NEWS FRAMING OF PETER GRESTE’S IMPRISONMENT IN EGYPT

A Comparative Content Analysis of Australian and Egyptian Media Coverage of Al Jazeera Correspondent Greste’s “Marriott Cell” Case

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This research aims to examine how Al Jazeera journalist Peter Greste imprisonment was portrayed in both the Australian and the Egyptian media. In light of the framing theory and Gatekeeping Theory, a quantitative content analysis was conducted to examine a total number of 69 news articles of the most visited news websites in each country. A non-probability purposive sampling technique was utilized to select 35 Australian news stories from news.com.au, and 34 Egyptian news articles from each of Egypt Independent and Ahram Online websites. The duration under study is a seven-month period that witnessed the journalist’s sentencing to seven years of prison on June 23rd, 2014, until reporting his release on February 2nd, 2015. Through analyzing these articles, the research concluded that both countries’ media were similar in: the overall portrayal of Greste through reporting on the case, the portrayal of the unfair processing of the case, and the portrayal of the consequences of this case on restricting media freedom in Egypt. However, Egyptian media showed some partiality in reporting on the evidence, portraying the criticism of the Egyptian authorities –whether the President or the judiciary- and portraying the violations against human rights in Egypt. Therefore, the framing of Greste’s case in Egyptian, versus Australian news articles, confirms that the media in Egypt are relatively restricted.
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“Only a newspaper can put the same thought at the same time before a thousand readers,” wrote Alexis de Tocqueville, a well-known French politician and thinker in his twin volumes “Democracy in America” (De Tocqueville, 1988, p. 517). Even after the dramatic technological advancements that the media have been witnessing in the twenty-first century, this statement still holds true for television, radio, and Internet, which provide information to millions of viewers and listeners instantaneously on a global level. Recognizing the drastic impact of media on public opinion, governments all over the world, and especially of authoritarian systems, seek to control and influence the flow of information reaching their citizens. Over many years, this control has taken many forms whether direct or indirect.

Leeson (2008) explains the reason behind the governments’ efforts to limit media freedom by stating that there is a specific connection between the level of media freedom and the economic development status of the country. In his research, he found out that individuals lack knowledge of basic political issues in countries where governments interfere with the media. Describing them as “politically ignorant and apathetic individuals”, the researcher assures that these individuals will not “participate enough politically to monitor or punish effectively the activities of self-interested politicians. When politicians are free from accountability to voters, they are more likely to pursue privately beneficial policies, which in turn lead to lower development” (Leeson, 2008, p. 156). Therefore, his research suggests that governments may try to influence the flow of political information to become less accountable to responding to its citizens’ demands, and limit their capability of criticizing the government.

In his research study, Whitten-Woodring (2009) explained that there is a relationship between media freedom, democracy and human rights. One of the main justifications for freedom of the news is that a lack of censorship will enable the media to act as a “watchdog” over the government, and therefore, hold the government more accountable and responsive to people’s demands. The researcher suggests that media freedom is associated with higher government respect for human rights in countries that are most democratic. On the other hand, in authoritarian countries, or less democratic ones, media freedom is related to lower government respect for human rights (Whitten-Woodring, 2009, p. 596). This lower respect for human rights is more likely
to be translated into various forms of governmental violations, such as “political imprisonment, murder, disappearance and torture” (Whitten-Woodring, 2009, p. 596). Unfortunately, such violations are still practiced on a wide scale, especially in the Middle East.

This research aims to study one of these governmental violation incidents that took place in Egypt recently. Three of Al Jazeera journalists were arrested in December 2013 for reporting unfavorable news about the Egyptian government. Assaulting journalists has always been a problem in Egypt that has had a tremendous impact on restricting press freedom and freedom of expression. “More than 65 journalists have been detained since former President Mohamed Morsi was ousted in July” according to the Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ, 2014). While most of these detained journalists have been freed, according to the same source, their arrest was meant to scare and prohibit journalists from further reporting of news that disapproves of the current government’s actions.

The arrest of the Australian Al Jazeera correspondent, Peter Greste –along with two other co-workers: Egyptian-Canadian Mohamed Fahmy and Egyptian Baher Mohamed - grabbed the attention of news, media and politicians internationally, and brought global criticism of Egyptian freedom of expression and human rights policies. In this research, the researcher focuses on this incident that captured international attention for more than two years and signified some concerns on the future of journalism reporting in Egypt. Conducting a quantitative content analysis, the researcher aims to examine how a leading Australian news website reported the incident in comparison to two leading Egyptian news websites. By comparing the framing of news presented by each country’s media, this research wishes to discover the dominating frames that characterized each country’s media, assess the similarities and/or differences between them in covering the issue, and accordingly, evaluate the degree of freedom that the media in Egypt has in discussing sensitive political issues.
STATED IN THE PROBLEM AND ITS SIGNIFICANCE

Journalism has always been a challenging profession for those who work in authoritarian, or less democratic, countries. Restricting journalism with all its various forms has drastic effects on many levels that can impact the country. It will not only affect the journalism profession, but also will impact political, social and economic development of the country, and put freedom of expression and human rights at adverse risk. Unfortunately, these restrictions are still practiced in Egypt under the new military government of Abdel Fattah El-Sisi. The arrest of Greste, with his other co-workers, captured the international attention of the media and politicians, and brought global criticism to Egyptian freedom of expression and human rights policies. Australian media specifically was on fire defending its citizen’s, Greste, rights. More than a thousand articles appeared in Australian newspapers and their websites, reported Conrad Walters data editor of Sydney Morning Herald on February 2015. “From the perplexing first days of your arrest to the euphoric moments of your release, Australians followed your case... All up, just shy of half a million words were published in Australia about the imprisonment. On nearly 200 days, the media here, normally voracious for the next new thing, stayed with your story. Articles, letters, opinion pieces and cartoonists all weighed in with you, cheered for you, demanded justice for you” (Walter, 2015).

Given the significance of this incident, specifically to both the Australian and the Egyptian media, this research examines how the media of each country framed the events of Greste’s jail. Conducting a quantitative content analysis, the researcher aims to examine how the leading news websites of each country reported the incident. The researcher analyzed news articles that appeared during a period of seven months that witnessed the most significant events- starting with sentencing Greste to seven years of prison on 23rd June 2014, until his release from jail was reported on 2nd February 2015, one day after his actual release. By comparing the framing of news brought by each country’s media, this research wishes to discover the dominant frames that characterized each media’s stories, and how these frames articulate the extent of media freedom in Egypt.

In addition to the political and media significance of this topic as stated earlier, this research is of a theoretical significance as well. Given the recent nature of this story in the media, this study has a particular edge of originality. The lack of academic studies conducted on this topic gives
extensive weight to the results of this research, which can be the foundation of future research. Moreover, this research will illustrate the objectivity of international versus local news coverage on the same topic, allowing us to understand more about the power of framing of political news.
Although to the world the arrest of these journalists raised human rights and freedom of expression concerns, the Egyptian narrative focused on defending national security and the need for confronting hidden agendas of channels like Al Jazeera (Osborn, 2014; Viney, 2015). While media globalization has, for many years, played a huge role in blending and homogenizing various cultures, for many years, it has always brought the fear of political, economic or cultural domination by developed countries over developing ones (Hammond, 2005, p. 19). In his book, Hammond clarified this fear saying that many Arab countries have the “paranoia” over globalization, and what foreign cultures may covertly plan for the Arab world. Even American fast food names are prohibited in some Arab countries due to political reasons (Hammond, 2005, p. 19). In the book "(UN) Civil War of words: Media and politics in the Arab World, Mamoun Fandy explained that this fear is justified. Media channels are controlled by various entities who have unannounced objectives, and utilize these media to advocate their own interests. The founders, the nature and the characteristics of these media suggest their objectives; therefore, it is crucial to study these factors to comprehend the purposes of what they portray to the masses (Fandy, 2007). Other factors are equally fundamental for studying the Middle East’s media outlets, including: the history of Arab media, the context of conflicts between the various Arab states, as well as within these Arab states and their oppositions, such as the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt, Hezbollah in Lebanon, or Hamas in the occupied territories (Fandy, 2007). For the purpose of this research study, the coming paragraphs demonstrate how these factors that Fandy referred to in his book played a role in these journalists’ case. The following section provides an overview of the case and background knowledge about the political situation in Egypt.

2.1 A Glance at Al Jazeera Journalists’ Case:

2.1.1 Arresting the Journalists

On December 29th, 2013, security forces in Cairo arrested four members of Al Jazeera. Correspondent Peter Greste, an Australian, Bureau Chief Mohamed Fahmy, a Canadian-Egyptian,
Producer Baher Mohamed as well as cameraman Mohamed Fawzy, both Egyptians, were accused of associating with Egypt’s Muslim Brotherhood, earlier designated as a terrorist organization, and conspiring to overthrow the state (Al Jazeera Journalists Arrested in Egypt, 2013; Osborn, 2014; Viney, 2015). Capturing world’s attention, this incident became a prime story in news networks and newspapers for almost two years, especially in Australia, which pulled all forces to release the Australian Greste from custody.

Describing the accusations as “absurd”, Al Jazeera reported that human rights groups mentioned that the Egyptian authorities are trampling on freedom of expression (Osborn, 2014). However, Egyptian officials assured that the case has nothing to do with freedom of expression, and that the journalists raised suspicions by operating without proper authorizations (Osborn, 2014). The accusations against these detainees included, publishing false information defaming Egypt and harming the national security (Brady, 2014; Osborn, 2014; Viney, 2015), operating without valid press licenses, and supplying money, equipment and information to Brotherhood members (Osborn, 2014; Viney, 2015). The journalists’ case -which became known in the media as the “Marriott Cell” in order to indicate their support to the Muslim Brotherhood- were accused of airing outdated and “contrary to reality” reports and news packages from preceding months that engaged the group (Viney, 2015). They were also accused of setting up a media center in their Marriot Hotel rooms, which is an unlicensed broadcasting space (Al Jazeera reporters, 2015). ABC News quoted Egypt’s Interior Ministry saying that the journalists used their Marriott rooms to meet with Muslim Brotherhood members and "broadcast news that harms national security as well as spread false information for Al Jazeera, without the approval of relevant authorities" (Viney, 2015). The court explained that Al Jazeera Mubashir TV channel lacked “objectivity in its coverage” of the events during and after President Mohamed Morsi’s ouster. The court added that this channel is primarily used by Qatar to publish news aimed at "bringing down the Egyptian state" (Al Jazeera reporters, 2015). Since then, Al Jazeera channel was also described as a terrorist media organization that works in favor of the terrorist groups (Viney, 2015). “Both state and private Egyptian media have fanned anti-Brotherhood sentiment, suggesting anyone associated with the veteran movement is a traitor and threat to national security” (Osborn, 2014). Greste and Fahmy were also charged with the absence of authorized press licenses to operate in the country. While this is true, ABC News highlighted that amidst the ongoing political turbulence in Egypt from 2011 to 2013, many foreign journalists had to work with expired licenses as they failed to renew them or obtain permits on time.
On the other hand, Australian media reported that the Queensland University of Technology (QUT) graduate and award-winning expert reporter with many years of experience at Reuters, BBC and Al Jazeera, Greste “was just doing his job” (Brady, 2014). It was Greste’s first time in the country, and he had only been in Egypt for a few weeks before the arrest (Viney, 2015). For Greste and his Al Jazeera colleagues Fahmy and Mohamed, that job meant, “reporting on the corruption, brutality and excesses of Egypt’s ruling force under President Abdel Fattah el-Sisi” (Brady, 2014). The media reported that the journalists’ trials were designed to scare journalists away from reporting anything unfavorable about the Egyptian government, and were a “choreographed attack on press freedom” (Brady, 2014).

Australian Broadcast Corporation (ABC) reported that Greste was jailed for what was meant to be a “routine assignment” in Cairo, and suggested the true reason behind the accusations was an “ongoing political battle” between Egypt and Qatar, where Al Jazeera is based (Viney, 2015). “The journalists are caught up in a battle that is not theirs, being scapegoated for simply doing their job” (Viney, 2015). The network also claimed that the lame accusation of operating without valid licenses only rose suspicious that the authorities were singling out Al Jazeera, because many foreign journalists work without updating their permits due to the political unrest that the country witnessed from 2011-2013 (Viney, 2015). On September 8th, 2015, ABC reported Greste was surprisingly released from jail; however, he was still being tried as a criminal in absentia, with serious allegations that impact the future of the journalists’ profession, as well as international journalism as a whole (Viney, 2015).

2.1.2 Describing the Trials:

While vigorously denying all charges and assuming the matter would be resolved in hours, the three journalists were referred to criminal court, after being held in detention for a month (Viney, 2015). The first trial was held on February 20th, 2014; however, it was repetitively postponed for the duration of four months, due to absent judges, witnesses who never arrived, and prosecutors struggling to bring any condemning evidence to the courts (Viney, 2015). During one of his trials, Greste was heard shouting out “unbelievable inefficiencies” (Viney, 2015). While distressed by the proceedings, the detainees became increasingly confident that the court would dismiss the case due
to lack of incriminating evidence against them. However, the prosecution unexpectedly continued to demand the maximum penalty of 15 to 25 years be applied, employing the narrative of Al Jazeera’s fabrication of false news to support a terrorist organization (Viney, 2015).

2.1.3 The Sentences:

On June 23rd, 2014, the media reported that after eleven mistrials, and despite the lack of sufficient evidence that incriminate the detainees, Greste and Fahmy were sentenced to seven years of prison, while Mohamed was sentenced to ten years, on charges related to supporting a "terrorist organization" (Viney, 2015). Describing it as a “show trial that was as absurd as it was crooked”, Brady explained her frustration upon hearing the sentences saying, “I railed at the injustice of shooting the messenger” (Brady, 2014).

2.1.4 International Pressure and Egyptian President Interference to Resolve the Issue:

Announcing the news of the verdict in various media outlets caused international outrage. The media all over the globe criticized the case for being politicized, and assured that it was entirely a proof of the ongoing battle between Qatar and Egypt, and had nothing to do with the journalists who were caught in the middle (Viney, 2015). During the detention of the journalists, Al Jazeera along with the BBC and other major news organizations launched the Twitter and social media campaign #FreeAJStaff (Viney, 2015). The campaign included moments of silence while holding the hashtag as well as protesting at Egyptian embassies in various countries. Calls from the United Nations, European Union and the United States for the journalists to be released were ignored (Viney, 2015). On July 7th, 2014, President and former army chief Abdel Fattah el-Sisi, responded to the criticism by declaring to reporters that the case was negatively impacting Egypt's image, and he personally disproves their trials; however, he declared that the judiciary in Egypt is independent and that he cannot interfere in its process (Viney, 2015).

Later on September 2014, during the United Nations General Assembly in New York, the
Australian Prime Minister Tony Abbott and US president Barack Obama requested Greste’s release from president El-Sisi. Meanwhile, “politicians from Australia and around the world increased pressure on Egypt to release the journalists, accompanied by continued campaigns in the media pressing for their release” (Viney, 2015), to which president el-Sisi responded by issuing an “unexpected” decree on November 13, 2014 allowing for the deportation of foreign detainees to their home countries. Though the decree sparked hope for Greste's release to Australia, it did not include Egyptian citizens with dual nationalities, thus did not apply to Greste’s jailed colleagues, which demonstrates that the decree was designed specifically for Greste, as a reaction to mounting international pressure (Viney, 2015).

2.1.5 Greste's Release From Jail:

On January 1st, 2015, six months after Al Jazeera sentencing appeals were filed, Egypt’s appeals court, the Court of Cassation, considered a retrial, during which the defendants’ lawyers presented proofs for lack of incriminating evidence. A month latter, Greste was released from jail after more than 400 days behind bars (Viney, 2015). He flew with his brother to Cyprus, and then finally to Australia where he was met with huge international celebration (Viney, 2015). Despite these celebrations surrounding his release, he was technically still on trial back in Egypt, and was both personally and professionally tied to the pending verdict of the unfinished case in the Egyptian courts (Viney, 2015). Hoping to secure his release as well, Fahmy renounced his Egyptian citizenship to become solely Canadian on February 3, 2015. A week later, both Fahmy and Mohamed were released on bail; however, unlike Greste, each was made to pay EGP 250,000 ($44,000) to return to their families and await the verdict (Viney, 2015).

Their retrials were continuously adjourned, delayed by absences, and postponed at least ten times for a period of over seven months. In August 29th, 2015, the journalists were sentenced to three years’ jail for being accused of supporting the renowned Muslim Brotherhood and operating without valid licenses, despite the lack of evidence that support those accusations. After hearing the verdict, Greste’s brothers reported on his reaction through posting what he said on his twitter account saying: “shocked. Outraged. Angry. Upset. None of them convey how I feel right now. 3 yr sentences for @bahrooz, @MFFahmy11 and me is so wrong” (Viney, 2015). The media reported that this verdict comes after the Jazeera journalists mark 608 days since their initial arrested back in December 2013 (Viney, 2015).
2.2 Describing the Political Life in Egypt Under the New Government:

Reporting about the incident of Al Jazeera journalists’ arrest, since the very first day, entailed massive criticism for the current government and its violations against both the citizens and media workers. The next day after the arrest, Al Jazeera quoted Human rights groups saying, “conditions for journalists in Egypt have become difficult since former Egyptian President Mohamed Morsi was removed in a coup on July 3, 2013” (Al Jazeera Journalists Arrested in Egypt, 2013). In her article defending Greste and criticizing the Egyptian legislators, the Australian Brady (2014) also hinted to the aggregate number of deaths and imprisonment since president El-Sisi took over ruling, saying, “1400 people have been killed and 15,000 jailed” during the events of 2014. She described the manner president el-Sisi’s as “a usurper president doggedly clutches to power” (Brady, 2014).

While Viney (2015) claimed that the media witnessed relative freedom for two years following the 2011 uprisings, he also referred to President El- Sisi restricting this freedom saying, “news channels and networks were quickly shut down and silenced, and foreign journalists apartments were often raided” (Viney, 2015). He singled out the incident of Rabaa Square describing it as “one of the crackdown's most prominent moments” that took place on August 2014, when the Egyptian military “violently dispersed the Brotherhood’s sit-in in Rabaa square, killing hundreds of demonstrations on that day” (Viney, 2015). Since then, “hundreds of Egyptian citizens were killed, thousands were jailed without trial, and journalists who engaged the Brotherhood faced rapidly increasing pressure and danger despite them having been in power merely weeks before” (Viney, 2015). Brady also heavily denounced the political unrest that Egypt encountered after president Morsi saying that the Journalists were merely doing their job which meant reporting on the “corruption, brutality and excesses of Egypt’s ruling force under President Abdel Fattah el-Sisi” (Brady, 2014). She assured that the corruption is in the country, not in these journalists saying, “It’s the sort of environment where simply reporting the news is enough to brand you a terrorist sympathizer” (Brady, 2014).

Though Brady correlated the reasons behind the deteriorated political conditions in Egypt to the harsh ruling of the current government, Al Jazeera related it to “political polarization” and “street violence”, and reported “six journalists were killed for their work in 2013” (Al Jazeera Journalists Arrested in Egypt, 2013). The latest journalists’ arrests came after a series of clashes between police and Muslim Brotherhood supporters across Egypt, making Egypt- along with Syria and Iraq- among
the “deadliest countries for journalists to work in” Al Jazeera claimed, sourcing CPJ reports (Al Jazeera Journalists Arrested in Egypt, 2013). “The conflict in Syria, a spike in Iraqi bloodshed, and political violence in Egypt accounted for the high number of journalists killed on the job in 2013” (Beiser, 2013). Having closer look to the CPJ reports that Al Jazeera quoted in its article, confirms the above quotes. However, the same source also reported, “The worst years on CPJ’s record are 2009 and 2012; 74 journalists were confirmed killed because of their work in each of those years” (Beiser, 2013). CPJ also documented at least 78 assaults on journalists from August 2012 until former President Mohamed Morsi’s ouster on July 3rd, 2013 (Beiser, 2013).
CHAPTER 3: LITERATURE REVIEW:

International reporting has always been a challenging task for journalists in many countries, especially for those who report on political issues. The below paragraphs discuss some of the challenges that journalists encounter on pursuing objective international political reporting. The researcher also discusses different approaches for restricting media freedom, governments’ violations against media workers and human rights, and finally global efforts to restrain media restrictions and governments’ violations.

