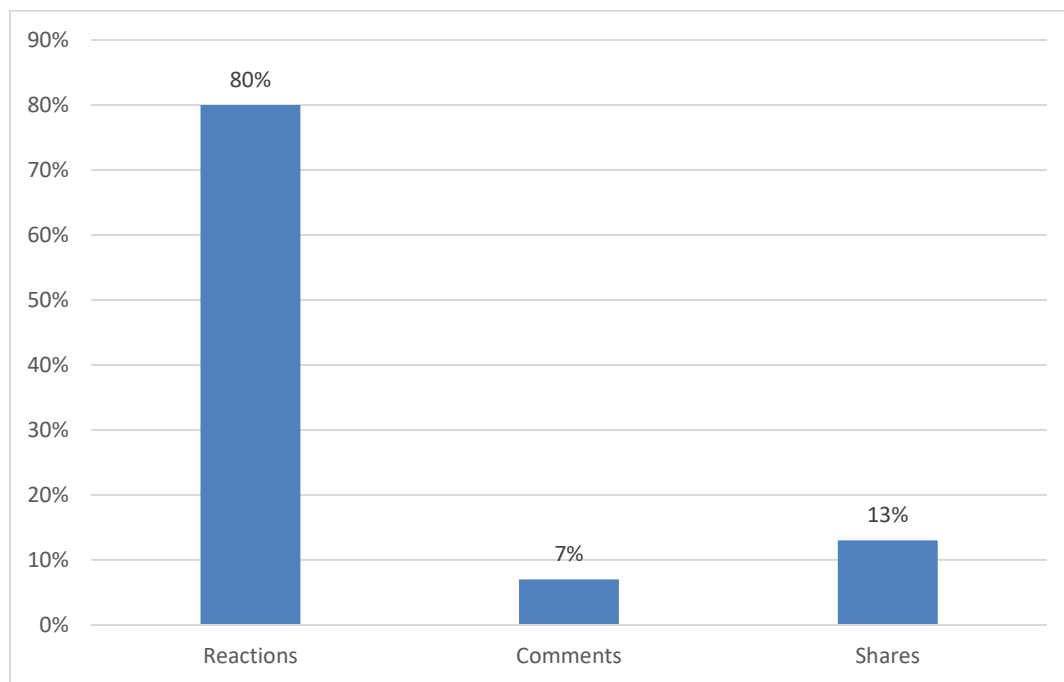
As per the statistical analysis and as shown in Figure 47 and Table 9, the users' interactions on the official page of *The Late Show* can be divided into three types: reactions, comments, and shares. The highest type of interaction that users of Facebook preferred to use excessively is the reactions, accounting for 80% of the total interactions on the page.

As mentioned earlier, by reactions on this social media platform, we refer to the seven available animated emoticons: Like, Love, Haha, Care, Wow, Sad, and Angry. These reactions are a mechanism for users on social media to express how they feel about a certain post. Moreover, the shares are the second highest interaction, accounting for 13%, with a total of 247 thousand shares overall. Lastly, commenting on the posts of the Facebook page scored the lowest, accounting for 7%, with 130 thousand comments generally.

Table 9. Distribution of interactions with the Facebook posts of *The Late Show*.

Type of interaction	Count of interactions	Percentage
Reactions	1.6 M	80%
Comments	130 K	7%
Shares	247 K	13%

Figure 47. Distribution of interactions with the Facebook posts of *The Late Show*.



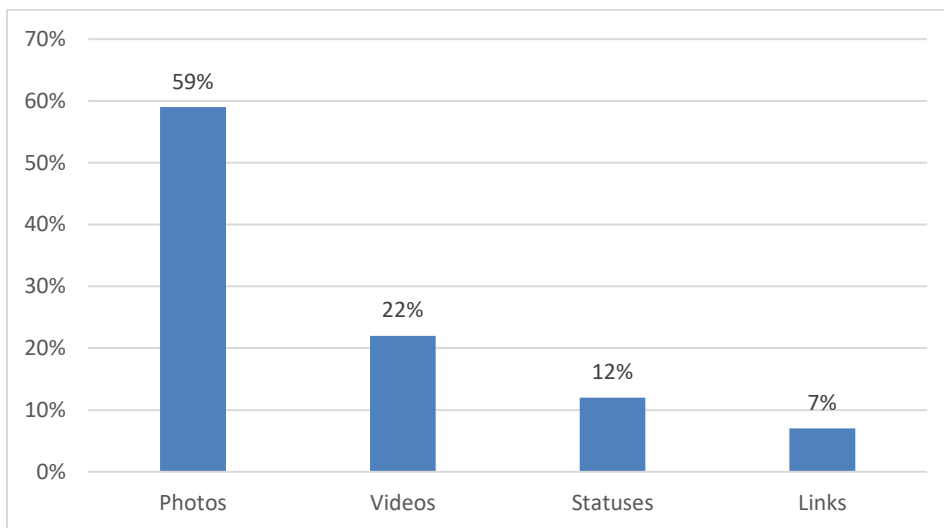
Regarding the most engaging type of posts on the official Facebook page of *The Late Show*, as shown in Figure 48 and Table 10, the results have demonstrated that, similar to the official Facebook page of *The Daily Show*, photos were the most engaging type of posts on the page. In addition, the videos posted on the page were the second most engaging type of posts, with 6.2 thousand interactions per post, accounting for 22% of the total post types.

Moreover, statuses accounted for 12%, with only 3.4 thousand interactions with these posts. Finally, the links shared on the Facebook page scored the least engaging type of posts, with a total of only 2.1 thousand interactions, accounting for 7% of the total interactions.

Table 10. Distribution of post types on the Facebook page of *The Late Show*.

Type of post	Average interactions per post	Percentage
Photos	17 K	59 %
Videos	6.2 K	22 %
Statuses	3.4 K	12%
Links	2.1 K	7%

Figure 48. Distribution of post types on the Facebook page of *The Late Show*.

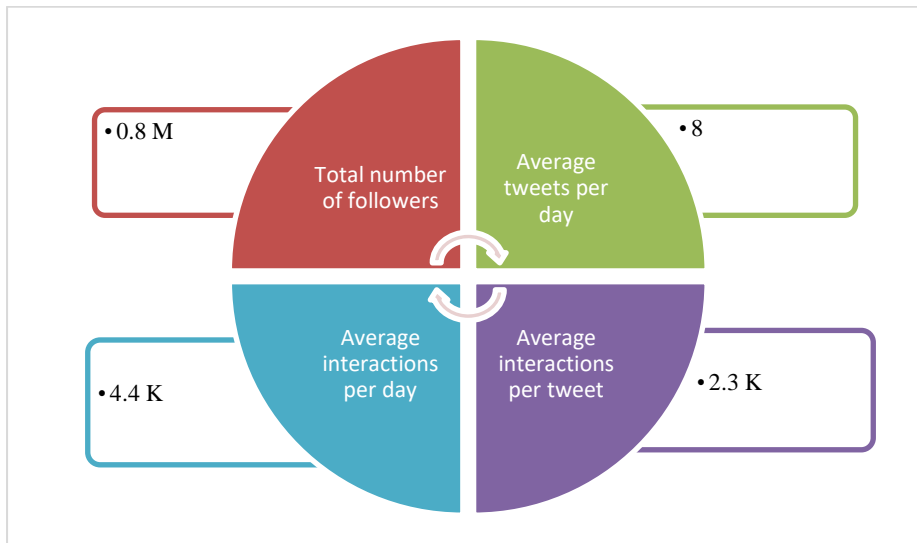


4.4.1.6 Audience interaction on Twitter for *The Late Show*

Concerning the official Twitter account of *The Late Show with Stephen Colbert*, Figure 49 provides an overview on audience interaction and popularity of the show on Twitter as a social media platform. The total number of followers on the official Twitter account is 0.8 million, which is a very low number of followers compared to *The Daily Show* which has 8.9 million followers. In addition, with regard to the official account activity, the average number of tweets is eight tweets over a month timeframe; the tweets may include photos of segments of the show, links to the episodes, or statuses reflecting a joke about a current issue.

Likewise, with regard to the average interactions per tweet, the official Twitter account of the show has an average of 2.3 thousand interactions per tweet, divided between retweets, likes, and replies. Lastly, the average interactions on the Twitter account per day are not as much as those on *The Daily Show*, with only 4.4 thousand interactions daily.

Figure 49. Twitter users' interaction overview, *The Late Show*.

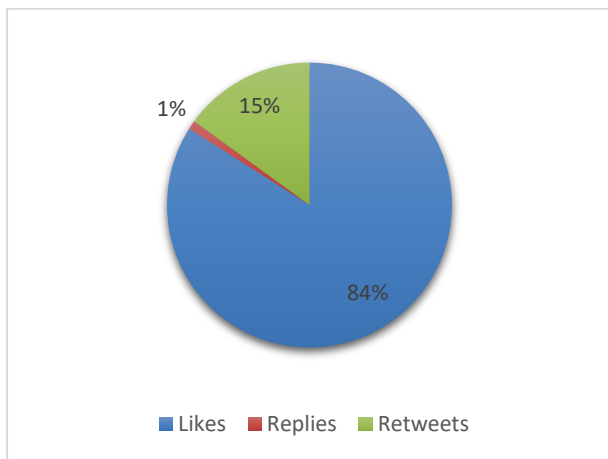


As shown in Figure 50 and Table 11, the audience interaction with posts on the official Twitter account of *The Late Show* is distributed among three types: likes which scored the highest, with a total of 110 thousand likes accounting for 84% of the total interactions in the timeframe under examination; retweets of the posts, with a total of 19.5 thousand retweets accounting for as low as 15% of the total interactions; and finally replies to tweets, which scored the least type of interaction, reaching only 1.7 thousand, which is a very low rate of interaction for the show.

Table 11. Distribution of audience interaction with posts on Twitter, *The Late Show*.

Type of interaction	Count of interactions	Percentage
Retweets	19.5 K	15%
Replies	1.7 K	1%
Likes	110 K	84%

Figure 50. Distribution of audience interaction with posts on Twitter, *The Late Show*.

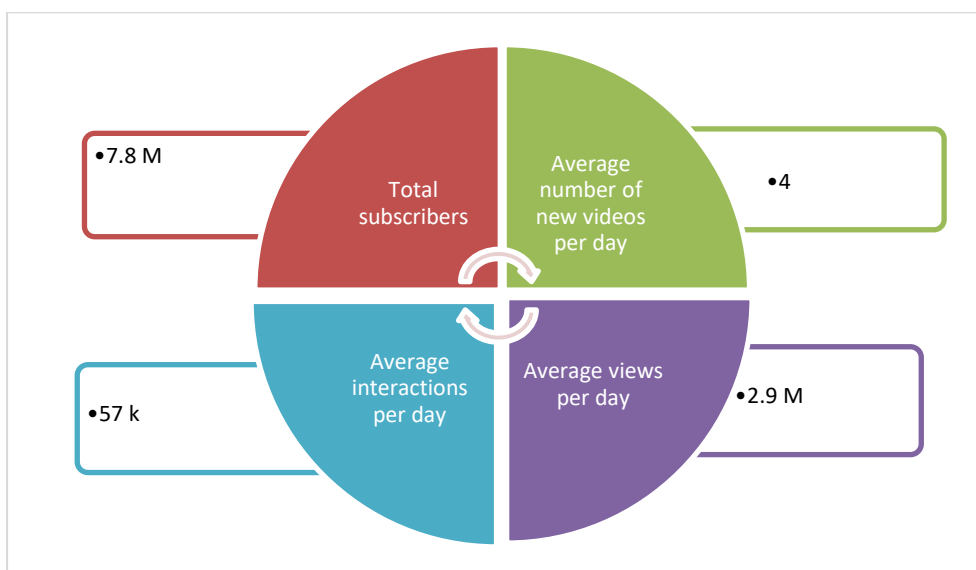


4.4.1.7 Audience interaction on YouTube for *The Late Show*

With regard to the statistical analysis of the users' interaction on the official YouTube channel for *The Late Show with Stephen Colbert*, Figure 51 shows an overview on the interaction distribution. First, the total number of subscribers to the official YouTube channel of the show is 7.8 million. In addition, another indicator of the channel popularity or user interactivity is the average views per day which is 2.9 million views, including viewers who may not be subscribers to the channel but still watch the videos regularly.

Moreover, another indicator of users' interactivity on the YouTube channel is the average interactions with the videos in a given day; these interactions are categorized as likes, dislikes, and shares of any video. The average reactions to videos per day are 57 thousand.

Figure 51. YouTube audience interaction overview, *The Late Show*.

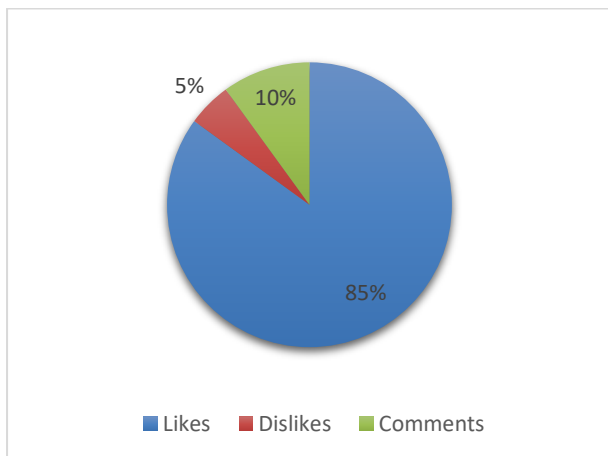


Additionally, the distribution of interactions with posts on the YouTube official channel of *The Late Show* is shown in Figure 52 and Table 12. According to the statistical analysis, the likes of videos are considered the highest type of interaction used by the audience, as they reached up to 1.5 million likes in a timeframe of one month, accounting for 85% of the total interactions. Furthermore, the comments on the posted videos ranked the second, reaching a total of 179 thousand comments. Finally, the dislike interaction, which refers to disagreement with the content of the video, was the least type of interaction, with a total of 78.7 thousand dislikes.

Table 12. Distribution of YouTube audience interaction, *The Late Show*.

Audience interaction	Total number of interactions	Percentage
Likes	1.5 M	85%
Dislikes	78.7 K	5%
Comments	179 K	10%

Figure 52. Distribution of YouTube audience interaction, *The Late Show*.



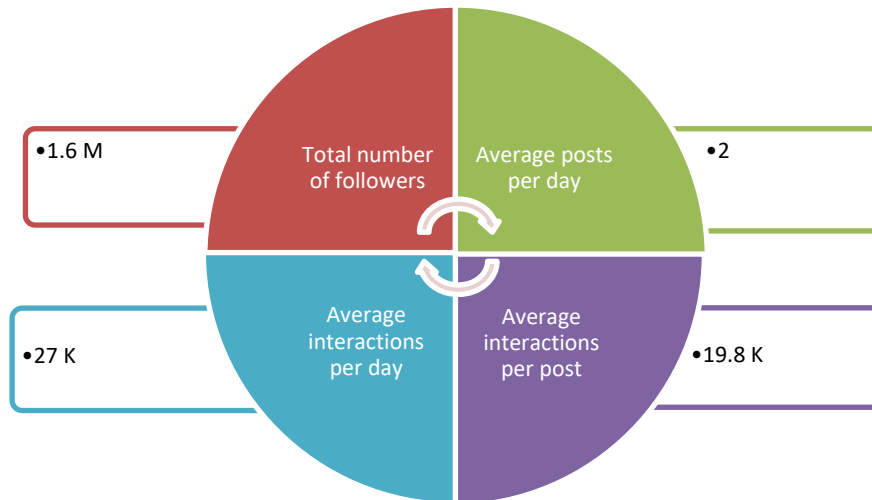
4.4.1.8 Audience interaction on Instagram for *The Late Show*

As shown in Figure 53, the total overview of the users' interaction on the official Instagram account of *The Late Show with Stephen Colbert* provides some general information about the level of users' interactivity and popularity of the show on the social media platform.

The total number of followers of the official Instagram account is 1.6 million, with an average of four new posts per day divided between photos, videos, and carousels.

In addition, the average interactions per post in a given period of a month is 19.8 thousand interactions overall. Moreover, the average interactions with the account different posts can reach a total of 27 thousand.

Figure 53. Instagram users' interaction overview, *The Late Show*.



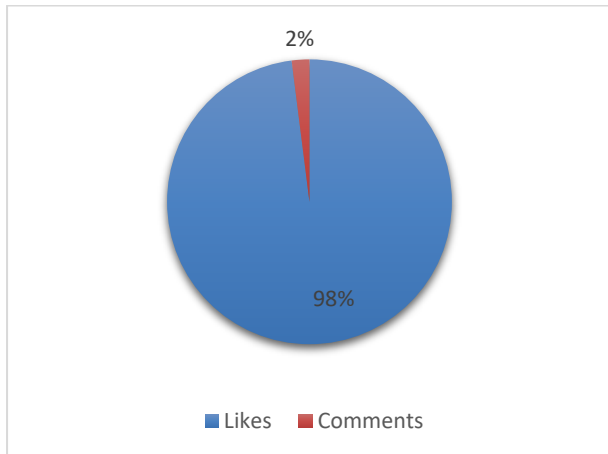
Furthermore, the distribution of users' interaction with posts on Instagram is divided between reactions and comments as shown in Figure 54 and Table 13. Reactions are seven different animated emoticons that people use to express how they feel about a certain post: the classic Like, Love, Haha, Care, Wow, Sad, and Angry. The reactions were the highest used interaction on the official Instagram account of *The Daily Show* with a total of 5.6 million.

In a notable observation, the statistical difference between the total numbers of both types of users' interactions is quite large, as the comments had a total of only 120 thousand over the same timeframe. This might provide an indication about the audience activity behavior on this social media platform, as they tend to react silently, without adding any comments that reflect their opinion, whether it was supporting or opposing the content of the post.

Table 13. Distribution of users' interaction with posts on Instagram, *The Late Show*.

Audience interaction	Total number of interactions	Percentage
Likes	799 K	98%
Comments	14.5 K	2%

Figure 54. Distribution of users' interaction with posts on Instagram, *The Late Show*.

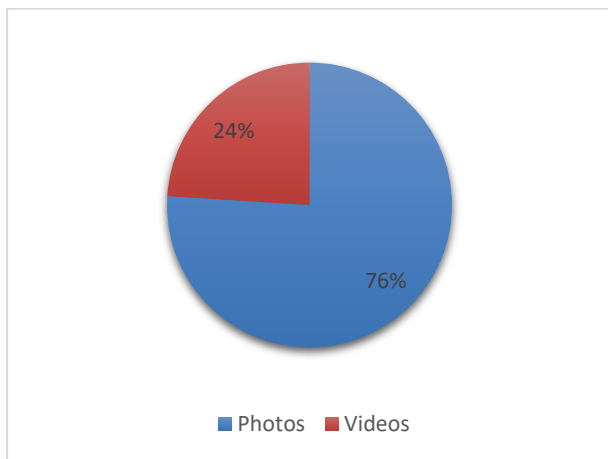


As demonstrated in Figure 55 and Table 14, the distribution of different types of posts on the Instagram account of *The Late Show* is as follows. Photos actually dominated the official account with a percentage of 76% of the total posts. Moreover, posts of videos scored second accounting for 24% of the total posts.

Table 14. Distribution of post types on Instagram, *The Late Show*.

Instagram post type	Count per day	Percentage
Photos	31	76%
Videos	10	24%

Figure 55. Distribution of post types on Instagram, *The Late Show*.



4.4.2 Comparative analysis of audience interaction for both shows

The following is a comparative analysis between all the mentioned social media platforms, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and YouTube, for each satire show, in order to find out the most interactive social media platform in terms of user interactivity for each of the two shows under investigation.

The comparative analysis will be examining the total number of users on each social media platform, the average number of users' interactions per post in each platform, and the average interactivity per day, in addition to measuring the average number of activities posted on each page of the mentioned platforms.

4.4.2.1 Total number of fans for *The Daily Show*

With regard to the total number of users following the social media platforms of *The Daily Show with Trevor Noah*, As shown in Figure 56 and Table 15, Facebook was actually the highest social media platform in terms of the fan base, with a total of 9.5 million users following the official page of the show, accounting for 28% of the total fan base on social media. In addition, Twitter scored the second highest with a total fan base of 8.9 million users following the official account, with a score of 26%.

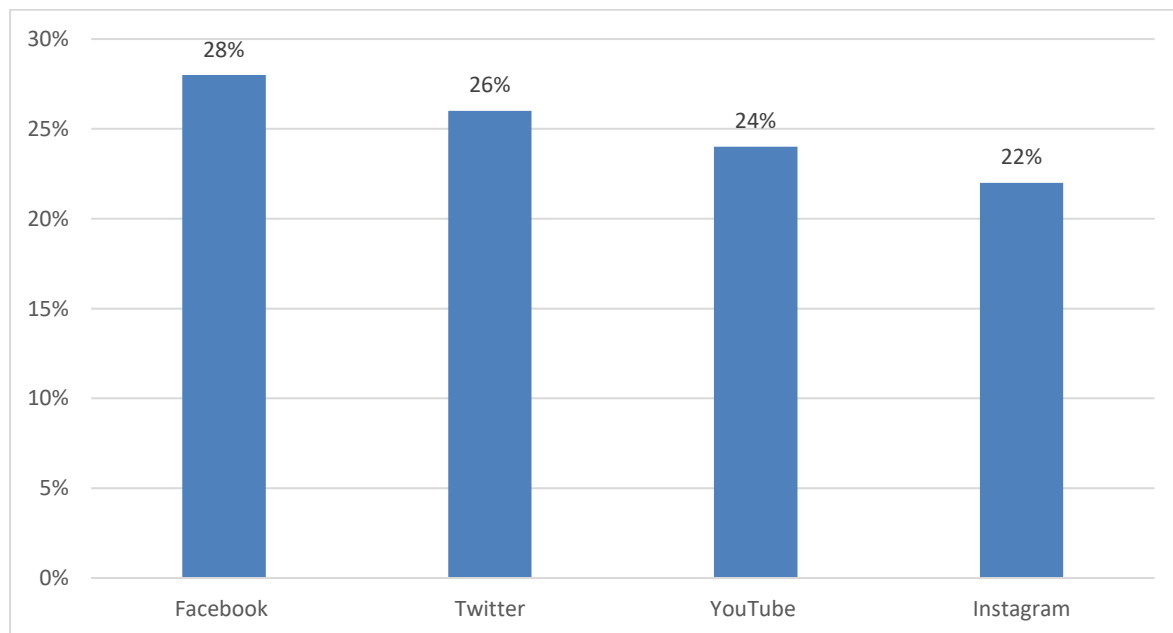
YouTube as a social media platform had a nearly similar number of fans to that of Twitter, with a total number of 8.2 million subscribers to the official channel of the show. On the other hand, Instagram scored the lowest when it comes to the total number of followers, with a total of 7.2 million followers of the official account of *The Daily Show*.

Although all four social media platforms have a fan base with millions of users following all these accounts, Facebook was the most popular social media account for the show audience.

Table 15. Total number of fans across all platforms of *The Daily Show*.

Social media platforms	Total number of fans	Percentage
Facebook	9.5 M	28%
Twitter	8.9 M	26%
YouTube	8.2 M	24%
Instagram	7.2 M	22%
Total	33.85 M	100%

Figure 56. Total number of fans across all platforms of *The Daily Show*.



4.4.2.2 Average interactions per post for *The Daily Show*

As per the comparative statistical analysis, with regard to the average interactions per post on each of the mentioned social media platforms, although Instagram was the lowest social media platform in terms of total number of fans, it still had the highest average of interactions per post with a total of 60.5 thousand interactions (Figure 57, Table 16). The interactions on Instagram are the reactions and comments on the posts of the official account of the show.

In addition, YouTube as a platform ranked the second in terms of the average interactions per post with a total of 40 thousand interactions; those interaction are likes, dislikes, or comments on the video uploaded to the official channel.

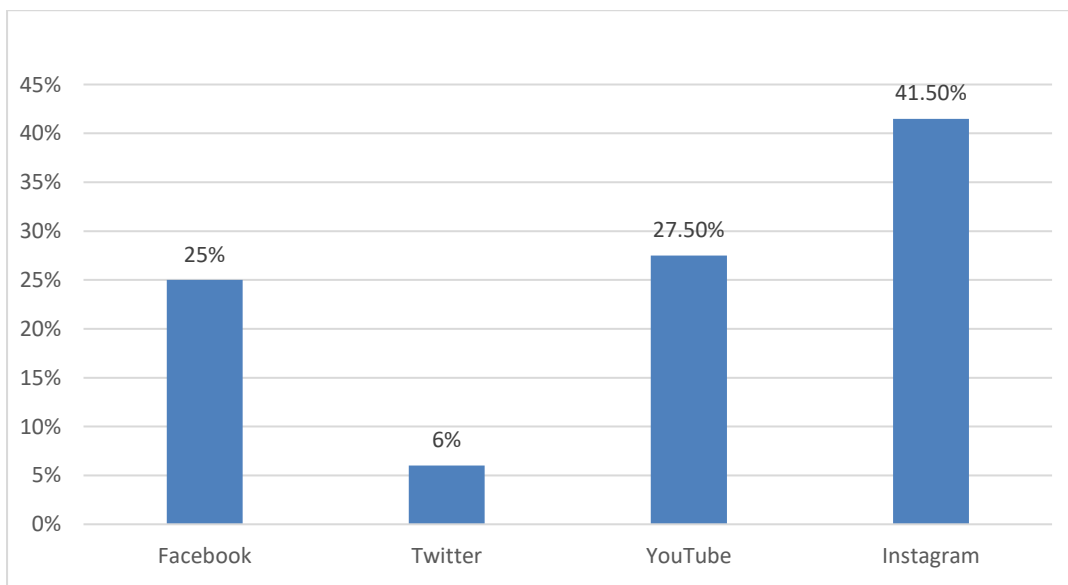
Moreover, the official Facebook page of *The Daily Show* was the most popular social media platform, with the highest number of followers and with average number of interactions per post of 36.2 thousand divided between reactions, comments, and shares.

