**Media Branding and Viewer’s Perception in Qatar**

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We study how background characteristics and media branding affect viewers’ perception in Qatar. We conduct an experiment by asking individuals to provide background information and then comment on a 2-minute Al Jazeera clip from 2006 on the Danish Cartoons controversy. However, an element of deception is added when for half the participants we remove the Al Jazeera logo from the clip, add the CNN logo in the beginning and refer to the survey as the CNN Survey.

Out of 600 survey participants we find that religion drives differences in perception for the debate on the Danish Cartoons, but most other background characteristics do not matter. Surprisingly, when we turn to the branding effect we find that faculty’s perception changes when the group thinks that the information comes from CNN instead of Al Jazeera. Branding also seems to affect Qataris and individuals who attended a segregated university. It does not affect the students. Finally, we build the profile of Al Jazeera and CNN viewers, and find that more than 60% of the survey participants do not consider Al Jazeera or CNN as their main source of information. This result points to the importance of social media as an alternative source of information in the Qatar, and more general in the Middle East.

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**Stigmatization of HIV-Positive Women among Qatari Students**

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**Background:** Although researchers have studied AIDS-related stigma for three decades, there is a serious shortage of this type of work in the Arab world including the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries. Our review revealed only 24 published studies on the social aspects of AIDS from all the GCC countries since the beginning of the epidemic. Unfortunately nothing was published from Qatar. A closer inspection of these studies shows that people living with HIV/AIDS (PLWHA) were treated as one homogenous group and the importance of layered stigma (e.g., being HIV-positive and female) was not considered. Although Arab HIV-positive women represent nearly 30.4% of all PLWHA in the Arab world, the majority of them contracted the virus while married. For example, a study from Saudi Arabia found that 62 out of 65 of the HIV-positive women were infected by their husbands, whereas, 111 out of the 124 men acquired it from sex workers. This is a new trend in the Arab world. In the past HIV was seen as a male disease.

**Objectives:** To correct these limitations this paper focuses on stigmatization of HIV-positive women in Qatar among college students.

**Methods:** The present study collected data from 520 college students at Qatar University using self-administered questionnaire to gauge their attitudes toward HIV-positive women compared to HIV-positive men.

**Results:** Findings illustrated the extreme negative view of HIV-positive women. For example, 63% of the students agreed that HIV-positive men should be allowed to get married while, 45% approved the same action for HIV-positive women. Further, we found that 78% of the students believed that HIV-positive women should not have children and 56% suggested that they should be sterilized to prevent them from having children. Other negative views and their relations to students’ knowledge of HIV/AIDS-related shame, degree of religiosity and gender will be discussed.

**Conclusions:** Reactions to HIV-positive people differ according to the gender of the infected individuals. Extreme measures were endorsed toward HIV-positive women compared to HIV-positive men. Further, limits were imposed on HIV-positive women’s sexual and reproductive rights. Future studies need to replicate this study among other segments of Qatar society.