3.1 Challenges to Objective International Reporting on Political Issues:

Framing of news events across countries are sometimes inconsistent. Though globalization played a huge role in bringing nations and cultures together, it has not erased the domestic context impact on the media institution when it comes to news reporting. The media institution is highly affected by local legislation, and social and cultural values (Kasmani, 2014, p. 596). Research on international news coverage on political violence, intercultural relations, government policy and war reporting show that news is still framed based on the national home perspective (Kasmani, 2014, p.596). Journalists’ and editors’ decisions regarding foreign events are thus still largely influenced by a broader cultural-domestic environment (Kasmani, 2014, p. 596).

Camaj (2010) also suggests lack of conformity of media frames across countries. Although a study analyzing the framing of European political and economic news found similarities between four European countries’ media frames, the study suggests that this similarity depends on the event being covered (Camaj, 2010, p. 638). On another study on framing the events of Iraq War in Swedish and US elite media, significant differences in frames were reported. Though US war coverage relied more on the ‘military conflict’ frame, the Swedish media emphasized the ‘responsibility’ and ‘anti-war protest’ frames (Camaj, 2010, p. 638). The researcher suggests that this inconsistency is a “consequence of the potential influence of the political culture of the country of origin on media professionals” (Camaj, 2010, p. 639). Therefore, media professionals tend to follow their national primacies when covering international events.
In his study of Kosovo political status negotiations’ news coverage by major international news agencies, Camaj assessed differences and similarities in the use of news frames. Reuters, Associated Press (AP), Agence-France Presse (AFP) and Russian news agency (ITAR-TASS) were examined to determine which factors have the greatest impact on news frame selection cross-nationally. The findings suggest that international news agencies are mostly influenced by the event-oriented factors when framing international news (Camaj, 2010, p. 649). Despite their different national origins, western news agencies consistently emphasized the ‘conflict’ frame. However, ITAR-TASS employed the ‘attribution of responsibility’ frame the most in its coverage, which suggests differences between western and non-western news agencies’ reporting (Camaj, 2010, p. 649). He thus concludes that this difference is a consequence of journalists’ background, national cultures and interest, all of which influence the framing of news.

In his study, Odine (2014) suggests that although the above-mentioned -Reuters, AP, and AFP- are global agencies, they maintain special associations with the United States, United Kingdom, and France. Sharing an Anglophonic feature, he argues, these media are “agents of their democracy and consumerism” (Odine, 2014, p. 247). The researcher assures that Western media are often criticized for their Western bias when reporting on Eastern Europe, Asia, Africa, the Middle East, for instance. He stated that “Political, cultural, and economic issues are not contextually reported, a practice that slants the stories and fails to adhere neither to accuracy nor objectivity” (Odine, 2014, p. 246).

In addition, foreign reporters may be unfamiliar with the political and cultural background of the events in the countries they are reporting on. This constitutes another factor that impacts the objectivity of their reporting. Kasmani (2014) conducted a content analysis to examine framing the news of the Iranian political election on 2009 on BBC World News and Al Jazeera English. The researcher concluded inconsistency in the representation of frames between both channels due to two main reasons: the reporters’ national affiliation and cultural backgrounds (Kasmani, 2014, p. 605). The researcher suggests that the BBC World news reporters did not only have the tendency to respond to public viewing preferences, but they also lacked the background on Iranian political life. On the other hand, most of AJE reporters were of Iranian background, which certainly played a role in shaping their framing of the events and made it more profound (Kasmani, 2014, p. 605). For example, conducting personal interviews with reporters of both channels, the researcher found that BBC reporter viewed the demonstration as an extraordinary event and the willingness of the opposition leaders to defy the result as highly unusual. Nevertheless, AJE correspondent showed
less excitement towards the opposition leadership defying the regime (Kasmani, 2014, p. 606). Therefore, reporters’ cultural backgrounds and their relation to each nation-state played an influential role in framing the events. He concluded that the privilege of understanding local background and contexts significantly improve international reporting and result in more nuanced and more consistent coverage (Kasmani, 2014, p. 607).

Similarly, in a study examining the challenges facing international reporting in a non-democratic political system, the researcher discusses how the complexity of the system in Egypt makes it difficult for both media workers and foreign audience to understand the political events and the situation of democracy in the country (Sakr, 2010, p. 46). Sakr explains the difficulty of reporting effectively on a system in which two sets of institutions operate in parallel saying, “One set includes independent media outlets and a journalists’ trade union, and the other set includes security forces who can detain people without charge under the state of emergency law, and an information ministry that can use licensing technicalities to censor media content and thereby avoid answering questions of principle about freedom of expression” (Sakr, 2010, p. 46). Sakr discusses how this duality in turn makes it hard for journalists to report on issues concerning freedom of expression, especially when foreign readers are unaware of the background on Egyptian law, and thus unable to understand the magnitude of the issues (Sakr, 2010, p. 46). He also explains how it is difficult to evaluate events according to the commonly accepted news values. Sakr explains whereby news stories require “immediacy, drama and simplicity, these factors may not apply well to reporting in Egypt due to the lengthy processes, lack of crisis, texts and institutions which makes some events do not count as news” (Sakr, 2010, p. 47).

Another form of challenges is self-censorship that journalists may practice while reporting on political issues internationally. Journalists may be discouraged to objectively report on political issues for two main reasons. The first reason is to preserve a journalist’s own culture. Odine (2014) discusses how journalists might be reluctant to report on events that may jeopardize their country’s image or security on a global level. For instance, after the US Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) dismissed a senior officer over the disclosure of secret prisons, Scott Armstrong, an investigative journalist and executive director of Information Trust, “regretted reporting on culture and security” (Odine, 2014, p. 237). Ben Bradlee, a veteran journalist whose career stretched from the beginning to the end of the Cold War, also admitted that he struggled on decisions concerning whether to report on military and security matters, stating that no journalist wants to endanger the national security (Odine, 2014, p. 244).
The second reason for journalists' self-censorship practices that impact the objectivity of global reporting on political issues is fear of potential harm. Fearing government officials, or even their direct bosses inside newsrooms, some journalists may overcome reporting on certain issues for fear of losing their jobs (Horsley & Harrison, 2013, p. 41). On other instances, potential physical harm is the media professionals’ main concern. There are many possible dangers that journalists might confront while coverage of political issues, especially on war zones. Concerned about the dangers that journalists encounter, a study on 140 war journalists from the world’s major news organizations concluded that war journalists have higher rates of psychopathology than in a demographically matched comparison group of 107 non-war journalists (Feinstein, Owen & Blair, 2002). They also concluded that war journalists, specifically, showed higher rates of post-traumatic stress disorder and major depression (Feinstein, Owen & Blair, 2002). Horsley and Harrison state that wars account for one third of the aggregate number of journalists being killed by acts of violence (Horsley & Harrison, 2013).

Indeed, reporting on wars is one aspect that jeopardizes journalists’ psychological and physical health, but it is not the only reason. Researchers confirm that authoritarian or less-democratic governments’ violations against human rights and media freedom constitutes the primarily challenge that journalists encounter while pursuing objective reporting on political events. Horsley and Harrison (2013) explain that in many regions, it has become impossible to report what goes on because of the risks of physical attack or arbitrary imprisonment to journalists who operate there (Horsley & Harrison, 2013, p. 41). Journalists around the world face mounting threats of various forms: threats to their physical safety, legal threats, impediments and others (Horsley & Harrison, 2013, p. 41).

### 3.2 Governments' Violations Against Media Workers and Human Rights:

Some governments in less-democratic countries may utilize their powers to suppress journalists’ freedom in many forms. One of these forms is public death threat to journalists who report unfavorable news against authorities. Horsley and Harrison explain how public death threats from the Taliban in Pakistan forced BBC staff there, and other Pakistani journalists, to take emergency precautions against being traced and killed (Horsley & Harrison, 2013, p. 40). Journalists from Mexico, Somalia, Russia and the Philippines work in a climate of constant fear for their own
lives “... as they seek to report the truth about violent drugs cartels, warlords, high-level corruption or serious abuses of power” states the researchers (Horsley & Harrison, 2013, p. 40). A TV presenter in Pakistan was named a “target” by the Taliban because he called for public support for a 15-year-old girl who was shot in the head for demanding her right to go to school. A few weeks later this presenter survived an assassination attempt when a bomb was found attached to his car (Horsley & Harrison, 2013, p. 40).

Expelling is another form of threat that government impose to challenge journalists. In 2009, the Afghan government banned reporting on Taliban attacks during nationwide election and threatened to expel foreign journalists who wouldn’t comply (Odine, 2014). An official order that was issued by the National Security Council and a government spokesman stated, ‘Local agencies will be closed and international journalists will be kicked out’ (Odine, 2014).

Jailing is another type of challenge that authorities’ use to restrict freedom of media and freedom of expression in more general terms. The U.S.-based Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ) reported that 232 journalists were imprisoned at the end of 2012, the highest number recorded (CPJ, 2012). The main pretext behind jailing is a variety of ill-defined anti-terrorism and secrets laws (Horsley & Harrison, 2013, p. 40). Turkey was the country with the most journalists behind bars: many of them in pre-trial detention, others facing sentences that could reach 59 years prison (Horsley & Harrison, 2013, p. 40). This figure has almost doubled since late 2008, which witnessed 125 media workers behind bars (CPJ, 2008).

Odine gives some examples of situations that resulted from jailing journalists. Total of 10 journalists were arrested in a controversial coup probe in Turkey on 2001 after their homes were raided (Odine, 2014, p. 248). Three other journalists were arrested two weeks before. All these journalists were critics of the government, which raised the issue of press freedom in the country. Among those detained was Nedim Sener, a prominent journalist who received the International Press Institute ‘World Press Freedom Hero’ award for a book that blamed the security forces for the 2007 murder of ethnic Armenian journalist, Hrant Dink (Odine, 2014, p. 248). Moreover, Two Germans journalists were detained in Iran after interviewing Ashtian’s son. Iranian officials accused them of crimes against their culture and national security, and later charged them with $50,000 each instead of a 20-month prison sentence (Odine, 2014, p. 250).

Scholars suggest that this phenomenon does also exist even in the most liberal counties. Odine explains that despite the fact that UAE has always been viewed as the most liberal country in
the Middle East, five activists were detained in April 2011. These activists were accused of “perpetrating acts that pose a threat to state security” through leading a popular online political forum, through which they criticized the UAE ruler for “failing to provide a legal code to prevent corruption and abuses during the economic woes of the past decade” (Odine, 2014, p. 248). One of these activists is Nasser bin Ghaith, a financial analyst and frequent lecturer at the Abu Dhabi branch of Paris’ Sorbonne University (Odine, 2014, p. 248). Furthermore, in the United States, a New York Times journalist was jailed in July 2005 for up to 4 months for refusing to reveal her source in an investigation into the leak of an undercover CIA officer’s name (Odine, 2014, p. 250). Judith Miller was sent to jail with the stipulation that she would be released if she relented and revealed her source (Odine, 2014, p. 250).

Another form of challenges to media freedom is the assassination of journalists. Journalists’ killing has also been widely practiced by less-democratic governments throughout the world. Horsley and Harrison named some countries where the right to free expression is “most likely to shorten your life”, some of which are Mexico, Pakistan, Russia, Somalia, Syria (Horsley & Harrison, 2013, p. 39). The year 2012 had set a new record in terms of journalists’ slaughter. “The count of assassinated journalists kept by UNESCO, the UN’s Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, showed that 95 had been killed in the first nine months of the year alone. By the end of the year the total reached 115” (Horsley & Harrison, 2013, p. 40). Researchers assure that it's a well-known problem that cannot be disregarded by scholars and journalists worldwide, who are definitely aware at least about the 2006 assassination of Russian journalist Anna Politkovskaya, after she criticized authorities in Chechnya for trying to re-establish a Soviet-style dictatorship (Sakr, 2010; Horsley & Harrison, 2013). The same year witnessed 92 journalists dying in Iraq alone since the US led invasion in 2003 (Odine, 2014). The Committee to Protect Journalists reported in 2002 that 28 of the dead journalists were actually murdered, and half of them were threatened beforehand (Odine, 2014, p. 251). Researchers also assure that such journalists are killed for just “doing their work” (Horsley & Harrison, 2013; Odine, 2014; Sakr, 2010).

In addition to the threatening, jailing or assassinating journalists, scholars discuss other forms of violations conducted by authorities against freedom of expression and journalists’ rights. Some governments in less democratic countries officially impose certain regulations to control media freedom. Odine explained that, in some instances, journalists are officially banned from covering certain events to preserve national security, despite constitutions that guarantee media freedom. For example, the Afghan government prohibited live coverage of militant attacks in a bid
to prevent the Taliban from exploiting television news. Odine quoted an Afghan spokesman, and head of the Government Media and Information Center who said, “While journalists are going to the scene of ongoing attacks, they endanger themselves and also they help inform the enemy with their live broadcasts” (Odine, 2014, p. 244).

Preserving culture and national security has always been a good excuse for governments to impose such regulations. In October 2011, The National Cyber Security Alliance (NCSA), worked to empower consumers, businesses, and government agencies to stay safe online, thereby creating a cyber security to preserve culture (Odine, 2014, p. 239). US and UK signed a comprehensive cyber security agreement aimed at enabling the two countries to share information, allowing the government to react quickly, and effectively, to new and evolving threats to security, such as counterterrorism, cyber security, international military crises and national disasters (Odine, 2014, p. 243). The researcher explained that this plan allows government to spy on citizens’ social media activities and personal email accounts (Odine, 2014, p. 243). In the Middle East, The United Arab Emirates (UAE) suspended Blackberry messenger, e-mail, and web browser services in October 2011 until accountability is addressed (Odine, 2014, p. 243).

Another example of these official restrictions is ‘The State of Emergency Law’ in Egypt. A state of emergency should only be permissible under international law if it is temporary, according to a UN treaty that Egypt is party of: the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) (Kassem, 2004). However, in 2008, Egypt’s government pushed through another two-year extension to the State of Emergency law, that has been continuously in force for 27 years (Kassem, 2004). Kassem stated “Its long-term effect on political life in the country is hard to summarize: emergency powers override citizens’ constitutional rights, making them subject to censorship, arbitrary arrest and detention and authorizing special security courts to try civilians without right of appeal” (Kassem, 2004).

Licensing of media outlets is similarly another form of official restrictions that authorities may utilize as a means to suppress freedom of expression. Some governments allow media to work only after official approval through licensing, as another procedure of official restrictions that governments may impose to implicitly silent media workers. Sakr discussed how licensing in Egypt is used to close various media channels that President Mubarak’s government perceived as unfavorable (Sakr, 2010, p. 40). He suggests that licensing in Egypt is all about texts, processes and institutions, all of which have the potential for “complexity and inscrutability” (Sakr, 2010, p. 40).
He states that licensing regulations may be written in imprecise language; licensing processes can be lengthy and inconclusive; and licensing bodies may be unaccountable and unwelcoming all in attempt of controlling media outlets from operation (Sakr, 2010, p. 40). However, it is inevitable for all media activities to possess a license to operate (Sakr, 2010, p. 40). In 2008, Egypt’s initiative to get Arab League Information Minsters to sign a Satellite Broadcasting Charter to govern television channels operating from Arab countries was rejected. Sakr assured that the charter aimed at imposing further restrictions on international reporting through ensuring that “Any satellite channel flouting editorial curbs enshrined in the Charter would have its license withdrawn” (Sakr, 2010, p. 40).

3.3 The Intention Behind Harassing Media Workers:

Scholars assure that the primary intention behind harassing journalists is the chilling effect on other journalists and the society as a whole. Less-democratic countries aim to silence the media and prevent unfavorable criticism through conducting the above-mentioned violations. “When world-famous journalists are killed – such as Anna Politkovskaya in Russia (2006), Hrant Dink in Turkey (2007), Lasantha Wickrematunge in Sri Lanka (2009) and Marie Colvin in Syria (2012) – a clear warning is delivered to all concerned” (Horsley & Harrison, 2013, p. 40). The Australian Human rights Centre mentioned Greste’s assassination in Egypt in its official magazine on 2014, “Fair and balanced journalism was considered a security threat by the Egyptian government who swiftly moved to use these journalists to send a chilling warning to all media professionals reporting in Egypt” (Human Rights Defender, 2014, p. 29). It also described what happened to Greste as “an attack” not just on himself and his two colleagues, but “on freedom of speech across Egypt” (Human Rights Defender, 2014, p. 29). Unfortunately, in many cases this technique succeeds in yielding the intended outcome. Sakr explains how in Egypt many junior officials refuse to comment until they have been given direction from their seniors. Moreover, ordinary people might also fear putting family members and their livelihoods at risk by commenting on political events, due to the terrifying impact that the government succeeded in employing (Sakr, 2010, p. 38).

What makes the problem more profound is that even though the criminals might be known, they might go unpunished to encourage further frightening effect for whoever assaults the government. That chilling effect is multiplied greatly when those responsible for the killing of journalists are allowed to go unpunished. “Impunity kills by encouraging more killing because the
risks are seen to be negligible. Such patterns of impunity mean that victims of many forms of gross human rights abuses of justice are deprived of justice or any form of redress” (Horsley & Harrison, 2013, p. 40). This has been the case for thousands of civilians killed in the civil war in Sri Lanka and in the ongoing drugs wars in Mexico (Horsley & Harrison, 2013, p. 40). However, cases of murder in which journalists are singled out as targets, are associated with especially high levels of impunity (Horsley & Harrison, 2013, p. 40). The National Union of Somali Journalists details a harrowing 2009 report, ‘War on Journalism in Somalia: Death, Displacement and Desolation.’ Seven out of nine journalists killed were murdered in Mogadishu. Although there are reports that the killers are known, the culture of impunity, made worse by the absence of law and order, has only exacerbated the crisis against the media (Odine, 2014). Between 2006 and 2009, UNESCO documented 244 cases of violent deaths of journalists in 36 countries, out of which only eight cases were successfully convicted (Horsley & Harrison, 2013, p. 40). Horsley and Harrison quote Rodney Pinder, the Director of the International News Safety Institute saying: “As long as people can murder journalists and get away with it, it’s the cheapest, easiest and risk-free form of censorship, and it’s being used increasingly” (Horsley & Harrison, 2013).

3.4 Global Efforts to Restrict Governments’ Violations Against Media Workers:

“It is time to confront the tide of violence used by governments against journalists”, argue Horsley and Harrison (Horsley & Harrison, 2013, p. 39). The UN has effectively endorsed some sentiments to protect freedom of expression and reporters’ rights. Realizing how immense the media’s work is for democracy, many voiced their demand for concerted international efforts to end the heavy toll of casualties among journalists. Representatives of 46 leading media organizations signed an eight-point London Statement demanding action by responsible governments to end crimes against journalists and impunity. It also demanded scrutinizing the actions of governments and national courts, and the workings of the UN itself (Horsley & Harrison, 2013, p. 41). The agreed on statement was discussed on a special United Nations conference in Vienna in November 2012, and marked the launch of an ambitious UN Action Plan on the Safety of Journalists and Impunity. The action plan held governments accountable to safeguard the lives and work of journalists (Horsley & Harrison, 2013, p. 41).

In addition, the resolution A/HRC/27/L.7 by the UN Human Rights Council on 2014 also focuses on ending impunity for attacks on journalists and media workers. Titled as “the safety of journalism” and supported by more than 90 states, the resolution sends a critical message to
governments that there is no excuse for allowing attacks on journalists and media workers to go unpunished. It strongly condemned impunity and identified it as one of the principal causes of recurring violence (UNGA A/HRC/27/L.7, 2014). It also calls on all states to align their laws and law-enforcement practices with agreed international standards, to implement tougher political pressure through the Human Rights Council on incomplete countries (Horsley & Harrison, 2013, p. 43).
CHAPTER 4: THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This research study is best examined in the light of two crucial mass communication theories: the framing theory and the gatekeeping theory. In the following paragraphs, the researcher will discuss each of these theories and highlight their main significance to this research study.

4.1 The Framing Theory:

*The Framing Theory* suggests that the media can portray events in a particular manner to influence the perception of its audiences (Entman, 1991). Entman (1993) suggests that framing involves “selection” of a perceived reality and making it more “salient” in a communicating text, in a manner that “defines a particular problem, *interprets* its cause, *evaluates*, and/or *suggests* judgments and *solutions* for it” (Entman, 1993, p. 52). Servin and Tankard (2001) agree with Entman’s definition of framing, stating that a frame is “a central organizing idea for news content that supplies a context and suggests what the issue is through the use of *selection, emphasis, exclusion, and elaboration*” (Servin and Tankard, 2001, p. 277). A frame in communication “Organizes everyday reality by providing meaning to an unfolding strip of event and promoting particular definitions and interpretations of political issues”, as Chong and Druckman explained (Chong & Druckman, 2007).