Finally, Twitter scored the lowest among all the social media platforms of the show in terms of the total number of followers and interactions, with the latter being 8.7 thousand. The interactions are the likes, replies, and retweets of the posts on the official account of the show.

Table 16. Average interactions per post across all platforms for *The Daily Show*.

Social media platform	Average interactions per post	Percentage
Facebook	36.2 K	25%
Twitter	8.7 K	6%
YouTube	40 K	27.5%
Instagram	60.5 K	41.5%
Total	145.4 K	100%

Figure 57. Average interactions per post across all platforms for *The Daily Show*.



4.4.2.3 Average interactions per day for *The Daily Show*

As demonstrated in Figure 58 and Table 17, with regard to the average interactions per day on each of the social media platforms of *The Daily Show with Trevor Noah*, Facebook is the highest social media platform in terms of the number of followers; it also demonstrated the highest average of users' interactions with a total of 265 thousand interactions per day.

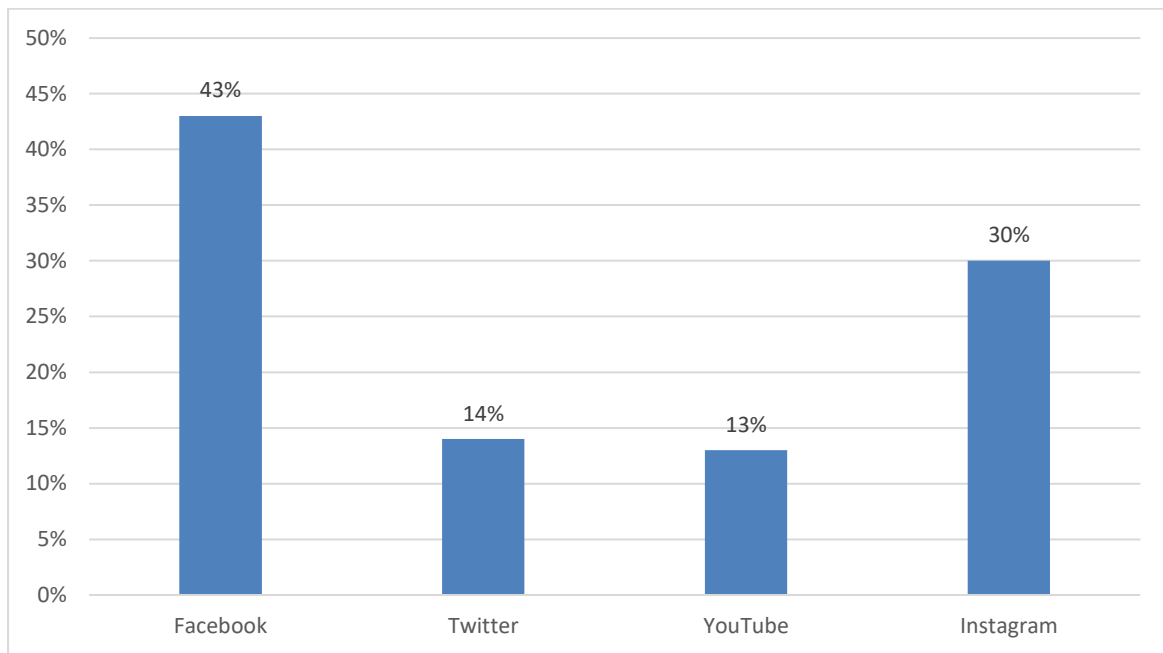
Although Instagram was the lowest social media platform in terms of the total number of fans, it still had the highest average of interactions per post, and it scored the second highest with around 192 thousand interactions per day.

In a notable observation, although Twitter had the least number of followers and the least number of average interactions per post across all the social media platforms of the show, when it comes to the average interactions per day on the official account of the show, it scored a total of 86 thousand. On the other hand, YouTube ranked the lowest in terms of the average interactions per day with a total of 79.6 thousand interactions.

Table 17. Average interactions per day across all platforms for *The Daily Show*.

Social media platform	Average interactions per day	Percentage
Facebook	265 K	43%
Twitter	86 K	14%
YouTube	79.6 K	13%
Instagram	192 K	30%
Total	622.6 K	100%

Figure 58. Average interactions per day across all platforms for *The Daily Show*.



4.4.2.4 Total number of fans for *The Late Show*

The results of the comparative statistical analysis of all social media platforms of the political satire show *The Late Show with Stephen Colbert*, with regard to the total numbers of users following the platforms, are shown in Table 18 and Figure 59. YouTube was the highest social media platform in terms of the fan base with a total of 7.8 subscribers to the official channel of the show, accounting for 65% of the total fan base on social media.

On the other hand, other social media platforms of *The Late Show* did not score as much when it comes to the total number of followers. Facebook was the second in rank with a total number of 1.9 million users following the official page of the show, accounting for 16% of the total fan base on social media. Besides, the official Instagram account of the show has 1.6 million followers.

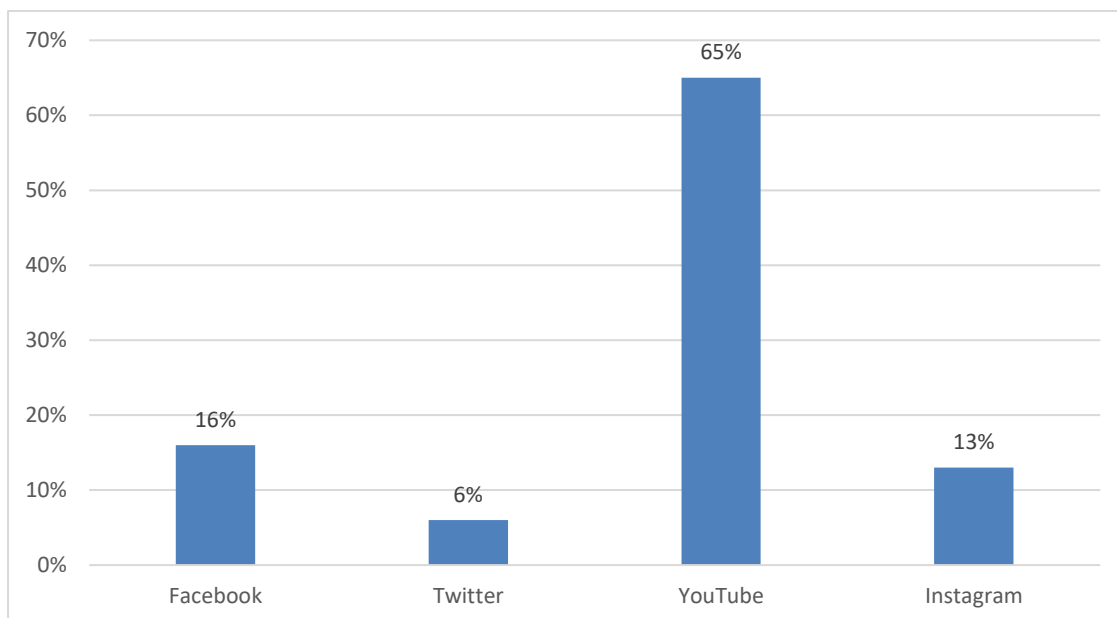
In addition, the official Twitter account of the show had a total fan base of 0.8 million followers, which is the least number of fans among all the show platforms.

Unlike *The Daily Show* which had close numbers of fans for different social media platforms, *The Late Show* has a wide gap between the numbers of followers of different platforms, with YouTube being the highest and most popular platform compared to the other social media platforms.

Table 18. Total number of fans across all platforms of *The Late Show*.

Social media platform	Total number of fans	Percentage
Facebook	1.9 M	16%
Twitter	0.8 M	6%
YouTube	7.8 M	65%
Instagram	1.6 M	13%
Total	12 M	100%

Figure 59. Total number of fans across all platforms of *The Late Show*.



4.4.2.5 Average interactions per post for *The Late Show*

As demonstrated in Table 19 and Figure 60, the statistical analysis revealed that YouTube, having the highest number of fans, ranked the highest in terms of the average interactions per post with a total of 95 thousand. The users' interactions on YouTube are likes, dislikes, or comments on the videos uploaded to the official channel.

Instagram as a social media platform had the second highest average of interactions per post with 19.8 thousand interactions over all. The interactions on Instagram are the reactions and comments on the posts of the official account of the show.

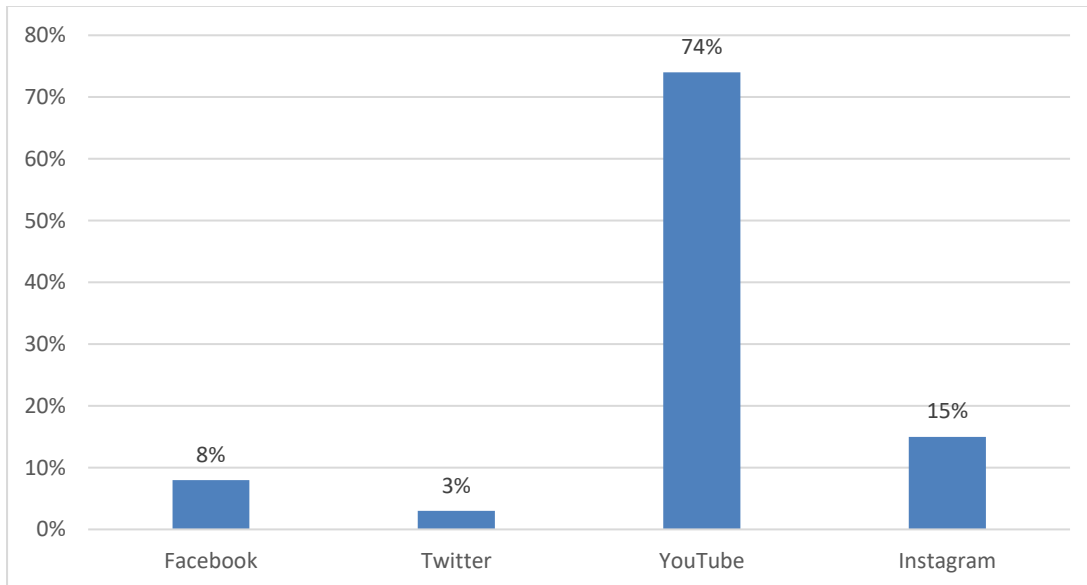
Moreover, the official Facebook page of *The Late Show* ranked the third, having 10.6 thousand interactions per post distributed between reactions, comments, and shares.

Finally, Twitter, having the least number of followers among all the social media platforms of the show, scored the lowest with a total number of interactions of 3.5 thousand. The interactions are likes, replies, and retweets of the posts on the official account of the show.

Table 19. Average interactions per post across all platforms for *The Late Show*.

Social media platform	Average interactions per post	Percentage
Facebook	10.6 K	8%
Twitter	2.3 K	3%
YouTube	95 K	74%
Instagram	19.8 K	15%
Total	127.7 K	100%

Figure 60. Average interactions per post across all platforms for *The Late Show*.



4.4.2.6 Average interactions per day for *The Late Show*

Table 20 and Figure 61 demonstrate the average interactions per day on each of the social media platforms of *The Late Show with Stephen Colbert*.

The official Facebook page of the show demonstrated the highest average of users' interactions per day with a total of 64.4 thousand.

Although YouTube was the highest social media platform in terms of the total number of fans and average interactions per post on the official channel of the show, YouTube ranked the second highest in terms of the average interactions per day on the official channel, with a total of 57 thousand.

Moreover, the official account of the show on Instagram was ranked the third with regard to the average number of interactions per day, with a total of 27 thousand interactions by the users of the platform.

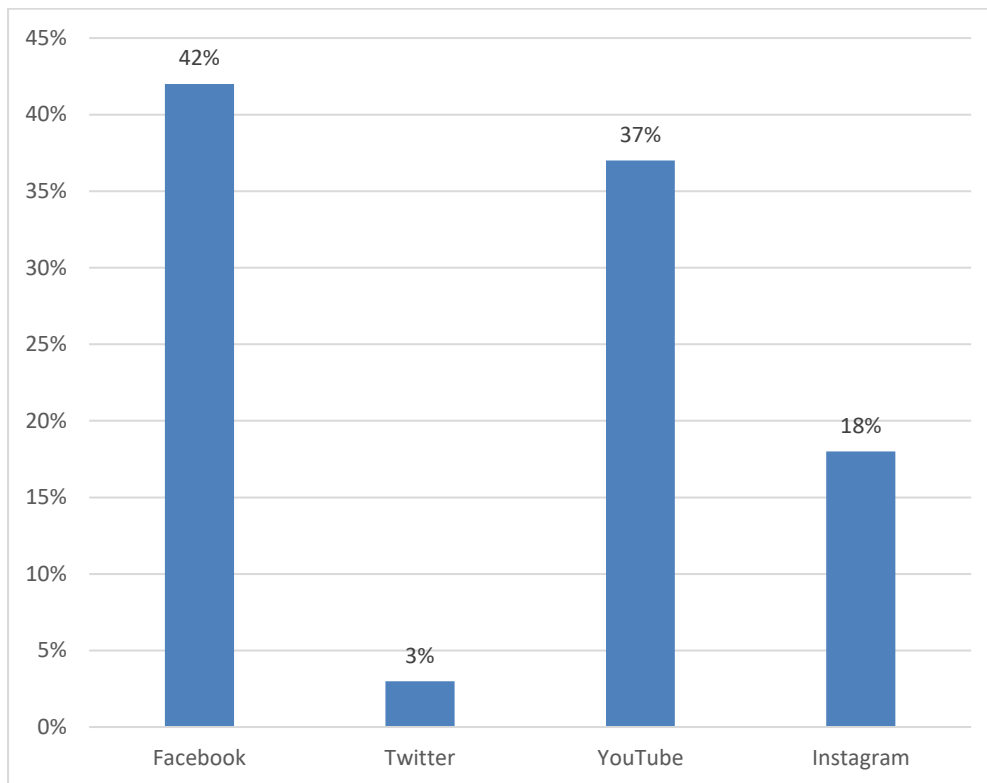
Additionally, Twitter, having the least number of followers and average interactions per post among all the social media platforms of the show, when it comes to the average interactions per day on the official account of the show, it scored the lowest with a total of 4.4 thousand. Therefore, in conclusion, for *The Late Show with Stephen Colbert*, Twitter was the least popular social media platform in terms of number of fans and user interaction as a whole.

Table 20. Average interactions per day across all platforms of *The Late Show*.

Social media platform	Average interactions per day	Percentage
Facebook	64.4 K	42%
Twitter	4.4 K	3%
YouTube	57 K	37%
Instagram	27 K	18%
Total	152.8 K	100%

Additional tables are available in Appendix (A).

Figure 61. Average interactions per post across all platforms for *The Late Show*.



On a final note, following are some general observations on the overview of audience interactivity over the four different social media platforms. In both shows, audience interactions were divided between likes on YouTube and Twitter, and reactions of the classic Like, Love, Haha, Care, Wow, Sad, and Angry displayed on Facebook and Instagram. Audience members tend to use these interaction as a mechanism of responding to any post more than any other types of interaction; they prefer the easiest fastest way of expressing their opinions silently by simply showing how they feel about a certain post without actually expressing that opinion using their own words in a comment.

In addition, another notable observation is that both shows actually display the same content of photos, videos, and statuses on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram. However, YouTube, because of the nature of the platform itself where only videos can be displayed, does not share the same content with the other platforms in both shows under examination.

4.4.3 Analysis of users' comments on social media platforms

In order to have a general overview on the audience interaction with the jokes mentioning Arabs and Muslims on political satire shows, a textual analysis was carried out on the first displayed comments on a selection of posts from the four social media platforms: Facebook,

Twitter, YouTube, and Instagram. The selected posts are the most commented posts related to Arabs or Muslims.

The total number of comments analyzed from the two satirical shows under examination is $N=140$ comments. The analyzed comments from Facebook posts are $N=40$, the replies to posts in Twitter are $N=30$, YouTube comments on videos analyzed are $N=36$, and Instagram comments are $N=34$.

The comments were analyzed based on several aspects including the display of the comment and whether it was text only, emojis only, or a mixture of both text and emojis, which are graphic symbols representing facial expressions, gestures (e.g., thumbs up or waving), objects (e.g., vehicles), and even actions (e.g., running or dancing) used to reflect a specific sentiment or as a substitute for linguistic text (Tian et al., 2017, p. 12).

Moreover, the textual analysis of the comments examined the relevance of the displayed comments to the post. Agreement or disagreement of the comment with the issue or topic of the joke was also analyzed to measure the degree of support of or opposition to the joke displayed on the post.

Additionally, the sentiment of the comments was examined by determining whether the comments carry a positive or negative sentiment in its context according to Contextual Polarity in Phrase-Level Sentiment Analysis developed by Wilson et al. (2005). Furthermore, the researcher investigated the existence of any stereotypes with regard to Arabs or Muslims mentioned in the comments. Finally, Arab countries and individuals mentioned in the comments were examined.

4.4.3.1 Analysis of users' comments on Facebook

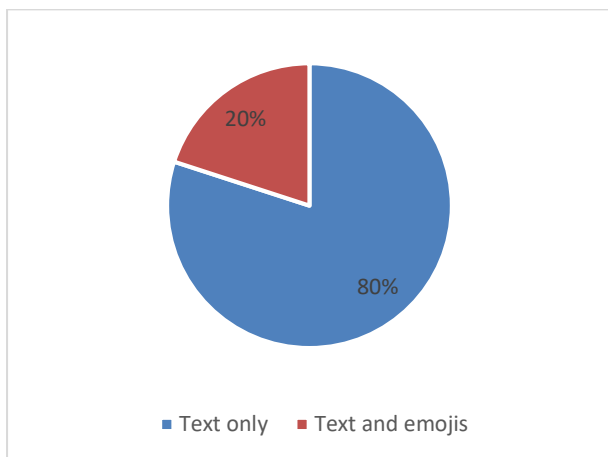
The analysis of the comments on the four most commented posts on the official Facebook pages of the two satirical shows under examination, *The Daily Show* and *The Late Show*, was carried out on a total of $N=40$ comments from the eight selected posts. The selected posts with reference to Arabs and Muslims were as follows: "The Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman and the purge he executed on his own family members," "Jeff Bezos's mobile phone being hacked by the crown prince of Saudi Arabia." "President Trump announcing the Muslim travel ban," "the abandoning of Kurds fighters by the American army after withdrawing from Syria," "Trump waiting for Saudi Arabia to tell him which country to go to war with," "Trump first visit to the Middle East, starting his visit with Saudi Arabia," "Trump first executive order

as the Muslim travel ban,” and “the involvement of the crown prince of Saudi Arabia in the murder of Jamal Khashoggi.”

With regard to the analysis of the displayed comments on the mentioned posts, as shown in Figure 62, the majority of the displayed comments, 80%, were text only comments from users adding their opinion, agreeing or disagreeing with the post. Furthermore, only 20% of the displayed comments were a mixture of text and emojis, where users infrequently used emojis in their comments as a method of expressing their feelings or opinions.

However, when used, emojis were applied as a supporting linguistic tactic to elaborate more what they need to express through this comment. Finally, from the analyzed comments, there were no comments displayed as only emojis without any text, which indicates audience preference for displayed written texts to express their linguistics needs.

Figure 62. Comments displayed on Facebook posts.

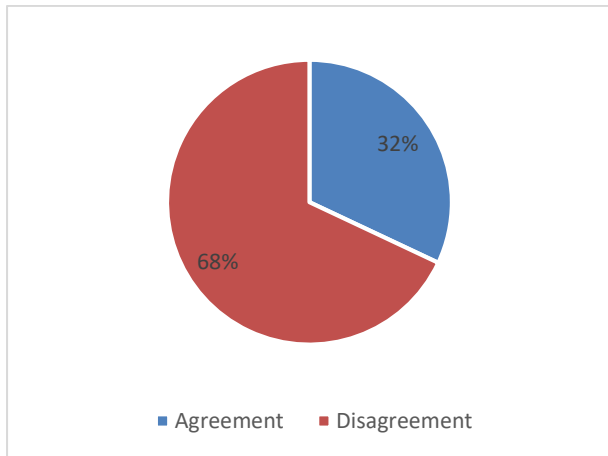


In addition, the textual analysis of the comments relied on examining the relevance of the comments to the post displayed. It was found that 95% of the comments displayed on the posts were relevant to the topic of joke, where users either commented on the posts with serious tone opinions or used some sarcastic comments on the joke mentioned in the posts under examination.

With regard to the agreement or disagreement of the comment with the issue or topic of the joke, the selected posts were actually criticizing President Trump and his political decisions. In addition, other posts were mocking Mohammed bin Salman, the Saudi crown prince, his actions, and his relation to the United States.

As shown in Figure 63, the analysis showed that 68% of first displayed comments on these posts demonstrated disagreement with the topic related to Arabs. The comments disagreed with Trump's decisions and mocked them as well. In addition, several comments revealed a disagreement with the actions of the Saudi prince and criticized him at a personal level.

Figure 63. Types of opinions in Facebook comments.



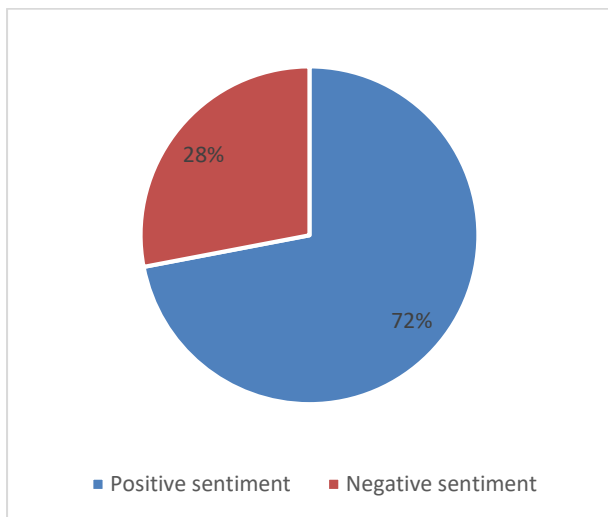
Moreover, for analyzing the polarity of Facebook comments on the selected posts with regard to Arabs or Muslims related topics, whether they are positive or negative, the researcher relied on sentiment analysis, which is considered one of the most reliable techniques for analyzing subjective content such as opinions sentiments and their polarity on social media platforms (Arya et al., 2020).

The analysis of the first displayed comments on the selected posts demonstrated that 72% of the displayed comments contained positive sentiment in their context (Figure 64) according to Contextual Polarity in Phrase-Level Sentiment Analysis developed by Wilson et al. (2005).

In other words, for both satirical shows, *The Daily Show* and *The Late Show*, the majority of comments displayed on their Facebook posts related to Arabs or Muslims included positive connotations in the opinions expressed by audience.

In addition, it is also worth noting that the negative sentiment in the displayed comments actually targeted President Trump and his actions or decisions. This result corresponds to the content analysis of the jokes in both shows, where the majority of the jokes were focusing on criticizing Trump's political actions and decisions as the head of the state with regard to Arabs and Muslims.

Figure 64. Comments sentiment on Facebook.



Additionally, the textual analysis of the common stereotypes mentioned in the first displayed comments on the Facebook posts for both shows demonstrated that the common stereotype was that Saudi Arabia is a very rich country that controls the United States because of the amount of investments and business deals both countries share together.

Consequently, the United States lets the Saudi crown prince get away with the murder of the Saudi journalist Jamal Khashoggi, in addition to Saudi Arabia bombing Yemen for years without facing any consequences for all these actions.

Moreover, the previous result is highlighting the common stereotypes in the Facebook comments for both shows under investigation, which is related to Saudi Arabia being a rich country trying to control other countries, just by being rich.

This result indicates that the highest mentioned Arab country in the audience comments on Facebook posts for both shows was Saudi Arabia, as five out of the eight most commented posts on Facebook for both shows was related to Saudi Arabia.

Likewise, this result also corresponds to the results of the content analysis of the jokes, where Saudi Arabia was the highest mentioned Arab country in the jokes.

Finally, with regard to the highest mentioned individuals in the comments of the Facebook posts for both shows, President Trump and the Crown Prince of Saudi Arabia Mohammed bin Salman are the highest mentioned individuals related to Arabs in the Facebook comments of both shows.

This result corresponds to the result of the content analysis of the jokes, where President Trump and the Saudi prince Mohammed bin Salman were also the highest mentioned individuals.

The figures below are examples of posts on the official Facebook pages of both shows and the first displayed comments on them.

Figure 65. A screenshot of a video posted on *The Daily Show* official Facebook page.

The Daily Show ✓
26 January · 🌐

If Jeff Bezos can get hacked, what hope is there for any of us?