However, a particular frame could influence the audiences’ interpretations of a context only if it fits well with their set of existing schema (Servin & Tankard, 2001, p. 278; Etman 1993, p.53). Schemas are defined as “Mentally stored clusters of ideas that guide individuals’ processing of information” (Etman, 1993, p. 53). Therefore, some ways of framing the news may correspond to those pre-existing ideas that people already have in mind (Etman, 1993, p. 53; Servin & Tankard, 2001, p. 278).

In her book, Zelizer (2004) suggested that there is no sole way to describe an event, as there should be an extent of inconsistency in the approach each individual interprets, defines, shapes and communicates any piece of information. However, whether this inconsistency of shaping communication is intentional or unintentional remains the fundamental factor behind the framing theory (Etman, 1993; Zelizer, 2004). There are many research that explain how hidden agendas, whether personal, political or social ones, affect the framing of news drastically, which may impact
the credibility of reporting (Zelizer, 2004). Consequently, the framing theory is one of the most crucial concepts that should be well comprehended in mass communication. Not only by those who work in the profession, but also by citizens who should recognize the need of altering their readership habits from passive readers to active analysts of each piece of information they attain.

4.1.1 The Framing Effects:

The concept of the framing effects occurs when minor changes in portrayal of an event result in re-orienting people’s judgments about it (Chong & Druckman, 2007). It occurs when a particular framing of an event, develop a specific conceptualization, or change individuals’ attitudes towards it (Chong & Druckman, 2007). Entman (1993) explained that “the presence or absence of certain key-words, stock phrases, stereotyped images, sources of information, and sentences that provide thematically reinforcing clusters of facts or judgments” influence the readers to develop particular understanding of a content (Entman, 1993, p. 52).

Therefore, while any person should hold opinions of his own, it has been found that citizens are incompetent to formulate genuine personal opinions regarding political affairs in many countries, which eventually affects their participation in voting (Chong & Druckman, 2007). Through exposure to various media outlets, people are normally exposed to competing frames to a specific subject. For those who are most knowledgeable, they would comprehend the frame that is consistent with their own beliefs, and disregard other frames. These frames that mostly stand out are identified as strong frames. Strong frames are those that emerge from public discussion as the best rationales for contending positions on the issue. These frames strike opinion leaders and audiences as being more compelling than alternative arguments (Chong & Druckman, 2007).

4.1.2 Effects of Framing on Public Opinion:

The framing theory emerged as early as the 1950 and 1960s when early studies of mass public opinion raised concerns about the capability of citizens to participate in political affairs. Citizens have been rated to have low quality opinions and insufficient information about the American government and political issues in general (Chong & Druckman, 2007). Research proves
that applying small changes to a statement can manipulate public opinion, especially in political topics, and thus Chong and Druckman highlighted the importance of the issue by stating that if opinions can be easily manipulated by changing a frame of a statement, then there can be no actual representation for public opinion (Chong & Druckman, 2007).

Framing in communication has the power to alter the attitudes and beliefs of audiences. Frames may introduce new beliefs to people by exposing them to a contradictory consideration repetitively (Chong & Druckman, 2007). Regular exposure to the same concept makes it easily retrieved from long-term memory with conscious deliberation (Chong & Druckman, 2007). An individual is affected by frames when he/she evaluates the applicability of the given frame to his/her own pre-stored set of beliefs in mind, this happens when individuals are motivated to accept a given idea when there are multiple competing frames (Chong & Druckman, 2007).

Furthermore, Chong and Druckman stated that framing could work by making new beliefs available about an issue, making certain available beliefs easily retrieved from memory, or making beliefs applicable or “strong” in people’s evaluations. Most importantly, people are most affected by strong frames that successfully appeal to them without the presence of opposing intellectual or moral superior arguments. "They can be built around exaggerations and outright lies playing on the fears and prejudices of the public. Strong frames often rest on symbols, endorsements, and links to partisanship and ideology, and may be effective in shaping opinions through heuristics rather than direct information about the substance of a policy" (Chong & Druckman, 2007).

4.1.3 Framing in Political News:

In many political contexts, people are exposed to competing frames. Thus, when citizens receive various points of view for the same event, they choose the alternative that is aligned with their beliefs, values or principles. Therefore, being exposed to "opposing sides of an argument increases consistency among decisions taken on specific policies and underlying principles” (Chong & Druckman, 2007).

Chong and Druckman suggest that it is possible for people to have the firm, full, and articulate opinions, which are less susceptible to manipulating frames. "Deliberation, discussion,
and exposure to information and alternative arguments can raise the quality of public opinion by reducing ambivalence and uncertainty. People who are better informed about the issues are more likely to have established a frame of reference for their opinions and are less likely to be swayed by how other people frame the issues for them" (Chong & Druckman, 2007).

4.2 The Gatekeeping Theory:

4.2.1 Overview of Gatekeeping:

Severin and Tankard (2001) explained the gatekeeper as a member of a decision-making unit who filters the information in order to pass some piece of information and prevent others from reaching the audience. The gatekeeper may choose to discard a story entirely, or permit the passage of a partial message after deleting some details. The gatekeeper can transfer the message after making some modifications or changes that might affect greatly the content of the message. In other words, the gatekeeper is the one who is responsible for encoding the message and that includes the amount of information, the timing, displaying, and other factors (Severin & Tankard, 2001).

David Manning White was the first to specifically apply the gatekeeping theory in a journalism context. White (1950) explained in his book that every single player in the newsroom is a gatekeeper. The first gatekeeping starts with the news correspondants who are the first ones to get exposed to any occurrence from the original sources directly. Thus, they take the primarily decision on whether or not this piece of information is newsworthy (White, 1950). White then identifies the second gatekeepers as the different sets of experiences, attitudes and expectations that various news reporters bring to the same story, in other words, how different reporters will frame or shape the news story (White, 1950). Afterwards this news story gets transmitted from one gatekeeper to another in the hierarchy of newsmen inside the news organization until it reaches the medium editor, which is the most important phase, for in case the wire editor discards a story then all the work of the preceding newsmen becomes neglected (White, 1950). White concluded that, overall, the editor's decisions were “highly subjective” and based on the gatekeeper's “own set of experiences, attitudes and expectations” (White, 1950).

Singer (2011) says that what the most impressive thing about communication is that there are numerous choices inside the communicator's head concerning the choices of what to select as news and what to discard. The researcher described a journalist's profession in general as “... a
community's gatekeeper, deciding what information was worth knowing" (Singer, 2011). He defined his main profession as that of the person who is responsible for reconstituting every day’s reality through "filtering" events according to a set of institutional routines and structures, providing the public with timely information, and offering the audience a rational reflection on the ongoing events (Singer, 2011).

Severin and Tankard (2001) stated several examples to demonstrate the practice of gatekeeping and how politicians can utilize it to advocate their own interests. They assured that a politician has the power to completely eradicate a particular event from history (Severin & Tankard, 2001). Their book mentioned the theory of Gatekeeping just after explaining the concept of "Selective Retention" which denotes that people tend to remember only some parts of the messages or pictures that are in compliance with their wants, needs, attitudes, behaviors and beliefs, or as referred to in the book as "prevailing frame of references" towards specific things (Severin & Tankard, 2001). This location has been chosen to associate both concepts together. Thus, the book attempts to explain the concept of gatekeeping as a tool in the hands of the gatekeeper – being the government, or the publishers of a newspaper, for example, to prevent a particular message from reaching the audience, or erase some parts of history which are perceived to have negative consequences to mention or recall (Severin & Tankard, 2001).

4.2.2 Historical Background of the Emergence of Gatekeeping:

Gatekeeping evolved in America’s postwar era in response to a variety of social, political, and economic changes as an attempt to decrease competition in the American press, news media and real world events. This was known as the "Social Responsibility Theory" in which the ‘truth’ about the social and political world was no longer constructed out of enlightened public discourse, but rather from a more managed and limited exchange among experts in the news media (Severin & Tankard, 2001). Citizens were redefined as unsophisticated consumers of information, and the public was redefined as an audience (Severin & Tankard, 2001).

This theory was further reinforced from 1950s to 1980s through lack of competition between media outlets, where at that time they had a maximum of five television channels broadcasting news at the same time, for example. This resulted in making the mainstream news media act as a monolithic gatekeeper, while a limited set of political elites vied with each other to
shape the political agenda (Severin & Tankard, 2001). In this way, news about the social and political world were constructed out of a more managed and limited exchange among experts in the news media, and therefore, gave the public a limited space in analyzing and choosing what to know and what not to know. In this way, the media exercised significant influence on shaping the public opinion (Severin & Tankard, 2001).

**RESEARCH QUESTIONS:**

**RQ1:**

What are the frames that characterized each of the Australian and the Egyptian news coverage of Peter Greste’s case?

**RQ2:**

How does the news coverage of Peter Greste’s case in both countries inform our knowledge about media freedom in Egypt?
CHAPTER 5: METHODOLOGY

A quantitative content analysis is conducted to explore how Egyptian and Australian media reported the developments of Al Jazeera Journalist case in the Egyptian’s court. Quantitative content analysis is, “A method of studying and analyzing communication in a systematic manner for the purpose of measuring variable” (Wimmer & Dominick, 2011). Through analyzing the content of specified media messages, we can examine the portrayal of a particular issue or group in the media (Wimmer & Dominick, 2011); consequently, this matches well the objective of this research.

5.1 Defining the Population Parameters:

The study will analyze the content of the most visited local news websites in each of Australia and Egypt. News.com.au is selected for Australia, while Egyptindependent.com and English.Ahram.org.eg are selected for Egypt. These were selected on the basis of their being the news media with the traffic in each country. The period under study will start on the day of sentencing Greste to seven years of prison, on June 23rd, 2014, until one day following his release on bail, February 2nd, 2015, for these seven months represent the most significant period that witnessed the case developments.

5.1.1 Defining the Population:

Although jailing the Australian correspondent grabbed international attention, it was with particular interest to Australian and Egyptian media. Therefore, the study will analyze the content of the most visited local news websites in each country while disregarding any other international media because of their lower significance to the objectives of this study. An in-depth analysis of each country’s leading news websites will portray the level of objectivity, or subjectivity, in reporting the same story, in two different countries with different interests. Though the most visited news websites in Egypt are in Arabic language, the researcher selected the most visited ones that offer their content in English version, for the reliability and accuracy of the analysis. The researcher also
selected two Egyptian websites versus one Australian website to have a balanced number of articles from each country. Since the primary language of the Egyptian websites is Arabic, a fewer number of articles were found under each website, and thus the researcher selected two websites from Egypt to match the number of articles found in the Australian website. Having a relatively equal number of articles to be analyzed from each country will add to the reliability of the results.

The researcher chose to study electronic media over mainstream media because newspapers are witnessing a tremendous decline of readership in both countries and on a global level. Recent research confirms that readers worldwide are shifting to the Internet for news, while press media is losing millions of dollars in profits to the rising digital era (Tiffen, 2015). Scholars predict that the last American newspaper reader would disappear by 2043 (Meyer, 2004, p. 16). The CEO of Microsoft, Steve Ballmer, told the editorial board of “The Washington Post” in 2008 that “There will be no newspapers, no magazines, that are delivered in paper form” by 2020 (Fallows, 2010). The press media is clearly an industry in decline. In a study on the Australian media ownership, the researcher stated that press has become less central in the media mix. The researcher explains that the primary reasons for this marginalization of press is that individual newspapers circulations have dramatically declined with an accelerated rate in recent years (Tiffen, 2015). Therefore, only electronic media were selected in this study, with news.com.au being selected for Australia, and Egyptindependent.com and English.Ahram.org.eg are selected for Egypt.

**News.com.au:**

According to Alexa, a global pioneer in the world of web analytics which was founded by the amazon.com company in 1996, news.com.au is the 15th most visited website, and the number one most visited news website in Australia as of 2015 (Alexa, 2015; Neilson, 2015; news.com.au; 2015). Owned by News Corp, the leading owner of media in Australia, it has an aggregate number of audiences of 3.577 million (Neilson, 2015; news.com.au, 2015). The site visitors are mainly from Australia, United States, India, Unites Kingdom and Canada (ranked in order of the percentages of visitors per country), the website has a bounce rate of 55.30%, daily page-views per visitors 3.56 and daily time spent on site 5:05 (Alexa, 2015).
• **Egypt Independent (EgyptIndependent.com):**

Egypt Independent is the sister English-language publication of “Al Masry Al Youm” daily, the country’s flagship independent and privately owned paper that was launched in 2009. In 2011, Egypt Independent launched a weekly print edition (Egypt Independent, 2015). Almasryalyoum.com -Al Masry Al Youm- is ranked the 20th of the most visited websites in Egypt (Alexa, 2015). Although it comes in the ranking of news websites the 8th, after youm7.com, albawabahnews.com, elmogaz.com, elwatannews.com, alwafd.org, masrawy.com, and elfagr.org (ranked in order of the most visited news websites) (Alexa, 2015), it is the only engine that provides content in English language, which is crucial for this study. The website is mostly visited by browsers from Egypt, Saudi Arabia, United States, United Arab Emirates, Kuwait and others (ranked in order according to the percentages of the visitors from each country) (Alexa, 2015). The website has an average bounce rate of 46.20%, daily page-views per visitor 2.89 and daily time spent on site 5:00 (Alexa, 2015).

• **Ahram Online (English.ahram.org.eg):**

Launched in 2010, Ahram Online is the English-language news website published by Al-Ahram Establishment, Egypt’s largest publicly owned news organization, and the publisher of the Middle East’s oldest newspaper: the daily Al-Ahram, in 1875 (Ahram Online, 2015). Ahram.org.eg is ranked the 59th most visited Egyptian website and it is the only news website that offers content in English language after Al Masry Al Youm. The website is mostly visited by browsers from Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Qatar, United Arab Emirates, United States, and others (ranked in order according to the percentages of the visitors from each country) (Alexa, 2015). With “Ahram Online” being the second most used keywords that sends traffic to this website, the site has an average bounce rate of 45.40%, daily page-views per visitor 3.04 and daily time spent on site 4:34 (Alexa, 2015).

5.1.2 **Defining the Time Period of Study:**

Duration of seven-month period was selected for this study, beginning on the day of Greste’s sentencing to seven years of prison, on June 23rd, 2014, until one day following his release from jail, on February 2nd, 2015. Although this case has been ongoing in the media for more than two years,
starting December 2013 until the present (end 2015), the researcher elected this period to have a closer look at the most significant case developments in the Egyptian courts. The sample is selected starting June 23rd, 2014 till February 2nd, 2015. According to an Australian research about the number of words written in the media about Greste’s case, the data reached its peak on 23rd of June 2014 with average number of words increasing remarkably until February 2015 (Walter, 2015). Although the journalist’s release on bail took place on the 1st of February, the researcher included the articles covering the release on the following day, the 2nd of February, to make sure all the news about Greste release from prison were included in the study.

5.2 Selecting the Sample:

Sample selection is a critical stage in the content analysis method. Although research suggests that Simple Random Sampling and Constructed Weeks are more common techniques for conducting content analysis (Hester & Dougall, 2007), recent research suggests that purposive sampling may be a more precise method for acquiring more representative and informative results (Drisko & Masch, 2015, p. 38). According to Krippendorff (2013) the core assumption of that each independent unit should have an equal chance of being selected in probability sampling may not necessarily be ideal in analyzing media content. The sampling units may not be independent or individual; however, they may reference each other or represent editions or presentations of the same material (Krippendorff, 2013). Another crucial reason that makes purposive sampling a more appropriate technique for content analysis is that not all text may prove to be “relevant” or “meaningful” to the study (Drisko & Masch, 2015, p. 38). These irrelevant and uninformative materials should be disregarded from the sample. Wimmer & Dominick (2011) define the process of purposive selection as a type of selection that includes subjects or elements that have “specific characteristics or qualities and eliminates those who fail to meet these criteria”. Consequently, this technique gives up equal probability of selection in favor of greater relevance and efficiency, and thus, equal probability of selection for each unit may be secondary in importance to identification and selection of the most informative units (Drisko & Masch, 2015, p. 38). Sixty eight percent of the “Journalism Quarterly” content analysis papers applied purposive sampling as stated by Riffe and Fretag (1997). In addition, for the fact that electronic media generate extensive content, limiting the sample under investigation is more likely to yield more representative results and decrease the degree of sampling error.
Consequently, in this study, the researcher purposively selected news articles that were generated during the specified period of study. The sample was assembled using the websites search tool to retrieve news articles that feature this topic. For each news website the following keywords were used to yield the most comprehensive sample: Peter Greste, Greste, Al Jazeera journalists, Greste trial, Greste jail, Greste sentence, Greste release, President El-Sisi and Greste, Julie Bishop and Greste, Tony Abbott and Greste. Using the tool bars of the websites, the researcher selected the results by date, and selected the most relevant electronic articles that came out during the specified period of study. Any duplicate articles or irrelevant articles were excluded from the selection. Therefore, 35 articles were selected from news.com.au, and 9 articles and 25 articles were selected from Egypt Independent and Ahram Online respectively, with a total number of 34 Egyptian articles. In aggregate, 69 articles were examined from both countries together. (The Bibliography section beginning on page 107 includes the entire set of news articles used for this study, not all of which are cited in the body of this thesis).

5.3 Defining Unit of Analysis:

The articles were analyzed in their entirety, excluding any photos, graphs or charts that are embedded within these articles. The study analyzed only news stories that discussed the case during this seven-month period; while opinion pieces were excluded from the sample due to their unavailability in the Egyptian population. The coding categories included the articles’ headline, lead and entire content in script format. A coding sheet was developed mainly on a nominal level of measurement to measure the characteristics of frames in each of the selected media. A coding scheme carrying in-depth explanations of the questions was provided to the coders to secure the validity and reliability of the coding.

5.4 Intercoder Reliability:

Intercoder reliability is assessed by having two or more coders categorize content, and then using these categorizations to calculate a numerical index of the extent of agreement between or among the coders (Lavrakas, 2008). Conducting an intercoder reliability test between independent coders is essential to assess the validity of the data that can be coded subjectively. Therefore, 10
percent -8 articles- of the selected sample is coded independently by two coders: the researcher, a 30 year-old female graduate of Journalism and Mass Communication, AUC, and a 33 year-old female graduate of Business Administration, AUC with a 12 year experience in Media and Communications working as a Media Director at Starcom Media Vest, a leading multinational media agency. The intercoder reliability test is calculated in reference to Holsti (1969) formula as follows: Reliability = 2M/(N1+N2) x 100. The intercoder reliability scored 89%. For more details about the intercoder reliability test please refer to the Appendix, section IV.
CHAPTER 6: RESULTS

This section includes statistical findings of the main variables that answer the two research questions of this study. To answer the first research question: What are the frames that characterized each of the Australian and the Egyptian news coverage of Peter Greste’s case?, the researcher examined the following in each of the Australian and Egyptian news articles:

- Portrayal of Greste throughout the events of the case;
- Portrayal of the most significant events that took place in the case developments;
- Portrayal of the Egyptian government’s actions in dealing with the case;
- Portrayal of the state of freedom of expression and human rights protection in Egypt through reporting on the case;
- The overall theme, balance and tone in the articles.

Through assessing the above areas, the researcher highlighted the similarities/differences in terms of balance, objectivity and comprehensiveness of the Egyptian news coverage in comparison to the Australian one. Using this comparison between both countries’ coverage, the researcher answered the second research question: How does the news coverage of Peter Greste’s case in both countries inform our knowledge about media freedom in Egypt?

6.1 Findings of RQ1:

This section presents the findings that answer the first research question of the study: What are the frames that characterized each of the Australian and the Egyptian news coverage of Peter Greste’s case?

6.1.1 Portrayal of Greste Throughout the Events of the Case:

A. Frames used in the articles to describe Greste:
This section shows the number of times each of the following words/statements - or synonyms - are mentioned in the content of the news articles to describe Greste in each country’s media: “Innocent”, “Supporting Muslim Brotherhood”, “Professional”, “Doing his Job”, and “Caught in the middle”. In counting the number of times that these frames are presented in the articles, a clear assessment can be made on the main message that the media of each country wants to convey about the defendant.

• **Portrayal of Greste as “Innocent”:**

  Although the word “Innocent” is mentioned in 77% (n=27) of the Australian articles, only 9% (n=3) mentioned it in the Egyptian articles.

  o **Australian Media:**

    In the Australian media, the word “innocent” – or a synonym - is used to describe Greste, especially after mentioning the Egyptian court accusations. For example, in one of the articles, Human rights lawyer Geoffrey Robertson, a Queen’s Counsel and former UN appeals judge said, “Peter and his colleagues are completely innocent” (Vonow, 2015). In another article, Greste’s brother, Andrew Greste, was quoted saying, “We’re not going to give up the fight to get Peter released because we believe he's completely innocent, he's done nothing wrong” (Drummond, 2014).

  o **Egyptian Media:**

    In the Egyptian media, the word “innocent” itself is not mentioned at all in any of the news articles, yet some phrases in only three stories indicate the same meaning. For example, “Lawyers said the defendants were physically and psychologically assaulted and forced to confess to crimes they did not commit” (Rizk, 2015). Also in another article, the author stated right after the accusations, “The three, who all denied the charges...” (Egypt Court Sets, 2014).
• Portrayal of Greste as “Supporting Muslim Brotherhood” or “Guilty”:

The word “Guilty”, or its synonyms, is not mentioned in any of the Australian news articles, yet mentioned in two Egyptian articles.

○ Australian Media:

The word “Guilty” (or synonyms) is not mentioned in any of the Australian news articles.

○ Egyptian Media:

6% (n=2) of the Egyptian media suggested that the journalists were guilty through the overall representation of the accusations being true, and through giving further details on how the defendants supported the Muslim Brotherhood group. These articles are titled: “18 Al Jazeera reporters sentenced to prison over false reporting” (18 Al Jazeera Reporters, 2014) and “Al Jazeera journalists get 7-10 years in jail” (Gamal El-Din & Al-Tawy, 2014). Although both articles mention that Al Jazeera network criticizes the verdict, they do not refute the charges.

In Egypt Independent, the journalists are reported as supporting Muslim Brotherhood through giving details about the support as follows: “The journalists were accused of fabricating photos and lies and broadcasting them through Al Jazeera Channel. According to the prosecution papers, the defendants were part of a media network “that has specialized in creating video scenes contrary to reality and airing them through Qatari AJE and US CNN to distort Egypt’s international reputation”. The article additionally states: “Political figures and media reports have shown little sympathy for the journalists, often describing them as ‘terrorists’ from the Muslim Brotherhood” (18 Al Jazeera Reporters, 2014).

The other article in Ahram Online similarly provides details about the support by saying that Greste, and his colleagues, face allegations of assisting and collaborating with the Egyptian co-defendants by “providing money, media material and equipment, as well as publishing lies harming national interests”, and comments on this by saying, “Egypt
authorities have been infuriated by the coverage of the Qatar-based satellite network Al Jazeera...The network has contributed to straining ties between Cairo and Doha, a staunch supporter of Morsi’s Muslim Brotherhood group” (Gamal El-Din & Al-Tawy, 2014). Furthermore, the author comments on issuing a medical release to Abdullah El-Shamy, Al Jazeera Arabic channel journalist who had been on hunger strike for nearly five months to protest his detention, by stating that he was seen outside the court, just one week following his release (Gamal El-Din & Al-Tawy, 2014).

• **Portrayal of Greste as a “Professional”**: 

31% (n=11) of Australian media referred to Greste’s professionalism, compared to 9% (n=3) in Egyptian articles.

- **Australian Media:**

  In the Australian articles, the authors mainly used this frame to introduce Greste. For instance, an article says, “the award winning Australian journalist” (Millar, 2014). This frame is also used to refer to Greste’s qualifications; for example, an article states: “the award winning reporter” (Rajca, 2014).

- **Egyptian Media:**

  In the Egyptian media, this frame is similarly used to introduce Greste, such as “the award-winning correspondent” (Al-Tawy, 2014a; Al-Tawy, 2014b).

• **Portrayal of Greste as “Just Doing his Job” or “reporting on the truth”**: 

  Greste is portrayed as “just doing his job”, in a “regular assignment”, or synonym, in 29% (n=10) and 27% (n=9) of Australian and Egyptian news articles respectively.
**Australian Media:**

In the Australian media, the phrase is meant to represent Greste’s innocence, and his colleagues’, following the accusations; for instance, one article says, “They had pleaded innocent, saying they were simply doing their jobs as journalists” (Drummond, 2014). In another article, Greens foreign affairs spokesman Senator Scott Ludlam is quoted defending Greste saying “Mr. Greste hadn’t committed any crime.. Not only has Peter been locked up for doing his job...” (Greste’s Legal Team, 2014). In some instances, the phrase is used to defend journalists in general and condemn allegations against the professionals. For example, the same article reports on a joint statement released by Opposition Leader, Bill Shorten and Opposition Foreign Affairs Spokeswoman, Tanya Plibersek saying, “Journalists shouldn’t be jailed for doing their job” (Greste’s Legal Team, 2014).

**Egyptian Media:**

Similarly, in the Egyptian media the phrase is used to defend the journalists saying: “The defendants denied the allegations saying they were simply doing their jobs” (Rizk, 2015), and another articles quotes media rights groups saying, “the three were simply reporting the news” (Dad of Jailed Jazeera Reporter, 2014). An article in Ahram Online reports the discussion between the Australian Prime Minister Tony Abbott and President El-Sisi, quotes Abbott saying, “I assured him – as a former journalist myself – that Peter Greste would have been reporting the Muslim Brotherhood, not supporting the Muslim Brotherhood” (Gamal El-Din & Al-Tawy, 2014).

**Portrayal of Greste as “Caught in the Middle” or a “Victim of a Politicized Case”:**

Describing Greste as being “caught in the middle” of a battle between the Egypt and Qatar, or referring to the case as being “politicized” is mentioned in 29% (n=10) Australian articles and 38% (n=13) Egyptian articles.
o **Australian Media:**

Ten Australian articles refer to the tension between Egypt and Qatar as the main cause behind the defendants’ arrest. For example, an article states, ”Qatar was a supporter of the ousted Islamist President Mohammed Morsi, and his Muslim Brotherhood group. After Morsi’s ouster last year, many of the group’s leaders moved to Qatar to avoid an intense government crackdown that landed thousands in jail” (Egypt’s President Says, 2014). Another article quotes Greste’s attorney, Chris Flynn saying, ”The verdict is plainly political” (Greste’s Legal Team, 2014), and another quoting an expert in international law from Australian National University, Professor Don Rothwell saying, “The connection between Al Jazeera and the Muslim Brotherhood I think cannot be ignored in terms of how this has been dealt with” (Salna, 2014).

Moreover, an article links Al Jazeera channel shutdown in Egypt as the main reason behind renewed hope that Greste could be released, and thus, indicates a direct link between Greste’s detention and the network saying, “renewed hope Australian journalist Peter Greste could be freed from his Cairo jail cell... after Qatar shut down its affiliate Al Jazeera television network covering news in Egypt” (Miranda & Rajca, 2014). On reporting about the shutdown of Al Jazeera Mubashir Misr, this article presented the shutdown of the channel “as a major development” in the case, as it states: “The suspension of broadcasts of Egyptian news by the channel is being seen as a major development to facilitate the release of Greste and his two colleagues from the network also jailed for up to 10 years” (Miranda & Rajca, 2014).

o **Egyptian Media:**

Egyptian articles emphasized portraying Greste’s detention as a means to penalize Al Jazeera network by the new government. An article in Egypt Independent quoted the Journalists Syndicate Undersecretary, Gamal Fahmy saying, “Al Jazeera made mistakes, but we have to distinguish between the management of the channel and the staff” (Journalists Syndicate, 2014). Another article in Egypt Independent quotes Greste’s colleague Sue Turton, a British journalist who was convicted with the same charges in absentia, saying that the journalists were jailed because the Egyptian government was trying to ”send a message to Qatar, which had backed the Muslim Brotherhood” (Rallies as Journalists Mark, 2014). Articles in Ahram online also highlighted that the case is politicized through dedicating a
statement -or more- explaining Al Jazeera’s relationship to Muslim Brotherhood. For instance, an article described Al Jazeera as “a mouthpiece for the Brotherhood and their supporters”, and stated that it “dedicated much of its air time to their protests and anti-government guest speakers” (Al Jazeera Calls on Egypt, 2015). Also, later on in the same article, the author says, “The court’s decision comes amid a growing rapprochement between Egypt and Qatar after months of soured relations due to the latter's support for Morsi’s group” (Al Jazeera Calls on Egypt, 2015). Another article also criticizes the Qatari network for its 'biased' coverage, saying that Egyptian authorities were incensed by Al Jazeera’s reporting, adding that authorities “accuse Doha of backing Morsi’s Brotherhood” (Al-Tawy, 2014c).

In addition, similar to Australian media, many articles created a direct link between the network's shutdown in Egypt and a positive development of Greste's case. An article in Ahram Online reports “spinning hope of Greste’s release” as a result of the easing of relationships between Qatar and Egypt: “A recent thaw in ties between Cairo and Doha offered fresh hope over the fate of the journalists” (Egypt Deports Jailed Australian, 2015). Finally, an article appearing in Egypt Independent reported on Egyptian Foreign Minister, Sameh Shurkri saying that Al Jazeera Mubashir shutdown is “a contributory factor to Greste’s release”, and the author comments on this statement saying, “although he did not mention other specific steps needed” for his release (Egypt Minister Says, 2015).

B. The Dominating Frame that is used to describe Greste in the articles:

Through conducting a cross-tabulation test between the Egyptian media and the Australian media results, the most dominating frame that is used to portray Greste in the Australian news articles, is “innocent” with 63% (n=22); however, the dominating frame used to portray Greste in Egyptian news articles is “Caught in the middle” with 38% (n=13). These results show an inconsistency in the way each country portrayed the defendant in the news articles, with Australian media directly defending its citizen and Egyptian media referring to the case as being politicized.
6.1.2 Portrayal of the Most Significant Events of the Case Developments:

This section analyzes how the Australian and the Egyptian news articles portray the most significant occurrences that took place in the duration under study. These events are: sentencing Greste to seven years of prison, the trial proceedings of the case, the evidence presented against Greste, the accusations against Greste, and Greste's release on bail.

A. Portrayal of the Verdict Imposed on Greste:

Sentencing Greste to seven years of prison on June 23rd, 2014 was not portrayed in the same manner in Australian and Egyptian news articles. 91% (n=31) of Australian articles portrayed the verdict as “unfair”, while the remaining did not mention the verdict. However, in Egyptian media, 53% (n=18) of the articles described it as “unfair”, 41% (n=14) as neutral, and 6% (n=2) as “fair”.

• Australian Media:

In the Australian media, all the articles that mentioned the verdict were against it. Most of these articles included words like “extreme”, “farcical”, “disgrace”, “unfair” and others to describe the verdict. For example, Rothwell described it as “fairly extreme” (Salna, 2014). In another article that presented public comments on the verdict, it was portrayed as a “disgrace” (Australians Call for Boycott, 2014). Also, Amnesty International in another article described it as "farcical" (Millar, 2014). In addition, one of the articles quotes Flynn saying that the verdict “is unjust and offends the rule of law” adding that, "The verdict is completely inconsistent with the findings of the Egyptian court’s own technical committee, which reviewed the evidence” (Greste's Legal Team, 2014).

Other articles focused on describing the reaction to the verdict. Political figures are quoted expressing their reaction to the verdict by using words like: “shock”, “dismay” and “outrage”. News Corp also highlighted on reporting Greste’s own feedback, which was posted
on his Facebook page by his brother the day after the sentence, saying that he is “devastated and outraged by Tuesday’s verdict” (I Am Devastated and Outraged, 2014).

- **Egyptian Media:**
  
  - **Articles that Criticized the Verdict:**

    Although the Egyptian media were not as bold as the Australian media in criticizing the verdict, it still conveyed direct opinions that described the verdict as unfair in 18 articles. For example, an article appearing on Ahram Online titled, “UK to summon Egypt envoy over 'unacceptable' journalist sentences: Foreign Secretary”, and emphasized the international outcry against the verdict (Al-Tawy, 2014a). The authors showed that the verdict was unfair in an indirect way through quoting foreign politician’s reactions, or mentioning the Western’s public outrage. For instance, an article in Al Ahram described the reaction following the verdict as “sparking wide fury and global support for the three journalists” (Egypt to Consider, 2014). Another article stated, “The sentences have drawn a flurry of condemnation from the international community” (Egypt Court Sets, 2014). Another article mentioned that Australia said it was appalled by the verdict and Washington slammed it as "'chilling and draconian" (Al-Tawy, 2014c). Finally, an article quotes Al Jazeera network saying, “the sentencing defied logic, sense, and any semblance of justice” (Egypt Court Sets, 2014).

  - **Articles that Neutrally Presented the Verdict:**

    41% of the Egyptian media are neutral on commenting on the verdict. One article in Ahram Online described the Journalists Syndicate board reaction to the verdict as “Muted response,” and reported that the board “respects the principle of not commenting on the judiciary's verdicts, adding that the verdict is not final and can still be appealed in the Court of Cassation” (Muted Response, 2014).
o **Articles that Supported the Verdict:**

Following the verdict, two articles were written in the Egyptian media to support it. Both articles report on Egyptian Ambassadors and Foreign Minister’s efforts to defend the verdict globally, and confirm the independence of the Egyptian judiciary. One of these articles appeared on Ahram Online and was titled as: “Egypt foreign ministry rejects foreign condemnation of Al Jazeera verdicts” (Egypt Foreign Ministry, 2014), and the other was titled as, “Egyptian ambassadors prepare for backlash over Al Jazeera verdict” (Egyptian Ambassadors Prepare, 2014).

**B. Portrayal of the Trials Proceedings:**

Both countries’ news articles described the trial proceedings in the same manner. More than 40% of all the news articles of both countries did not mention anything related to the trials. Most of the articles that discussed the trials proceedings portrayed them in a negative way in both countries, with 57% (n=20) of Australian articles and 41% (n=14) of Egyptian articles.

o **Australian Media:**

More than 50% of the articles directly criticize the trials. For example, the trials are described as “chaotic”, saying “chaotic scenes in the Cairo courtroom” (Drummond, 2014). In addition it is described as “a sham”, “farcical” and “sparkling outrage” (Greste’s Legal Team, 2014). The same article also describes the trials as “miscarried at every step” (Greste’s Legal Team, 2014). Greste’s brother says that Greste’s release from jail assures that “the first trial was flawed” (Vonow, 2015). Finally, Greste’s note on his Facebook page after the verdict gave a more detailed comment on the proceedings saying, “our lawyers have highlighted countless procedural errors, irregularities and abuses of due process that should have had the entire case thrown out of court many times over” (I Am Devastated and Outraged, 2014).
Egyptian Media:

More than 40% of the Egyptian media similarly criticized the trials for a number of reasons, including fallacious procedures, unfair prosecution and lengthy process. In Ahram online, an article mentions Amal Clooney, internationally acclaimed human rights lawyer and a member of Fahmy's defence team, commenting on adjourning the trial to January 1st, by saying it as "unfair" and "a travesty of justice" (Egypt Court Sets, 2014). In an article appearing in Egypt Independent, the trials are also directly described as “unfair” by "many trial observers", it also states that "the defense was not allowed to review or refute the evidence presented by prosecution against it" (Australia Summons Egyptian Diplomat, 2014). Adel Fahmy, brother of Fahmy, is quoted in one of the articles revealing a piece of news that is not mentioned in neither of News Corp articles or Ahram Online articles, criticizing the prosecution for requesting a fee from the defense team by saying, “Prosecution requested LE 1,200,000 to hand in the CDs of evidence to lawyers to prepare for their pleading” (Prosecution Asked for LE 1.2 Million, 2014). On this matter, Ahram Online only reported that the prosecution refused to share the evidence with the lawyers through quoting UK Foreign Minister William Hague, "I am particularly concerned by unacceptable procedural shortcomings during the trial process, including that key prosecution evidence was not made available to the defence team" (Al-Tawy, 2014a).

Similar to Australian media, Ahram Online also reported Greste’s comments after the verdict through Al Jazeera network. Greste said his lawyers "highlighted countless procedural errors, irregularities and abuses of due process that should have had the entire case thrown out of court many times over" (Al-Tawy, 2014b).

Moreover, several articles in Ahram Online highlighted the lengthy and the slowed process that cases take in Egyptian courts. For example, an article says, “the case, which began on 20 February and spanned over 12 hearings” (Al-Tawy, 2014d). In another article, the author stated that Greste has been in prison for eight months -so far- and that his parents assumed he could spend another year. The author added, “if their son loses the upcoming appeal, a second appeal could be lodged, a process that could take another year” (Dad of Jailed Jazeera Reporter, 2014). Another article stated that the defence lawyer told Ahram Online that, “A retrial is expected to start within a month. The sessions of the retrial, however, could be extended over months” (Peter Greste's Family, 2015).
C. Portrayal of the Evidence Presented against Greste:

Both countries’ media mentioned the lack of evidence against the journalists in the same manner. While the majority of the articles in both countries’ media did not mention anything related to the evidences, 17% (n=6) and 26% (n=9) of the remaining Australian and Egyptian news articles respectively described the evidences presented against the journalists as “inadequate”.

- **Australian Media:**

  The Australian media criticized the prosecution for presenting inadequate and irrelevant evidence in six articles. Describing them as insufficient, some articles just hinted “lack of evidence used to convict him and two Al Jazeera colleagues on terrorism-related charges” (I Am Devastated and Outraged, 2014), and in another article mentioned, “the evidence presented in court did not marry with the charges” (Jailed Australian journalist, 2014). Yet another article reported Robertson saying, “There is no evidence whatsoever that they published false reports. Their reports were true. There is no evidence that they aided and abetted the Muslim Brotherhood” (Vonow, 2014).

  Other articles gave more details about being inadequate and irrelevant saying, "They had videos from other news organizations, family photos, they had the Gotye music video. It was totally irrelevant to the case" (Jones, 2014). Finally, an article discussed the evidence in details titled, “Gotye’s ‘Somebody That I Used To Know’ used in Egyptian court against Peter Greste and Al Jazeera colleagues” discussed the evidence in details (Killalea, 2014). The same article says “And in bizarre circumstances Somebody That I Used to Know was used as evidence against Australian journalist Peter Greste”. It also mocked other pieces of evidences that were presented in court saying, “The former BBC journalist’s laptop was analyzed in court and pictures of his family on holiday in Latvia and Estonia were shown. But there was no mention or explanation as to why they were used as evidence”. Moreover, it cites other pieces of evidences as, “old news footage from Somalia and Kenya”, commenting on this saying, “Prosecutors also presented a video story on Somalia which Greste had done for the BBC’s Panorama program in June 2011. It was unclear what this three-year-old program had to do with the journalist’s activities in Egypt, but was presented as evidence anyway”. Finally,
it reports the last piece of evidence, which was an “Audio of unknown person singing”, and saying that it is “not known who this person is, or why it was used in court” (Killalea, 2014).

- **Egyptian Media**

  26% of Egyptian news articles criticized the evidence presented against Greste for being insufficient. However, none of them discussed the reasons for describing the evidence in this way. No reasons or details were mentioned at all about the elements that the prosecution presented as evidence in court to incriminate the defendants.

  An article on Egypt Independent represents the evidence as irrelevant through quoting many observers of the trials saying, “Prosecution was unable to clearly link the journalists to a terrorist group”. The same article also criticized the evidence as being “unorganized”, and “irrelevant” (Australia Summons Egyptian Diplomat, 2014). Ahram Online also reported, “The prosecution failed to produce any evidence that lawyers and rights groups deemed incriminating” (Al-Tawy, 2014b). It also quoted Clooney saying, “There was no evidence to prove that the reporters have any links with the Brotherhood” (Egypt Court Sets, 2014). Finally, both countries reported Greste’s declaration on his Facebook page saying, "Throughout this trial, the prosecutor has consistently failed to present a single piece of concrete evidence to support the outrageous allegations against us," (I Am Devastated and Outraged, 2014; Al-Tawy, 2014b).

**D. Portrayal of the Accusations against Greste:**

Although both countries’ media criticized the trial proceedings, they did not present the accusations in the same manner. Most of the Egyptian articles 79% (n=27) presented the accusations without commenting on them; however, the majority of the Australian articles (63%, n=22) described the accusations as “false”.

- **Australian Media:**

  63% of the Australian media described the accusations as “false” by commenting on them.
Most of these articles stated that the journalists are innocent after stating the accusations against them. An article commented on the accusations by saying “The trio have consistently denied any wrongdoing” (Gartrell, 2014). Foreign Minister Julie Bishop also reported saying, "He was in Egypt to report on the political situation, and not to support the outlawed Muslim brotherhood as the court found” (Drummond, 2014).