👍 🤔 😱 2.5K 147 comments 273 shares

Sandy Bouvier-Ingram
In a word- ZERO!
That is until GOOGLE release quantum computing!
COMING SOON!
Like · Reply · 31 w 1

Scott Nichols
That's easy, none of us is as interesting or as cool a target.
Like · Reply · 31 w 1

Missz Dee
Omg u are naturally funny. So in love with you sense of humor.
Like · Reply · 31 w

Vivek Menon
If true, the Saudi prince is very immature. I don't think anyone would have actually advised him to do that, even if espionage was their motto. An impulsive guy like that is very dangerous to be leading a country.
Like · Reply · 31 w 3

Source: *The Daily Show* official Facebook page (2021). A segment about how the crown prince of Saudi Arabia personally hacked the personal phone of Jeff Bezos, Amazon CEO, in addition to a screenshot of the first comments in the thread of comments on the post.

Figure 66. A screenshot of a video posted on *The Daily Show* official Facebook page.

The Daily Show ✓
8 November 2017 · 🌐

Trevor unpacks all the news out of Saudi Arabia, America's kooky, rich uncle who occasionally beheads people. <http://on.cc.com/2hlgqpw>

Like · Reply · 2 y

Vicente Arches
Is it really purging against corrupt high profile Saudis or just so to allow King Salman's son continue to reign when the King either abdicate his thrown or is gone due to health reasons. The recent killings of several Saudi royals are also highly questionable? Maybe this is greed for power?

Like · Reply · 2 y · Edited

Osama Sam Hadanah
Saudi Arabia is nothing but a rich US territory... simple as that!

Like · Reply · 2 y

Michael Romanski
Don't they own the US?


Like · Reply · 2 y

↳ 2 replies

Vahid Hadavi
Saudi Arabia is bombarding Yemen for almost 3 yrs, killed thousands of children with American weapons and now started crying and accusing half of middle east, after a single rocket passed their territory the last week. It's as ridiculous as Trump's hair!


Source: *The Daily Show* official Facebook page (2021). A segment about how the crown prince of Saudi Arabia arrested several Saudi princes and locked them down in a five star hotel, in addition to a screenshot of the first comments in the thread of comments on the post.

Figure 67. A screenshot of a video posted on *The Late Show* official Facebook page.


 **The Late Show with Stephen Colbert** · Follow
17 September 2019 · 🌐


Trump Is Waiting For Saudi Arabia To Tell Him Who To Attack


America's top unintelligence official tweeted that he is awaiting direction from the Saudis before deciding on how and when to retaliate against the perpetrators of this weekend's drone strikes. See less





👍 Like 💬 Comment ➦ Share 🗨️ 🤔 🙄 7.8K · 669 comments


 **Tricia Bryan**
In the history of...of... in all history, priceless!
Like · Reply · 50 w 🗨️ 🤔 🙄 127
↳ 4 replies

 **Tee Em David**
Very unfortunate what has become of this nation.... Losing face value each day.
Like · Reply · 50 w 🗨️ 🤔 🙄 16
↳ 1 reply

 **John Fuller**
So tragic, we have become a nation for hire.
Like · Reply · 50 w 🗨️ 🤔 🙄 74
↳ 7 replies

 **Monica Stamm**
He's waiting on them? They have a military, and their own people, who we train.
Like · Reply · 50 w 🗨️ 🤔 🙄 28
↳ 3 replies

 **Eric Van Bezooijen**
Would you buy a used car from this man? "This car is the safest car in the entire universe and all alternate dimensions."
Like · Reply · 50 w 🗨️ 🤔 🙄 5

 **Judy Johnson Haga**
I love getting news from Stephen Colbert. He makes the news more bearable.
Like · Reply · 50 w 🗨️ 🤔 🙄 140
↳ 5 replies

Source: *The Late Show* official Facebook page (2021). A segments about USA going to war with Iran to protect Saudi Arabia, in addition to the first replies to the posted video.

Figure 68. A screenshot of a video posted on *The Late Show* official Facebook page.

 **The Late Show with Stephen Colbert** · Follow
18 October 2018 · 🌐

Trump Refuses To Criticize Saudi Arabia's "Mr. Bonesaw"
Donald Trump is showing Saudi Arabia that alleged human rights violations will be met... See more



Like Comment Share 9.1K · 1.1K comments

Susan Noesen
450 million purchase of military equipment and stuff excuses the murder of a journalist. I'm in need of a different president.
Like · Reply · 1 y 17

Graham Fowler
Don't worry, he put Kushner in charge. He'll saw through the investigation, bone chilling as it may be, looking through all the parts, until he reaches a dead end.
Like · Reply · 1 y 64
"Most relevant" is selected, so some replies may have been filtered out.

Kathy DiNardo
I think you are one hundred percent correct ! Nicely said !
Like · Reply · 1 y 6
↳ View 3 more replies

Courtney Herlihy
"The world looks to America for moral authority" lolololololololol 🤔🤔🤔🤔🤔 no we dont yhe rest of the world sees America as. Third world country
Like · Reply · 1 y 14
↳ 4 replies

Charles Gibson
It's utterly outrageous that Trump, the spineless pathological liar, is, once again, covering up information that our own citizens should know. He cares more about keeping the Saudi \$\$\$\$ arms deal in tact than the dismemberment of a journalist.
Like · Reply · 1 y 4

Source: *The Late Show* official Facebook page (2021). A segment about President Trump refusing to admit the involvement of the Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman in the murder of the Saudi journalist Jamal Khashoggi, in addition to the first replies to the posted video.

4.4.3.2 Analysis of users' comments on Twitter

The analysis of the comments on the four most commented posts on the official Twitter accounts of the two satirical shows under examination, *The Daily Show* and *The Late Show*, was carried out on a total of $N=30$ first displayed comments from the selected posts.

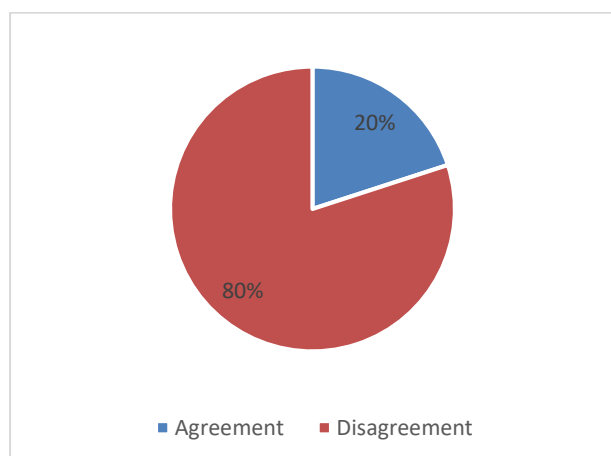
The majority, 95%, of the first displayed comments on (or replies to) Twitter posts for both shows were text only comments from users expressing their opinions, agreeing or disagreeing with the post, whereas a very low percentage of the replies, only 5%, used a mixture of text and emojis.

In that context, emojis were usually displayed as an elaboration for what is written in a textual form. This result also corresponds to that of audience's comments displayed on Facebook, where the preferences were oriented towards written texts to express linguistics requirements.

In addition, the textual analysis of the comments, regarding the relevance of the comments to the post displayed, showed that 95% of the comments displayed on the Twitter posts were relevant to the topic of joke, whereas users relied on commenting on the posts using a sarcastic tone on the jokes mentioned in the posts under examination.

Furthermore, the agreement and disagreement with the content of the posts related to Arabs were divided as follows: 80% disagreed and 20% agreed (Figure 69). The posts were as usual criticizing President Trump and his political decisions. The topics were referring to his decisions to go to another war with Iran just to protect Saudi Arabia, in addition to his announcement of withdrawing troops from Syria. Consequently, the majority of the comments disagreed with Trump's decisions and were making fun of how incompetent he was as a president.

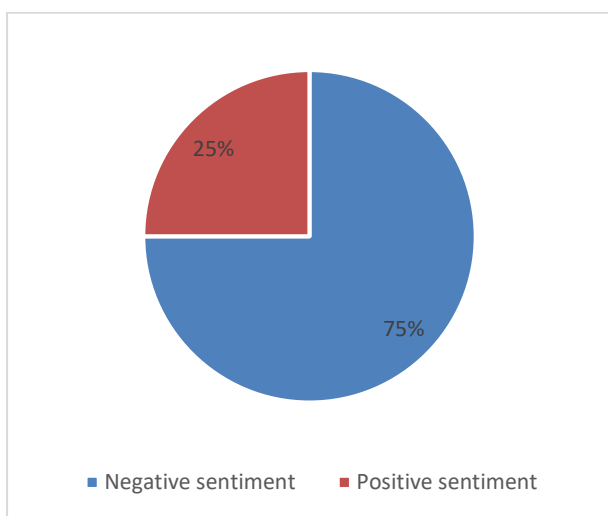
Figure 69. Types of opinions in Twitter comments.



A textual analysis was conducted to measure the polarity of the first displayed comments on Twitter accounts for the two satirical shows under examination. With regard to posts mentioning Arab countries, as shown in Figure 70, the results of the sentiment analysis indicated that the majority of comments, 75%, carried negative sentiment in their context according to Contextual Polarity in Phrase-Level Sentiment Analysis developed by Wilson et al. (2005).

It is worth mentioning that the negative sentiment of the comments was not targeting Arabs or Muslims, but it was completely focused on President Trump and his actions.

Figure 70. Comments sentiment on Twitter.



Moreover, the textual analysis of the first displayed comments on Twitter's posts for the satirical shows under examination defined some stereotypes regarding Arabs and Muslims. The stereotypes were consistent with those mentioned in Facebook comments, that Saudi Arabia is a rich country and the United States will go to war with Iran because Saudi Arabia is in trouble.

In the same context, the comments mentioned the fact that the United States is withdrawing from Syria and will no longer fight ISIS just because Syria does not have oil or cash to offer to the United States to fight their wars for them like Saudi Arabia is doing. Furthermore, the stereotypes mentioned in the comments of Twitter posts are also consistent with the stereotypes mentioned in the jokes of both satirical shows, *The Daily Show* and *The Late Show*, where

Saudi Arabia was referred to, more than once, as a rich country trying to control the world with its money.

Additionally, the highest mentioned Arab countries in the comments on Twitter were Saudi Arabia and Syria, respectively. This result reflects the focus of the posts, which mentioned more than once jokes referring to how the United States is going to war with Iran to fight for Saudi Arabia, in addition to jokes about the army of the United States withdrawing from Syria to be involved in another war in another Arab country.

In addition, there were several mentions to Iraq in the comments, in reference to the war in Iraq, being a battleground for the war between Iran and the United States. Moreover, Iraq has been mentioned in the comments displayed on the posts of Twitter in reference to the war in Iraq in 2002, which actually was a big lie that the United States still suffers from its consequences until this day.

Finally, with regard to the highest mentioned individuals in the comments of Twitter posts for both shows, President Trump was the highest mentioned individual related to Arabs. In a notable observation, this result corresponds to the results of the content analysis of the jokes for both shows, where President Trump was also the highest mentioned individual. This result is actually consistent with the fact that the content of the jokes was constantly mocking and criticizing President Trump, his actions, decisions, speeches, and even his personality traits, so it was comprehensible that the results of the comments analysis reflect the same cynical attitude towards President Trump.

The figures below are examples of posts on the official Twitter accounts of both shows and the first displayed comments on them.

Figure 71. A screenshot of a video posted on *The Daily Show* official Twitter account.

The Daily Show  @TheDailyShow · Sep 19, 2019
Trump and Saudi Arabia have forged a deep bond over their shared love of cold, hard cash.

Watch the entire act: youtu.be/sXXKIL5b0K4

Arābian Fights
WHETHER AMERICA WILL GO TO WAR WITH IRAN,

33 231 923

Mr.almost @Mralmost13 · Sep 19, 2019
Replying to @TheDailyShow
so funny ,I really like this guy's bullshit!

el mejor chef del mundo @AdrianzioVale · Sep 23, 2019
Replying to @TheDailyShow
#MAGA

BeautifulWahala 🍌🤔 @Vickydilish1 · Sep 19, 2019
Replying to @TheDailyShow
😂😂

Suz Mar @march7_mar · Sep 19, 2019
Replying to @TheDailyShow
He really needs to recuse himself from any decisions regarding the Saudis as he it totally compromised!!

Source: *The Daily Show* official Twitter account (2021). A segment about how USA is going to war with Iran to defend the properties and interests of Saudi Arabia because they simply pay in cash, in reference to the multibillion dollar deals the Saudis have with the USA, in addition to the first replies to the tweeted video.

Figure 72. A screenshot of a video posted on *The Daily Show* official Twitter account.

The Daily Show  @TheDailyShow · Jun 20, 2019 ▼
Iraq War 2: This Time, It's Persial

The Daily Show  @TheDailyShow · Jun 20, 2019
Can America at least wrap up one of its other wars before starting a new one with Iran?



16 119 602

TheOracle @keysersozenow · Jun 20, 2019 ▼
What threats?
19

Flipper the Priest @AberJohnny · Jun 20, 2019 ▼
Replying to @TheDailyShow
Those weapons won't drop themselves. Come on America , get a grip.
19

Torque LeBoeuf @TorqueLeBoeuf · Jun 20, 2019 ▼
Replying to @TheDailyShow
No no...we have to stay in Iraq and Afghanistan, and Keep bribing Pakistan and Turkmenistan so we can keep Iran totally surrounded before we invade. It's the Dick Cheney plan reloaded.
19

The Devil's Advocate @wbmerriman · Jun 20, 2019 ▼
Replying to @TheDailyShow
Would you please stop being so funny. This is not funny. I mean it is, but it's not. So, please stop. I can't stop laughing/crying. It hurts.
1

Source: *The Daily Show* official Twitter account (2021). A segment about how USA is going to war with Iran although there are still ongoing wars in Syria, Iraq, and Afghanistan, in addition to the first replies to the tweeted video.

Figure 73. A screenshot of a video posted on *The Late Show* official Twitter account.

A Late Show 
@colbertlateshow

TONIGHT: Will Trump go to war with Iran? Even he doesn't know. #LSSC

1:51 8.8K views

2:39 AM · Sep 19, 2019 · [Twitter Media Studio](#)

54 Retweets 6 Quote Tweets 168 Likes

Ivalinajade @ivalinajade · Sep 19, 2019
Replying to @colbertlateshow
He will just deny it all later

greykitten @greykitten · Sep 19, 2019
Replying to @colbertlateshow
Will he go to prison?
I can't wait for him to wear a jumpsuit that matches his skin.

tombettis3 @tombettis3 · Sep 21, 2019
Replying to @colbertlateshow
Yikes. I'm gonna just pray and work HARD for a change!

Buddy Bennett @buddyabc123 · Sep 19, 2019
Replying to @colbertlateshow
If he did you would say that's bad and if he doesn't you'll say that's bad !!

Source: *The Late Show* official Twitter account (2021). A segment about President Trump having no clear plan about the reason for going to war with Iran for the benefits of Saudi Arabia, in addition to the first replies to the posted video.

Figure 74. A photo posted on *The Late Show* official Twitter account.

A Late Show  @colbertlateshow · Oct 24, 2019 

Trump's speech explaining his Syria decision is making heads spin. #LSSC
[cbs.com/shows/the-late...](https://www.cbs.com/shows/the-late-...)



11 22 103 

 **Torque LeBoeuf** @TorqueLeBoeuf · Oct 24, 2019 

Replying to @colbertlateshow
Oil is worth defending, but humans are not?

   1 

 **Damian L. Malek**  @_Damian11 · Oct 24, 2019 

Replying to @colbertlateshow
Daily #MoronAlert when will this freak show be over?! #ImpeachAndRemove NOW! #ImpeachTrump @StephenAtHome #LSSC

 **Oldguy**   @Oldguydoingfor1 · Oct 24, 2019 

Replying to @colbertlateshow
Interesting point about the toddler, except a couple of toddlers on the loose could be catastrophic. We're only talking about a relatively small number of terrorists. Obviously a clear victory.

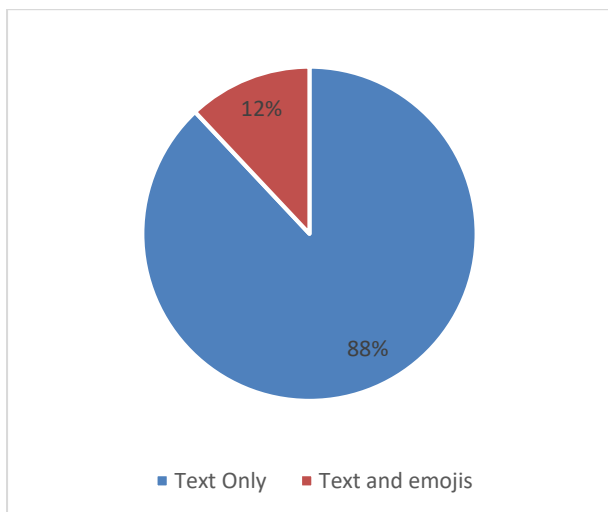
Source: *The Late Show* official Twitter account (2021). A segment about President Trump's decision to withdraw all the USA troops from Syria, in addition to the first replies to the posted video.

4.4.3.3 Analysis of users' comments on YouTube

The analysis of users' comments on YouTube was carried out on the highest commented Arab related videos, on the official channels of both satirical shows, *The Daily Show with Trevor Noah* and *The Late Show with Stephen Colbert*. The total number of comments analyzed was $N=36$. The videos included topics of “demonstrations going on all over the world including Lebanon,” “an Egyptian zoo painting a donkey to appear as a zebra,” “the Muslim ban,” “Trump’s first visit to the Middle East,” “Trump’s reaction to the murder of Saudi journalist Jamal Khashoggi,” “Jared Kushner’s response to the involvement of the crown prince of Saudi Arabia in the murder of Jamal Khashoggi,” “withdrawing the American troops from Syria,” and “the war with ISIS.”

The first aspect of analysis is concerned with the textual display of the comments, as shown in Figure 75. The majority, 88%, of the comments contained text only, while the other 12% contained a mixture of text and emojis. This result is consistent with the results of the comments displayed on other social media platforms, where the majority of the comments relied on plain text as a prime linguistic representation.

Figure 75. Comments displayed on YouTube.

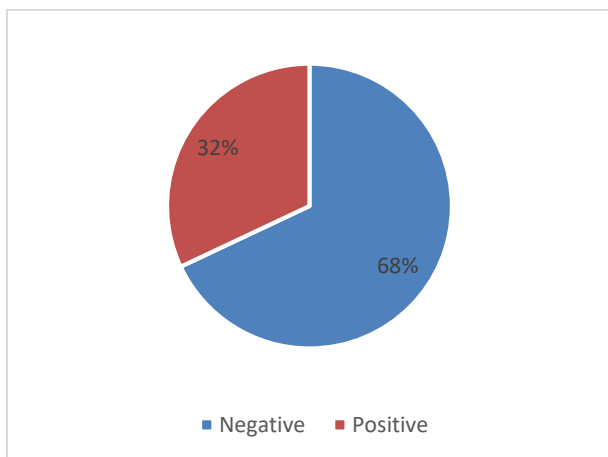


In addition, the majority, 80%, of the comments displayed on YouTube videos exhibited a relevance to the context of the jokes presented on the videos, while only 20% of the comments were not relevant to the topic of the jokes.

With regard to the agreement of the comments with the context of the jokes displayed on the YouTube videos, 75% of the comments were in disagreement about the topics of the jokes, where the majority of the topics mentioning Arabs involved several political decisions, actions, or statements from President Trump, so the comments were in disagreement about those actions.

Moreover, as demonstrated in Figure 76, the textual analysis of the comments polarity showed that 68% of the comments involved negative sentiment, which can be explicable, as the majority of the topics involving Arabs were war and conflict related, in addition to President Trump's involvement in those conflicts. Consequently, audiences' comments were reflecting a negative sentiment when expressing their opinion regarding these topics. On the other hand, 32% of the comments exhibited positive sentiment in their context, especially comments on the video mentioning demonstrations in Lebanon describing how peaceful and cheerful they are.

Figure 76. Comment sentiments on YouTube.



With regard to the stereotypes of Arabs or Muslims mentioned in the comments on the YouTube videos, the common stereotype mentioned was in reference to Jamal Khashoggi's murder, where the comments mentioned that Saudi Arabia is well known for its brutality in punishing people.

This stereotype was discussing the notion of the law in Saudi Arabia, which applies the beheading and cutting of hands as a punishment to certain crimes. Moreover, there was another stereotype mentioning how Egypt is full of mysterious and unorthodox animals' presentations since the ancient Egyptian civilization, in reference to the joke about the Egyptian zoo.

The previously mentioned stereotypes in the audiences' comments correspond to the stereotypes mentioned in the results of the content analysis applied to the jokes mentioning Arabs and Muslims in both shows under examination.

Furthermore, the mentioned countries in the comments involved Saudi Arabia, being the highest mentioned country, in addition to Egypt and Lebanon. Similarly, the content analysis of the jokes also stated those countries among the highest mentioned countries in the jokes.

Finally, the most mentioned individuals in the comments were President Trump and the crown prince of Saudi Arabia, Mohammed bin Salman, in addition to Jared Kushner, Trump's son-in-law and assigned advisor for the Middle East affairs.

This result also corresponds to the content analysis's results regarding the highest mentioned individuals in the jokes of both shows under examination, where Trump dominated the jokes of both shows and the crown prince of Saudi Arabia was also one of the highest mentioned individuals owing to the fact that Saudi Arabia was the highest mentioned Arab country in the jokes.

The figures below are examples of posts on the official YouTube channels of both shows and the first displayed comments on them.

Figure 77. A screenshot of a video posted on *The Daily Show* official YouTube channel.

#TheDailyShow #SoMuchNewsSoLittleTime

So Much News, So Little Time: International Protests Edition | The Daily Show

1,872,445 views · 31 Oct 2019

38K 859 SHARE SAVE ...

M McCoy 10 months ago (edited)
"People shouldn't be afraid of their governments. Governments should be afraid of their people."
Fight on!
1.3K REPLY
[View 34 replies](#)

Nadine S 9 months ago (edited)
It's long but you won't regret reading.
The wholesome "baby shark" video that you showed is nothing but a drop in the sea of amazing things that are happening during the revolution in Lebanon:
- the lebanese people have joined together in more than 10 major cities in Lebanon, everyday for the past 22 days...
Read more
127 REPLY
[View 3 replies](#)

Victoria Powers 10 months ago
"Civil unrest is a byproduct of extreme inequality"
Listen up America
1K REPLY
[View 47 replies](#)

IN A FLASH 10 months ago
You forgot about the one we're responsible for, Iraq.
529 REPLY

Source: *The Daily Show* official YouTube channel (2021). A segment about how demonstrations going on all over the world including Lebanon, in addition to the first comments on the posted video.

Figure 78. A screenshot of a video posted on *The Daily Show* official YouTube channel.



Ving Rhames's Terrifying Run-In with Police & An Egyptian Zoo's Fake Zebra | The Daily Show

882,970 views • 4 Aug 2018

12K 202 SHARE SAVE ...

bella 2 years ago
Poor Ving - This is America.
Poor Zebra - paint is toxic.
212 REPLY
[View 5 replies](#)

Laquitta Belmont 2 years ago
Egyptians are ahead of our times 😊
30 REPLY

Jack Sparrow 2 years ago
Tourist from usa :
Why that zebra sounds like Trump 😂😂😂
237 REPLY
[View 8 replies](#)

Jerrin 2 years ago
missed opportunity to call it zebrass
25 REPLY

Source: *The Daily Show* official YouTube channel (2021). A segment about an Egyptian zoo painting a donkey to look like a zebra, in addition to the first replies to the posted video.

Figure 79. A screenshot of a video posted on *The Late Show* official YouTube channel.

#LSSC #Colbert #Kushner
Jared Kushner Struggles With 'Is Donald Trump A Racist?'
1,460,301 views · 4 Jun 2019

The Late Show with Stephen Colbert
7.8M subscribers

byteresistor 1 year ago
"Is murder wrong?"
Kushner: I wasn't involved in that
1.3K REPLY
View 21 replies

AllenSJ5 1 year ago
"How on Earth did you get into Harvard?"
"I wasn't involved in that"
133 REPLY
View 3 replies

J C 1 year ago
You're right Jared, none of the people trump brought in are qualified for their jobs including you.
329 REPLY
View 2 replies

Tim's Virtual Reality 1 year ago (edited)
Wow. Hearing Kushner weasel his way through that was revealing. I am truly disgusted by him. What a slimy bastard.
181 REPLY

Source: *The Late Show* official YouTube channel (2021). A segment about an interview with Jared Kushner, president's advisor for Middle East affairs and son-in-law, when he was asked about the involvement of the crown prince of Saudi Arabia in the Khashoggi murder, in addition to the first replies to the posted video.

Figure 80. A screenshot of a video posted on *The Late Show* official YouTube channel.

Orbs And Swords: Trump's Weekend In Saudi Arabia

2,736,486 views • 23 May 2017

30K 2.5K SHARE SAVE

The Late Show with Stephen Colbert

Maidaan LEBON 3 years ago (edited)
Easy, Nobody cares about Trump in Saudi Arabia! you wanna know something about Arabs, they don't get intimidated like at all, and that's my ten year experience summary in the middle east.
67 REPLY
View reply

Ali Marzooq 3 years ago
The Arabic sign actually read,
DANGER!
Armored vehicles pass through, and dusty conditions ahead (actually it says dust in the air if we're being literal)
33 REPLY
View reply

vxx2010 3 years ago
am Saudi and it was so hilarious
i laughed so hard
ahhh we love how you americans always take every thing in a funny way
23 REPLY
View 3 replies

robcol125 3 years ago
I just love how Stephen disposes of every prop he uses.
293 REPLY
View 3 replies

Source: *The Late Show* official YouTube channel (2021). A segment about President Trump's first visit to Saudi Arabia and engaging in a sword dance with Saudis, in addition to the first replies to the posted video.