- **Egyptian Media:**

  Unlike Australian media, most of the Egyptian articles did not comment on the accusations. However, the majority of the articles represented them in a neutral way.

**E. Portrayal of the Release on Bail issued to Greste:**

The verdict issued on February 1st, 2015 that released Greste from jail is reported on two articles in each country’s media.

- **Australian Media:**

  Two articles were reported the following day of Greste’s release on bail in the Australian media. Both articles described his release as “fair”.

- **Egyptian Media:**

  Similarly, two articles were reported in the Egyptian media following Greste’s release. While one article portrayed the release as “fair”, the other article was neutral. This article described issuing a release for Greste is fair to him, yet unfair to the other detainees, especially the Egyptian one. This article quotes British Foreign Minister, Philip Hammond, seizing the opportunity to request similar treatment for the other detainees saying, "I welcome the decision by the Egyptian authorities today to release Peter Greste. However, I remain concerned that Mohamed Fahmy and Baher Mohamed remain in jail" (British Foreign Secretary, 2015). He also requested the Egyptian authority to review the charges against British nationals convicted in absentia, "I call on the
Egyptian government to take further action to ensure the release of other journalists from prison, to release political detainees and to relax restrictions on civil society" (British Foreign Secretary, 2015).

6.1.3 Portrayal of the Egyptian Authorities’ Actions in Dealing with the Case:

This section discusses the findings on how each country’s media portrayed the reaction towards how each of the Egyptian judiciary and the Egyptian President dealt with the case.

A. Portrayal of the Egyptian Judiciary in Dealing with the Case:

Portrayal of the Egyptian Judiciary varied in the Australian and the Egyptian media in terms of how each one commented on it in light of Greste’s case. 69% (n=24) of the Australian articles criticized the Judiciary system in Egypt compared to only 6% (n=2) of the Egyptian news articles. On the other hand, 6% (n=2) of the Egyptian articles supported the system, compared to zero% of the articles of the Australian media.

• Australian Media:

  o Articles that Criticized the Egyptian Judiciary:

    Most of the Australian articles criticized the Egyptian judicial system for being “flawed” and “slow”. An article quotes Greste’s parents commenting on the Egyptian judiciary saying, “This is unprecedented though — we are in chartered waters”, and added that they hope that, “the country’s slow wheels of justice will eventually lead to his freedom” (Peter Greste Marks 300 Days, 2014). Also referring to being “slow”, his brother Mike says, “Although the appeal date should have been earlier, at least it was now set” and added, “It’s a tremendous relief - up until now there’s been nothing to look forward to” (Peter Greste Marks 300 Days, 2014). Another article quotes Greste’s parents saying, “The past 12 months had been “mixed and confusing” for the family trying to steer their way through the Egyptian judicial system” (Ferrier, 2015).
Moreover, another article quotes the Managing Director of Al Jazeera English, Al Anstey saying, "It defies logic, it defies justice they're still behind bars after 320 days" (Jones, 2014). Another article quotes Fahmy’s brother commenting after the appeal date was set on January 1st saying, “The date was further away than his family had hoped for, but the mere fact that it had been scheduled was a relief”(Appeal Hearing Date, 2014). Some articles include direct comments against the Egyptian judiciary system. An article representing public comments on the Egyptian consulate website says, “Egypt’s justice system is a disgrace as demonstrated in Greste’s trial” (Australians Call for Boycott, 2014).

Articles that Neutrally Portrayed the Egyptian Judiciary:

Only two articles conveyed a neutral position in commenting on the Egyptian judicial system. For example, Rothwell says in an article that warns against undiplomatic response by the Australian authorities to the verdict, "This is a decision by a trial judge; there will be appeal options, there will be other options for possible intervention such as a clemency appeal that could be directed to the president." He also added that it was also essential that “Australia maintain respect for the integrity of the Egyptian legal system” (Salna, 2014).

Egyptian Media:

Articles that Supported the Egyptian Judiciary:

Although the majority of Australian articles criticized the judicial system in Egypt, only two Egyptian articles did so. However, two Egyptian articles supported the system; these are the same articles in support of the verdict in the Ahram Online that were mentioned earlier. One article says in the lead paragraph, “Embassies worldwide have been ordered to meet with foreign officials and affirm Egypt’s judicial independence and free press” (Egyptian Ambassadors Prepare, 2014). This article supports the system and emphasizes that it is completely independent. It also states that, “The convicted still have the right to appeal their verdicts, with a special emphasis that the convicted were tried in front of a normal civilian court, in front of a civilian judge” (Egyptian Ambassadors Prepare, 2014).
The other article reports Egyptian Foreign Minister Shoukri supporting the “independence of the Egyptian Judiciary” and the “fairness of its ruling” saying that the summoning is “an opportunity to explain the nature of the ruling and the independence of the judiciary” (Egypt Foreign Ministry, 2014). This article also reports that the ministry declared, “The summoning is also an opportunity for Egypt to affirm to foreign officials its complete refusal of any meddling in its domestic affairs or in the independence of its judiciary” (Egypt Foreign Ministry, 2014).

- **Articles that Neutrally Portrayed the Egyptian Judiciary:**

  12% (n=4) of the Egyptian articles are neutral in commenting on the judicial system. An article in Ahram Online comments on the judicial system by quoting Greste’s family saying that they accept “the integrity and independence of any country’s judicial system and administration of law” (Dad of Jailed Jazeera Reporter, 2014). Also the article quotes Greste’s brother commenting on the fairness of the judiciary in Egypt saying, "In no way would we want to challenge that" (Dad of Jailed Jazeera Reporter, 2014).

- **Articles that Criticized the Egyptian Judiciary:**

  Two of the Egyptian articles criticized the judicial system, yet in an indirect way. One article appearing in Ahram Online reports Negad El-Borai, lawyer of Fahmy, saying that he is certain of “Fahmy's innocence”, and “slams the ruling as a blot on the record of the Egyptian judiciary” (Egypt Court Sets, 2014). Another article in Egypt Independent reports Fahmy's brother criticizing the Egyptian judiciary saying, “We respect Egyptian judiciary, but what happened today is indescribable injustice,” (Prosecution Asked for LE 1.2 Million, 2014).

**B. Portrayal of the Egyptian President’s Rhetoric/Actions in Dealing with the Case:**

The way in which each country portrayed the Egyptian government actions in responding to the case is inconsistent. 49% (n=17) of Australian news articles, compared to 9% (n=3) Egyptian news articles, criticized the Egyptian government rhetoric/actions. However, while none of the Australian articles supported the declarations, one Egyptian news article (3%) did so.
• **Australian Media:**

  o **Articles that Criticized the Egyptian Government:**

    49% (n=17) of the articles criticized the Egyptian government for three main reasons: delayed action, unclear declarations and unclear law enforcement. First, the government is criticized for not taking sufficient action in various articles. For example, an article states that the Australian federal government summoned a senior Egyptian diplomat as the “latest diplomatic overture from the government to Egyptian authorities about the case” after Abbott “who twice contacted the country’s leadership to lobby for Greste” (Rajca & Tin, 2014a). Greste’s parents also referring to the Egyptian government to take an action “to correct the injustice that’s occurred” are quoted saying, “Justice delayed is justice denied” (Rajca & Tin, 2014b).

    In addition, the government’s declarations to the media are also criticized for being unclear. After El-Sisi declared he would not interfere in the court ruling, an article described his declarations as “shocking news” to Abbott (Rajca & Tin, 2014a). In another article, the author reported on El-Sisi’s declaration to the media saying, “The case represented one of the foreign policy challenges facing Egypt” and commented on this declaration by saying, “but stopped short of saying whether he will issue a clemency” (Egypt’s President Says, 2014).

    The decree is also criticized for being “unclear” by Bishop saying, “The law is not very clear” (Journalist Peter Greste’s Family, 2015). Al Anstey also described the decree as “just another twist and turn in a very confusing and unfair process” (Jones, 2014).

• **Egyptian Media:**

  o **Articles that Criticized the Egyptian Government:**

    Though indirectly, three Egyptian news articles criticized the Egyptian government for acting in a way that contradicts his declarations. In an article titled, “Egypt’s Sisi says pardon for Al Jazeera journalists "being discussed”", the government’s declarations to the media are presented as both: contradictory to his actions and passive (Egypt’s Sisi Says, 2014). First, it presented the president’s declarations as contradictory to his actions in saying that although the president said that "he wished the journalists had been deported
and not tried”, the president “could utilize a decree he issued last week allowing him to repatriate foreign prisoners” (Egypt’s Sisi Says, 2014). Second, the article portrayed his declarations to the media as “unclear” through presenting Greste’s parents’ comments on his declaration to the media, "Let us say that this matter is being discussed to solve the issue” adding that they have always been pleased with such declarations; however, they have “built up hope but in fact it hasn’t led anywhere" (Egypt’s Sisi Says, 2014). Moreover, the same article also criticizes the new law as being unfair to the Egyptian, Mohamed, who is convicted of the same charges saying, “The third Al Jazeera journalist behind bars, Baher Mohamed, is Egyptian, so would not be expected to benefit”, and commented on this by quoting Al Jazeera network stating, "The Egyptian authorities have it in their power to release our journalists. World opinion expects this to happen speedily, and for all three to be freed" (Egypt’s Sisi Says, 2014).

Another article appearing on Ahram online criticizes the Egyptian government for its delayed action after releasing the decree. The article says: “The decision at the time was expected to be utilized in the highly publicized Al Jazeera journalists case" (Rizk, 2015). The same article criticizes the decree itself for being unfair to Egyptian citizens through quoting Baher’s wife Jihan Rashed saying, “For Egyptian producer Baher Mohamed, this option is foreclosed. This is a case of journalists, not a case of foreigners or Egyptians" Rashed said, brushing off suggestions that foreigners might get special treatment in the case” (Rizk, 2015).

Another article directly criticized the government declarations quoting Bishop, “Cairo sent mixed signals about his case. We had indications that Egyptian President Abdel Fattah El-Sisi would exercise his authority regarding a pardon or a clemency plea in advance of the appeal, yet, in the meantime, the Egyptian foreign minister has said to me that we have to await the appeal, so there are different messages coming from the Egyptian government” (Egypt to Consider, 2014).

6.1.4 **Portrayal of the State of Media Freedom and Human Rights Protection through Reporting on the Case:**

**A. Portrayal of the State of Media Freedom in Egypt:**
57% (n=20) and 50% (n=17) of Australian and Egyptian articles respectively mentioned that the journalist case is a challenge to media freedom in Egypt, while only 3% mentioned that the media freedom is protected.

- **Australian Media:**

  More than half the Australian articles discussed that the issue represents the media freedom/censorship under the new government in Egypt. An article described the sentence as “a tragedy of human rights and press freedom” (Australians Call for Boycott, 2014). Another article quotes Amnesty International on describing the trial as “farcical spectacle” and a “ferocious attack on media freedom” (Appeal Hearing Date, 2014).

  In addition, an article introduced Montesar Marai, a senior producer for Al Jazeera, as the one who “filmed the Arab Spring uprising back in early 2011”, and reported that he is currently in Sydney because he “is now too fearful of media treatment in Egypt to risk returning;” this further emphasizes the braches on freedom of expression that are practiced in the country (Byrnes, 2014). The author also reported that Marai told News Corp network that: “the battle between the journalists and the people who they are challenging is not easy and will not end with this issue” (Byrnes, 2014). Furthermore, to indicate that the case was a successful attempt to scare the media of reporting unfavorable news, the author reported that Marai added, “Many journalists had, unsurprisingly, been terrified by the treatment of Greste and his co-workers as criminals and terrorists” (Byrnes, 2014). He finally reported that Marai concluded by encouraging the media to fight such attempts saying, “the world’s media must not be cowered and continue to stand united against injustice” (Byrnes, 2014).

  Finally, in Greste’s letter posted on his Facebook page after the verdict by his brother, that was reported in both countries’ media, he said that the verdict has been “an attempt to use the court to intimidate and silence critical voices in the media. That is why I know that our freedom, and more importantly the freedom of Egypt’s press will never come without noisy, sustained pressure from individuals, human rights groups, governments and anyone who understands the fundamental importance of a free press to Egypt’s fledgling democracy” (I Am Devastated and Outraged, 2014; Al-Tawy, 2014b).
- **Egyptian Media:**

  Similarly, 50% of the Egyptian media represented the case as alarming to the freedom of press in Egypt. Most of these articles mention one statement, such as “raised alarm over the future of press freedoms in Egypt” (Egypt Court Sets, 2014). Some articles put more emphasis on the rising concerns over freedom of speech in Egypt through quoting foreign political figures. An article appearing on Ahram Online says, “The case has provoked fears about the future of media freedom and the muzzling of political dissent in Egypt. Local and global rights watchdogs, as well as international news organizations, have repeatedly called for the release of the detained journalists” (Gamal El-Din & Barsoum, 2014).

  Another article also in Ahram Online quotes Obama saying, "We have been very consistent in pushing governments not just in Africa, but around the world, to respect the right of journalists to practice their trade as a critical part of civil society and a critical part of any democratic norm" (Al-Tawy, 2014d). Moreover, Hague was quoted commenting on the verdict by saying, “Egypt should show commitment to freedom of the press” (Al Jazeera Verdict, 2014). Another article presents protests against journalist’s rights and free speech violations in Egypt through reporting on journalists’ protest in supporting the detainees, “About a dozen Kenya-based journalists staged a small protest against the jailing in front of the minister in the U.N. compound, taping their mouths shut to reflect their view that Egypt was stifling free speech”, and commenting on this by saying, “Rights groups and Western governments have criticized the detentions.” (Egypt Minister Says Pardon, 2015).

  However, only one article states that the case is not related to censorship of voices is Egypt. This article quotes Journalists Syndicate board saying, “All the principles set down by the Court of Cassation show that it favors and emphasizes freedom of the press, expression and opinion” (Muted Response, 2014). The statement also added, “Egypt’s constitution affirms the independence of the media and press and guarantees the protection of journalists and media personnel while doing their jobs” (Muted Response, 2014).
B. Portrayal of The State of Human Rights Protection in Egypt:

57% (n=20) of Australian articles criticized the protection of human rights in Egypt compared to only 32% (n=11) of Egyptian articles, while the majority of the Egyptian articles did not mention Human rights at all.

• Australian Media:

The majority of the news articles in Australian media condemned the case as a violation to human rights, unlike the Egyptian media. Some articles are entirely dedicated to highlight conditions inside the Egyptian jail, reporting on leaked photos and videos that were shot by prisoners inside the Egyptian cells. One of these article titled, “Secret video leaked by prisoners from inside the Egypt prison where Peter Greste is being held,” described these videos as “shocking” and reported that they convey the “decaying conditions inside the Egyptian prison” (Byrnes, 2014). This article further describes the prison saying that the videos showed, “darkened cells, where prisoners are sleeping on dirt floors, shoulder-to-shoulder under blankets, beside open dirty and rusting ‘pit’ toilets” (Byrnes, 2014). The article, furthermore, reported that Marai commented on these images by saying that they “had been smuggled out of the jails by inmates desperate for the world to see the bad conditions”. The author also quotes Marai describing the conditions inside the prison by saying that prisoners “are suffering” and that the cells are “like small rooms, no light, not enough oxygen...it’s very very bad conditions. All the Egyptian prisons I think are like this because I have seen many videos from different prisons...they are all the same” (Byrnes, 2014).

Another article, “Peter Greste faces living in squalid, overcrowded Egyptian prison for 15 years,” reports, “It’s been described as a nightmare, where up to 85 people can be crammed into tiny cells for days on end with no relief. This is the hell that Peter Greste faces living in for the next 15 years” (Millar, 2014). In another article, Greste’s parents say, “Peter was forced to live in a hot, dirty and cramped Egyptian cell alongside five other prisoners”
(Cockerell, 2014). Other articles mention words that show humiliation and miss treatment such as being held in “mesh cages” during trials (Drummond, 2014).

- **Egyptian media:**

  Egyptian articles do not condemn breaches against human rights throughout the case as strongly as the Australian media. Most of the articles that do so, quotes Human Rights Groups say, for example, “repression has been growing in Egypt” (Egypt Independent, 2014), or in other articles as the case has sparkled Human Rights Groups condemnations. One article in Ahram Online discussed the conditions in the Egyptian jail by quoting Fahmy’s fiancés expressing concerns over Fahmy's health, which was deteriorating in prison, and saying, "Staying behind bars threatens his life" (Rizk, 2015). However, overall not many details were presented about the state of human rights protection in Egypt.

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6.1.5 **Analyses of the Overall Theme, Balance and Tone in the Articles:**

A. **The Main Theme of the Articles:**

Although both countries’ media emphasized on reporting the role that the political figures and the community played to resolve the situation, Egyptian media further emphasized reporting on el-Sisi’s attempts to respond to international pressure. The main theme in the Australian articles is “International Community Involvement” with 23% (n=8), and in the Egyptian articles is “Egyptian Government rhetoric/actions”, with 29% (n=10).

- **The Main theme of Australian Media is “International Community Involvement”:**
  - **Australian Media:**

    Australian media put high emphasis on representing public/media, politicians and UN figures involvement to resolve the issue.
• **Public/Media Involvement:**

The news articles emphasized the role that media played in putting pressure on the Egyptian government and raising awareness about the case. On highlighting the international public’s outrage as a reaction to the verdict, news articles reported: “Australians call for boycott of Egypt tourism after Al Jazeera Australian journalist Peter Greste is jailed for seven years” (Australians Call for Boycott, 2014). This article, convey public comments written on the website of the Egyptian consulate in Sydney, twitter, Facebook and other media to reflect their support to Greste. Another article discusses petitions signed for the release of Greste, “Change.org and Amnesty International petitions show support for release of Al Jazeera journalist Peter Greste” (Change.org and Amnesty International, 2014). This article reports that 76,000 signed one petition, Charge.org, and conveys petitioners’ comments saying, “Set this right & let them go & sack the judge for major miscarriage of justice” (Change.org and Amnesty International, 2014).

• **Australian Government Efforts:**

Various articles reported the news highlighting the efforts of Abbott and Bishop in contacting the Egyptian government to resolve the issue. The article entitled, “Bishop calling Egypt minister over Greste” is entirely about conveying this governmental role. The article stated, “Foreign Minister Julie Bishop is trying to get her Egyptian counterpart on the phone to register her shock and dismay over Peter Greste's sentence” (Bishop Calling Egypt, 2014). Another article reports, “Foreign Minister Julie Bishop said she had spoken overnight with recently appointed Egyptian counterpart Sameh Shoukri, and Mr. Abbott was seeking similar contact with Mr. Sisi” (Jailed Australian Al Jazeera, 2014); and another article reports “The federal government summoned a senior Egyptian diplomat to express outrage over the seven-year sentence” (Rajca & Tin, 2014a).

• **UN Involvement:**

Some articles focused their theme on the US president and Australian Prime Minister’s efforts after the UN General Assembly meeting. For instance, an article reports: “Abbott and Obama
press Egypt over Peter Greste jailing” (Gartrell, 2014). The same article reports, “President Obama’s deputy national security adviser Ben Rhodes told reporters aboard Air Force One that the president had a “frank exchange” about human rights, including the rights of free speech and the rights of journalists” (Gartrell, 2014). In another article reporting Greste’s letter to the media, “Everyone, from US President Barack Obama to the United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon to Prime Minister Tony Abbott, has been speaking out both publicly and in private to demand our release and call for a free press in Egypt” (Jailed Australian Journalist, 2014). The pressure that the political figures have put on Egypt is reported to be the main reason behind his release. An article reports: “A successful campaign led by world leaders including Prime Minister Tony Abbott and US President Barack Obama led to his unconditional deportation early yesterday morning” (Peter Greste: Egypt Releases, 2015).

- **Egyptian Media:**

  The main theme in 29% of the Egyptian news articles is “Egyptian Government Rhetoric/actions”, followed by “International Community Involvement” with 24% of the news articles. Thus, more than half the Egyptian news articles focused their main theme on reporting the case through highlighting the government’s efforts in responding to the international pressure imposed on the country, as well as demonstrating the role that foreign media and authorities played to impose that pressure. In other words, the Egyptian media’s main concern was reporting on the political side of the case.

  One of the articles on Ahram Online reports: “Embassies worldwide have been ordered to meet with foreign officials and affirm Egypt’s judicial independence and free press” (Egyptian Ambassadors Prepare, 2014). Another article highlighting political involvement being useless in resolving the issue says, “Greste was found guilty despite Australian Prime Minister Tony Abbott’s lobbying Egypt’s new leader Abdel-Fattah el-Sisi in the weekend for the release of the detained journalist” (Gamal El-Din & Al-Tawy, 2014).

  Another article that appears in Ahram online discusses the US President’s involvement, “Obama says Al Jazeera journalists should be released” (Al-Tawy, 2014d). Another article discusses the British pressure on Egypt to release Greste and pardon the British reporters being tried in absentia titled, “Al Jazeera verdict triggers international condemnation” (Al Jazeera Verdict, 2014).
Finally, another article also entitled, “UK to summon Egypt envoy over 'unacceptable' journalist sentences: Foreign Secretary”, and does the same (UK to Summon Egypt, 2014).

- **The Main Theme of Egyptian media is “Egyptian Government Rhetoric/Actions”:**

“Egyptian Government Rhetoric/Actions” is the main theme in 29% (n=10) of the Egyptian articles, compared to 14% (n=5) in Australian media.

**Australian Media:**

Only five Australian articles main theme is reporting on El-Sisi’s declarations to the media, his issuing of the new decree and the impact of this on Greste's case. One of these articles titled: “Egyptian President’s new deportation law could be good news for Peter Greste” (Egyptian President’s New Deportation Law, 2014). Other articles focused on the President’s declarations to the media with regards to his intervention to help Greste, “Egypt president Abdel-Fattah El-Sisi ‘can’t help' Australian Al Jazeera journalist Peter Greste” (Egypt President, 2014).

**Egyptian Media:**

The Egyptian Government declarations and actions are the prime focus of 29% of the articles. Some Egyptian articles entirely discussed the government declarations and gave less attention to discussing the case itself and its developments. For example, one of these articles that appeared in Egypt Independent titled: “Egypt's Sisi says pardon for Al Jazeera journalists being discussed” (Egypt's Sisi Says Pardon, 2014), was entirely centered on El-Sisi's declarations to the media. The same article quotes El-Sisi saying, "Let us say that this matter is being discussed to solve the issue" (Egypt's Sisi Says, 2014). Moreover, an article in Ahram Online reported, “El-Sisi says he wishes Al Jazeera journalists had not been tried” (Al-Tawy, 2014c). It also focused on discussing the new law that was issued by El-Sisi concerning Greste, and so did other articles, such as “Egypt's new law could repatriate detained Al Jazeera reporters: Peter Greste's lawyer” (Egypt's New Law, 2014).
B. The Balance in the Articles:

To measure the degree of balance in representing the journalist’s case in each country’s news articles, the researcher assessed the central and secondary statements that were quoted by the authors. The quotes are assessed based on four main criteria:

- The source of the quote (Who said it?);
- The nationality of the quote source;
- The placement of the quote;
- And the indication of the quote.

a. Central Quotes:

The Central Quote Source:

- The Main sources quoted in Australian articles is “The journalist(s) family member(s)”:

  Australian media focused mainly on representing quotes from “The Journalist(s) Family Member(s)” with 26% (n=9), compared to 9% (n=3) in Egyptian media. In Egyptian media, the central quote sources are “Government Officials” other than the Prime Minister and President with 32% (n=11), compared to 14% (n=5) in Australian media.

  - Australian media:

    The Australian media focuses more on quoting “The Journalist(s) Family Member(s)” in 26% (n=9) of the articles, compared to only 9% (n=3) in Egyptian media. Graste’s family members, being his parents Juris and Lois, and brothers Mike and Andrew, are the most represented voices in the articles. The articles quoted them to reflect on their feelings in various occasions during the trial proceedings, on Graste’s feelings and statuses inside the Egyptian jail, and to inform the media about the latest updates that are taking place in the case. In describing their feelings, an article reports the family’s reaction to the court’s decision in ordering a retrial for Greste but refusing bail. The author quoted Greste’s brother Andrew saying, “We naturally now need time to digest what has just happened and to talk to Mum and Dad and legal advisers who were in the courtroom” (Egyptian
Court to Decide, 2015). Another article representing Greste’s status and conditions inside the Egyptian jail quoted his parents saying: “Greste holding up well in jail” (Cockerell, 2014). The media also used their statements to inform about Greste’s own feelings and as a means to represent what he wants to inform the media and the publics about from inside the jail. For instance, an article representing Greste’s reaction on hearing the verdict through quoting his brothers saying that Greste is “devastated and outraged,” they also added that Greste “slams Egyptian sham trial, in desperate appeal ‘smuggled’ out of jail” (I Am Devastated and Outraged, 2014).

○ **Egyptian Media:**

In contrast to Australian media, only three articles in the Egyptian media quoted the journalist(s) family member(s) as the focal statement in the article. The quotes are used to update the media about the latest developments that are taking place in the case. For example, in one of Al Ahram Online articles, Greste’s parents are quoted in the headline, the lead and the first paragraph expressing their hope after the court ordered a retrial to the detainees, and described this order as a ‘positive step’” in the case developments (Peter Greste’s Family, 2015). The Egyptian media also represented the voices of the other two Egyptian journalists and their families, who were not quoted at all in Australian media. One of the articles of Ahram Online quotes Rashed saying, ”The lawyer told me what to expect, but I had a wish he would be released” (Rizk, 2015).

- **The Main Sources Quoted in Egyptian media is “Government Officials”:**

Although the prime focus in Australian media is the journalists families, Egyptian media focused more on quoting “government officials” other than Prime Minister and the President in 32% (n=11), compared to only 14% (n=5) in Australian media.

○ **Australian Media:**

Government officials –other than President and Prime Minister- are the sources of the central quotes in five Australian articles. Most of these quotes are said by Bishop to inform the media about the status of the case as well as the Australian government’s efforts in intervening to resolve the issue. For instance, Bishop was quoted just before Christmas saying that she is
“optimistic” that Greste could be released soon from prison (Miranda & Rajca, 2014), in hopes that the Egyptian government would release him to celebrate Christmas with his family, after Al Jazeera Mubashir Misr announced it is going off air one day before. Few days later, Bishop is also quoted saying, “Peter Greste might have to seek out appeal hearing before he could be granted pardon” to update the media about the case (Rajca & Tin, 2014b).

- **Egyptian Media:**

  In the Egyptian media, quotes by government officials are represented to inform the media about the repercussions of the case developments on international media. For instance, an article says, “Australian Foreign Minister Julie Bishop said she was deeply shocked by the seven-year sentence imposed on Australian journalist Peter Greste” (Al Jazeera Verdict Triggers, 2014). Other articles also focused on presenting quotes from other countries officials’ reactions towards the verdict against the journalists as well as the other English journalists being tried in absentia at the same time. For example, an article quotes UK Foreign Secretary saying, “UK to summon Egypt envoy over 'unacceptable' journalist sentences” (Al-Tawy, 2014a).

  In addition, Egyptian articles presented quotes said by Egyptian politicians to respond to the international outrage. An article quotes Shoukri saying that the ministry 'strongly rejects any comment from a foreign body which expresses suspicion of the independence of the Egyptian judiciary and the fairness of its rulings' (Egypt Foreign Ministry, 2014). Moreover, the Foreign Minister is quoted saying, “Egypt minister says pardon still possible for Al Jazeera journalists” (Egypt Minister Says, 2015). Therefore, Egyptian media emphasized politicians’ declarations more than representing the journalist –or his family’s – voice, unlike the Australian media that gave more emphasis to the journalist voice, followed by the politicians.

- **Other Sources Presented in the Central Quotes:**

  - **“The Accused Journalist(s)”:**

    Greste and/or his colleagues are quoted in 9% (n=3) of the Australian articles and 6% (n=2) of Egyptian articles. The voices of Greste and his jailed colleagues are represented in few articles of both countries’ media, for the fact that they are being detained and not given much room to speak.
Hence, the Australian media relied on using Greste’s family members to speak on behalf of him, and reflect on his feelings and physical status as mentioned earlier in this section. Still few news articles managed to pin his exact words as shown in the below paragraphs.

- **Australian Media:**

  Three Australian news articles presented Greste’s exact words from inside the prison. One of these articles presented a letter that was penned by Greste himself in response to Shorten and Plibersek’s joint statement that they have released to the media in support of Greste and his colleagues. In this letter, Greste thanked the Australians public and political support for his freedom saying, “I have been quite overwhelmed by the sheer volume of support that our cause has generated in parliament on both sides of the house, among the Australian public, our fellow journalists and countless others around the world” (Rajca, 2014). He also requested them to continue imposing pressure on Egyptian authorities, saying that he is “convinced” that the “continued pressure” is helping, despite remaining in prison until that moment (Rajca, 2014).

  Another article reflects his exact words posted on his official Facebook page through his brothers after meeting him in prison following the sentence: “Peter Greste has spoken out after being sentenced to seven years in a foul Egyptian jail... a message from the Australian journalist was posted on Facebook by his brothers after they visited him in his grim prison” (I Am Devastated and Outraged, 2014).

- **Egyptian Media:**

  Greste’s own statements are also quoted in two Egyptian articles. These articles aimed to reflect on his feelings, especially after receiving the verdict. For instance, an article in Ahram Online quoted him saying that he was 'devastated' and “outraged” by the verdict, in the headline and lead paragraph. He was also quoted in the lead paragraph of the same article describing the verdict as “gross injustice” (Al-Tawy, 2014b). This article also reported his words conveyed on his Facebook page by his brothers.
“Media Sources”:

As for the media sources in the articles, 14% (n=5) of Al Jazeera representatives, and 3% (n=1) of other media sources are quoted in Australian media; compared to only 3% (n=1) of Al Jazeera representatives, and 21% (n=7) of other media sources are quoted in Egyptian media.

Central Quotes represented by Al Jazeera network are presented to show support for Greste and his colleagues. On reporting the appeal that Greste filed, the network says: “The weaknesses in the case have been widely protested and ridiculed, and much of the public criticism is reflected in the grounds for appeal” (Jailed Australian journalist, 2014). Other media sources like Twitter, Facebook, the Egyptian Consulate in Sydney's website, Charge.org and others are also quoted in Australian articles to reflect public comments.

In Egyptian media, an article quoted Al Jazeera representative reporting the network’s efforts to intervene for the Journalists saying, "We welcome the court's decision to accept the appeal of our journalists but at the same time we demand that they are immediately released," Mostafa Sawaq, acting general manager of the Qatari media network said in a video statement (Peter Greste's Family, 2015). Other media sources quoted in Egyptian media also include Facebook, Twitter, BBC website and other media.

Human Rights Groups:

Human Rights Groups are quoted 3% (n=1) in both countries’ media; for instance, the Australian media quotes Human rights describing the verdict as a “sham” (Egypt’s President Says, 2014).
Intellectuals: Intellectuals are represented in two the Australian articles. One of these articles quotes Rothwell in analyzing the situation and evaluating the Australian authorities efforts in resolving the issue (Drummond, 2014). Intellectuals were not represented in the Egyptian media.

Ordinary people: Ordinary people are represented in one of the Australian articles through public comments on the Sydney Egyptian Consulate official website, "Aussies took to the website of the Egyptian consulate in Sydney to vent their fury" (Australians Call for Boycott, 2014); however, ordinary people were not represented in the Egyptian media.

In general, the Australian news articles are more balanced in representing different voices with minor differences in percentages terms between the sources’ categories, unlike the Egyptian media that focused on quoting government officials and media representatives (other than Al Jazeera) more than the rest of the categories.

The Central Quote Source’s Nationality: Due to the discrepancy in the main source of the central quotes between Australian and Egyptian articles, it is reflected on the nationalities of the central quotes’ sources. In the Australian media, the nationality of the source that is mostly quoted is Australian in 63% (n=22) of the articles, while in Egyptian articles it is Egyptian in 47% (n=7) of the articles.

The Central Quotes Indications: As for what the central quotes are indicating about the journalist’s case, 91% (n=32) of Australian media quotes supported the journalist’s release, compared to 77% (n=26) in
Egyptian media. Thus, while the originators of the central quotes are varying in each media, the majority of quotes in both countries’ media support the journalist.

- **Neutral Quotes:**

  Some central quotes in both countries’ media neither defended nor condemned Greste, yet they were just reporting on the case developments. One of these quotes is said by President El-Sisi in the Australian media after the verdict commenting that he will not interfere in the matter saying, “Egypt’s President Abdel-Fattah El-Sisi said he will not interfere in court rulings” (Rajca & Tin, 2014a).

- **Quotes that were Not Applicable:**

  The quotes that are considered N/A did not mention anything related to the defendants. For example, in Ahram Online, the central quote stated by the journalists attorney Mostafa Nagy was about refusing to mention the reason behind the appeal: "Professionally speaking I cannot talk about the reasons behind the appeal, as it is in front of the court now” (Gamal El-Din & Barsoum, 2014).

**The Central Quote Placement:**

There is almost no difference in the position where the central quote appear in each country’s news articles. In both countries’ media, almost 50% (n=17) of the quotes appeared on the headline, and almost 17% (n=6) appeared in the lead paragraph.

**b. The Secondary Quotes:**

**The Secondary Quotes Sources:**

In the Australian media, the main originators of the secondary quotes are “The Journalist(s) Family Member(s)” and “Government Official” with 23% each (n=8). In the Egyptian Media, the main originator of the secondary quotes is “Government Officials” with
29% (n=10). Similar to the central quotes, Egyptian media still focus on quoting Government Official. Although the results of both countries are very close, the Australian media presented the human side of the situation as well as the political side, unlike Egyptian media that focused more on the political declarations.

Collectively the news articles in both countries’ media focused on quoting government officials in the main quotes as well as the quotes that follow. This may indicate the importance of the issue from a political perspective in both countries. The only difference is that the Australian media gave similar emphasis on voicing the human perspective as well through emphasizing statements from the defendants and their families, while Egyptian media represented them in 3% (n=1) of their secondary quotes only.

• **Other Sources Quoted with Secondary Importance:**

  o **Media Sources:**

    Quoting "Al Jazeera network or its representative(s)" is almost the same in both countries media with 9% (n=3) and 12% (n=4) in Australian and Egyptian articles respectively. In general, the difference is statistically insignificant (Table 17).

  o **Australian Media:**

    In Australian articles, Marai is quoted in one article in supporting the defendants and discussing the state of journalism in Egypt, “the battle between the journalist and the people who they are challenging is not easy” (Byrnes, 2014). Other Al Jazeera representatives were also quoted in the articles.

  o **Egyptian Media:**

    In the Egyptian media, statements by Al Jazeera representatives are also represented in the articles to support the release of their co-workers. For instance, an article quotes the network spokesman in commenting on el-Sisi’s declarations to the media saying, "The Egyptian authorities have it in their power to release our journalists. World opinion expects
this to happen speedily, and for all three to be freed" (Egypt's Sisi Says, 2014). The network is also quoted in other articles to reflect their support to the detainees after the verdict was announced. Moreover, the Egyptian articles also referred to the network’s campaign to support the journalists and its plan to dedicate air-time to protest against the lengthy process in Egypt and symbolize marking 300 days since the journalists were arrested by "300 seconds of silence on-air, accompanied by images of the detainees and the campaign to release them" (Egypt Court Sets, 2014).

As for quotes from “other media sources”, Egyptian articles included some quotes from Facebook accounts, tweeter accounts and official Internet websites. For instance, an article presented a comment on the Facebook page of the Dutch Embassy in Egypt: “The Netherlands is very disappointed in the verdict pronounced by the Egyptian judge against the Dutch journalist Rena Netjes,” (Al Jazeera Verdict Triggers, 2014). The same article also quoted Hague’s tweeter post on commenting on the verdict describing it as “unacceptable” (Al Jazeera Verdict Triggers, 2014). Furthermore, another article quotes the BBC official website on reporting the BBC staff protests that were held in front of London’s News Broadcasting House over Egypt’s verdict (BBC Holds Silent Protest, 2014).

**The Secondary Quote Source’s Nationality:**

With regards to the nationalities of the secondary quotes spokespersons, the results are very similar to those of the central quotes in both countries’ media. In the Australian news articles, 63% (n=22) are Australian, 14% (n=5) other and/or unspecified nationalities, and 14% (n=5) are Egyptians. In the Egyptian news articles, 18% (n=6) are Australian, 38% (n=13) are from other and/or unspecified nationalities, and 44% (n=15) are Egyptians. Thus, each country emphasized on quoting one of its citizens.

**The Secondary Quote Indication:**
As for what the secondary quotes indicate about the journalist’s case, the difference is statistically insignificant (Table 19) between the both countries’ media. Both countries’ media quoted statements that are in favor of Greste position with 77% (n=27) of Australian media’s secondary quotes and 71% (n=24) of the Egyptian ones.

**The Secondary Quote Placement:**

There is almost no difference in the placement of the secondary quotes in each country’s news articles. More than 50% of the secondary quotes appear after the second paragraph in each country’s news articles.

**Overall Quotes Presented in the Articles:**

Altogether, the central and secondary quotes presented in the articles indicate that both countries’ media emphasized on showing the role of the “government officials”, Australian media gave as much attention to represent the defendants’ voices. With regards to what these statements indicate, there was an insignificant statistical difference between both countries’ media (Table 15; Table 19), as the majority of these quotes were favoring Greste’s release. However, the number of statements that were neutrally presented in Egyptian media is larger than that of the Australian media.

**C. The Overall Tone of the Articles:**

- **The Overall Tone of the Articles in Presenting Greste’s Case:**

  94% (n=33) of the Australian articles supported the journalist through their overall tone, compared to 62% (n=21) of overall tone of Egyptian articles. None of the Australian articles were unfavorable while 6% (n=2) are neutral; however, 12% (n=4) of the overall tone of the Egyptian articles are unfavorable to the journalist’s position and 27% (n=9) are neutral.
Summary of RQ1 Findings:

This section includes the summary of statistical test’s results and findings of the key variables of this study. Various cross-tabulation tests are conducted to see the difference in percentage terms for each country’s media. Chi-square tests are also conducted to find out in case there is a correlation -or association- between the variables and the news originator, being the Australian and Egyptian media. The p-value highlights in case the correlation between the dependent variables and independent variables –in this research being the sources of the news articles- are statistically significant, with equal to or less than 0.05, or statistically insignificant with a value greater than 0.05. In case of being statistically insignificant, then the discrepancies might be due to external factors or errors.

Portrayal of Greste Throughout the Events of the Case:

A. Frames used in the articles to describe Greste:

  • Portrayal of Greste as “Innocent”:

    The word “Innocent” (or synonyms) is mentioned in 77% (n=27) of the Australian articles, and 9% (n=3) in the Egyptian articles.

    A chi-square test showed that the difference is statistically significant: $\chi^2$ (2, N=69)=38.09, p-value (0.000).

  • Portrayal of Greste as “Supporting Muslim Brotherhood” or “Guilty”:

    The word “Guilty”/“supporting Muslim Brotherhood” (or synonyms) is mentioned in 6% (n=2) of Egyptian media while not mentioned at all in the Australian media.

    A chi-square test showed that the difference is statistically insignificant: $\chi^2$ (2, N=69)=1.04, p-value (0.307).
• **Portrayal of Greste as a “Professional”:**

Describing the journalist as an “award winning”/ “professional” –or synonym”, is mentioned in 31% (n=11) Australian news articles, and in 9% (n=3) Egyptian news articles.

A chi-square test showed that the difference is statistically significant: $\chi^2 (1, N=69)=5.45$, p-value (0.020).

• **Portrayal of Greste as “Just Doing his Job” or “reporting on the truth”:**

Mentioning that the journalist is “doing his job”/ “regular assignment” - or synonym- is mentioned in 29% (n=10) Australian news articles, and in 27% (n=9) Egyptian news articles.

A chi-square test showed that the difference is statistically insignificant: $\chi^2 (1, N=69)=0.04$, p-value (0.845).

• **Portrayal of Greste as “Caught in the Middle” or a “victim of a Politicized Case”:**

Describing Greste as “caught in the middle” or referring that the case is “politicized” – or synonym- is mentioned in 29% (n=10) Australian articles, and 38% (n=13) Egyptian articles.

A chi-square test showed that the difference is statistically insignificant: $\chi^2 (2, N=69)=1.58$, p-value (0.454).
Table 1: Frames Used in the Articles to Describe Greste:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Frames Describing Greste</th>
<th>Australian News Articles</th>
<th>Egyptian News Articles</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Innocent</td>
<td>77%</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guilty</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regular Assignment</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caught in the Middle</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>38%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

B. The Dominating Frame that is used to describe Greste in the articles:

In the Australian articles, the dominating frame describing Greste is “innocent” in 63% (n=22) of the news articles. In the Egyptian articles, the dominating frame is “caught in the middle” with 38% (n=13).