4.4.3.4 Analysis of users' comments on Instagram

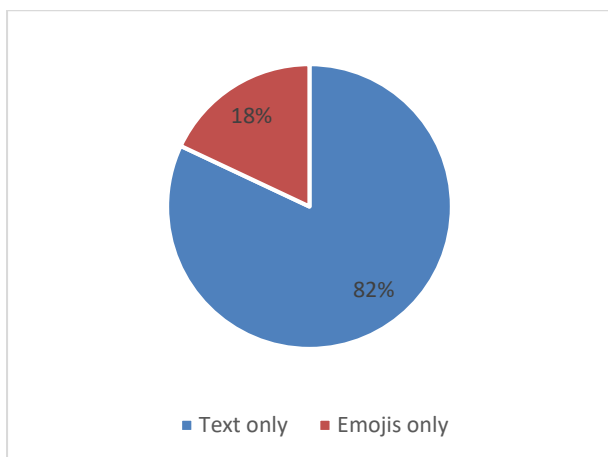
A textual analysis was conducted on users' comments on the official Instagram accounts for both shows under examination, *The Daily Show with Trevor Noah* and *The Late Show with Stephen Colbert*. The analysis was carried out on the first displayed comments on the most commented posts related to Arabs or Muslims, with the total number of comments analyzed being $N=34$. The posts analyzed mentioned the topics of "the war in Syria," "Trump's racists comments on Muslims," "Trump is worried about ISIS fighters escaping Syria," "the Saudi purge," "the second war in Iraq," "Trump announcing the recognition of Jerusalem as the capital of Israel," "the Muslim travel ban," and "Muslim immigrants in the USA."

The textual analysis of the comments revealed that the majority of the comments, 82%, contained text only, while the other 18% contained emojis only (Figure 81), with no comments containing a mixture of text and emojis as a form of linguistic expression.

This result is rather different from those of other social media platforms, as audiences' comments on Facebook, YouTube, and Twitter were all displayed in the form of text only or a mixture of text and emojis. This exhibits the audiences' difference in their expressive tactics; in other words, in users' comments across other social media platforms, emojis were used as a supporting linguistic approach for further amplification of what needed to be said through these comments.

On the other hand, Instagram users relied on emojis as an essential linguistic expressive method rather than regular use of written words.

Figure 81. Comments displayed on Instagram.



Furthermore, the relevance of the comments to the topics of the posts was found in 90% of the total displayed comments, while only 10% were irrelevant to the topic of the posts on Instagram.

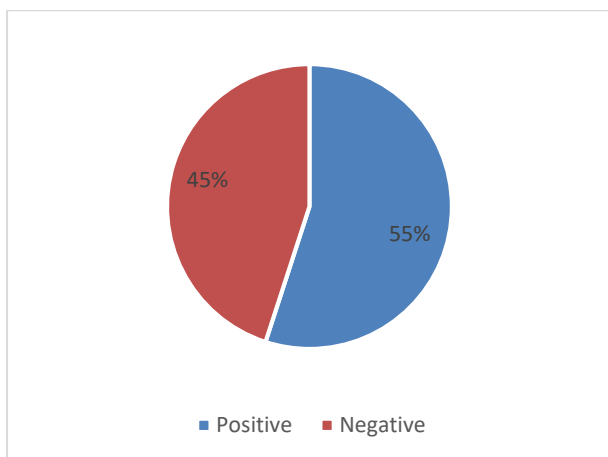
In addition, 85% of the total comments revealed disagreement with the content of the posts, while 15% agreed with the content. These results also correspond to the results apparent in other social media platforms' comments, when it comes to agreement with the topic of the posts.

The reasoning behind that is the previously mentioned notion that the majority of the posts related to Arabs and Muslims, for both satirical shows under examination on social media, are concerned with topics of war and conflict issues related to Arabs and Muslims, more importantly criticizing how President Trump reacts to those issues, so the disagreement is quite understandable.

Regarding the sentiment of the comments (Figure 82), the results of the textual analysis of the comment's polarity on Instagram posts for the two satirical shows under examination demonstrated that 55% of the comments expressed positive sentiment in their context.

On the other hand, 45% of the examined users' comments involved negative sentiment in their context as the displayed posts involved jokes about topics related to the war in Syria and Iraq, Trump's racism towards Muslim and Middle Eastern immigrants, and the internal conflicts in Saudi Arabia, which all embedded criticism and negativity in their treatment. Consequently, the comment sentiments reflected this negativity.

Figure 82. Comment sentiments on Instagram.



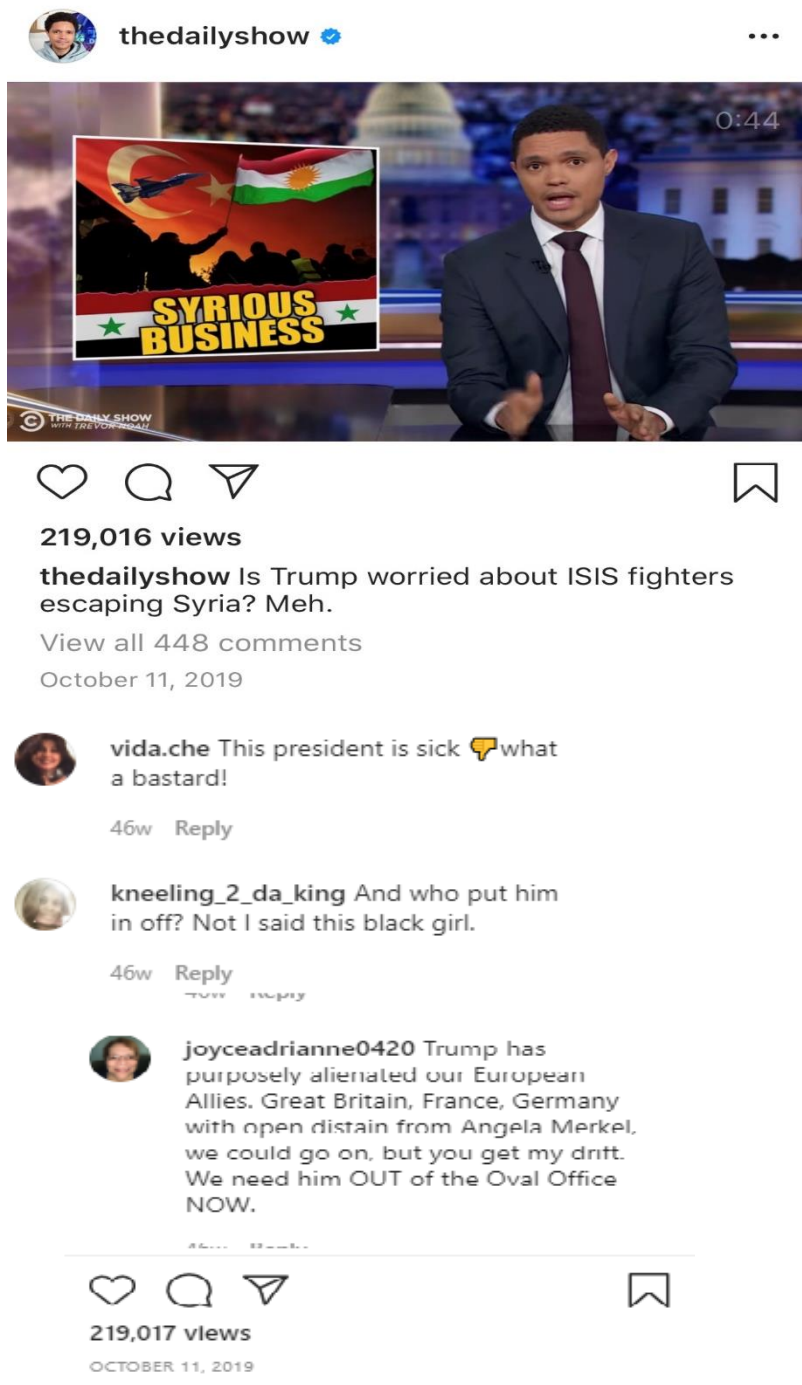
Audiences' comments on Instagram posts did not reveal a vivid mention of stereotypes concerning Arabs and Muslims, except for the stereotype of Middle Eastern countries being a war zone for the United States for decades, in reference to the first Gulf war, the invasion of Iraq, the second war in Iraq with Iran, and the war in Syria. The audience comments refer to how the United States has always considered the Middle East as a battle field, so its normal to regularly engage in wars, even if it is not logically justified, just to continue their accustomed behavior.

Regarding the mentioned countries in the audiences' comments on Instagram posts for *The Daily Show* and *The Late Show*, they correspond to the results of the mentioned Arab countries in the content analysis of the jokes of the two shows, where the comments mentioned Arab countries like Syria, Iraq, Saudi Arabia, and Palestine.

Furthermore, the only mentioned individual in the comments was President Trump. These mentions were in the context of criticizing and mocking his actions and attitude.

The figures below are examples of posts on the official Instagram accounts of both shows and the first displayed comments on them.





Figure 83. A screenshot of a video posted on *The Daily Show* official Instagram account.



Source: *The Daily Show* official Instagram account (2021). A segment about ISIS fighters in Syria, with a title for the segment of “*syroi*us business.” The word “serious” is written that way in reference to Syria. In addition, the first replies to the posted video are shown.

Figure 84. A screenshot of a video posted on *The Daily Show* official Instagram account.



-  **chris__phillips** So when was the last war the US won? Seems that for a country that has so much military might they just can't win.
49w Reply
-  **domiduarte_pati** Something tells me that Iran wouldn't mind going to war with anyone
49w Reply
-  **ouraniadesipris** As much as I like Trevor this isn't at all funny. Why do we need another useless pointless war in the middle east? Since when is the US Armed Forces for sale? #45 is beyond belief. He likes building walls does he want to be the author of the next one for all the you g who will die so he and his cronies can get richer. The Saudis can fight their own battles and the Iranians can defend themselves.
49w Reply
-  **humasahig** Painfully true.. and straight from Donald Trump's mouth..
49w Reply

Source: *The Daily Show* official Instagram account (2021). A segment about USA going to war with Iran to protect Saudi Arabia, in addition to the first replies to the posted video.

Figure 85. A photo posted on *The Late Show* official Instagram account.



Source: *The Late Show* official Instagram account (2021). A joke about President Trump immigration law and banning every immigrant to come to the USA although his wives are not Americans, in addition to the first replies to the posted photo.

Figure 86. A photo posted on *The Late Show* official Instagram account.



Source: *The Late Show* official Instagram account (2021). A joke about President Trump saying he is not a racist towards Muslims and does not have a racist bone in his body, with Colbert joking about him having cheese instead of bones in his body, in addition to the first replies to the posted photo.

4.5 Results Interpretation

Following the quantitative, qualitative, and social media data analysis, along with the comparative analysis of the three types, the following section is an interpretation of the data analysis to finally answer the research questions of the study accordingly.

4.5.1 Answering RQ1

To what extent do political satire shows cover Arab related news stories in comparison to Muslim related news stories?

Arab and Muslim related jokes scored a very low percentage of the total number of episodes, where *The Daily Show* mentioned Arab related jokes in 12% only of the episodes and *The Late Show* mentioned them in 10% only. This low visibility of Arab mentions in the shows reflects the perception of Arabs as an ethnic group. Apart from some rare exceptions, Arabs are only present in the jokes if the United States is part of the news story. However, the data analysis demonstrated that the sample jokes in both shows were dominated by Arabs as the main character focus in comparison to Muslims as the focus of the jokes, with a large statistical difference in favor of Arabs. Clearly, the satire shows under examination successfully displayed Arabs and Muslims as two separate groups.

4.5.2 Answering RQ2

What are the different topics concerning Arabs mentioned in political satire shows?

With regard to the Arab world, results showed that war and politics related topics dominated the content of the sample jokes in both shows. For several years now, the Middle East has been a hotspot and war zone with the United States being a part of most of these wars. Accordingly, war related topics dominated both shows, which clearly reflects Arab countries' image in these political satire shows, a group of troubled countries that live in an endless war. Moreover, miscellaneous topics, accidents, and social issues in Arab countries were occasionally mentioned in both shows.

It was also noted that, along with other two accidents mentioned in the sample jokes, the Jamal Khashoggi assassination accident had an excessive coverage in the two shows, simply because he was a writer and columnist at *The Washington Post* American newspaper and the

accusations of his murder referred to the involvement of the crown prince of Saudi Arabia, one of the United States' biggest ally in the region.

On the other hand, topics about the economic status of Arab countries were never the focus of any of the jokes related to Arabs in the sample jokes. This result offers some important insights about topic selection in both shows; with regard to Arab countries, apart from some seldom occasions, makers of these satire shows deliberately focus only on topics that involve the United States.

4.5.3 Answering RQ3

What are the different frames presented regarding Arabs and Arab countries in the American political satire programs?

The data analysis of the sample revealed the common frames used in the political satire shows, with the issue frame being the highest frame used in both shows. In addition, attribution of responsibility and conflict frame were frequently apparent in the sample jokes, which is consistent with other results indicating that most of the topics related to Arabs were politics and war topics.

Moreover, the human-interest frame was used in *The Daily Show* in jokes about Arabs more frequently than *The Late Show*, as jokes of *The Daily Show* involved some news stories that covered variety of topics, not just covering political issues and news about war.

It was noted that the morality frame was never used in *The Late Show* while the economic frame was never used in both shows, which is also consistent with the results reflecting the absence of social and economic issues related to Arabs in the sample jokes. These results illustrate the media agenda of both shows and the treatment of the issues related to Arabs.

4.5.4 Answering RQ4

What are the common stereotypes presented about Arabs in American political satire programs? How are Arabs portrayed?

The qualitative analysis of the sample was applied to discover the common stereotypes about Arabs embedded in the jokes in both shows under examination. One of the commonly perceived stereotypes about Muslims mentioned in the sample was the infamous "Muslims as terrorists" notion.

In addition, another common stereotype mentioned in both shows is the *Arabian Nights* tales. The famous Arabic stories were mentioned in jokes related to Arabs as a cultural representation of Arabs in several occasions. Moreover, both shows joked about the appearance of Muslim men and women, for instance, the stereotype of Muslim women covering their heads and faces with black scarfs and all Muslim men having beards.

Furthermore, some mentioned stereotypes reflected how the American media perceive specific countries. For instance, the jokes about Saudi Arabia referred to how everyone there is a wealthy sheik or prince. In a similar context, Egypt, with reference to its ancient Egyptian history, is famous for being a country of mummies.

4.5.5 Answering RQ5

What is the tone of jokes related to Arabs?

As mentioned earlier, the tone of the joke was examining whether the context of the joke is criticizing the United States and/or supporting Arabs within the given situation and so is a negative tone. In addition, if the context of the joke is criticizing Arabs and/or supporting the American side then, it is a positive tone. A neutral tone, on the other hand, is just presenting the joke without focusing on a specific party to mock or make fun of.

The results of the study demonstrated that the negative tone dominated the jokes in both shows, as the majority of jokes focused on mocking President Trump and the American polices when it comes to Arab and Muslim issues. On the other hand, both shows sometimes expressed criticism and mockery of Arabs in several jokes displaying stereotypes about Arabs and Muslims as well.

However, regarding Arab related jokes, *The Daily Show* exhibited a higher neutral tone than *The Late Show* especially if the joke is referring to a critical topic that has more one than side. As mentioned earlier, although the dominant tone in this discourse was frequently being negative towards the American side and supporting the Arab side, the support was not present throughout the whole sample. Sometimes, Arabs were the raw material for laughter in the context of jokes, while in other occasions jokes reflected the neutral tone and did not support neither side.

4.5.6 Answering RQ6

What is the degree of support for or opposition to the American foreign policies regarding Arab issues present in jokes?

The textual analysis of the jokes discourse and the satirical messages in both shows revealed that, although sometimes the jokes mock and criticize Arabs or Muslims, the majority of jokes were opposing, condemning, and disparaging President Trump and most of the American policies when it comes to Muslims and Arabs.

4.5.7 Answering RQ7

Who is the target of Arab related jokes?

According to the statistical analysis, President Trump was the highest mentioned individual related to Arabs in both shows, where criticizing and mocking him constitute a regular section in every joke. Apart from disparaging him as a political leader, both hosts frequently impersonated Trump on their shows on a regular basis, making fun of his voice, his language structure, and his body gestures in all of his speeches.

Similarly, Arab leaders were mentioned excessively in both shows as well. For example, the Syrian President Bashar al-Assad was mentioned several times in the sample jokes. Similarly, Prince Mohammed bin Salman, the crown prince of Saudi Arabia and the de facto ruler of the country, was the highest mentioned Arab leader in both shows.

Although there were several other Arab leaders mentioned in the sample jokes, both al-Assad and bin Salman were always the target of humor in the satirical messages in the sample jokes. This is a reasonable argument, as these two do not actually display signs of moral leadership because they are both responsible for attacking and harming their own people.

Finally, the Islamic state ISIS, located in Syria and Iraq for several years now, has been held responsible for many terroristic acts in the region and globally. In addition, the United States has been a part of the war on ISIS for several years in the Middle East.

Accordingly, ISIS was the target of several jokes related to Arabs in both shows.

4.5.8 Answering RQ8

What is the level of audience interactivity and perception of Arab related issues on the social media platforms of political satire shows?

The research investigated the level of audience interactivity and popularity of the satire shows under examination on different social media platforms, namely, Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and YouTube. The data analysis has demonstrated that, for *The Daily Show with Trevor Noah*, Facebook was the most popular social media platform in terms of the total number of fans across all the social media platforms.

Moreover, with regard to users' interaction, Facebook was also the highest platform in terms of the daily interaction of users on the official page of the show. On the other hand, Instagram was the lowest social media platform with regard to the number of total followers.

Moreover, with regard to the audience interactivity on the different social media platforms of *The Late Show with Stephen Colbert*, YouTube was the highest social media platform in terms of the total number of fans; however, when it comes to the average interactions per day, Facebook was the highest social media platform for this show. On the other hand, Twitter was the lowest social media platform in terms of the total number of followers for the official account of the show. Likewise, Twitter was the lowest in terms of average users' daily interactivity.

Moreover, with regard to audience comments on the different social media platforms, analyzing these comments can play a role in indicating the level of audience interaction on social media. The textual analysis revealed that the majority of the comments had positive sentiment with the topics related to Arabs in their context; even the ones expressing a negative sentiment were all focusing on Trump's actions and misconduct.

In addition, the majority of the first displayed comments on the social media posts were relevant to the context of the topic or joke. The analysis demonstrated that audience's perception corresponds to the results of the content analysis of the jokes, with regard to the highly mentioned Arab countries, mentioned individuals, and stereotypes related to Arabs and Muslims. These jokes are presented on their TV shows and later displayed on the official social media platforms of both programs.

5. Discussion and Conclusion

5.1 Remarkable Results

In conclusion, the results of the study at hand succeeded in bridging the gap in the literature review, by defining the image of the Arabs as a separate cultural group portrayed in the American political satire shows. Moreover, the research proposed a new theoretical perspective through using a multilevel analysis of the data by using mixed theoretical approach covering both linguistic and communicative perspectives to draw the whole picture of this topic, through applying both quantitative and qualitative comparative methodological approaches.

Regarding the issues concerning Arabs mentioned in the political satire shows, in general, war and politics related topics dominated the content of the sample jokes in both shows. Moreover, miscellaneous topics, accidents, and social issues in Arab countries were occasionally mentioned in both shows. On the other hand, topics about the economic status of Arab countries were never the focus of any of the jokes related to Arabs in the sample jokes.

With regard to the frames used in both political satire shows under investigation with regard to Arabs and Muslims, the examination of the sample jokes showed that the most common frame is the “issue frame,” being the highest frame used in jokes in both shows. Furthermore, the “attribution of responsibility” and “conflict” frames were frequently used in the sample jokes, which corresponds to the type of topics regularly mentioned in both shows in reference to Arabs, which are war and politics.

A qualitative analysis was applied to discover the common stereotypes about Arabs embedded in the jokes in both shows under examination. One of the commonly perceived stereotypes about Muslims mentioned in the sample was the infamous “Muslims as terrorists” notion.

In addition, another common stereotype mentioned in both shows is the *Arabian Nights* tales. The famous Arabic stories were mentioned in jokes related to Arabs, as a cultural representation of Arabs in several occasions.

Moreover, both shows joked about the appearance of Muslim men and women, for instance, the stereotype of Muslim women covering their heads and faces with black scarfs and Muslim men all having beards.

On the other hand, the in-depth examination of the data highlighted some ideologies in the humorous messages. One of the ideologies observed was related to the type of topics related to

Arabs tackled in the news and, respectively, in the shows; the topics were mainly political or war related topics.

In addition, the tone used in the jokes under investigation was always attacking the American policy; however, it did not exactly provide significant support for Arabs as cultural group when referring to them in the jokes. This result defines the ideological perspective of these shows regarding Arab countries.

Another remarkable result is related to the Arab countries frequently mentioned in the sample jokes; the focus was mainly on Iraq, Syria, and Saudi Arabia. Correspondingly, although President Trump was the dominant target of the jokes in political satire shows, even in jokes about Arabs and Arab countries, the most mentioned Arab leaders as the target of the jokes in the sample under investigation are Mohammed bin Salman, the crown prince of Saudi Arabia, and Bashar al-Assad, the Syrian president.

Furthermore, the Islamic state or ISIS, the terroristic group that has been located in Syria and Iraq for several years now, has been held responsible for many terroristic acts in the region and globally had its share of references in the sample jokes under examination as well.

Moreover, regarding the analysis of users' interactivity on the different social media platforms of political satire shows under investigation, the results demonstrated that Facebook and YouTube were the highest social media platforms in terms of total number of fans and user interaction.

The textual analysis of the audience comments on the social media platforms of *The Daily Show with Trevor Noah* and *The Late Show with Stephen Colbert* concerning Arabs and Muslims demonstrated that audience's perception corresponds to the results of the content analysis of the jokes. Comments on social media posts reflected the content of jokes with regard to stereotypes about Arabs and Muslims, Arab countries mentioned, polarity of comments, and individuals related to Arabs.

5. 2 Limitation of the Research

The following are the limitations of the methodological procedures applies in the research:

The first limitation is related to the content analysis as a data gathering technique, which is human error. Although the research applied the tests required to ensure reliability and validity, human error might have occurred unintentionally.

Moreover, another limitation is related to the qualitative analysis of the jokes, which is the external validity related to any qualitative research technique. In addition, there is also the concern of researcher's bias; however, the researcher tried to overcome any chances of researcher's bias as much as possible by consulting previous studies and following specific scientific models to reach the most suitable technique to conduct the qualitative analysis.

Additionally, one of the limitations of the research is related to the timeframe of the social media analysis being quite limited. However, the analysis of the social media platforms in this research is concerned with providing an overview on the audience interaction on several social media platforms, to have a general idea about the audience perception and popularity of the satire shows under examination on social media.

Another limitation is related to the sample of the research, that is, analyzing only two political satire shows, with purposive sampling technique that filtered the jokes keeping Arabs and Muslims jokes only.

Consequently, the sample in total became a limited number of jokes because of the limited focus on Arabs and Muslims in the discourse of the mentioned satirical programs. However, the researcher tried to overcome this shortage by conducting a multilevel analysis, including qualitative and quantitative comparative analysis, of the sample of the research in order to be able reach significant results and conclusions from the data gathered during the analysis.

5.3 Discussion

This section provides the discussion of the results of the research after conducting the quantitative, qualitative, and social media data analysis, along with the comparative analysis of the three types, and finally analyzing all these data together to reach the final and complete picture of the topic in question.

5.3.1 Discussing main topics concerning Arabs in political satire shows

The results of the research revealed that, from the total number of jokes aired in both shows through the three-year period of the analysis, only 10 to 12% were actually mentioning Arabs or Muslims. In addition, the analysis reflected some certain topics that are regularly mentioned in the discourse of the satire shows examined. In general, war and politics related topics dominated the content of the sample jokes in both shows. That is because, for decades, the

Middle East has been a hotspot and war zone with the United States being a part of most of these wars.

Moreover, miscellaneous topics, accidents, and social issues in Arab countries were occasionally mentioned in both shows. On the other hand, topics about the economic status of Arab countries were never the focus of any of the jokes related to Arabs in the sample jokes.

Similarly, the results of the analysis showed that the topics presented about Arabs and Muslims were focused on war and political conflicts in the Middle East. These results are consistent with the argument of Lind and Danowski (1998) who suggested that the coverage of Arab related news in the three major American television networks of ABC, CNN, and PBS, during the 90s, was very limited coverage of Arabs and Arab culture. In addition, this coverage was associated with war, violence, threats, and the Arab-Israeli conflict.

Therefore, the media representation of Arabs and Muslims has not changed in years and has been playing a major role in the reinforcement of Arabs and Muslims stereotypes. Moreover, the results of the analysis were a clear reflection of the positioning of the Arabs in the media mainstream and of the Arab countries' image in these political satire shows, as a group of troubled countries that live in an endless war.