A chi-square test showed that the difference is statistically significant: $\chi^2 (6, N=69)=16.36$, p-value (0.012).
$\chi^2 (6, N=69) = 16.36$, p-value (0.012).

Table 2: The Dominating Frame Describing Greste
Portrayal of the Most Significant Events of the Case Developments:

A. **Portrayal of the Verdict Imposed on Greste:**

In Australian articles, 91% (n=31) criticized the verdict for being “unfair”. In Egyptian articles, 53% (n=18) described it as “unfair”, and 41% (n=14) as neutral.

A chi-square test showed that the difference is statistically significant: $\chi^2 (3, N=69)=22.91$, p-value (0.000).

![The Verdict Chart]

$\chi^2 (3, N=69)=22.91$, p-value (0.000).

**Table 3: Portrayal of the Verdict Imposed on Greste**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The Verdict</th>
<th>Australian</th>
<th>Egyptian</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Unfair</td>
<td>91%</td>
<td>53%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>41%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fair</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
B. Portrayal of the Trials Proceedings:

Both countries’ news articles described the trial proceedings in the same manner. Most of the articles that discussed the trials proceedings portrayed them in a negative way in both countries, with 57% (n=20) of Australian articles and 41% (n=14) of Egyptian articles.

A chi-square test showed that the difference is statistically insignificant: $\chi^2 (3, N=69)=7.08$, p-value (0.069).

### Table 4: Portrayal of the Trial Proceedings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Trial Proceedings</th>
<th>Australian</th>
<th>Egyptian</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Unfair</td>
<td>57%</td>
<td>41%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fair</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>41%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

$\chi^2 (3, N=69)=7.08$, p-value (0.069).
C. Portrayal of the Evidence Presented Against Greste:

Both countries media mentioned the lack of evidence against the journalists. While the majority of the articles in both countries’ media do not mention the evidence at all, all the remaining articles criticized prosecution for being unable to present adequate or relevant evidence to the case, 17% (n=6) of the Australian articles and 26% (n=9) of Egyptian articles.

A chi-square test showed that the difference is statistically insignificant: $\chi^2 (2, N=69)=2.06$, p-value (0.357).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Australian</th>
<th>Egyptian</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Inadequate</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adequate</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>83%</td>
<td>71%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

$\chi^2 (2, N=69)=2.06$, p-value (0.357).

Table 5: Portrayal on the Evidence Presented Against Greste
D. Portrayal of the Accusations against Greste:

63% (n=22) of the Australian articles represented the accusations against Greste as “False”, and 37% (n=13) as neutral and none as “true”. In Egyptian articles, 17% (n=6) as “False”, 79% (n=27) presented the accusations “neutrally”, and 6% (n=2) as “true”.

A chi-square test showed that the difference is statistically significant: \( \chi^2 (2, N=69)=15.03, p\text{-value (0.001).} \)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Accusations</th>
<th>Australian</th>
<th>Egyptian</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FALSE</td>
<td>63%</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>79%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TRUE</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\( \chi^2 (2, N=69)=15.03, p\text{-value (0.001).} \)

Table 6: Portrayal of the Accusations Against Greste
E. Portrayal of the Release on Bail issued to Greste:

Two articles in each country’s articles are reported about the release. The two articles in Australian media describe the release as “Fair”, while in Egyptian media, one describes it as “Fair”, and the other is “neutral”.

A chi-square test showed that the difference is statistically insignificant: $\chi^2 (3, N=69)=4.99$, p-value (0.173).

Table 7: Portrayal of the Release on Bail Issued to Greste

$\chi^2 (3, N=69)=4.99$, p-value (0.173).
Portrayal of the Egyptian Authorities’ Actions in Dealing with the Case:

A. Portrayal of the Judicial System in Dealing with the Case:

69% (n=24) of Australian articles compared to only and 6% (n=2) of Egyptian ones criticized the judicial system in Egypt.

A chi-square test showed that the difference is statistically significant: χ² (3, N=69) = 19.44, p-value (0.000).

Table 8: Portrayal of the Judicial System in Dealing with the Case

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Australian</th>
<th>Egyptian</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Criticized</td>
<td>69%</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supported</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>76%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

χ² (3, N=69) = 19.44, p-value (0.000).

Table 8: Portrayal of the Judicial System in Dealing with the Case
B. Portrayal of the Egyptian President’s Rhetoric/Actions in Dealing with the Case:

The way in which each country portrayed the Egyptian government actions in responding to the case is inconsistent. 49% (n=17) of Australian articles criticized the President’s declarations, compared to 9% (n=3) in Egyptian Media.

A chi-square test showed that the difference is statistically significant: $\chi^2 (3, N=69)=13.35$, p-value (0.004).

![Graph showing government rhetoric/actions portrayal]

$\chi^2 (3, N=69)=13.35$, p-value (0.004).

Table 9: Portrayal of the Egyptian President’s Rhetoric/Actions in Dealing with the Case
Portrayal of the State of Media Freedom and Human Rights Protection through reporting on the Case:

A. Portrayal of the State of the Media Freedom in Egypt:

57% (n=20) and 50% (n=17) of Australian and Egyptian articles respectively mentioned that the journalist case is a challenge to media freedom in Egypt, while only 3% (n=1) mention that media freedom is protected.

A chi-square test showed that the difference is statistically insignificant: $\chi^2 (2, N=69)=1.26$, p-value (0.53).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Australian</th>
<th>Egyptian</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>57%</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>47%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

$\chi^2 (2, N=69)=1.26$, p-value (0.53).

Table 10: Portrayal of the State of the Media Freedom in Egypt
B. **Portrayal of the State of Human Rights Protection in Egypt:**

57% (n=20) of Australian articles criticized the protection of human rights in Egypt compared to only 32% (n=11) of Egyptian articles, while the majority of the articles did not mention Human rights at all.

A chi-square test showed that the difference is statistically significant: \( \chi^2 (1, N=69)=4.28, p\)-value (0.038).

![Human Rights Protection](chart)

\( \chi^2 (1, N=69)=0.33, p\)-value (0.038).

**Table 11: Portrayal of the State of Human Rights Protection in Egypt**
Portrayal of the Overall Theme, Balance and Tone in the Articles:

A. The Main Theme of the Articles:

The main theme in the Australian articles is “International Community Involvement” with 23% (n=8). Although both countries have similar number of articles with main theme being “International Community Involvement”, “Government Rhetoric/Actions” is the highest main theme in Egyptian media with 29% (n=10).

A chi-square test showed that the correlation between the source of the articles and the main theme is insignificant: $\chi^2 (6, N=69)=3.86$, p-value (0.695).

Table 12: The Main Theme of the Articles

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Main Theme</th>
<th>Australian</th>
<th>Egyptian</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Verdict</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trial proceedings</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Release</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Int. Involvement</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MF</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Egy. Gov.Dec/Actions</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HR</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

$\chi^2 (6, N=69)=3.86$, p-value (0.695)
B. The Balance in the Articles:

a. Central Quotes:

   • The Central Quote Source:

   Australian media focused mainly on representing quotes from “The Journalist(s) Family Member(s)” with 26% (n=9), compared to 9% (n=3) in Egyptian media. In Egyptian media, the central quote sources are “Government Officials” other than the Prime Minister and President with 32% (n=11), compared to 14% (n=5) in Australian media.

   A chi-square test showed that the difference is statistically significant: $\chi^2 (10, N=69)=23.72$, p-value (0.008).

   ![Central Quotes Sources](image)

   Table 13: The Central Quote Source

   \[\chi^2 (10, N=69)=23.72, \text{ p-value} (0.008)\]
• **The Central Quote Source’s Nationality:**

Due to the discrepancy in the main source of the central quotes between Australian and Egyptian articles, this is reflected in a similar discrepancy in the nationalities of the central quotes originator. In the Australian media, the nationality of the source that is mostly quoted is Australian in 63% (n=22) of the articles; while in Egyptian articles it is Egyptian in 47% (n=7) of the articles.

A chi-square test showed that the difference is statistically significant: \( \chi^2 (3, N=69)=18.83, p\text{-value } (0.000) \).

![Central Quote Source's Nationality](image)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Australian</th>
<th>Egyptian</th>
<th>Other</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Australian</td>
<td>63%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Egyptian</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>47%</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\[ \chi^2 (3, N=69)=18.83, p\text{-value } (0.000) \]

**Table 14: The Central Quote Nationality**
• **The Central Quotes Indications:**

91% (n=32) of Australian media quotes support the journalists as well as 77% (n=26) in Egyptian media.

A chi-square test showed that the difference is statistically insignificant: $\chi^2 (3, N=69)=4.27$, p-value (0.233).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Australian</th>
<th>Egyptian</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Supports</td>
<td>91%</td>
<td>77%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Condemns</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

$\chi^2 (3, N=69)=4.27$, p-value (0.233).

**Table 15: The Central Quotes Indications**
• **The Central Quotes Placement:**

Most of the central quotes that appear in both countries’ news articles are placed in either the headlines or the lead paragraphs. Almost 50% (n=17) of the quotes are in the headline of both countries media, and 17% (n=6) appeared in the lead paragraph in both countries’ articles.

A chi-square test showed that the difference is statistically insignificant: $\chi^2 (3, N=69)=2.67$, p-value (0.444).

![Central Quotes Placement Chart]

$\chi^2 (3, N=69)=2.67$, p-value (0.444).

**Table 16: The Central Quotes Placement in the article**

b. **The Secondary Quotes:**

• **The Secondary Quote Source:**

In the Australian media, the main originators of the secondary quotes are “The Journalist(s) Family Member(s)” and “Government Official” with 23% each (n=8). In the Egyptian Media, the main originator of the secondary quotes is “Government Officials” with 29% (n=10). Similar to the central quotes, Egyptian media still focus on quoting Government
Official. Although the results of both countries are very close, the Australian media presented the human side of the situation as well as the political side, unlike Egyptian media that focused more on the political declarations.

A chi-square test showed that the difference is statistically insignificant: $\chi^2 (11, N=69)=15.19$, p-value (0.174).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Secondary Quotes Sources</th>
<th>Australian</th>
<th>Egyptian</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>President</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prime Minister</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gov Official</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Defendant Family</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Defendant</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attorney</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AlJazeera</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Media</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

$\chi^2 (11, N=69)=15.19$, p-value (0.174).

Table 17: The Secondary Quote Source
• **The Secondary Quote Source’s Nationality:**

The majority of the sources who said the secondary quotes are Australian in Australian media (63%, n=22), and Egyptian in Egyptian media (44%, n=15). A chi-square test showed that the difference is statistically significant: $\chi^2 (4, N=69)=16.95$, p-value (0.002).

![Secondary Quote Source Nationality](chart.png)

$\chi^2 (4, N=69)=16.95$, p-value (0.002).

*Table 18: The Secondary Quote Source’s Nationality*
The Secondary Quotes Indications:

Similar to the central quotes, the majority of both countries’ media support the journalist, with 77% (n=27) of Australian news articles, and 71% (n=24) of Egyptian news articles.

A chi-square test showed that the difference is statistically insignificant: \( \chi^2 (4, N=69)=7.43, p\text{-value} (0.115). \)

\[
\chi^2 (4, N=69)=7.43, p\text{-value} (0.115).
\]

Table 19: The Secondary Quotes Indications
C. Overall Tone of the Articles:

94% (n=33) of the Australian articles supported the journalist through their overall tone, compared to 62% (n=21) of overall tone of Egyptian articles.

A chi-square test showed that the difference is statistically insignificant: $\chi^2 (2, N=69)=8.52$, p-value (0.14).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Overall Tone</th>
<th>Australian</th>
<th>Egyptian</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Favorable</td>
<td>94%</td>
<td>62%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unfavorable</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

$\chi^2 (2, N=69)=8.52$, p-value (0.14).

Table 20: The Overall Tone of the Articles in Presenting Greste’s Case
6.2 Findings of RQ2:

This section presents the findings that answer the second research question of this study: How does the news coverage of Peter Greste’s case in both countries inform our knowledge about media freedom in Egypt?

In his study, Whitten-Woodring (2009) answered the question: “what makes media free?” by referring to the index of press freedom of the Freedom House (2007) saying various criteria that determine media freedom. These criteria, as far as this research is concerned, include: media outlets to determine content freely, a lack of authoritative censorship, a lack of journalist self-censorship, freedom of media practitioners from intimidation and violence, and a lack of partiality of news reporting (Whitten-Woodring, 2009, p. 598). While the researcher referred to uncensored coverage and impartiality of news reporting as important criteria to determine media freedom, he further stated that these criteria are essential to be combined with the professional norms that essentially drive the journalistic practices. He explained that these norms are “objectivity, fairness, independence and a sense of responsibility to serve the news audience” (Whitten-Woodring, 2009, p. 598). Scholars explain that objectivity is one of the fundamentals of professional journalism. In their research, Mellado and Humanes (2015) state that objective reporting enables journalists to provide citizens with an exact version of events, and thus allows them to form their own opinions. In this sense, they state that the best way for journalism to serve democracy is to employ the objectivity of reporting (Mellado & Humanes, 2015, p. 70).

Accordingly, for the purpose of this study, the researcher employed objectivity and impartiality of news reporting to evaluate the news coverage of Greste’s case developments in order to assess the degree of media freedom in Egypt. The researcher evaluated the objectivity and impartiality of the news coverage of the Egyptian media through comparing it to that of the Australian media, which is equally concerned with the coverage of this incident to serve justice to its citizen, Greste.

Through comparing the number of articles that displayed the following frames in each country: “innocent”, “guilty”, “professional”, “doing his job” and “caught in the middle”, the researcher found a large similarity in employing these frames to describe Greste, except for the frame “innocent”. Both countries equally referred to his proficiency as a journalist who was just
reporting on the news, and/or a victim of a politicized case. Besides, both countries’ articles did not employ the frame “guilty” in portraying Greste, except for two Egyptian articles only. However, Australian media frequently utilized the “innocent” frame, especially after presenting the accusations against him, unlike the Egyptian media.

However, there is an inconsistency in the dominating frame that each country’s media employed in portraying him through the overall representation of the news. Australian media focused on portraying him as “innocent”, while Egyptian media focused on portraying him as being “caught in the middle”. Unlike Australian media, Egyptian media provided an equivalent meaning as a connotation of his innocence—in an indirect way—by portraying the entire case as being politicized. Therefore, Egyptian media emphasized that incriminating Greste—and his colleagues—was not because he opposed the law, but rather as a means to impose pressure on Al Jazeera network—or Qatar—where Greste is employed. In this way, the Egyptian media were objective in describing Greste and in portraying the case as being politicized.

Analyzing the portrayal of the case developments, the researcher studied how each country’s media presented the following events during the period of study: the verdict issued to Greste on June 23rd, 2014, the trial proceedings, the evidences presented in court by prosecution, the accusations presented in court, and the release on bail issued to Greste on February 1st, 2015. The researcher found similarities between both countries’ articles in reporting on the verdict, the trial proceedings, the evidences and the release from jail, while found inconsistency in reporting on the accusations. Both countries’ media portrayed the verdict as being “unfair”. Also, both countries’ media agreed on portraying the trials as “unfair”. Egyptian media were as objective as the Australian media in criticizing the trials, and presenting them as fallacious and lengthy. Similarly, the Egyptian media were as objective as the Australian media in supporting Greste’s release through portraying it as “fair”, while still referring to its unfairness for the other detainees.

However, the Egyptian media were not as comprehensive as Australian media in portraying the pieces of evidence that were presented by prosecution against Greste. Although both countries’ media portrayed them as “inadequate” to incriminate Greste, the Egyptian media did not convey the reasons behind describing them in such a way, unlike Australian media. Egyptian news articles did not reveal the elements that prosecution mentioned in court as evidences; and thus, the Egyptian audiences were not informed about this detail. However, the
Australian media informed the readers that the prosecution presented irrelevant elements, such as Getye’s song, family trip photos and dated news footage of other countries. None of these elements was mentioned in the Egyptian media, which demonstrates a partiality in its reporting. Furthermore, the Egyptian media were not as objective as the Australian media in presenting the accusations against Greste. While the majority of Australian articles described the accusations as “false”, the Egyptian media neutrally portrayed them, despite acknowledging that the evidences incriminating him were insufficient, and his trials were fallacious.

Analyzing the portrayal of the manner in which each of the Egyptian government and Egyptian judiciary handled the case, the researcher found inconsistency between both countries’ coverage. Although the majority of the Australian articles criticized the Egyptian judicial system, the President’s declarations, or the reluctance to intervene to solve the issue, this kind of criticism was hardly mentioned in the Egyptian articles. The Egyptian media were comprehensive in reporting on the details related to the president’s declarations to the media and issuing of a new law that supports the release of the foreign detainees; however, this information was reported in a neutral manner. This may suggest that the Egyptian media are relatively restricted in terms of criticizing the country’s authorities and political figures.

Analyzing the portrayal of the degree of media freedom in Egypt in the news as a result of the case, the researcher found consistency between both countries’ coverage. Both countries’ news reports equally suggested that the case indicates a violation to freedom of expression in Egypt and an attempt by the government to censor the media through jailing of journalists. However, both countries did not portray human rights protection in the same manner. The Egyptian media concealed some information regarding human rights violation issues that were presented in the Australian media. Most of the articles in the Egyptian media just mentioned that human rights groups condemns the case, or that the case brought international condemnation to human rights protection in Egypt. However, Australian media revealed that some videos and photos were leaked from inside the Egyptian prison to the media describing the “unlivable” conditions that the defendants had to endure while awaiting their verdict. Several Australian articles described the Egyptian jail, according to the photos, as made up of “decaying”, “darkened”, “overcrowded” and “tiny” cells. The articles also emphasized that the defendants not only had to share such tiny cells, but they also had to share “one open dirty and rusting pit toilet” with others inside the cell (Byrnes, 2014; Millar, 2014). The information brought by the
Australian media concerning those photos and videos was absent from Egyptian media. Consequently, the Egyptian media were incomprehensive in reporting on human rights violations in Egypt.

Finally, analyzing the overall theme, balance and tone in the news stories, the researcher concluded that there was not a significant difference between both countries’ reporting. With regard to the theme, both countries’ media emphasized the importance of the political dimension of this case, and the way international communities – politician and media professionals – imposed pressure on Egypt to resolve the issue. Nevertheless, the Egyptian media equally emphasized reporting on the Egyptian president’s declarations and actions in dealing with this global pressure. Regarding the balance, both countries’ news articles presented voices that supported Greste’s position in the case. Although there is a degree of dissimilarity in displaying a variety of voices involved in the case, both countries’ articles presented statements that supported the journalist, regardless of their originators. The differences between the originators of the quotes presented in the articles are possibly due to the fact that the Australian media accentuated portraying the human side of the case through quoting Greste’s family members. The reason behind this, one may rationally assume, is that the Australian media are mainly concerned with freeing its citizen, rather than discussing problems related to political or media issues in Egypt. On the other hand, Egyptian media did not give the same emphasis to Greste – or the other detainees; nevertheless, emphasized portraying quotes from government officials. Thus, the Egyptian media were mainly concerned with the political side of the situation, either by conveying the global criticism or by conveying the role of Egyptian politicians in responding to this criticism. As for the overall tone of the articles, both countries’ media similarly supported Greste throughout their news coverage of the events.

In conclusion, the above-mentioned results demonstrate that the Egyptian media were objective in the overall portrayal of Greste through reporting on the case, the unfairness of processing the case, and the consequences of this case on restricting media freedom in Egypt. However, they also exhibit a degree of partiality in portraying the inefficiencies of the prosecution in presenting the evidences, the criticism of Egyptian authorities – whether the President or the judiciary – and the violations against human rights. Therefore, the framing of Greste’s case in Egyptian, versus Australian, news articles suggests that the media in Egypt are relatively restricted.
Realizing the dramatic impact of the media on influencing public opinion, previous research shows that governments of less democratic countries seek to control the flow of information reaching their citizens. According to research, these governments could practice various forms of violations to challenge media freedom, such as torturing, jailing, expelling or killing of journalists (Odine, 2014; Whitten-Woodring, 2009, p. 596). This thesis project examined one of these forms of violations through analyzing the framing of the news coverage of a contemporary instance of journalists’ imprisonment in Egypt. In light of this analysis, the researcher evaluated the level of media freedom in Egypt.