The mentioned stereotypes contribute to the notion of the American media's ignorance with regard to the major events in the Arab world and the Arab culture as a whole. Moreover, this also corresponds to the mentioned orientalism ideologies presented by Said (1978) in his researches about the Orient and the Middle East.

In addition, the results display the role of infotainment programs in the visibility of topics concerning Arabs and Muslims, where they choose to frame war and political related topics and ignore any social or economic development issues in the Arab world.

5.3.2 Discussing media frames in political satire shows

With regard to the frames used in political satire shows under examination, the analysis of the sample has revealed that the highest frame used in both political satire shows is the issue frame. This result is consistent with the literature review, as Brewer and Marquardt (2007) argue that political satire programs rely on the "issue frame" in mocking the news media and political topics.

In addition, “attribution of responsibility” and “conflict” frames were frequently used in the sample jokes. These results also correspond to previous studies analyzing news frames. For example, Semetko and Valkenburg (2000) argued that “the attribution of responsibility” frame was the most commonly used frame in the news.

In addition, another commonly used frame in the news was the conflict frame, which also corresponds to the result of this research. Although Semetko and Valkenburg (2000) argument refers to the frames used in regular news media not satirical programs, Baum (2002) suggested that political satire programs are considered soft news because of their role in informing the public about political issues.

Consequently, the results of this research referring to the most common used frames in satire as a sort of news discourse were consistent with the frames used in regular news media.

Although the mentioned previous studies pointed out that the “economic,” “human-interest,” and “morality frames” were frequently used frames in the news media, with regard to Arabs and Muslims in satire shows, these frames were seldom used in the sample jokes.

This is also consistent with the results reflecting the absence of social and economic issues related to Arabs in the sample jokes. These results illustrate the media agenda of both shows and the treatment of the issues related to Arabs, as the media agenda of these satire shows ignores specific topics and keep them invisible.

5.3.3 Discussing stereotypes in political satire shows

One of the main objectives of the current research was discovering the stereotypes of Arabs and Muslims presented in the political satire shows under examination, and they were revealed through the qualitative analysis of the sample jokes.

One of the commonly perceived stereotypes about Muslims mentioned in the sample was the infamous “Muslims as terrorists” notion. This image is a deeply rooted stereotype regarding Muslims that has been presented in the Western media for decades. The results of the analysis were consistent with several previous studies analyzing the images of Arabs and Muslims in the media. For instance, Elayan (2005) carried out an analysis of several Hollywood movies from 1994 to 2000 to examine the representation of Arabs and Arab Americans in those movies; the results showed that Arabs were usually portrayed in a negative way as aggressive, hostile, or involved in terrorism.

Similarly, Shaheen (2003) argued that images in the American media have transformed lately to be mainly depicting Arabs as terrorist, ignorant, violent, and heartless people; images included Arabs presented as religious fanatics, murderers, rapists, and of course oil-rich sheiks. Most of these images are consistent with the stereotypes depicted in the sample jokes under investigation.

The image of Arabs and Muslims as terrorists was also a part of many comic and satirical narratives in the media especially after the September 11 era. Examples include the jokes presented by American stand-up comedian “Jeff Dunham” featuring a puppet called “Achmed the Dead Terrorist.” The puppet is shown as a skeleton with black bushy eyebrows, wearing a turban and having the stereotypical beard often associated with Muslim males (Culcasi and Gokmen, 2011). This image corresponds to the stereotypes of the sample jokes under investigation, as the jokes mocked the idea that Muslim men always have beards several times.

This image about Arabs and Muslims depicted as terrorists was not only present in the cinema, but also in the news, so it is not a matter of fiction narratives presented in movies; they are images reflected by actual politicians and displayed in the news media.

Merskin (2004) argued that President Bush’s public statements from September 2001 till January 2002 included all the stereotypical words that framed and constructed Arabs as “the enemy,” by identifying any one from Middle Eastern descendants as the enemy or as evil, calling them evil, bloodthirsty, and animalistic terrorists, with regard to the political conflict with Osama bin Laden and Saddam Hussein (Fish, 2001).

The fact that Arabs and Muslims are referred to as terrorists in the news media by the head of the state is also consistent with results of the analysis of this research. President Trump’s continuous public statements and tweets about Arabs and Muslims being terrorists were frequently criticized in both satire shows.

On a notable observation, the stereotypes of Muslims and Arabs as terrorists were mentioned in the discourse of both shows as jokes and as a criticism of President Trump’s continuous statements that Muslims and Arabs are terrorists. However, even though the idea is presented in the narrative of the joke, referring to the stereotypes in a humorous context can still help reinforce such image in the public imaginary.

In other words, making fun of Trump saying Muslims and Arabs are terrorists does not mean that satire shows are defending them, because simply it takes more than laughing about an idea to change it. As Weaver (2011) argues, placing jokes in a certain context could have embodied racism and serve the ideological function of offensiveness towards a particular group.

Similarly, Howitt and Owusu-Bempah (2005) discussed the notion of racist jokes as playing a role in presenting an ethnic culture as something insignificant to be laughed at not something to be valued, reinforcing racist ideology. Similarly, Medhurst (1990) mentioned that humor is associated with power; there are those who laugh and make the jokes and those who are laughed at, and in that case, ethnic minorities were the least powerful party.

In addition, another common stereotype mentioned in both shows is the *Arabian Nights* tales. The famous Arabic stories were mentioned in jokes related to Arabs, as a cultural representation of Arabs in several occasions. Both shows extracted the image presented in the early days of the film industry in the Western media about the Middle East and used it in the discourse of the jokes, by referring to the Genie of lamp, the flying carpet, and other famous tales from the renowned tales.

The images displayed in both satire shows clearly reflect the fact that images about the Arab world have not changed after 200 years, since the colonial era, when the orientalism ideologies started spreading about the Middle East and invading the Western media industry, to create the rooted images about Arabs as cultural group.

These ideological representations and narrative stereotypes about Arabs were mainly reflected in Hollywood cinema which has depicted Arabs as incompetent people living in the deserts and tropical oases, having imaginary props like magic carpets and genies (Al-Olaqi, 2012; Ridouani, 2011; Said, 2008; Shaheen, 2003). The satirical shows under examination relied on the fact that audience receiving these jokes have predispositions about the images from the *Arabian Nights* tales and the fact that they represent the Arab world.

This result about the audience predispositions with regard to jokes about the *Arabian Nights* is consistent with previous studies mentioning the fact that it is not possible to understand a joke or humor distant from its social or historical context. (Caldas-Coulthard, 2003; Chilton, 2004).

Similarly, Maslo (2016) argues that, in satire shows, in order for a joke to be understood, the listener/viewer needs to have background information about the situation, which is referred to as the “blend theory,” where two mental inputs are displayed.

In this regard, the jokes referring to the *Arabian Nights* narratives rely on the images about the Arab world rooted in the public imaginary, mainly from Hollywood movies, to deliver the joke intended to make people laugh, by simply blending both mental inputs: the one the public already have in their minds about the famous *Arabian Nights*' tales and the one they are seeing/hearing in the joke.

With regard to Arab women, the results of the analysis have revealed that Arab women are almost absent in most of the jokes about Arabs in both shows; however, there are some exceptions where Arab or Muslim women were mentioned. Nonetheless, Arab and Muslim women were mentioned as all dressed in black covering their heads and faces.

These images, which are divided between presenting women dressed in black and never mentioning them at all, actually correspond to the image presented about women for years in the media. According to Naber (2000), media has reinforced three stereotype images related to the Arab Middle Eastern Muslim women.

The first image is that women are always the victims of the irrationally violent behavior of Arab men. The second image is that Arab women are an overly oppressed group in the society in comparison to white European and American women.

Finally, another image about Arab women is the image of the "absent women"; that is, in comparison to the stereotypes of Arab men, which are clear and excessive in the media, stereotypes of Arab women are much harder to spot because of their absence in most of the narratives related to Arabs in media.

In addition, Yunis and Picherit-Duthler (2011) defined the image of Arab women in the media in recent years as being portrayed as sexless, victimized women wearing nothing but black and living in the shadow of a terrorist. This image is consistent with the results of the research; that is, in the few mentions of Arab women, that was exactly how they were referred to, as women covered in black, being actually mocked for that aspect and compared to ninjas or mailboxes.

Even though the image of Arab women as mysterious, majestically exotic females in the Orient is no longer visible in the media main stream, including satire shows, other stereotypical images still exist in the Western media. In other words, through years the image of the exotic female from the *Arabian Nights* tales has disappeared, and instead we now have the women covered in black or being actually absent from any narrative referring to Arabs or Muslims.

Furthermore, some mentioned stereotypes reflected how the American media perceive specific countries. For instance, the jokes about Saudi Arabia referred to how everyone there is a wealthy sheik or prince. Similarly, Egypt was mentioned several times, with reference to its ancient Egyptian history, as being a country of mummies. These images are considered an extension to the commonly known stereotypical images displayed in the Western media for years, where these images have been apparent in several Hollywood movies as a reflection of these two countries (Al-Olaqi, 2012; Ridouani, 2011; Said, 2008; Shaheen, 2003).

As mentioned earlier, these distorted images about Arab countries were considered as a justification for the continuous intervention in the Middle East for centuries from several Western countries. Accordingly, the region was seen as being in need of the Western civilization to help them to be civilized and free nations, or what is known as the “white man’s burden” in the Middle East during the colonial era (Melman, 2002).

This notion was based on the early Hollywood images about Arab and Muslim societies being cruel and backward. Moreover, in recent years, with the United States’ war in Iraq and Syria and having military bases and army troops in several other Arab countries, the justification for the intervention was modified to be fighting terrorism and helping Middle Eastern countries in gaining and protecting their freedom. Consequently, this was the new image presented about the Middle East, as a war zone that needs the help of the United States to bring peace to the region.

The identification of Arabs and Muslims as two separate groups, in their representation in the sample joke under investigation, was one of the main quests of this research. As per the results of jokes’ analysis, Arab and Muslim related jokes scored a very low percentage in the total number of episodes in both shows. The low presence of Arab and Muslims mentions in the shows can be a reflection of the image about Arabs as an ethnic group. The analysis of the jokes discourse indicated that, apart from some rare exceptions, Arabs are only present in the jokes if the United States is part of the news story.

Another notable observation demonstrated by the data analysis is that the sample jokes in both shows were dominated by Arabs as the main character focus in comparison to Muslims as the focus of the jokes with a large statistical difference in favor of Arabs.

The discourse of the political satire shows under examination displayed Arabs and Muslims as two separate groups, which is quite different from the regular images about the Arabs and Muslims being presented as the same cultural group, in a geopolitical area created by the colonial ideology called the Orient (Eisele, 2002; Said, 1978).

5.3.4 Discussing ideologies in political satire shows

According to Haigh and Heresco (2010) and Williams et al. (2004), examining the tone of jokes can be used through constructing categories that included three variables to describe the tone of each joke, the categories are either positive, negative, or neutral.

In his argument, van Dijk (2006) suggested that the adoption of ideologies usually carries the connotations that all positive notions are always associated with the ingroup of the speaker and all negative traits are attributed to the outgroup, trying to attack them by highlighting their defaults and their negative traits.

In this regard, the research at hand was examining the tone of the joke to identify whether the context of the joke is criticizing the United States and/or supporting Arabs within the given situation and so is a negative tone. In addition, if the context of the joke criticizes Arabs and/or supports the American side, then it is a positive tone.

On the other hand, if the context is just presenting the joke without focusing on a specific party to mock or make fun of, it is a neutral tone.

Results of the data analysis demonstrated that the ideology of both shows with regard to Arab issues was somehow favorable, as the negative tone commonly dominated the jokes in both shows. The majority of the jokes under investigation focused on mocking President Trump and the American polices when it comes to Arab and Muslim issues.

On the other hand, this result does not guarantee the ideological support of the American satire shows for the Arabs and Muslims. In fact, both shows sometimes expressed criticism and mockery of Arabs in several jokes displaying stereotypes about Arabs and Muslims as well.

In other words, criticizing the American president and the government does not necessarily imply that these satirical shows actually support the Arab side of the argument. Apart from some exceptionally controversial issues, the satirical shows actually supported the Arab or Muslims side.

It is worth mentioning that the attitude towards Trump's actions, in a rather polarized society in the USA, was also divided. The democrats viewed his actions as incompetent, while his supporters viewed his actions as the only way of "Making America Great Again" in reference to the name of his campaign. Either way, his actions with regard to Arabs and Muslims were always a joking material in satire shows.

This support was a result of understanding the logical consequences of the issue. For instance, the issue regarding Trump announcing the recognition of Jerusalem as the capital of Israel has been a controversial topic for decades, and one of the main challenges of any political administration of the United States is to reach a peaceful resolution in this regard.

However, with Trump's administration ignoring this geopolitical conflict between Palestine and Israel and all the years of peace negotiations, the satirical shows under examination did not only criticize Trump's actions, but also defend the Palestinian side.

One notable observation regarding Arab related jokes is that *The Daily Show* exhibited a higher neutral tone than *The Late Show* especially if the joke is referring to a critical topic that has more than one side. As mentioned earlier, although the dominant tone in this discourse was frequently being negative towards the American side and supporting the Arab side, the support was not present throughout the whole sample. Sometimes, Arabs were the raw material for laughter in the context of jokes, while in other occasions, jokes reflected the neutral tone and did not support neither side.

5.3.5 Discussing social media interaction

The final level of analysis conducted in this research was an analysis of the level of audience interactivity taking place on the official accounts of the two satirical shows under investigation on social media. In addition to analyzing the users' comments on the highest commented posts, concerning Arabs and Muslims, on the official accounts of the two satirical programs under investigation, four major social media platforms were examined: Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and YouTube.

These social media sites were selected because of their global popularity, as scholars argue that, in recent years, social media sites have reached almost 4 billion users worldwide, which is almost 45% of the global population (Kemp, 2019; Alexa 2020).

The data analysis revealed that, for *The Daily Show with Trevor Noah*, Facebook was the most popular social media platform in terms of the total number of fans among all the social media platforms.

Moreover, with regard to users' interaction, Facebook was also the highest platform with regard to the daily interaction of users on the official page of the show. On the other hand, Instagram was the lowest social media platform with regard to the total number of followers.

This result is consistent with the literature review that supported the notion of Facebook as one of the highest social media platforms in terms of the number of users, reaching over 1.6 billion users globally (Alexa 2020; Kircaburun et al., 2020).

Moreover, regarding the analysis of users' interactivity on the different social media platforms of *The Late Show with Stephen Colbert*, YouTube was the highest social media platform in terms of the total number of fans; however, when it comes to the average interactions per day, Facebook was the highest social media platform for this show.

On the other hand, Twitter was the lowest social media platform in terms of the total number of followers of the official account of the show and also in terms of the average users' daily interactivity.

Similarly, the results of audience interactivity for *The Late Show* were consistent with the previous studies suggesting YouTube as one of the highest interactive social media platform, with its platform being the second highest visited site in 2020, with a total of 2 billion users (Alexa 2020).

One notable observation is related to the type of user interaction over the four different social media platforms. In both shows under examination, the highest types of audience interaction were divided between the interactions of likes on YouTube and Twitter, and the reactions of the classic Like, Love, Haha, Care, Wow, Sad, and Angry displayed on Facebook and Instagram.

These results provide an overview on the interaction mechanism of responding to any post on these social media sites, as social media users prefer the easiest fastest way of expressing their opinions silently, by just showing how they feel about a certain post without actually expressing that opinion using their own words in comments.

In addition, the results of the analysis revealed another remarkable observation with regard to the type of material posted on the mentioned social platforms; that is, both shows actually displayed the same content of photos, videos, and statuses on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram.

On the other hand, with regard to YouTube, where the platform itself allows posting videos only, the content on the official channel of both shows was different from that on the other platforms, showing only videos from the episodes of the two shows.

As Bhaumik and Yadav (2021) stated, analyzing users comments on social media platforms provides an elaborative overview on the audience interaction and perception of the content displayed on social media. Therefore, in addition to the content analysis of the jokes, a textual analysis was performed on audience's comments on the posts concerning Arabs and Muslims of *The Daily Show with Trevor Noah* and *The Late Show with Stephen Colbert* on their official social media platforms, Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, and Instagram.

This analysis was carried out to have an inclusive understanding of audience's feedback about the jokes concerning Arabs and Muslims in political satire shows. The analysis demonstrated that audience's perception corresponds to the results of the content analysis of the jokes performed on their TV shows and later displayed on the official social media platforms of both programs.

The content of the comments on social media posts is divided into comments containing text only, emojis only, or a mixture of both (Tian et al., 2017, p. 12). The majority of comments on Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube were displayed in text only, in addition to some comments that displayed both text and emojis as a linguistic expression mechanism.

However, Instagram comments exhibited a difference in their content, in addition to the plain text of the majority of comments, Instagram users relied on emojis only as an expressive tactic in their comments.

Moreover, the majority of the first displayed comments on the social media posts were relevant to the context of the topic or joke, contrary to the suggestion by Garcia & Berton (2021) that irrelevant comments are usually displayed on every public social media post.

In addition, the majority of users' comments exhibited disagreement with the content or topic of the joke, where the main content of the jokes concerning Arabs or Muslims were criticizing President Trump and his political decisions.

In addition, the majority of topics were referring to his decisions to go to another war in the Middle East or his racism towards Muslims, in addition to the continuous defending of the misconduct of the Saudi crown prince in several occasions. Consequently, the majority of comments disagreed with Trump's decisions and were making fun of how incompetent he was as a president.

With respect to the polarity of sentiment in users' comments on different social media platforms, specifically Facebook and Instagram, the majority of comments expressed positive sentiment in their context towards the topics concerning Arabs and Muslims.

On the other hand, the majority of users' comments on Twitter and YouTube involved negative sentiment in their context according to Contextual Polarity in Phrase-Level Sentiment Analysis developed by Wilson et al. (2005). This result was explicable, as the majority of the topics involving Arabs are war and conflict related. Although some of the users' comments involved negative sentiment, it is worth mentioning that all the negative sentiments in their comments were directed towards Trump and his actions and misconduct, like his racism towards Muslims.

With regard to the countries mentioned in the audiences' comments on the different social media platforms of *The Daily Show* and *The Late Show*, the results demonstrated that the users' comments correspond to the results from the content analysis of the Arab countries mentioned in the jokes of both satirical shows.

In this regard, Saudi Arabia was the highest mentioned Arab country in the jokes; accordingly, it was one of the highest mentioned countries in the audience's comments, along with Syria and Iraq that were mentioned frequently in users' comments.

In addition, Lebanon, Egypt, and Palestine were mentioned occasionally in users' comments on videos that presented jokes about those countries.

As stated previously, according to the results of the content analysis, Donald Trump, former president of the United States, was the highest mentioned individual in the jokes examined. Hence, this result was reflected in the users' comments on different social media platforms, where Trump was the highest mentioned individual in the first displayed comments.

This result demonstrated that the focus of criticism in most jokes, even the ones mentioning Arabs or Muslims, was President Trump and his actions or political decisions; consequently, the focus of the audience's comments was also Trump and his frequent misconduct.

Furthermore, the most common stereotype mentioned in users' comments on different social media platforms is that Saudi Arabia is a rich country because of the oil they control, which consequently allows them to control other countries, including the United States. This stereotype was consistent with those mentioned in the jokes of both shows under examination.

5.4 Recommendations for Future Research

Future researches could be conducted on a larger scale to analyze the images of Arabs and Muslims in political satire shows in the United States and in European countries as well, to discover the portrayals of Arabs in different media presentations.

Moreover, the research at hand suggests conducting an analysis on a bigger sample with a larger time scale in order to examine the transformation of the portrayal of Arabs and Muslims over the years in the satirical shows.

The results of this research pointed out that Arab and Muslim women are rarely mentioned in the satirical context of the jokes examined. Consequently, this raises a question about the image of Arab and Muslim women in the comedy genre in international media. This is considered an important line of research into minority representation that could be carried out in the future.

In addition, with regard to Arab women, the research at hand also pointed out the absence of Arab women as hosts for satirical TV shows, which raises a question about the capabilities of Arab women in creating a humorous content and presenting it in any media context.

Another essential recommendation for future research is conducting both qualitative and quantitative studies that aim at examining the attitudes and perception of audience on an international scale, in the United States and Europe, towards the images presented about Arabs and Muslims in political satire shows.

Furthermore, it would be a rather vital line of research to conduct a thorough analysis on the audience perception of the information and news about Arabs and Muslims on social media, including the line of research concerning fake news, as social media is now facing the dilemma of spreading unreliable information and fake news on their platforms.

With regard to social media, examining the new trend of iconographies as a communicative tool in political satire on social media will be a very essential research track in the future. As these new communication tools are being used as an alternative linguistic tool instead of words as a means of expression especially in the world of cyber communication.

5.5 Closing Remarks

After spending over ten years studying and researching political satire from several perspectives and being an Arab Muslim woman, conducting this research and reaching these results have actually changed the researcher's perspective regarding how Arabs and Muslims are presented in Western media. After almost two centuries since the first distorted image about this cultural group was presented to the Western world, the image has not changed much yet.

Accordingly, it is rather important for the researcher, and as someone who belongs to a stereotypical cultural and religious group, to propose some suggestions on how to contribute to drawing a frank image about Arabs and Muslims.

The answer to that quest starts and ends with one word, the media. For years, the media has played an influential role in reinforcing these negative images about Arabs and Muslims for several reasons previously mentioned in detail.

Therefore, drawing a positive image must be also done through the media; for instance, Arab nationalities should be part of any production that involves a reference to Arabs to ensure the quality and truthfulness of the information presented about Arabs as a cultural group.

In addition, Arabs should produce their own media materials intended for the rest of the world, in addition to using social media as a tool of dissemination of these materials aimed at clarifying the misconceptions about Arabs and Muslims that are deeply inherited in the Western culture.

The proposed promotional materials could be in the form of documentaries, featured films, and even stand-up comedies or satirical shows as well. Previous studies have supported the idea that satire shows can have an informative role when it comes to political knowledge, in addition to its role in influencing public opinion; in this regard, satire shows could play a significant role in delivering a non-stereotypical image about Arabs and Muslims to the whole world.

Finally, continuous research should be conducted to measure the outcome of these proposed ideas and audience perception towards them, in addition to examining the differences in the perception of Arabs and Muslims as cultural groups on a regular basis to identify the level of transformation of the images of Arabs and Muslims in the media.

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Appendix (A): Additional Tables

Table A1. Arab countries mentioned in *The Daily Show*.

Arab countries mentioned	Frequency (N)	Percentage
Saudi Arabia	13	22%
Iraq	10	17%
Palestine	5	9%
Syria	16	28%
Sudan	4	7%
Egypt	2	3%
Lebanon	1	2%
Somalia	1	2%
Libya	2	3%
Yemen	2	3%
Algeria	1	2%
United Arab emirates	1	2%
Total	58	100%

Table A2. Arab countries mentioned in *The Late Show*.

Arab countries mentioned	Frequency (N)	Percentage
Iraq	10	22%
Saudi Arabia	16	35%
Syria	11	24%
Egypt	4	9%
Palestine	5	11%

Arab countries mentioned	Frequency (N)	Percentage
Total	46	100%

Table A3. Type of joke in *The Daily Show*.

Type of joke	Frequency (N)	Percentage
Visual	53	88%
Narrative	7	12%
Total	60	100%

Table A4. Type of joke in *The Late Show*.

Type of joke	Frequency (N)	Percentage
Visual	27	48%
Narrative	29	52%
Total	56	100%

Table A5. Focus of the joke in *The Daily Show*.

Focus of the joke	Frequency (N)	Percentage
Individuals	27	16%
Issues	25	15%
Events	25	15%
Country	47	28%
Multiple	46	27%
Total	170	100%

Table A6. Focus of the joke in *The Late Show*.

Focus of the joke	Frequency (N)	Percentage
Individuals	40	21%
Issues	47	24%
Events	9	5%
Country	45	23%
Multiple	51	27%
Total	192	100%

Table A7. Frames used in *The Daily Show*.

Frames used	Frequency (N)	Percentage
Issue frame	48	26%
Attribution of responsibility	42	22%
Human interest	6	3%
Conflict	44	23%
Morality	1	1%
Economic	0	0%
Multiple	47	25%
Total	188	100%

Table A8. Frames used in *The Late Show*.

Frames used	Frequency (N)	Percentage
Issue frame	54	27%
Attribution of responsibility	51	26%
Human interest	1	1%

Frames used	Frequency (N)	Percentage
Conflict	42	21%
Morality	0	0%
Economic	0	0%
Multiple	51	26%
Total	199	100%

Table A9. Individuals related to Arabs in *The Daily Show*.

Individual related to Arabs	Frequency (N)	Percentage
President Trump	43	57%
American government official	3	4%
Public personality	5	7%
Arab leader	13	17%
Arab government official	0	0%
Arab public personality	2	3%
Multiple	10	13%
Total	76	100%

Table A10. Individuals related to Arabs in *The Late Show*.

Individual related to Arabs	Frequency (N)	Percentage
President Trump	44	51%
American government official	0	0%
Public personality	4	5%
Arab leader	14	16%

Individual related to Arabs	Frequency (N)	Percentage
Arab government official	0	0%
Arab public personality	8	9%
Multiple	16	19%
Total	86	100%

Table A11. Character focus in *The Daily Show*.

Character focus	Frequency (N)	Percentage
Arabs	47	77%
Muslims	13	21%
Not identified	1	2%
Total	61	100%

Table A12. Character focus in *The Late Show*.

Character focus	Frequency (N)	Percentage
Arabs	42	71%
Muslims	13	22%
Not identified	4	7%
Total	59	100%

Table A13. Topics related to Arabs in *The Daily Show*.

Topics related to Arabs	Frequency (N)	Percentage
Social	2	3%
Political	25	41%
Economic	0	0%
War	23	38%
Accidents	3	5%

Topics related to Arabs	Frequency (N)	Percentage
Miscellaneous	8	13%
Total	61	100%

Table A14. Topics related to Arabs in *The Daily Show*.

Topics related to Arabs	Frequency (N)	Percentage
Social	1	2%
Political	20	34%
Economic	0	0%
War	21	36%
Accidents	11	19%
Miscellaneous	5	9%
Total	58	100%

Table A15. Tone of the joke in *The Daily Show*.

Tone of the joke	Frequency (N)	Percentage
Positive	10	17%
Negative	39	65%
Neutral	11	18%
Total	60	100%

Table A16. Tone of the joke in *The Late Show*.

Tone of the joke	Frequency (N)	Percentage
Positive	8	14%
Negative	44	77%
Neutral	5	9%
Total	57	100%

Table A17. Cross tabulation for Arab countries mentioned in both shows.

Arab country	Satirical show	Frequency (N)	Percentage	Total
Saudi Arabia	The Late Show	16	55%	29
	The Daily Show	13	45%	
Syria	The Late Show	11	41%	27
	The Daily Show	16	59%	
Iraq	The Late Show	10	50%	20
	The Daily Show	10	50%	
Palestine	The Late Show	5	50%	10
	The Daily Show	5	50%	
Egypt	The Late Show	4	67%	6
	The Daily Show	2	33%	
ISIS	The Late Show	9	43%	21
	The Daily Show	12	57%	
N/A	The Late Show	12	55%	22
	The Daily Show	10	45%	

Table A18. Cross tabulation for the type of joke in both shows.

Type of joke	Satirical show	Frequency (N)	Percentage	Total
Visual	The Late Show	27	34%	80
	The Daily Show	53	66%	
Narrative	The Late Show	29	81%	36
	The Daily Show	7	19%	

Table A19. Cross tabulation for the tone of the joke in both shows.

Tone of the joke	Satirical show	Frequency (N)	Percentage
Positive	The Late Show	8	44%
	The Daily Show	10	56%
	Total	18	100%
Negative	The Late Show	44	53%
	The Daily Show	39	47%
	Total	83	100%
Neutral	The Late Show	5	31%
	The Daily Show	11	69%
	Total	16	100%

Table A20. Cross tabulation for focus of the joke in both shows.

Focus of the joke	Satirical show	Frequency (N)	Percentage
Individuals	The Late Show	40	60%
	The Daily Show	27	40%
	Total	67	100%
Issues	The Late Show	47	65%
	The Daily Show	25	35%
	Total	72	100%
Events	The Late Show	9	26%

	The Daily Show	25	74%
	Total	34	100%
Country	The Late Show	45	49%
	The Daily Show	47	51%
	Total	92	100%
Multiple	The Late Show	46	47%
	The Daily Show	51	53%
	Total	97	100%

Table A21. Cross tabulation for frames used in both shows.

Frame used	Satirical show	Frequency (N)	Percentage
Issue frame	The Late Show	54	53%
	The Daily Show	48	47%
	Total	102	100%
Attribution of responsibility	The Late Show	51	55%
	The Daily Show	42	45%
	Total	93	100%
Conflict	The Late Show	42	49%
	The Daily Show	44	51%
	Total	86	100%
Multiple	The Late Show	51	52%
	The Daily Show	47	48%
	Total	98	100%
Human interest	The Late Show	1	14%
	The Daily Show	6	86%

Frame used	Satirical show	Frequency (N)	Percentage
	Total	7	100%

Table A22. Cross tabulation for individuals related to Arabs in both shows.

Individual related to Arabs	Satirical show	Frequency (N)	Percentage
President Trump	The Late Show	44	51%
	The Daily Show	43	49%
	Total	87	100%
American government official	The Late Show	0	0%
	The Daily Show	3	100%
	Total	3	100%
Public personality	The Late Show	4	44%
	The Daily Show	5	56%
	Total	9	100%
Arab leader	The Late Show	14	52%
	The Daily Show	13	48%
	Total	27	100%
Arab public personality	The Late Show	8	80%
	The Daily Show	2	20%
	Total	10	100%
Multiple	The Late Show	16	62%
	The Daily Show	10	38%
	Total	26	100%

Table A23. Cross tabulation for character focus in in both shows.

Character focus	Satirical show	Frequency (N)	Percentage
Arabs	The Late Show	42	47%
	The Daily Show	47	53%
	Total	89	100%
Muslims	The Late Show	13	50%
	The Daily Show	13	50%
	Total	26	100%
Not identified	The Late Show	1	20%
	The Daily Show	4	80%
	Total	5	100%

Table A24. Cross tabulation for topics related to Arabs in both shows.

Topics related to Arabs	Satirical show	Frequency (N)	Percentage
Social	The Late Show	1	33%
	The Daily Show	2	67%
	Total	3	100%
Political	The Late Show	20	44%
	The Daily Show	25	56%
	Total	45	100%
War	The Late Show	21	48%
	The Daily Show	23	52%
	Total	44	100%
Accidents	The Late Show	11	79%
	The Daily Show	3	21%
	Total	14	100%

Topics related to Arabs	Satirical show	Frequency (<i>N</i>)	Percentage
	The Late Show	5	38%
Miscellaneous	The Daily Show	8	62%
	Total	13	100%

Appendix (B): Coding Sheet

Coding categories

A. Date:

B. Channel:

C. Host:

1. Joke description:

2. Arab countries mentioned

3. Type of the joke

- a. Visual
- b. Narrative

4. Type of the visual joke

- a. Images
- b. Videos

5. Focus of the joke

- a. Individuals
- b. Issues
- c. Events
- d. Country
- e. Multiple

6. Character Focus in the joke

- a. Arabs
- b. Muslims
- c. Not identified

7. Frames used
 - a. Issue frame
 - b. Attribution of responsibility frame
 - c. Human-interest frame
 - d. Conflict frame
 - e. Morality frame
 - f. Economic frame
 - g. Multiple

8. Topics related to Arabs
 - a. Social
 - b. Political
 - c. Economic
 - d. War
 - e. Accidents
 - f. Miscellaneous

9. Individuals related to Arabs
 - a. President Trump
 - b. American government official
 - c. Public personality
 - d. Arab leader
 - e. Arab government official
 - f. Arab public personality
 - g. Multiple

10. Tone of the joke
 - a. Positive
 - b. Negative
 - c. Neutral

Appendix (C): Coding Scheme

Coding categories

A. **Date:** the date of the episode

B. **Channel:** the channel airing the show

C. **Host:** the host of the show

1. **Joke description:** briefly mentioning what the joke is about

2. **Arab countries mentioned:** the names of the countries mentioned in the joke

3. **Type of the joke**

a. Visual	The visual jokes include an image or a video commented on by the host in humorous context.
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b. Narrative	The narrative joke is where the host of the show has a humorous monologue about a topic or an event without any visual aids.
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4. **Type of the visual joke**

a. Images

b. Videos

5. **Focus of the joke**

a. Individuals	The focus of the joke is an individual, whose personal traits are made fun of.
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b. Issues	The focus of the joke is an issue concerning Arabs or Muslims.
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c. Events	The focus of the joke is an event that is related to Arabs.
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d. Country	The focus of the joke is a specific country which is named.
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e. Multiple	The focus of the joke includes more than one choice.
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6. Character Focus in the joke

a. Arabs	The characters in the joke are identified as Arabs, who belong to an Arab nationality.
b. Muslims	The characters in the joke are identified as Muslims as a religious group without mentioning their country.
c. Not identified	The characters in the joke are not precisely defined as Arabs or Muslims.

7. Frames used

a. Issue	The focus of the joke is on the issue self.
b. Attribution of responsibility	The joke presents an issue or topic and identifies its cause or solution as the responsibility of the government, an individual, or a group.
c. Human interest	The joke presents the emotional aspect of any issue.
d. Conflict	The joke highlights all sorts of conflicts in any news story.
e. Morality	The joke presents the issue or topic from a religious or moral perspective.
f. Economic	The joke presents any given event, problem, or issue in terms of the economic consequences it might have on an individual, group, institution, region, or country.
g. Multiple	The same joke includes more than one frame.

8. Topics related to Arabs

a. Social	Any social topic related to Arabs
b. Political	Any political topic related to Arabs
c. Economic	Any economic topic related to Arabs
d. War	Any war related topic that mentions Arabs or Arab countries
e. Accidents	Any Accidents related news that involves an Arab personality or country

f. Miscellaneous	Any other topic that does not fall into the previously mentioned categories
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9. Individuals related to Arabs

a. President Trump	President Trump mentioned by name
b. American government official	Any American official mentioned by name
c. Public personality	Any public personality that is not a politician
d. Arab leader	Any ruler of an Arab country mentioned by name
e. Arab government official	Any Arab official mentioned by name
f. Arab public personality	Any Arab public personality that is not a politician
g. Multiple	Mentioning more than one individual

10. Tone of the joke

a. Negative	The joke is making fun of the United States stand in the situation and/or supporting Arabs.
b. Positive	The joke is supporting the United States and making fun of Arabs stand in the situation.
c. Neutral	The joke is just mentioning the issue without taking a stand on either side.

Appendix (D): Detailed Qualitative Analysis

Qualitative Analysis of Jokes of *The Daily Show*

1. The joke is about Trump first interview since becoming president.

Seriousness: President Trump is giving his first interview as president, mentioning the first executive order for banning citizens from seven Muslim countries.

Humorousness: The joke is making fun of Trump saying that all news media criticizing him and his decision are inaccurate and fake; he only acknowledges one media source which is *Fox News*, which is supporting him.

Counterfactuality: Although Trump states that the Muslim ban is an act of protection from terrorism or people who want to hurt the United States, mentioning the September 11 example not wanting it to be repeated, the September 11 executors are from countries like Saudi Arabia that are not on the Muslim travel ban.

2. The joke is about banning people from Muslim countries with valid visa from entering the USA.

Seriousness: The joke used videos from newscast referring to how people are being banned from entering the United States even if they have a valid visa or a green card, also referring to people who helped the United States in Iraq being banned because of the Muslim travel ban when they came as refugees to the United States.

Humorousness: The joke is making fun of how people who are actually American citizens are banned just because they are coming from a Muslim country; even a British official was banned from entering because he is coming from a country under the ban.

Counterfactuality: This action is described as not planned, as the actual airport officials are not well informed about this action and they are banning any one with no logic or clear rules.

3. The joke is making fun of the consequences of Trump's first executive order, which is banning citizens from some Muslim majority countries from entering the USA.

Seriousness: The joke is referring to people from Muslim majority countries being banned from entering the United States even if they have a valid visa or a green card, which is causing

chaos in airports and demonstrations in all American airports, with thousands gathered in the airports denied entering the country.

Humorousness: This travel ban is making Muslims gather in large numbers in airports, actually praying in airports and demonstrating everywhere, which is one of the reasons they are banning Muslims for; they do not want to see them in their country, but now they are everywhere in the news.

Counterfactuality: The punch line of the joke is that this Muslim ban is actually increasing sympathy with Muslim people all over the United States.

4. The joke is about the reaction of the Democratic Party and the people in the United States to the Muslim ban and Trump failing to see it as a problem.

Seriousness: The segment is discussing how the Democratic Party is refusing this travel ban with all of its consequences, how the result of this Muslim ban turned into chaos, and how demonstrations spread across the country refusing this order.

Humorousness: Trump does not understand that these demonstrations and chaos mean that there is a problem with this executive order, and he is not confessing he did something wrong and insists regardless of the chaos occurring that it is going well and as planned.

Counterfactuality: The joke is pointing out that Trump did not think his order through and that he did not actually understand the consequences of his actions

5. The joke is about a joint conference between President Trump and Israeli prime minister, where Trump cannot deal with the historical Palestinian-Israeli conflict.

Seriousness: A joint conference is held between the American president and Israeli prime minister discussing the situation in the Middle East and the ongoing tension between the Palestinians and the Israeli government.

Humorousness: The joke is making fun of how President Trump is so stupid when it comes to dealing with this historical conflict, as the Palestinians and Israelis will finally have something to agree on which is the stupidity of Trump.

Counterfactuality: With regard to the Palestinian-Israeli conflict, although as a host he is supposed to be neutral, Trevor Noah used the statement “unauthorized settlement” to express the Israeli expansion in Palestine.

6. The joke is about Trump's son-in-law being responsible for fighting ISIS and bringing peace to the Middle East.

Seriousness: The joke is about how Jared Kushner, President Trump son-in-law, who is now responsible for fighting ISIS in Iraq and bringing peace to the Middle East.

Humorousness: The joke is making fun of Kushner's incompetence stating that he is going to mix all his tasks together.

Counterfactuality: Trevor Noah mentioned that these tasks are very important and large and Kushner's only qualification is being married to the president's daughter.

7. The joke is criticizing the electronic ban, which ban people from carrying electronic devices on planes if they are traveling from several Middle Eastern countries.

Seriousness: The joke is about the law, which bans people coming from specific Middle Eastern countries from boarding a plane with any electronic device bigger than a cell phone.

Humorousness: The joke is making fun of how Trump does not even realize he is banning citizens from allied countries with the United States. Trevor is asking Trump how he considers them his friends and alliances and apply this ban on them

Counterfactuality: The countries listed on the ban involve three of the most notable alliances with the United States in the Middle East, Egypt, Saudi Arabia, and United Arab Emirate, in reference to the impulsive unplanned decisions and actions of President Trump.

8. The joke is referring to the struggle of powers between USA and Russia in Syria.

Seriousness: There is uprising tension and struggle of powers in Syria between Russia and the United States.

Humorousness: The joke is making fun of the possibility that the situation in Syria might cause world war three because the struggle of powers in Syria between Russia and the United States is increasing. The joke is mentioning Trump's tweets threatening the Russian forces that he will attack them with heavy arsenals.

Counterfactuality: The United States is fighting ISIS and attacking Bashar al-Assad regime while Russia is protecting this regime, and this struggle will cause world war three if it did not stop and focus on fighting ISIS.

9. The Narrative joke is about the Canadian immigration site crashing since Trump became president.

Seriousness: The Canadian immigration site has crashed since Trump became president.

Humorousness: Noah is making fun of how people have caused the Canadian immigration site to crash as they are applying for immigration to leave the country since Trump became president.

Counterfactuality: The joke is implying that Trump is an open racist encouraging xenophobia and Islamophobia. Although they have been there since September 11, now they are encouraged by the head of the state to leave, which will consequently increase the number of hate crimes against not only Muslims but anyone who is African, Mexican, or simply not white.

10. The joke is making fun of how media criticized Obama for bowing to the late Saudi king in 2009, while no one commented on Trump doing the same thing in his first trip to the Middle East.

Seriousness: The joke is criticizing the media, as they attacked former President Obama for bowing to the Saudi late king in 2009, saying that it gives a meaning of superiority of Islam over the whole world.

Humorousness: The joke is calling Obama a scandalous president for bowing, in reference to how the media is biased in describing the same action, one as being scandalous and one as friendship.

Counterfactuality: When Trump bowed to receive a medal from the Saudi king, no one commented on this because simply he was cutting a deal with Saudi Arabia to sell weapons to them with billions of dollars, so the joke is attacking the biased media coverage of both events.

11. The joke is making fun of how the United States attacks Canada for welcoming Syrian refugees because they might cross the borders or become ISIS supporters.

Seriousness: The joke is referring to the United States criticizing Canadian government for encouraging people to welcome Syrian refugees in their country.

Humorousness: Trevor is saying that Canada should not welcome people we do not like as Americans.

Counterfactuality: There is contradiction in the United States position towards the Syrian refugees, because while the United States is banning them from entering the country and attacking countries who welcome them, they are sending weapons to and fighting in Syria for the so-called freedom of the people.

12. The joke is about President Trump's first trip to the Middle East, where he visited Saudi Arabia and made a 2 billion dollar deal for weapons with them.

Seriousness: The joke is criticizing how Trump is making a deal to sell weapons to Saudi Arabia although he has been accusing them of funding Islamic terrorism.

Humorousness: The joke made fun of Trump's speech to the Islamic world and to young Muslims advising them not to follow radical terrorism and telling them that their life would be empty and brief. Noah is saying that those words are not words of a leader, but they are words Trump would say on his wedding as his vows to his wife. Furthermore, the visual part was very interesting; it included a photo of the Saudi king and Egyptian president along with Trump putting their hands on a glowing orb as if they are planning for world mass destruction, which is very symbolic with the weapons deal the United States signed with Saudi Arabia on the same visit. Noah also made fun of Trump's perception of Arab women dressed in black veils, calling them ninjas.

Counterfactuality: Although Trump accused Saudi Arabia of supporting terrorism at a point, he changed all his beliefs when it comes to this amount of money they will pay for the arms deal.

13. The joke is making fun of President Trump's delusional accomplishments made in the first 100 days of his presidency, which are not actually true.

Seriousness: The joke is making fun of President Trump saying that he is making accomplishments, while in fact nothing is actually real, especially the arms deal with Saudi Arabia.

Humorousness: Noah is calling them phony accomplishments, because Trump is always talking about his future plans as real facts that already happened. The arms deal with Saudi Arabia is an example, which is still in the negotiation phase. Trump took Twitter to mention that he is bringing billions of dollars from the Middle East to the United States and providing many jobs for the American people.

Counterfactuality: This deal represents the typical relation between the United States and the Gulf countries, where the United States provides them with weapons and, in return, they pay huge amounts of money to the United States.

14. The joke is making fun of “the Authorized Use of Military Force” by the American president, also known as the AUMF.

Seriousness: The joke is making fun of the law by the Congress that allows the president of the United States to declare war on seven countries, namely, Iraq, Syria, Yemen, Libya, Somalia, Afghanistan, and Pakistan, without referring to the Congress for approval as per the American constitution.

Humorousness: The joke is making fun of how this law is giving the president the ultimate power to declare war on any country, especially with someone irresponsible like Trump who would cause a catastrophe. In addition, the joke is making fun of the fact that when former President Obama tried to minimize this authority for the president, the Congress refused.

Counterfactuality: This law was made for countries that are considered a threat since September 11, which gives the United States’ president the right to declare war whenever he wants without any considerations.

15. The joke is about how translators deal with Trump’s comments and mangled language.

Seriousness: Official White House interpreters from different languages have trouble translating Trump’s speeches.

Humorousness: The joke is making fun of how interpreters find it difficult to translate Trump’s weird expressions and mangled language.

Counterfactuality: Trump is criticized for using unprofessional language such that sometimes interpreters/translators cannot find an equivalent for his words in their languages.

16. The joke is making fun of the Saudi purge of power.

Seriousness: The joke is making fun of the Saudi purge of power, where the crown prince of Saudi Arabia arrested several princes from his family and other government officials and kept them imprisoned in the luxurious Ritz-Carlton Hotel as a part of corruption fighting in Saudi.

Humorousness: Noah is calling Saudi Arabia “America’s kooky rich uncle” who beheaded people, in reference to the wealth of the Gulf countries from petrol and how they are extremists when it comes to punishing people. In addition, the joke is making fun of the purge of power and calling it the “Arabian Fights” in reference to the famous *Arabian Nights* tales.

Counterfactuality: Noah is referring to this action as elimination of rivals and consolidation of power from the crown prince of Saudi Arabia, who is acting as the actual leader of the country, and because of the multibillion dollar deals the United States has with Saudi Arabia, President Trump supported this purge on his Twitter account.

17. The joke is making fun of Trump calling a slave occupation in Libya reported by CNN as fake.

Seriousness: An undercover reporter from CNN has filmed an auction for humans in Libya; they were selling people as slaves, and the repost was aired on the news channel of CNN.

Humorousness: Trump refuses to believe this incident or acknowledge its occurrence, calling it fake because it is aired on CNN, as he calls them fake news media.

Counterfactuality: Trump acknowledges *Fox News* as the only authentic news source, because simply they support him all the way and never criticize him; on the other hand, he calls any other media source a fake news source.

18. The joke is making fun of Trump and his formal speaker, as Trump has retweeted several anti-Muslim videos which turned out to be fake.

Seriousness: Trump retweeted anti-Muslim videos posted by a British nationalist extremist.

Humorousness: Trevor is making fun of Trump retweeting anti-Muslim videos posted by a British nationalist extremist; the media attacked his action as it would increase Islamophobia and hate crimes. Later, the video turned out to be fake, and when the speaker tried to justify his acts and responses, she said that even if the videos are not real, the threats are real, which is a clear anti-Muslim statement.

Counterfactuality: This actions would increase Islamophobia and hate crimes because if the head of the state is spreading this kind of ideas, then everyone else in the country will consider this as a normal thing.

19. The joke is about President Trump joint press conference with Israeli prime minister to announce Israel as the capital of Jerusalem.

Seriousness: Trump is announcing that the USA will recognize Jerusalem as the Israeli capital, and when asked about the consequences, he said that people would laugh in the Middle East about this.

Humorousness: The joke is making fun of Trump's way of speech during the press conference with the Israeli prime minister; it was as if he is drunk.

Counterfactuality: Trevor, on the other hand, is saying that this announcement will have negative consequences and it is no laughing matter as Trump claims.

20. The joke is about President Trump insulting the Palestinians on Twitter.

Seriousness: Trump is taking Twitter to announce cutting the American financial aid to the Palestinian Authority because of their unwillingness to negotiate.

Humorousness: Trump is taking Twitter to announce all his presidential decisions and making fun of people as well.

Counterfactuality: Trevor mentioned that Trump is angry at the Palestinian for refusing to negotiate although he removed the acknowledgment of Jerusalem as the Israeli capital from the negotiations, noting that this is the first thing they want to negotiate on.

21. The joke is making fun of the social media campaign called "Punish a Muslim Day."

Seriousness: A campaign on Twitter is calling for a day called "Punish a Muslim Day," in reference to the acts of attacking Muslims and offending them.

Humorousness: The joke is making fun of the fact that they are making it a day to offend Muslims, when in fact Muslims have been suffering from racism and hate for decades, so for years every day is a "Punish a Muslim Day."

Counterfactuality: The joke is making fun of how this campaign is calling for actions that encourage Islamophobia and hate against Muslims.

22. The joke is making fun of how Trump is using Twitter to attack Bashar al-Assad the Syrian president for bombing his people with chemical weapons.

Seriousness: Trump is taking social media as a platform for announcing war on Russia as they are helping al-Assad bomb his own people with weapons provided by Russia.

Humorousness: The joke is mainly focusing on how Twitter will be later used as presidential documents because Trump uses it for his announcements and decisions, including declarations of wars.

Counterfactuality: Trump described Bashar al-Assad as a gas-killing animal for bombing his own people.

23. The segment is about the backlash of public opinion after announcing the transfer of the American embassy to Jerusalem.

Seriousness: The American embassy was moved from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem, which caused a backlash from the Palestinian side and caused several protests in response to this announcement.

Humorousness: The joke is criticizing this event with the least humorous tone.

Counterfactuality: According to Trevor Noah, this announcement was not a very wise move in the line of peace and from a country said to be supporting peace in the Arab-Israeli ongoing conflict. As both Palestinians and Israelis are claiming that Jerusalem is theirs, by this move the United States is clearly supporting the Israeli side over the Palestinian side.

24. The joke is about a fashion show in Saudi Arabia with drones holding the dresses instead of the models wearing them on the catwalk.

Seriousness: Saudi Arabia is holding fashion show for women dresses, but because they are a conservative nation, they are using drones to exhibit the dresses by holding the dresses and flying them over.

Humorousness: The joke is saying that they are using drones to hold the dresses in a fashion show, so it seems like as if there are ghosts wandering around and that they should add a Harry Potter theme song to this show to make sense of this ghostly scene.

Counterfactuality: Saudi Arabia is struggling between its conservative nature as a country and its attempts to start opening to new ideas and lifestyles to reach international aspects.

25. The joke is about Trump hosting the Ramadan dinner after canceling it the previous year.

Seriousness: Trump was the first president canceling the White House Ramadan dinner.

Humorousness: Trevor is making fun of the fact that Muslims, after 16 hours of fasting, have to attend the dinner to deal with another hardship, which is listening to Trump talking.

Counterfactuality: The annual Ramadan dinner is a presidential tradition, where the president holds a dinner for Muslims to recognize the holy month of Ramadan. Trump, however, after canceling it the year before in a sign of refusing to recognize the importance of this holy month to Muslim, this year in the announcement of the dinner he said that he does not have a problem with Ramadan, “I just don't like Muslims.”

26. Narrative joke is comparing Trump to the Egyptian president.

Seriousness: The joke is comparing Trump to the Egyptian leader in the way they both speak.

Humorousness: Trevor Noah was making fun of the way Trump speaks, saying that if Trump spoke Arabic, he would say the same crazy stuff but in an Arabic accent.

Counterfactuality: In a narrative joke, Trevor was talking to an audience member from Egypt, asking him about the conditions in Egypt and saying that he will not reveal his name and he can nod his head if the situation in Egypt is not good, in reference to how the political situation in Egypt is full of oppression.