Conducting a content analysis, the researcher examined the framing of Al Jazeera correspondent Peter Greste’s imprisonment case in each of the Australian and the Egyptian media. The researcher identified the similarities and differences between the Egyptian media’s framing of Greste’s case developments versus his home country’s media. According to this analysis, the researcher evaluated the state of media freedom in Egypt. Since the case took place over a duration of two years, commencing on December 2013 with the journalists’ detention, the researcher limited the duration of study to cover the most significant events starting with sentencing Greste to seven years of prison on June 23rd, 2014, until his release from the Egyptian jail was reported on February 2nd, 2015, one day after issuing his bail. The researcher conducted a purposive sampling technique to select all the relevant news articles that appeared on the most-visited news websites of each country: www.news.com.au in Australia, and www.EgyptIndependent.com and www.English.Ahram.org.eg in Egypt. Through analyzing an aggregate of 69 news stories from both countries’ media, the researcher concluded that despite several similarities between their coverage of the events, some frames that characterized the Egyptian media were inconsistent with the Australian one. Besides, the researcher found that the Egyptian media did not comprehensively cover particular events, especially the ones that entailed criticism of authorities in Egypt or human rights protection in Egypt, which were revealed by Australian media. Accordingly, the researcher concluded that the media in Egypt are relatively restricted.
The Similarities Between Both Countries’ News Coverage:

There were several similarities in the portrayal of events in both countries’ media. The similarities between both countries’ coverage included: agreeing that the case is politicized, reporting on miscarriages in handling the developments of the case (the unfair verdict, the unfair trials, and the inadequateness of evidences), and the impact of the case on media freedom in Egypt. Despite that these similarities indicate an extent of objectivity in the Egyptian media, they yet highlight some challenges to media freedom in Egypt.

Both countries’ media suggested that the case is politicized. In the case of Greste and his colleagues, Egyptian and Australian media suggested that the Egyptian authorities aimed at penalizing Al Jazeera network through imprisoning these journalists. They also suggested that the Egyptian government was successful in forcing Al Jazeera channel – Mubashir- to shut down their operation in Egypt after almost a year of detaining these journalists. They, furthermore, described the channel’s closure as a “positive step” in the case developments, which assisted in freeing the journalists from jail. Therefore, the objective behind imprisoning these journalists as reported by both countries’ media was to silence the unfavorable reporting of Al Jazeera network.

In addition, both countries’ media referred to the unfairness of the journalists’ trials, and the insufficiency of the evidence that incriminated the defendants. Besides, both countries’ media described sentencing Greste to seven years of prison as unfair, and described his release from jail as fair. This information may indicate that the entire case was constructed to serve another purpose, rather than penalizing the journalists. In studying the accusations that were meant to incriminate Al Jazeera journalists, the researcher found them similar to what previous scholars identified as common allegations that are used to silence the media. According to previous researchers, imposing laws and regulations, restricting news that harms national security, and requiring an authorized license for operation are among the common procedures that authorities employ to restrict freedom of expression in a country (Odine, 2014; Sakr, 2010).

Firstly, both countries’ media mentioned that the Egyptian authorities used the law to incriminate Greste and his colleagues. The authorities issued a law that designates the Muslim Brotherhood group as a terrorist organization. Afterwards, the authorities utilized this law to incriminate Greste for supporting the outlawed group. Previous research suggested that law
enforcement is utilized as a means to challenge the freedom of expression in some countries. Sakr (2010) referred in her research to the state of emergency law as an example to illustrate how the Egyptian media use law enforcement to restrict freedom of expression.

Secondly, both countries’ media reported that Greste was also accused of publishing false information defaming Egypt and harming the national security, which Odine (2014) acknowledged as challenges to press freedom. Previous research affirmed that preserving national security has always been used as an excuse by governments to restrict the flow of information. Odine explained that some governments in less democratic countries might ban journalists from covering certain events to preserve national security, despite constitutions that guarantee media freedom in these countries (Odine, 2014).

Thirdly, both countries’ media reported that Greste was accused of operating without valid press licenses, which was similarly identified by Sakr as a means that authorities use to complicate the system, and thus, restrict unfavorable media outlets from operation. Sakr suggested that licensing in Egypt can be lengthy and inconclusive; and licensing bodies may be unaccountable and unwelcoming, all in attempt to restrain the media outlets from operation (Sakr, 2010, p. 40).

Furthermore, several articles in both countries’ media suggested that the case represents a threat to media freedom in Egypt. Both countries’ media suggested that authorities’ intention of jailing these journalists was the threatening impact that the case would bring to other media professionals. Previous studies describe such impact as “the chilling effect”, and describe it as the primary repercussion that authoritarian governments intend to achieve from committing violations against journalists (Horsley & Harrison, 2013, p. 40). Similarly, both countries’ media reported that the Egyptian authorities hoped to scare other journalists by imprisoning Greste and his colleagues, and thus, restricting any unfavorable news reporting concerning the organization. An article in the Australian media quotes Marai, a senior producer for Al Jazeera, saying, “While many journalists had, unsurprisingly, been terrified by the treatment of Greste and his co-workers as criminals and terrorists, the world’s media must not be cowered and continue to stand united against injustice” (Byrnes, 2014). Both countries’ media also further emphasized that the Egyptian authorities’ main objective was to terrify other journalists through reporting about the adjournment of trials to prolong the process, which resulted in holding the defendants for more than 400 days in prison without proving adequate evidence against them.
Despite the above-mentioned similarities, the researcher discovered an inconsistency in the framing of particular events between the Egyptian and the Australian news coverage. Previous research suggests that the inconsistency of framing of particular events across countries might be due to local legislations, local social and cultural values, and lack of knowledge of the political and/or historical background of the country being reported on (Camaj, 2010, p. 639; Kasmani, 2014, p. 596). Camaj also suggested that media professionals tend to follow their national primacies when covering international events (Camaj, 2010, p. 639). These reasons might have played a role in shaping the reporting of each of the Egyptian and the Australian coverage of events.

According to scholars, framing of news could influence the perception of its audiences through “selection” of a perceived reality and making it more “salient” in a communicating text (Entman, 1993, p. 52). In light of the framing effects, the researcher found that the Australian media repetitively mentioned the frame “innocent” in describing Greste, unlike the Egyptian media. Emphasizing this frame by the Australian media serves well the Australian authorities’ main objective in intervening for Greste’s release, as well as supporting freedom of the press in general. On the other hand, Egyptian media emphasized frames that describe the case as politicized instead of describing Greste, and his colleagues, as innocent. The repetition of using this frame in various articles is consistent with the government’s attempt at opposing Al Jazeera channel’s reporting rather than addressing the state of the defendants in the case. Various articles emphatically described Al Jazeera as “supporting Muslim Brotherhood”, “the mouthpiece of the Muslim brotherhood” (Peter Greste’s Family, 2015), “biased” (Al-Tawy, 2014c), or as “making mistakes” in reporting (Journalists Syndicate, 2014).

Moreover, the main theme of the articles of the Australian media was inconsistent with that of the Egyptian media. Although both countries’ media emphasized the importance of the political dimension of this case, and the way the international communities imposed pressure on Egypt to resolve the situation, the Egyptian media placed more emphasis on reporting the Egyptian president’s declarations and actions in dealing with this global pressure. Besides, the Australian media emphasized displaying quotes that represent Greste’s family, and thus, portraying the human side of the case while also displaying quotes said by the government officials to communicate the politicians’ role in the case. On the other hand, the Egyptian media only stressed portraying quotes from government officials, and displaying the political side of the situation more than the human
In addition to the inconsistency of framing the events that was found between both countries’ media, the researcher also discovered that the Egyptian media were not as comprehensive as the Australian media in the coverage of particular news. This may indicate that the Egyptian media here exercised gatekeeping by precluding coverage of certain events or individuals in the local news. The Egyptian media partially reported some information related to evaluating the efficiencies inside the courtroom, evaluating the Egyptian authorities -government and judiciary- as well as condemning human rights protection in Egypt. According to previous research, gatekeeping of reporting on political issues might be due to several reasons, including government’s restriction of freedom of expression (Horsley & Harrison, 2013; Severin & Tankard, 2001), self-censorship for preserving national security or local culture (Odine, 2014, p. 237), self-censorship for fear of potential harm (Horsley & Harrison, 2013), or evaluating the newsworthiness of events (Singer, 2011). Consequently, the researcher cannot assume the exact reason behind censoring such information from the Egyptian news articles, while acknowledging them by the Australian ones.

In conclusion, analyzing the framing of news coverage of Greste’s case highlighted that the Egyptian media are relatively restricted. It also highlighted some violations that authorities are practicing in Egypt against the freedom of expression rights and human rights in general. In addition, it also highlighted that the framing of events differs from the reporting of one country to another.
Content analysis is a very useful method to study the characteristics of media messages as well as the portrayal of events or groups in the media. However, it cannot infer the effect of these messages on their readers. Therefore, this study could be utilized as a foundation for other quantitative (or qualitative) research that studies the impact of these messages on public opinion, and the extent of influence that these messages had on the Egyptian versus the Australian readers.

Furthermore, this research cannot detect the reasons behind eliminating some details from Egyptian news. It would be useful to conduct personal interviews with the authors of the Egyptian news articles that were studied in this research to identify the reasons behind censoring or precluding certain information.

Moreover, due to the lengthiness of the case, the researcher had to limit the duration under study to focus on certain events. However, further content analysis research could be conducted to comprehensively cover the framing of the entire case in both countries’ media. Finally, given that Egyptian news mostly targets an Arabic-speaking audience, it would be insightful to examine how Arabic-language Egyptian news tackled this case for a more comprehensive account of the news content constructed for and consumed by local readers.


CPJ Egypt Some UN member states have poor records. (2014). *Committee to Protect Journalist*. Retrieved from https://cpj.org/mideast/egypt/


Egypt court sets 1 January as date for Al Jazeera staff appeal. (2014, October 21). *Ahram Online*. Retrieved from [http://english.ahram.org.eg/NewsContent/1/64/113641/Egypt/Politics-/Egypt-court-sets--January-as-date-for-Al Jazeera-s.aspx](http://english.ahram.org.eg/NewsContent/1/64/113641/Egypt/Politics-/Egypt-court-sets--January-as-date-for-Al Jazeera-s.aspx)


Egyptian ambassadors prepare for backlash over Al Jazeera verdict. (2014, June 23). *Ahram Online*. Retrieved from [http://english.ahram.org.eg/NewsContent/1/64/104561/Egypt/Politics-/Egyptian-ambassadors-prepare-for-backlash-over-Al-.aspx](http://english.ahram.org.eg/NewsContent/1/64/104561/Egypt/Politics-/Egyptian-ambassadors-prepare-for-backlash-over-Al-.aspx)


Fandy, M. (2007). (UN) Civil War of words: Media and politics in the Arab World


Hammond, A. (2005), Pop Culture Arab World: Media, Arts and Lifestyle


Horsley, W., & Harrison, J. (2013), Censorship by bullet, British Journalism Review. 24(1), 39-46


APPENDIX

I. The Code Book:

I. Technical Data:

a. Article Number: …

b. Article Source: 1= News.com.au; 2= Egyptindependent.com; 3= English.ahram.org.eg

c. Date: … dd/mm/year

II. News Framing:

A. General Information:

a. The main theme of the article: 1= the sentencing; 2= trial proceeding; 3= accusations; 4= the evidences; 5= release from jail; 6= Al Jazeera campaign; 7= international community Involvement; 8= media freedom/censorship; 9= Egyptian government Rhetoric/actions; 10= human rights; 11= other.

b. Article Frame Type: 1= Episodic; 2= Thematic

B. Sourcing:

(If no sources were quoted please skip to section C)

i. Central Quotes:

a. The primary source’s nationality is: 1= Australian; 2= Egyptian; 3= other nationality; 4= unspecified; 5= no main sources were quoted (if no main sources were quoted, please skip to section ii).

b. The primary Sources is: 1= President; 2= Prime Minister; 3= other government officials (still in profession) 4= former government officials; 5= Judge; 6= prosecutor 7= attorney; 8= Human rights groups; 9= Accused journalist(s) 10= Al Jazeera network/staff; 11= other media sources (other than Al Jazeera); 12= intellectual/academic expert; 13= ordinary people; 14= Accused journalist(s) family member; 15= other...
c. In which part of the article is the main source first quoted/referred to? 1= headline; 2= lead sentence; 3= first paragraph; 4= second paragraph; 5= other...

d. The statement 1= defends; 2= neutral; 3= condemns; 4= N/A; the journalists

ii. Secondary Quotes:

a. The secondary source’s nationality is: 1= Australian; 2= Egyptian; 3= other nationality; 4= unspecified; 5= no secondary sources were quoted (if no sources were quoted, please skip to section C).

b. The secondary Sources is: 1= President; 2= Prime Minister; 3= other government officials (still in profession) 4= former government officials; 5= Judge; 6= prosecutor 7= attorney; 8= Human rights groups; 9= Accused journalist(s) 10= Al Jazeera network/staff; 11= other media sources (other than Al Jazeera); 12= intellectual/academic expert; 13= ordinary people; 14= Accused journalist(s) family member; 15= other...

c. In which part of the article is the main source quoted/referred to? 1= headline; 2= lead sentence; 3= first paragraph; 4= second paragraph; 5= other...

d. The statement 1= defends; 2= neutral; 3= condemns; 4= N/A; the journalists’ release from jail

C. News Discourse:

a. Overall tone of the article regarding the journalists’ position in the crime: 1= unfavorable; 2= neutral; 3= favorable; 4= other; 5= N/A

i. The dominant frame(s) describing Greste:

a. The word ‘Innocent’ (or synonym) is used to describe Greste: 1= yes; 2= no; 3= N/A

b. The word ‘Guilty’ (or synonym) is used to describe Greste: 1= yes; 2= no; 3= N/A

c. The word ‘professional’ (or synonym) is used to describe Greste: 1= yes; 2= no; 3= N/A

d. The phrase ‘regular assignment’ is used to describe Greste: 1= yes; 2= no; 3= N/A

e. The phrase ‘caught in the middle of a battle’ (or synonym) is used to describe Greste: 1= yes; 2= no; 3= N/A

f. The dominating frame describing the journalist’s situation is: 1= innocent; 2= guilty; 3= professional; 4=regular assignment; 5= caught in the middle; 6= other
ii. Description of Greste’s trials:

a. Sentencing Greste to seven years prison is represented as: 1= unfair; 2=neutral; 3= fair; 4= N/A

b. Greste trials are represented as 1= unfair; 2=neutral; 3= fair; 4= N/A

c. The accusations against Greste are represented as 1= false; 2= neutral; 3= true; 4= N/A

d. The evidence for Greste is represented as 1= inadequate 2=neutral; 3= adequate; 4= N/A

e. Greste’s release from jail is represented as 1= unfair; 2=neutral; 3= fair; 4= N/A

iii. Political Life in Egypt:

a. The journalists’ case questioned media freedom in Egypt: 1= yes; 2= no; 3= neutral; 4=N/A

b. The journalists’ case questioned the protection of human rights in Egypt: 1= yes; 2= no; 3= neutral; 4=N/A

c. The judicial system (laws) in Egypt is 1= criticized; 2= neutral; 3= supported; 4=N/A

d. Egyptian government declarations is represented as 1= supported; 2= neutral; 3= criticized; 4=N/A

II. Coding Scheme:

The below table includes clarification only on words or statements that might be unclear to the coders, thus, any self-evident terms are excluded.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I. Technical Data:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a. Article Number</td>
<td></td>
<td>The number given to the article by the researcher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>c. Date</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>The date in which the article was published (day/month/year).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>II. News Framing:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>A. General Information:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a. <em>The main theme of the article:</em></td>
<td>The theme that best describes the overall article's topic</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2= trial proceeding</td>
<td>Reporting about the details and/or proceedings of a trial or trial adjournment</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3= accusations</td>
<td>This category should include any witnessing. It also includes any sorts of accusations presented against the journalists whether they were described as true or untrue.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4= evidences</td>
<td>Evidences include any confirmed misconduct by the journalists. Also includes whether authorities fail or succeed to confirm the journalists' misconduct.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7= international community Involvement</td>
<td>Including media, scholars, politicians, authorities or any international involvement/pressure.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>b. Article Frame Type:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1= Episodic</td>
<td>Focus on the immediate event or incident</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2= Thematic</td>
<td>Focus on the big picture, for instance, by providing an overview of the underlying issues, background, expert analysis or other information to help the public view the event in a broader context.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>B. Sourcing:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>i. <em>Central Quotes:</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a. <em>The primary source</em></td>
<td>The main source (most important one) will be identified via its placement in the article. Whether it was placed in the title, the lead or first couple of paragraphs. If more than one quote were mentioned then</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
select the first one only, while the second one is considered a secondary.

### ii. Secondary Quotes:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>a. The secondary source</th>
<th>Secondary in significance in case there is no main/central quote, or secondary in order mentioned after the first quote.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

#### A. News Discourse:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>a. Overall tone of the article regarding the journalists' position in the crime</th>
<th>What does the overall tone of the author reflect about the journalist's position in the crime?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1=unfavorable</td>
<td>Unfavourable to the journalist's position in the crime. The overall tone reflects that the journalist is guilty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3=favorable</td>
<td>The overall tone reflects that the journalist is innocent.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### i. The dominant frame(s) describing Greste:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>a. Innocent</th>
<th>Synonyms may include: uninvolved, righteous, not guilty...etc.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1= yes</td>
<td>The journalist was described with this term or synonym</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2= no</td>
<td>The journalist was described with the contrary of this term or synonym (i.e. the journalist is not innocent)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3= N/A</td>
<td>Not applicable and/or not available (not mentioned).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>b. Guilty</strong></td>
<td>Synonyms may include: Support Muslim Brotherhood, corrupt, conspiring, lawbreaker, criminal, unlawful…etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>e. Professional</strong></td>
<td>Synonyms may include: award winning, competent, skilled, qualified, expert…etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>g. Regular assignment’</strong></td>
<td>Synonyms may include: doing his/their job</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>i. Caught in the middle of a battle</strong></td>
<td>Synonyms may include referring to the situation as being politicized or any statement denoting that the journalists were used as a means to harm/defame another party/country or channel</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**ii. Description of Greste's trials:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>a. Sentencing Peter Greste to seven years prison was represented as:</th>
<th>2=neutral</th>
<th>The author's is not taking a stand, or his position is unclear. Same meaning applies throughout the coding sheet.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>b. Greste trials were represented as</td>
<td>Any trial that took place before or after the sentencing. Mentioning the degree of professionalism of the process, number of adjourned trials, process of the law enforcement… etc. is included.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**iii. Political Life in Egypt:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>a. Media freedom</th>
<th>Includes freedom of expression, journalism freedom…etc.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>d. Egyptian government declarations</td>
<td>1= Supported; 2= neutral; 3= Criticized;</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
III. Additional Tables and Charts:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Unique Audience (000)</th>
<th>Page Views Per Person</th>
<th>Sessions Per Person</th>
<th>Time Per Person (hh:mm:ss)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>news.com.au</td>
<td>3,577</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>13.41</td>
<td>01:50:46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>smh.com.au</td>
<td>3,125</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>11.52</td>
<td>01:14:51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ABC News Websites</td>
<td>2,676</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>10.05</td>
<td>00:49:20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daily Mail Australia</td>
<td>2,462</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>7.85</td>
<td>01:04:47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9NEWS Websites</td>
<td>2,195</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>10.66</td>
<td>00:45:44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yahoo7 News Websites</td>
<td>2,049</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>7.11</td>
<td>00:31:25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Guardian</td>
<td>1,812</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>6.26</td>
<td>00:40:51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Age</td>
<td>1,753</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>11.49</td>
<td>01:35:37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Daily Telegraph</td>
<td>1,717</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>6.51</td>
<td>00:32:41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Herald Sun</td>
<td>1,715</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>7.41</td>
<td>00:39:41</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Nielsen Online Ratings, Hybrid data January 2015.
IV. The Intercoder Reliability:

|   | A | B | C | D | E | F | G | H | I | J | K | L | M | N | O | P | Q | R | S | T | U | V | W | X | Y | Z | AA | AB | AC | AD | AE | AF | AG |
| 1 |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| 2 |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| 3 |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| 4 |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| 5 |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| 6 |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| 7 |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| 8 |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| 9 |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| 10 |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |

TOTAL

|   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |

(742/895 x 100 = 89%)

124