27. The joke is about the Supreme Court approving the Muslim travel ban law.

Seriousness: The joke is about the Supreme Court approving the bill of Trump’s Muslim travel ban, which bans citizens from seven Muslim majority countries from entering the United States; however, the law had North Korea added to the countries of the ban.

Humorousness: Noah is saying that it is as if the Supreme Court just turned a blind eye to this ban as a Muslim ban because they saw the name of North Korea at the end of the line.

Counterfactuality: Although they added North Korea to the list of banned countries, so it is not a Muslim ban anymore, they are still misleading the public opinion, as this law is banning Muslim majority countries only precisely, which makes it a form of racism against Muslims.

28. The joke is about Saudi Arabia lifting the driving ban for women after decades of banning them from driving.

Seriousness: The new law declared in Saudi Arabia allows women to drive cars for the first time alone and to obtain their own driving licenses.

Humorousness: The joke is making fun of how late this law is; being the last country in the world to allow women to drive, Saudi Arabia must have done it before. Besides, this is not something new for women from what they say about how easy driving is. The joke also mentioned that they will later find out how boring it is and start being lazy about driving.

Counterfactuality: Saudi Arabia has been always known for having very strict law when it comes to women being engaged in public life, and with this law they are starting a new era of freedom that has never been witnessed in the country for decades.

29. The joke is about a fake zebra in a zoo in Egypt.

Seriousness: The joke is making fun of how people in a zoo in Egypt painted stripes on a regular donkey to fool the visitors into thinking that it is a zebra.

Humorousness: Trevor is making fun of how Egyptians are used to inventing exotic animals, like the sphinx, which is a lion with a human face, saying also that it is the visitors' fault for wanting to visit a zoo in Egypt in the first place and expecting something normal.

Counterfactuality: He is making fun of the low standards in Egypt, such that visitors cannot expect anything to go normal even if it was visiting a zoo.

30. The joke is about a British government official making fun of Muslim women and the way they are dressed.

Seriousness: A British government official was calling Muslim women who wear burqa "mailboxes," because one can only see their eyes.

Humorousness: Trevor Noah is making fun of this messy looking British official calling Muslim women who are wearing burqa mailboxes, while he himself seems as if he has not showered for years.

Counterfactuality: This British official himself was actually accusing Denmark of banning women wearing burqa in public places; however, he is now making fun of those women and how they are dressed as a sign of their religion.

31. The joke is about the Saudi government lying about the Khashoggi murder.

Seriousness: The Saudi government is being deceitful about the murder of the Saudi journalist Jamal Khashoggi, saying that they do not know where Khashoggi is, while it was confirmed by the Turkish investigation that he was last seen going into the Saudi consulate in Turkey.

Humorousness: Trevor is making fun of how Trump does not want to confirm the murder or accuse Saudi Arabia because of the 100 billion dollar weapons deal he had with them.

Counterfactuality: The joke is making fun of how the Saudi government is lying and changing the story of Khashoggi, saying that they have no idea about him or where he could be, although he was last seen going into the Saudi consulate in Turkey.

32. The joke is about Trump refusing to acknowledge the involvement of Saudi government in the Khashoggi murder.

Seriousness: The joke is making fun of Trump refusing to acknowledge the involvement of Saudi government in the murder because of the financial deals he has with Saudi Arabia.

Humorousness: Trevor is saying that Trump's denial of their involvement is clearly because of the arms deal with Saudi Arabia.

Counterfactuality: The joke is making fun of Trump refusing to acknowledge the involvement of Saudi government in the murder and saying that he will not accuse anyone who might be innocent.

33. The joke is about Trump's plan to withdraw the USA troops from Syria.

Seriousness: The joke is making fun of Trump plan to withdraw from Syria, which the Congress disagree with because of its spontaneity.

Humorousness: The joke is making fun of Trump's plan to withdraw from Syria and how he justifies his plan by saying that they have fast planes and they can go back quickly if they want to, as if they are leaving their grandmother's house.

Counterfactuality: The joke is making fun of Trump's plan to withdraw from Syria, which the Congress disagree with as it might allow ISIS to gain power once again in the region after spending billions in the war against them.

34. The joke is about Trump's solution for the captured ISIS fighters.

Seriousness: After the ISIS fighters are defeated in Syria, Trump is asking the European nations to put them into trials or the United States will have to release them.

Humorousness: The joke is making fun of President Trump and his solution for the prisoners of war and for the captured ISIS fighters, which is a very dump solution according to Trevor.

Counterfactuality: This intended action will allow those released terrorists to gather and restore power once again after finally ending their threat.

35. The joke is about the defeat of ISIS in the Middle East.

Seriousness: The joke is about the defeat of ISIS in the Middle East and physically ending their caliphate.

Humorousness: Two years ago, ISIS fighters were so famous and everyone was talking about those fighters, like Pokémon GO, the video game, as they controlled half of the Middle East. However, now they only have a small town under their control and soon they will be living in a small New York apartment and complaining about the rent, because their time as fighters is over.

Counterfactuality: The end of the ISIS in the Middle East marks a new era of power distribution in the region and marks the beginning of an era where new forces are rising to the surface trying to have control over the Middle East.

36. The joke is about the women of ISIS.

Seriousness: The joke is about women who ran away from the United States and European countries to join ISIS and marry the fighters.

Humorousness: Trevor is making fun of one of them saying that, as a punishment, she should have therapy sessions and talk to people in public. He is saying that they will never trust her in a place with a large number of people, as she simply might blow herself up, as a sign of being rejected by her society.

Counterfactuality: Now after ISIS is defeated, these women want to come back to their countries and rejoin the social life as if nothing happened; however, they are considered even more dangerous to society than those fighters, because their intentions are never clear.

37. The joke is about Trump supporting hate messages towards Muslims.

Seriousness: Trump has been supporting hate messages by white supremacist against Muslims.

Humorousness: The joke is making fun of how Trump is not even making an effort to appear not racist towards Muslims.

Counterfactuality: The joke is making fun of the fact that if the head of the state is supporting racism, it is as if he is actually calling for the spread of racism in his country.

38. The joke is about the news that the Saudis hacked Jeff Bezos's personal phone.

Seriousness: The joke is about Jeff Bezos claiming that the Saudi intelligence hacked his phone and released his private photos and texts with women revealing his outside marriage affair.

Humorousness: Trevor is saying that if the Saudis can hack Bezos's phone, then the rest of us do not stand a chance and we might as well send them our private photos before they hack our phones.

Counterfactuality: Bezos claims that the Saudi government did that because he owns *The Washington Post* newspaper and was responsible for revealing the involvement of the Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman in the Jamal Khashoggi murder.

39. The Sudanese dictator is being thrown down in a military coup.

Seriousness: After 30 years in power, Omar al-Bashir, the Sudanese president, is stepping down and he is forced into house arrest after a military coup following a wide range of demonstrations with people revolting against him and his ruling across the country.

Humorousness: Trevor is making fun of how fancy his house is, so being under house arrest is not a punishment. Instead, he should be in prison and his house given to the people.

Counterfactuality: The role of Sudanese women was very effective; that is what Noah is saying about women leading the demonstrations in Sudan, adding that they should be ruling the country instead of this dictator.

40. The military force took over power in Sudan after the people's revolution.

Seriousness: After overthrowing the Sudan dictator, the military took over power in a very brutal way by arresting and killing thousands of civilians to force them to stop their demonstrations.

Humorousness: Trevor made a joke that the main reason that burst the flame of the revolution was the high level of poverty, that people could not find bread, although in places like California they will revolt against anyone who gives them any bread or any kind of carbs.

Counterfactuality: It is more of an informative joke with information about the dictatorship of al-Bashir by saying how his country lived in poverty and how he executed his opponents, and now he is replaced by another dictatorship, which is the military. Trevor compared him to Hitler, but the only difference is that al-Bashir was always smiling.

41. Celebrities on social media are raising awareness regarding what is happening in Sudan.

Seriousness: Celebrities including Rihanna and George Clooney took their social media platform to raise awareness about what is going on in Sudan, that is, violence and arrests of the protesters who are calling for democracy after the military took over the power.

Humorousness: Trevor is saying that celebrities are now using their social media accounts to raise awareness of international and humanitarian causes instead of posting photos of how good their bodies look on Instagram.

Counterfactuality: Trevor is saying that people should ask their Congress representatives to keep pressuring this topic to help people of Sudan gain their freedom and democracy.

42. The joke is about the war in Iran, also known as second war in Iraq.

Seriousness: the United States is sending troops back to the Middle East to Iraq to fight Iran; Trevor is calling it Iraq war two.

Humorousness: Trevor is making a joke about how the United States does not finish what it started; it has not actually finished its war in Syria and there are still armed forces in Iraq. It is like watching something on Netflix and moving to another thing to watch without finishing the first program and forgetting about it.

Counterfactuality: Trevor is saying that they need to finish those wars before then starting a new one or simply bring home those soldiers who have been in the Middle East for two decades now in wars that was started for fake reasons like the one in Iraq.

43. The United States is accusing Iran of attacking Saudi oil facilities, although the Houthi rebels have declared their responsibility for it.

Seriousness: Trump is sending Secretary of State Mike Pompeo to the Middle East to weigh options for the United States response to Iran involvement in a Saudi oil facility attack.

Humorousness: Trevor is calling this accelerated tension in the Middle East “Arabian Fights,” in reference to the *Arabian Nights* famous tales.

Counterfactuality: Trump is willing to defend Saudi Arabia against any attack because of their trade relationship.

44. The United States is going to war with Iran to protect Saudi Arabia after shooting oil facilities.

Seriousness: The joke is about the United States willingness to go to war with Iran after they bombed Saudi’s oil facilities, and Trump is saying Saudi will be involved in the war by paying cash.

Humorousness: The United States is going to fight on behalf of Saudi Arabia because they pay cash, and this would be the weirdest motivational speech to go to war.

Counterfactuality: The United States is no longer fighting for its value; they are fighting because they have common interests with Saudi, which is money.

45. The joke is making fun of how Trump’s decision of pulling back USA troops from Syria will cause an international crisis.

Seriousness: Trump has ordered the United States troops to withdraw from northern Syria, leaving the Kurdish fighters to face ISIS and the Turkish troops alone, although they are an important ally in the fight against ISIS.

Humorousness: The joke is making fun of how Trump blindsided the pentagon in such an important decision like pulling troops from Syria; it is like blindsiding NASA by blowing up the moon.

Counterfactualty: Trevor is talking about how irrational decisions like this will cause a problem for the Kurds, as they will have to fight the Turkish troops and ISIS alone after helping the United States in their fights against ISIS for years in Syria.

46. The joke is about the consequences of American troops withdrawing from Syria and Turkey invading it.

Seriousness: Turkey is invading northern Syria after the American troops are being pulled out of this front leaving their Kurd allies, where they have been brutally attacked by the Turkish troops.

Humorousness: Trevor is making fun of how unplanned and unwise Trump decisions are, such that he will cause an international crisis.

Counterfactualty: Trevor mentioned that the Kurds fighting against the Turkish troops would cause them to leave thousands of imprisoned ISIS members unguarded, which will lead to the rise of ISIS again, along with being slaughtered by the Turkish troops, which is a loss for everyone except for Trump, who turns out to have conflicts of interest with Turkey as he has real estate business in Turkey.

47. Trump's decision of withdrawing the American troops out of Syria is causing chaos in the Middle East.

Seriousness: Trump's decision is causing Turkey to invade Syria, and the Kurds are fleeing their country and ISIS escaping from their prisons.

Humorousness: Trevor is making fun of Trump's decision of sending troops to fight on behalf of Saudi Arabia as if he is renting the armed forces of his country to another country.

Counterfactualty: It turns out that Trump is pulling out troops from Syria to send them to another Middle Eastern country which is Saudi Arabia which promised to pay more in return for helping it protect its oil facilities.

48. Trump is bragging about the 5 day ceasefire deal between Turkey and the Kurdish troops in Syria.

Seriousness: the United States helped in creating a deal with five day ceasefire between the Kurds and Turkish troops in Syria.

Humorousness: Trevor is making fun of Trump calling this a great achievement, while in fact it is a very small timeframe that would barely allow Kurds to flee the country.

Counterfactuality: This deal is simply giving the Kurds the chance to flee the country while Turkey has full control over northern Syria, not a real peaceful ceasefire deal.

49. The joke is about the news that about 20 ancient pharaonic coffins were discovered in Egypt.

Seriousness: 20 ancient coffins were discovered in Egypt.

Humorousness: The joke is about how the discovery of ancient coffins is always a start of a horror movie and digging people's graves is called archeology.

Counterfactuality: Trevor is saying that those coffins are lasting more than any other civilization and they are so beautiful as a part of history we get to know about.

50. Trump announces the killing of ISIS leader.

Seriousness: the United States killed the ISIS leader al-Baghdadi in Syria.

Humorousness: Trevor is making fun of Trump's speech and choices of words. The joke is also made fun of the information released that they reached him through questioning his courier, so Trevor is saying that he should have tipped him extra to protect his self.

Counterfactuality: Trump turned a unifying event and a great step in defeating ISIS into a contest and tried to prove that this is better than killing Osama bin Laden who was killed during the Obama presidency, because, in everything Trump does or says, he is trying to criticize the Obama administration.

51. The joke is about protests in Lebanon against their prime minister.

Seriousness: The Lebanese people are protesting against their government and demanding their prime minister to step down.

Humorousness: The joke is about how protesters were singing Baby Shark when they encountered a mother with her child in their car and they were trying to calm the child by singing a children's song instead of the protesting cheers.

Counterfactualty: The Lebanese people are demonstrating against corruption of the government and the prime minister, and all leaders of the world need to listen to their people's demands.

52. New information is released about the killing of ISIS leader.

Seriousness: Information was released about how they used personal underwear of al-Baghdadi as an intelligent information in the operation to catch him.

Humorousness: The host is making fun of how weird is it to use underwear as intelligent information to catch a world wanted terrorist.

Counterfactualty: In spite of the briefing about how al-Baghdadi was very long, the information sounded unrealistic.

53. The United States is starting a war in the Middle East with Iran using Iraq as a battleground.

Seriousness: the United States started a war in the Middle East against Iran using Iraq as a battleground through sending more troops to Iraq and using the American military bases in the country to attack Iran.

Humorousness: Trevor is making fun of how Trump canceled all his new years' hopes to bring peace in the Middle East by starting a war on the first day of this new year.

Counterfactualty: the United States is using Iraq as a battleground for its war with Iran and warning American citizens to leave Baghdad because it will soon be a battleground, which is a reflection of how the United States is using another country and willing to destroy it just to fulfill its war plans.

54. American officials announce that killing the Iranian General Soleimani is like killing Saddam Hussein and Gadhafi; it will not be beneficial in any way.

Seriousness: Some American government officials and Congress representatives are lashing the decision of Trump to kill Soleimani in that way.

Humorousness: Trump does not think of his options if they involve reading full information and its consequences, so Trevor is saying they should give him war options with pictures only.

Counterfactuality: Killing this high ranked Iranian official will only cause much trouble within the countries, just like killing Saddam Hussein and Gadhafi; killing them both did not save Iraq or Libya, on the other hand the two countries are suffering from chaos until this moment.

55. The United States announces it will stop the fight against ISIS because of the war between the United States and Iran.

Seriousness: The United States will stop the fight against ISIS in Syria because the troops will be involved in another war.

Humorousness: The joke is making fun of how being involved in more than one battleground is like having two girl friends at the same time with all the drama that comes with it.

Counterfactuality: The United States is no longer fighting in Syria because it will be involved in another war, so it announced it would leave the terrorist group ungraded once again in Syria, which will have a major consequences on the peace in the region, as after years of fighting this terrorist group and trying to demolish their power in the region, the Unites States will leave them ungraded to get involved in a another poorly planned war in the Middle East.

56. The joke is comparing the Iran war with the 2003 Iraq war, which had no exit plan or firm reasons for the invasion in the first place.

Seriousness: The joke is about how the United States is repeating the same mistake by starting a war in Iran and taking the nation into another war for no firm reason, just like they did in the Iraqi war years ago.

Humorousness: The joke is about Trump's administration repeating the same scenario of the war in Iraq in 2003, as if it is a remake of an old soap opera named "let's go to war," same incidents but different actors.

Counterfactuality: It is like what happened in Iraq in 2003, which was the greatest mistake in American modern history, as the American people are still paying its price until now.

57. Iraq is involved in the war between the United States and Iran for no logical reason.

Seriousness: The United States is refusing to leaving Iraq after the Iraqi parliament voted that the American troops should leave the country.

Humorousness: The joke is about Trump refusing to leave Iraq and asking them to pay for the American base they build in Iraq, as if he is saying to them, you should pay for us the price of invading and destroying your country.

Counterfactuality: In spite of this request from the Iraqi government, the United States has ignored it and started deploying more troops to Iraq to start a ground base of war with its neighbor Iran through Iraq as its front.

58. Iran attacks two American military bases in Iraq, but warns them first before the attack.

Seriousness: Iran responded to the killing of General Soleimani by firing several missiles on two American military bases in Iraq.

Humorousness: The joke is making fun of how this counterattack was fake, because they actually warned the Iraqi before the attack and the base was cleared from civilians; the joke is making fun of how both countries are actually afraid this might really get to a real war.

Counterfactuality: The Iranian government has warned the Iraqi government of possible attacks on their ground 6 hours ahead from the actual attack. Iraq is in the middle of this accelerated military tension, just because of their geographical location, where both USA and Iran are attacking each other on the Iraqi land and both are using it as a battleground.

59. New information is released about the Saudi crown prince personally hacking Jeff Bezos's mobile phone.

Seriousness: It was revealed that the crown prince of Saudi Arabia, Mohammed bin Salman, personally hacked the phone of Jeff Bezos, Amazon CEO, by sending WhatsApp messages to Bezos with a link that hacked the phone.

Humorousness: The joke is making fun of the Saudi crown prince, as he could have hired a hacker to do it for him, but simply he could not, because everyone else in the country is a wealthy sheik or a prince. In addition, Noah joked about how Saudis will now suffer with their deliveries because they messed with the head of Amazon, the leading online shopping company. Noah added that if the Saudis are planning to have a public stoning today, it will not happen because the stones will never be delivered, so they shall use donuts instead.

Counterfactuality: The fact that he is micromanaging his own personal battles that way is so unconventional for a head of a state.

60. Trump and Jared Kushner announce a “Middle East Peace Plan” between Israelis and Palestinians.

Seriousness: Donald Trump and Jared Kushner announced the execution of a “Middle East Peace Plan” between Israelis and Palestinians without the knowledge of the Palestinians.

Humorousness: The joke is making fun of how Trump’s son-in-law, Jared Kushner, planned for peace between the Israeli and Palestinian people without informing the Palestinians about this plan or even having their consent to it. In addition, the joke is making fun of how unrealistic this plan is, because Kushner said that it is a very successful plan because it has a map and a lot of paper work, which is a funny reason for such a political dilemma.

Counterfactuality: Trump considers that this the plan will resolve all the conflicts in the Middle East, because it is a perfect plan from his point of view and just because the Israeli prime minister is praising Trump all the time, even if the plan does not really achieve peace as promised, because this peace plan does not involve the consent of the other party involved in the dispute.

Qualitative Analysis of Jokes of *The Late Show*

1. Officials defend Trump’s Muslim travel ban and call it not anti-Muslim.

Seriousness: Officials defend Trump’s anti-Muslim comments about this travel ban and try to make this travel ban legal as soon as possible.

Humorousness: Colbert is joking about how the officials cannot even justify Trump’s comments, by saying, “just put aside his anti-Muslim comments, and everything will be legal.”

Counterfactuality: It is not possible to put aside everything he says, because he is an official and he is defined through his words as well as his actions.

2. The joke is about Trump taking his first executive orders, including the travel ban, and denying refugees the right to enter the United States.

Seriousness: Trump’s first executive order as president is a law restricting people from seven Muslim majority countries like Iraq, Syria, Libya, Somalia, Pakistan, and Afghanistan from entering the United States.

Humorousness: The joke is saying when the United States needed permission to go to Iraq after an Iraqi official said they would not allow Americans to enter Iraq after this travel ban.

Counterfactuality: This law is banning refugees from finding a safe place to be in after their long suffering in their home countries, and Trump says he is protecting the United States from bad dudes.

3. The joke is about ISIS fighters using drugs to defeat the American bombing.

Seriousness: ISIS fighters turn out to be drug addicts; however, the United States has problem defeating them.

Humorousness: Colbert is suggesting in his joke that they should use drugs to fight the ISIS fighters as long as bombing them is not good enough.

Counterfactuality: The United States has used over 2000 bombs over the Syrian front, such that they even announced that the army on the Syrian front is out of bombs. Another fact is that those are not radical jihadist; they are drug users and that is how they joined ISIS, because they are usually recruiting people who are unstable and drug addicts, so they can keep them under their control.

4. The joke is about how Trump is acting like an angry baby and his officials are using his travel ban law implementation to calm him down.

Seriousness: the joke is making fun of how Trump gets angry and his staff uses the famous Muslim ban to calm him down, like a baby.

Humorousness: The joke is making fun of Trump, wanting to break Muslim families with his travel ban law, and the host is talking to him like a baby to calm him down, by saying he is breaking Muslim families and evacuate refugees.

Counterfactuality: Colbert is saying that this gibberish baby talk about Muslim ban might make Trump think he is talking in Arabic, which is not relevant. Although many Muslim countries are Arab countries as well, not all Muslim countries speak Arabic, but Trump does not understand the difference between Arabs as a cultural and ethnic group and Muslims who are a religious group.

5. The joke is about the homeland television show, having Arabic graffiti on the set, which is translated as “homeland is racist.”

Seriousness: The drama show *Homeland*, which is about the CIA fighting against radicalism all over the world, hired a graffiti artist who wrote that homeland is racist in Arabic and a joke that homeland is watermelon, which is an Arabic joke about something being clueless or ignorant, described as a watermelon.

Humorousness: The joke is making fun of how they are angry of the false depiction of Arabs and Muslims, although they hardly depict anything right in the show.

Counterfactuality: The artist said they wrote that as a protest to the racist and unrealistic depiction of Arabs and Muslims in the show. Although Colbert agrees with the fact that they are being racists in depiction of Muslims, he said that those artists are even worse, for betraying what they are hired to do.

6. The joke is about how Jared Kushner, President Trump’s son-in-law, is now responsible for fighting ISIS in Iraq and bringing peace to the Middle East.

Seriousness: The joke is making fun of how Trump is giving a very important issue for his son-in-law to be responsible for, like bringing peace to the Middle East.

Humorousness: Colbert is joking about how Kushner’s only qualification for solving the dispute in the Middle East is being Trump’s son-in-law.

Counterfactuality: Solving the ongoing conflict between the Palestinians and the Israelis is a very sophisticated job and has been a burden to the American president over the years, and now Trump is giving it to his unqualified son-in-law.

7. The joke is about a man taking a selfie with EgyptAir hijacker.

Seriousness: A flight passenger took a selfie with a man wearing a suicide bomb vest on an EgyptAir flight, who was threatening to bomb himself on the plane.

Humorousness: Colbert is joking about how this act restores faith in humanity, with its bravery and stupidity at the same time.

Counterfactuality: Although the bomb turned out to be fake and everyone came out fine, the flight passenger taking a selfie with the man threatening to kill the people on the plane was very unorthodox.

8. The joke is about judge blocking Trump travel ban from Muslim majority countries.

Seriousness: The joke is about a federal judge blocking Trump travel ban after he tried to pass the law as something different from Muslim ban, by adding North Korea.

Humorousness: The host is joking about Trump's racism and Islamophobia saying that he even wants to hang a sign on the Statue of Liberty saying Muslim ban. In addition, another joke is that Trump is always afraid of any one covering his head in reference to Muslim women.

Counterfactuality: Although Trump was saying that it is not a Muslim travel ban, it was very clear; in addition, it is unconstitutional to ban people from Muslim majority countries from traveling to the United States.

9. The joke is about Trump's first 100 days in office.

Seriousness: The joke is about Trump celebrating his 100 days in the office as president, with one of his first orders in the office including a Muslim travel ban.

Humorousness: Colbert is saying that, after 100 days in office, there are still Muslims in the USA, referring to his first executive order of Muslim travel ban.

Counterfactuality: The joke refers to Trump's intention to remove all Muslims in the United States coming from Muslim countries by announcing his first executive order to prohibit Muslims from other countries from coming to the United States.

10. The joke is about the preparations for Trump's first trip to the Middle East.

Seriousness: The joke is about Trump visit to Saudi Arabia to unite the Muslim nation and his visit to Israel to solve the conflict between the Israelis and the Palestinians.

Humorousness: The joke is making fun of the fact that the White House staff are writing Trump speech and mentioning his name, because he tends to keep reading if he sees his name. The host is also making fun of Trump saying that solving the ongoing conflict in the Middle East is very easy, and Colbert asks whether he has tried unplugging the west bank. The host is also mocking Trump for uniting the Muslim nation by calling them radical.

Counterfactuality: The joke is making fun of how Trump is trying to unite the Muslim nation by talking about radical Islam and how he thinks that solving the long going fight between the Palestinians and Israelis is a piece of cake.

11. The joke is about Trump taking the first direct flight from Saudi Arabia to Israel and the White House mistyping the press release.

Seriousness: Trump took the first direct flight to Israel from Saudi Arabia as a form of peace action.

Humorousness: The White House press release about the issue had a mistake; instead of “peace,” it was written “peach.”

Counterfactuality: Trump thinks he is solving the ongoing conflict in the Middle East by trying to win several Arab countries to support his plan of resolving this dispute.

12. The joke is about Trump’s first trip to the Middle East visiting Saudi Arabia and his dancing and bowing to the Saudi king.

Seriousness: Trump visited Saudi Arabia, was greeted by the Saudis, and bowed to the king of Saudi Arabia with a courtesy as well.

Humorousness: The joke is making fun of Trump as he was engaged in a Saudi traditional sword dance and promising him he will meet the Genie from the lamp, as the joke is associating the Arabs and Middle East with the Genie from the lamp, in reference to the famous *Arabian Nights* tale. In addition, he shared a photo with the king of Saudi and the president of Egypt putting their hands on a glowing orbit as if they are super villains.

Counterfactuality: Trump was welcomed into the country by the king; as their new ally, they actually made him dance and bow to the king to receive an honorary medal, and Trump agreed because of the finical deals he is having with Saudi Arabia.

13. The joke is about Trump’s first trip to the Middle East visiting Saudi Arabia and delivering a speech to the Arab and Muslim nations.

Seriousness: Trump gave a speech to the Arab nation and young Muslims.

Humorousness: The joke is making fun of how Trump was talking to other Arab countries about his arms deal as if he is making them an offer to follow the lead of Saudi Arabia and buy arms from the USA.

Counterfactuality: Even though Trump was talking about his arms deals with the Saudis, he also mentioned that young Muslims could be victims to radical Islamic beliefs.

14. The joke is about the discovery of Egypt’s lopsided pyramids.

Seriousness: A recent research proved that the great pyramid of Giza is slightly sloped from one side than the other.

Humorousness: Colbert is saying, “In your face ancient Egypt, you were always bragging about how perfect your monuments are; now they are not.”

Counterfactuality: Colbert mentioned that this is a consequence of using Jewish slavery to build the pyramids, which is not historically proven.

15. The joke is about Trump retweeting anti-Muslim videos.

Seriousness: Trump is retweeting anti-Muslim videos, and the world is attacking him for this action.

Humorousness: The videos even turned out to be fake. Trump did not even have the trouble to check their authenticity, and it is problematic for the head of the state to be promoting such ideas. In addition, when the British prime minister, Theresa May, condemned his action, he texted back but he tweeted at the wrong Theresa May.

Counterfactuality: Trump as a head of state is promoting Islamophobia and racism towards Muslims by his actions, which is considered a statement for the rest of the American people, as if he is telling them it is acceptable to be racist towards Muslims.

16. Trump announces the recognition of Jerusalem as the capital of Israel.

Seriousness: In a joint press conference for Trump and the Israeli prime minister, Trump announced that he would recognize Jerusalem as the Israeli capital.

Humorousness: Trump is having trouble pronouncing some words, and he thinks that his actions will bring peace to the Middle East.

Counterfactuality: Both Muslims and Jews consider Jerusalem as their capital and consider it as a holy city, which will escalate the long going conflict between Palestinians and Israelis.

17. The joke is about the consequences of announcing the recognition of Jerusalem as the capital of Israel.

Seriousness: It is about the consequences of Trump’s announcing the United States recognition of Jerusalem as the capital of Israel.

Humorousness: The joke is making fun of how the United States is taking the Israeli side in this conflict without any consideration. The joke is about takes on an actor speaking as the White House speaker, saying we are not going to use algebra or Arabic numerals and even change the name of the Disney movie *Aladdin*, only to please Israel.

Counterfactuality: The United States, in order to please the Israeli government, is accelerating a long going conflict in the Middle East, without reconsidering any of the consequences these decisions will have on the peace operations in the Middle East.

18. The joke is about Jared Kushner White House pass being demoted from top secret to secret.

Seriousness: Jared Kushner, who, as Trump says, is responsible for the Middle East peace plans in the White House, is losing his privileges.

Humorousness: The joke is about how his security **pass** being demoted will hinder him from solving the dispute in the Middle East, in reference to how incompetent he is.

Counterfactuality: The counter-fact is mainly about how he is already owning privileges he does not deserve and how he is assigned to a very sophisticated issue like bringing peace to the Middle East.

19. The joke is about the possibility that Trump tweets will start world war 3 after Russia threatens to fight the United States in Syria.

Seriousness: Trump, although he is being investigated for colliding with Russia, he took Twitter to attack the Russian announcement of attacking the United States missiles in Syria.

Humorousness: The joke suggests that Trump's plan to bring peace to the Middle East is now ruined by bringing world war 3.

Counterfactuality: Russia and the United States are about to start world war 3 on the Syrian land, even though they are both outsiders and both are fighting ISIS and terrorism in Syria, but apparently they left all that to fight each other.

20. The joke is about Trump's tweet against the Syrian President Bashar al-Assad's gas attack on his own people.

Seriousness: Trump took out Twitter to attack the Syrian President Bashar al-Assad for attacking his own people by gas bombs.

Humorousness: The joke mainly states that Trump's plan to bring peace to the Middle East is apparently not working, because he seems to be lashing out at everyone in more than one front.

Counterfactuality: Trump is using Twitter to fight back and attack everyone without thinking of his actions and its consequences.

21. The joke is about Trump announcing the bombing of Syria and then the USA troop's withdrawal from there in the same week, without consulting his staff or the pentagon.

Seriousness: The joke is about Trump announcing the bombing of Syria and then the USA troop's withdrawal from there in the same week, without consulting his staff or the pentagon.

Humorousness: The joke is making fun of how the White House officials try to handle Trump's spontaneous intracranial decisions as if they are pampering a baby.

Counterfactuality: The pentagon and the White House officials are having trouble being blindsided all the time by Trump decisions.

22. The Supreme Court finally agreed to the Muslim travel ban.

Seriousness: The Supreme Court agreed with a very tight vote on the Muslim travel ban imposed by Trump.

Humorousness: The joke is making fun of how Trump is always afraid of Muslims and how beards are scary.

Counterfactuality: In order to make what they did acceptable, the Supreme Court is saying that this is a travel ban for threatening countries and not specifically for Muslims, although it was first called a Muslim travel ban.

23. The joke is about EgyptAir faking an interview with Drew Barrymore and then defending themselves in a tweet, pronouncing her name wrong.

Seriousness: EgyptAir faked an interview with Drew Barrymore.

Humorousness: The host is making fun of how they are spelling the celebrity name and all her movies in a wrong way.

Counterfactuality: The joke is making fun of how the Egyptian airlines faked an interview with Drew Barrymore and defending themselves in a tweet pronouncing her name in a wrong way.

24. The joke is about the suspected murder of the Saudi journalist Khashoggi and Trump refusing to admit it.

Seriousness: Saudi Arabia government is denying their connection to the murder of Saudi journalist, although the Turkish investigators said that 15 agents from the Saudi secret service were seen entering the consulate with a chainsaw.

Humorousness: Trump is refusing to admit what is obvious saying he believes the Saudi king. Saudi Arabia is saying that his murder is known to be an investigation gone badly, and Colbert is saying how an investigation with 15 men and a chain saw can go right.

Counterfactuality: Trump is refusing to admit the murder to protect his arms deal with the Saudis, and he is making fun of how the Saudis are denying the murder by announcing more threats to those attacking them.

25. The joke is about an interview where President Trump refused to admit the involvement of the Saudi king in the Saudi journalist murder.

Seriousness: Trump is waiting for the hard evidence for the involvement of the Saudi government in the murder of Khashoggi, saying let us not accuse the innocents.

Humorousness: Trump said he could not accuse the innocent, although all the evidence is very clear, and said that it sounded as if he did not feel he did it.

Counterfactuality: A political official is saying that the United States needs to have Arab allies, so how much important it is for one guy to be dead; the United States will gain billions of dollars from the arms deal with Saudi Arabia, so we cannot fight with them now.

26. The joke is about Melania Trump’s first visit abroad to Africa, starting with Egypt.

Seriousness: The joke is about Melania Trump’s first international trip alone since she became the first lady; she was visiting some African nations. The visit started with Egypt, where she visited the pyramids and had a photoshoot there.

Humorousness: The joke is about Melania Trump’s visiting Africa, starting with Egypt, visiting the pyramids, and having a photoshoot there, like a super star not as a representative of her country to Africa.

Counterfactuality: Melania Trump was visiting some African nations, whereas earlier her husband Trump called African countries a “shithole countries”. In her visit, she was wearing an outfit referring to the colonial era, a time which most African countries suffered from, which is offending.

27. The joke is about the crown prince of Saudi Arabia, Mohammed bin Salman, also known as MBS, being now called Mister Bone Saw.

Seriousness: Trump is still defending the Saudi prince from his involvement in the murder of Khashoggi.

Humorousness: The joke is about the crown prince of Saudi Arabia, known as MBS, being now called Mister Bone Saw for being accused of ordering the murder of the Saudi journalist Khashoggi using a bone saw. Trump is refusing to take action against Saudi Arabia, saying that Saudis are good buyers for weapons and other things.

Counterfactuality: Although there is clear evidence of the involvement of the crown prince of Saudi Arabia in the murder, Trump is refusing to take action against Saudi Arabia because of the financial deal the United States has with it, so he is willing to disregard their crimes in return for money.

28. The joke is about the Saudi prince purging and imprisoning other royal family members and government officials in the Ritz-Carlton.

Seriousness: The Saudi prince is imprisoning a number of government officials and royal family members in the luxurious Ritz-Carlton Hotel for what is said to be cases of corruption and misuse of power.

Humorousness: Colbert is saying that this action will threaten the rating of the hotel on the Tripadvisor site, because it will have the words “luxurious prison” next to its rooms and suits availability.

Counterfactuality: it is becoming a well-known fact that the crown prince is the de facto ruler of Saudi and he is getting rid of his political enemies to overtake complete power.

29. The joke is about the Saudi government’s unrealistic statements released to cover the murder of Khashoggi.

Seriousness: The Saudi government released a statement that Khashoggi has died in a fistfight.

Humorousness: The joke is a fake translation for a Saudi news cast with several statements by the crown prince for reasons related to the death of Khashoggi; all are funny methods like draining in a pool, fistfight, and being hit by a large hamburger.

Counterfactuality: The joke is in fact criticizing the Saudi government for covering up the murder of Khashoggi with unrealistic statements that are even too funny to believe.

30. The joke is about Trump claiming that a migrant caravan from South America includes Middle Easterners and Muslims.

Seriousness: The joke is about the migrant caravan from South America that Trump thought it has Muslims and Middle Eastern citizens in it.

Humorousness: Colbert joked that the caravan included characters from the famous *Arabian Nights* tale. The joke is referring to Arabs and Muslims as characters from the famous *Arabian Nights* tales, saying that they would find Ali baba and his 40 thieves, Aladdin, Jafar, and the Genie lamp in this caravan.

Counterfactuality: Trump hates all immigrants from all over the world and especially Muslims. Although the caravan is coming from South America, he pointed out that there are Muslims within it, so he is even an unrealistic racist.

31. The joke is about Muslims sympathizing with a mass shooting targeting Jews.

Seriousness: The Muslim community in the United States has raised money for the Jewish community after the mass shooting targeting a Jews gathering.

Humorousness: Colbert is joking about how Muslims are standing and sympathizing with the Jewish community, although they are long known enemies, while Trump thinks that this act of violence would not have happened if they had more guns to protect themselves.

Counterfactuality: Even though Muslims and Jews are known to be archenemies for centuries, they are standing together against hate, while Trump, on the other hand, thinks that the answer to violence is more violence, by asking them to have more guns to protect themselves, instead of trying to condemn this violent action.

32. Trump never visited his troops in his war zones in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Seriousness: Trump never visited the troops he is calling to return home on the front where they are serving for years now in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Humorousness: The joke is about Trump not having a clue about when to visit his troops in war zones, because of safety reasons as he says, so he fears for his life and not so much for his troops’.

Counterfactuality: Trump does not have a clue as to whether he should visit his troops, and he seems to be afraid of going to these war zones for what he calls safety reasons.

33. Trump is releasing a statement denying the CIA report about the involvement of the Saudi crown prince in the murder of Khashoggi, saying he may or may not have murdered him.

Seriousness: Trump is refusing to acknowledge the report released by the CIA, refusing to accuse the crown prince of Saudi Arabia of the murder of the Saudi journalist Jamal Khashoggi.

Humorousness: Colbert is making fun of how he is still resistant although the evidence is actually very obvious and even blinding, but that seems normal because Trump is known for looking at things that are actually blinding like the solar eclipse.

Counterfactuality: Trump is providing a cover for a murderer autocrat, regardless of all the evidence, just to protect the financial deals with Saudi Arabia.

34. The joke is about the United States refusing to admit that the crown prince of Saudi Arabia was involved in the murder of Jamal Khashoggi.

Seriousness: The joke is about the vice president refusing to admit the involvement of the Saudi crown prince in the Khashoggi murder.

Humorousness: The joke is comparing this situation with Lion King when Scar killed his brother Mufasa, in reference to the murder of Jamal Khashoggi by the crown prince of Saudi Arabia with the United States continuing the arms deal with the hyenas.

Counterfactuality: The United States administration is refusing to admit to pass the arms deal with Saudi Arabia.

35. The joke is making fun of Trump troubled foreign affairs with the case of colluding with Russia and covering the involvement of the Saudi crown prince in the murder of Khashoggi.

Seriousness: The joke is making fun of how Trump is colluding with two tyrants and murderers, Putin of Russia and Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman of Saudi Arabia.

Humorousness: The joke is putting out a video of Putin and Mohammed bin Salman shaking hands and laughing, and Colbert is reacting to their voices as if they are laughing about how Trump is covering their murders.

Counterfactuality: The counter-fact is how Trump is facing criticism for covering and colluding with those murderers for his own interests and profit, while he was accusing al-Assad of killing his own people earlier, but because of the profit, anyone can be a murderer.

36. The joke is about Trump defending the prince Mohammed bin Salman from his involvement in the Khashoggi murder.

Seriousness: The joke is about Trump's administration refusing to admit that the Saudi prince is in fact a murderer.

Humorousness: The joke is making fun of how the Trump administration, although there is clear evidence of the involvement of the Saudi prince, are refusing to attack him to protect the arms deal they are having with Saudi Arabia.

Counterfactuality: Although there is abundant evidence, Trump’s administration is refusing to admit that the crown prince is in fact a murderer, so they do not look as if they are covering up a murderer and having a murderer as an ally.

37. The joke is about Trump announcing the withdrawal of the United States troops from Syria on several conditions.

Seriousness: The joke is about Trump promising to bring back troops fighting in Syria, on several conditions.

Humorousness: Colbert is making fun of Trump saying to the Turkish president about Syria, “I am leaving, it is yours,” as if he is talking about a table in a restaurant not a country.

Counterfactuality: The White House national security advisor had to come out to announce that the United States’ withdrawal from Syria will be conditioned. The withdrawals will be at a very slow pace, after completely defeating ISIS, and Turkey is promising not to attack the Kurds.

38. The joke is about The New Zealand attack on a mosque.

Seriousness: New Zealand suffered from a terrorist attack on a mosque during the Friday prayer.

Humorousness: This country was a place of shooting movies not a place for terrorist attacks; there was not actually a humor tone in this joke.

Counterfactuality: This country never faced this kind of problems; it was always a peaceful place.

39. The joke is about Trump’s reaction towards the New Zealand attack on a mosque, being an anti-Muslim attack.

Seriousness: The joke is about how Trump refuses to directly condemn white supremacists, as the attacker is one of them.

Humorousness: Colbert is responding to Trump’s vice president, daring anyone to accuse Trump of being an anti-Muslim, so Colbert said it out and clear; “Trump is anti-Muslim and a racist.”

Counterfactuality: Trump clearly refuses to condemn white supremacists, and his administration is trying to defend him from being anti-Muslim.

40. The joke is about the United States' possible new war in the Middle East.

Seriousness: The joke is about President Trump refusing to go to war with Iran, because there is no enough evidence for a threat to the United States.

Humorousness: Colbert called it the worst Throwback Thursday ever, in reference to the situation that led to the war on Iraq in 2003, because the events are very similar.

Counterfactuality: Colbert is comparing the situation to the 2003 war on Iraq, with no evidence of real threat, and sending troops to the Middle East, which is a war that is still going on after 17 years with no enough evidence, and the war with Iran will not be any different.

41. The joke is about the United States' possible new war with Iran.

Seriousness: The joke is about Trump seeking for the diplomatic resolution and wanting to meet with the Iranian diplomats.

Humorousness: The joke is making fun of Trump considering anything from the Middle East as a part of the famous *Arabian Nights* tales. The joke is referring to Trump's perception of the Middle East as he thinks that the Iranian president, with his long beard, which is a Muslim look for religious men, as a Muslim wizard and as Dumbledore (the character from Harry Potter) of the desert. In addition, when Trump arrives to the Middle East, he will start asking about the magic carpet and the Genie, which are parts of the *Aladdin* tale from the famous *Arabian Nights* tales

Counterfactuality: Although Trump might seem reckless and does not understand anything about international politics, he still does not want to go into another war.

42. The joke is about Jared Kushner, Trump's son-in-law, being friends with the crown prince of Saudi Arabia.

Seriousness: The joke is about how Kushner was asked about his knowledge of the involvement of the Saudi prince in the murder of Khashoggi, and he denied his knowledge about the issue.

Humorousness: The joke called the Saudi prince Jared's better half, in reference to them being close friends, and made fun of him refusing to acknowledge the involvement of the crown prince in the murder because he is afraid of being murdered by a chain saw as well.

Counterfactuality: Jared refused to answer the question directly because of the close connections he has with the Saudi prince, so again he is, just like Trump, covering up a murderer.

43. the United States is calling for war against Iran although the Houthis have declared responsibility for bombing an oil facility in Saudi Arabia.

Seriousness: the United States is planning to attack Iran even though the Houthis rebels in Yemen have announced they are responsible for the attack on an oil facility in Saudi Arabia, only because the Saudis said so.

Humorousness: Trump is waiting for the order of the crown prince of Saudi Arabia to tell him who to attack and when, in return for business deals and money as if he is renting his army to other countries.

Counterfactuality: Iran and Saudi Arabia have always been archenemies, so the United States is using the incident of the oil facility attack to go to battle with Iran.

44. The United States is calling for war against Iran for attacking a Saudi oil facility.

Seriousness: The United States said they would declare war on Iran after they allegedly attacked an oil facility.

Humorousness: The joke is in a form of as advertisement, saying that the United States is going to war, ready and sound, for any country who wants to go to war; the American army is ready to fight your battles for you if you pay in cash.

Counterfactuality: The US is helping their allies and their golden chicken and preserving their oil rights as well, although most of the American people do not know why the United States is declaring war on Iran.

45. Trump announcing the troop's withdrawal from Syria after a phone call from Turkish president and abandoning their ally, the Kurdish fighters.

Seriousness: After a phone call with the Turkish president, Trump announces the United States withdrawing from northern Syria.

Humorousness: Colbert is making fun of how officials in the Whitehouse convinced Trump to rethink his decisions, but he actually must have thought about the meaning of “to rethink” first.

Counterfactuality: Everyone is attacking Trump's decisions of withdrawing and abandoning an ally, the Kurds that helped them fight ISIS for years, and he is threatening to ruin the Turkish economy if they attacked the Kurds.

46. The joke is about Trump defending the United States withdrawal from Syria and abandoning the Kurds.

Seriousness: The joke is about how withdrawing from Syria and abandoning the Kurds will leave them alone to face the attacks of the Turkish army in northern Syria.

Humorousness: The joke is making fun of Trump's plan to bring peace in the Middle East, by starting a war on Iran, leaving Syria to the Turkish army to invade, elevating the conflict between Palestine and Israel, leaving the Kurds, their ally, for a mysterious fate with the Turkish army to fight, and leaving the war on ISIS in Syria, to help Saudi Arabia with its war on Iran. Colbert is saying that this is not a peace plan; it seems as a plan for a script of drama show called “destroying the Middle East.”

Counterfactuality: Trump is saying that Turkey is an ally and trading partner, so it will not hurt the Kurds, and he will keep helping Kurds and providing them with weapons, to fight back the Turkish troops.

47. The United States is leaving the Syrian front and abandoning the Kurds, its ally, and the Congress is condemning his actions.

Seriousness: The United States is leaving the Syrian front, and Turkey is evading it.

Humorousness: Trump reassuring speech is full of signs about how unsafe the situation is in Syria, with Kurds being under attack and ISIS fleeing their prisons, and the peace zone is actually turning into a war zone.

Counterfactuality: Although Trump is bragging about ending the role of the United States in the war in the Middle East, now Turkey and Russia are taking over the Syrian front and attacking the Kurds. Furthermore, the ISIS prisoners are fleeing their prisons and may be reforming again.

48. Trump gets extremely graphic in describing death of Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, the ISIS leader.

Seriousness: Trump was declaring the killing of al-Baghdadi, the ISIS leader; instead of making it brief, he started talking and praising himself about it.

Humorousness: Trump was using a visual narration of the operation; he was even saying that they did not knock on the door to kill him, as if it was normal to fight terrorists by knocking on their doors.

Counterfactuality: Although it a major event, Trump made it hilarious with his comments on the operation and his attempts to make this event a bigger event than the killing of Osama bin Laden, during the Obama administration.

49. Trump press conference about killing the terrorist Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi turned into announcing his plans to take over the Syrian oil.

Seriousness: Trump announces that the United States is not entirely withdrawing from Syria, but they are leaving some troops to protect the oil facilities they are willing to invest in.

Humorousness: Colbert is saying that these plans are not supposed to be said aloud, giving them nicknames like “Iraqi Freedom” or the “Desert Storm.”

Counterfactuality: Those nicknames for the wars in the Middle East are referring to the wars the United States has waged in the Middle East under false intention to take over the oil in the region, referring to the fact that all the United States’ wars are always for economic reasons, not for freedom or peace.

50. The United States is going to war with Iran, using Iraq as a battleground.

Seriousness: The joke is about the United States going to war in the Middle East with Iran and using Iraq as a battlefield

Humorousness: The joke is making fun of how Trump is planning to start another war in the Middle East, again with Iraq being involved, although it has nothing to do with this dispute.

Counterfactuality: Iraq is still suffering after 17 years from the first American invasion of its land; now the United States is using it as a battleground to fight neighboring countries.

51. The joke is comparing this war to 2003 Iraq war, with US going into war without considering the consequences in both cases.

Seriousness: The United States announced it is going to war with Iran and attacked the Iranian Major General Soleimani.

Humorousness: The joke is comparing the unclear information about real threats to American targets from Iran, stating that taking the decision of the attack on General Soleimani is just like what happened in the 2003 war in Iraq.

Counterfactuality: The United States is repeating the same mistake of the war in Iraq in 2003, by starting a war with no good evidence of threat and no clear understanding of the consequences.

52. The joke is about the United States announcing troops withdrawing from Iraq and then taking it back after 2 hours.

Seriousness: The joke is about how the Iraqi parliament asked the United States to withdraw their troops from Iraq and not to use it as a battleground.

Humorousness: The joke is making fun of American officials, who, after announcing their willingness to withdraw, said it was a draft not a real decision. Colbert is satirically asking why officials announce drafts of decisions in the first place.

Counterfactuality: Colbert is making fun of how indecisive the administration in the United States is and how they do not have an actual plan for the ongoing conflict in the Middle East.

53. Iran firing missiles on an American military base located in Iraq.

Seriousness: The joke is about Trump finishing WWII on Twitter and assuring the American people that the military base in Iraq had no casualties.

Humorousness: The joke is making fun of Trump, as all his announcements even if they are about victory in war are mispronounced.

Counterfactual: The American base was hit by Iranian missiles but there were casualties, so Trump was celebrating this on Twitter, considering that he ended world war 3.

54. The American administration is lying to the people about the war with Iran.

Seriousness: The American administration is not declaring the actual reason for the war with Iran.

Humorousness: The joke is about how Trump and his administration are willing to start a war in the Middle East for money, but they do not have the courage to say it distinctly.

Counterfactual: The joke is making fun of the American administration lying to the Congress and to the people about why they are going to war again in the Middle East just like what happened in 2003 in Iraq, calling this war the recent big mistake in American modern history.

55. The joke is comparing the American administration lies in every war in the Middle East.

Seriousness: The current administration failed to declare the true reason for the war with Iran.

Humorousness: The joke is about how the former president Bush respected the American people and made efforts in his lies about Iraq war and Saddam Hussein having nuclear weapons.

Counterfactual: All the wars in the Middle East have been for economic reasons and for the oil in the Middle East. The American administration has always been lying to its people about those millions of dollars and millions of lives wasted to achieve its goals, which have nothing to do with achieving freedom, fighting the terror, or protecting the United States from evident threats as they always announce.

56. The joke is about Trump wanting to add Middle East countries to the NATO alliance.

Seriousness: Trump is suggesting to the head of NATO to add Middle East countries to the organization, although it is an alliance with north Atlantic nations only.

Humorousness: The joke is about the new name Trump intended to give to the NATO after adding countries from the Middle East to be “NATOME,” which indicates his ignorance about the organization or what it stands for.

Counterfactuality: They are making fun of how ignorant Trump is when it comes to anything related to foreign policy, especially anything related to the Middle East.