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The Role of Qatari English Dailies in Promoting National Identity: A Case Study of the Peninsula Newspaper

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Abstract

Objective: This study aims to uncover the role of *The Peninsula*, the well-known English-language newspaper, in promoting Qatar's national identity.

Methods: To achieve the study's objective, the content of sixty-four editorial articles was analyzed. These articles were purposefully collected from the newspaper's website over the period between September 19, 2022, and February 18, 2023—covering the time when Qatar hosted the FIFA World Cup, along with the two months before and after the tournament. The rationale behind selecting two months before and after the event was to determine whether there were any changes in the newspaper's policy regarding the promotion of Qatari national identity following the tournament's conclusion.

Results: Based on the analysis results, The Peninsula actively promoted various values and cultural symbols that shaped Qatar's national identity. The values emphasized by the newspaper included generosity, respect, hospitality, and tolerance. As for cultural symbols, the newspaper highlighted Katara and Darb Al Saai.

Conclusion: *The Peninsula* maintained a consistent policy in promoting Qatar's national identity before, during, and after the tournament—indicating that its approach was not deliberately limited to the World Cup period.

Keywords: Qatar, national identity, cultural symbols, values, content analysis, editorial, FIFA World Cup

دورُصُحف قطر الإنجليزيَّة في تعزيز الهُويَّة الوطنيَّة: دراسة حالة لصحيفة "شبه الجزيرة"

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ملخّص

الأهداف: تسعى هذه الدراسة إلى الكشف عن دور صحيفة "شبه الجزيرة" (المشهورة بالبينينسولا) الإنجليزيَّة في تعزيز هُويَّة دولة قطر الوطنيَّة.

المنهجيَّة: لتحقيق الدراسة هدفَها، جرى تحليل محتوى أربع وستين مقالةً افتتاحيَّة، جُمعت قصدًا من موقع الصحيفة في الفترة ما بين 19 سبتمبر 2022 و18 فبراير 2023؛ أي الفترة التي استضافت فيها قطرُ بطولة كأس العالم لكرة القدم، إضافة إلى شهرين قبلها وشهرين بعدها. وقد كان الهدف من اختيار شهرين قبل البطولة وشهرين بعدها معرفة ما إذا كانت هناك تغييرات في سياسة الصحيفة المذكورة تجاه تعزيز الهُويَّة الوطنيَّة القطريَّة بعد انتهاء البطولة.

النتائج: بناءً على نتائج التحليل، رَوَّجَت صحيفة البينينسولا للعديد من القيم والرُّموز الثقافيَّة التي شكَّلت هُويَّة دولة قطر الوطنيَّة، شملت قيم: الكرم، والاحترام، وحُسن الضيافة، والتسامُح؛ أما الرُّموز الثقافية، التي رَوَّجَت لها الصحيفة، فشملت كتارا ودرب الساعي.

الخلاصة: انتهجت صحيفة البينينسولا سياسة ثابتة تجاه تعزيز هُويَّة قطرالوطنية قبل وفي أثناء وبعد البطولة؛ أي أن سياسة الصحيفة لم تكن مقصورة، قصدًا على فترة تنظيم كأس العالم.

الكلمات الدالَّة: قطر، الهُويَّة الوطنيَّة، الرُّموز الثقافيَّة، القيم، تحليل المضمون، الافتتاحيَّة، كأس العالم لكرة القدم.

Introduction

National identity is something that people learn; it is not an innate quality (Wiltgren, 2014). Although enhancing national identity is often a focus of governments and their actors, the media, in general, and newspapers, in particular, can play a vital role in achieving that. Newspapers enhance shared values and mediate conflicting interests through debate and information-sharing (Bannerman, 2011). For Oloyede (2005), the press is responsible for reporting events and explaining, interpreting, criticizing, commenting, and clarifying society's goals and values. Ostini and Fung (2002) see providing citizens with adequate information to help them make informed decisions as one of the media's moral obligations to society. As Oloyede (2005) depicts it, the press, under the social responsibility theory, is morally responsible and obliged to present and clarify the values and goals of society. National identities are among the values newspapers present, clarify, and promote. National identities are not fixed or naturally given constructions (Eriksen, 2010); they are qualities that must be learned (Wiltgren, 2014).

A cursory review of the literature shows that no attention has been paid to what societal values and cultural symbols the Qatari dailies' editorials promote and whether or not these values are promoted in a way that serves to shape the Qatari national identity. That being the case, this study seeks to fill this gap, enrich the literature, and contribute to both theory and practice in the field. To that end, the following three research questions were developed:

1. What values did the editorials published on *The Peninsula's* website between the 19th of September 2022 and the 18th of February 2023 promote to shape Qatar's national identity?

2. What cultural symbols did the editorials published on *The Peninsula's* website between the 19th of September 2022 and the 18th of February 2023 promote to shape Qatar's national identity?

3. In what context did *The Peninsula* depict the values and the cultural symbols it promoted during the period examined?

It is worth mentioning that we carefully scrutinized the editorials published by the Qatari English dailies online. Unfortunately, we have not found enough material on the topic studied here to analyze on the Gulf Times and Qatar Tribune websites, so we limited our study to *The Peninsula* editorials.

This study claims that *The Peninsula* has a static policy promoting Qatar's national identity. That is to say, the English daily promoted Qatar's national identity almost equally before, during, and after the 2022 FIFA World Cup (held in Qatar).

The pages to come include the study's literature review, the framework employed to orient inquiry and analysis, the methodology, findings and discussion, and finally, the study's conclusion.

Literature Review

Smith (2001) describes national identity as "the continuous reproduction and reinterpretation of the pattern of values, symbols, memories, myths, and traditions that compose the distinctive heritage of nations and the identifications of individuals with that pattern and heritage and with its cultural elements" (p. 18). Of the elements that construct identities according to Smith's definition, values and symbols are examined in this study, while memories, myths, and traditions are not. Values can be theoretical, aesthetic, economic, religious, social, and political (Allport, Vernon & Lindzey, 1970), and symbols include clothes and heritage sports (Baycar, 2022), cultural symbols (Geertz, 1994), public rituals and ceremonies (McCrone & McPherson, 2009; Hayday, 2010), national flags (Billig, 1995; Eriksen & Jenkins, 2007; Elgenius, 2011), postage stamps (Reid, 1993; Cusack, 2005; Raento & Brunn, 2005), banknotes (Helleiner, 1998; Unwin & Hewitt, 2001; Penrose, 2011; Penrose & Cumming, 2011; First & Sheffi, 2015), street names (Azaryahu, 1996; Azaryahu & Kook, 2002; Jones & Merriman, 2009), and anthems and emblems (Butz, 2009).

The advancement of the pattern of values, as Smith (2001) put it, that identify Canadians was what Wilton (2010) examined in the Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC) materials, besides whether or not those values shaped Canadian national identity. Wilton found several values embedded in the two CIC genres she analyzed: tolerance, respect, dialogue, social justice, equality, unity, commitment, and integration. For the author, such values promote belongingness among new immigrants.

Similarly, Baycar (2022) studied how the United Arab Emirates could create a second national identity (an identity that

includes nationals and non-nationals) by promoting tolerance, dialogue, diversity, and multiculturalism through institutional activities (cultural gatherings, heritage festivals, and cultural center visits), national gatherings (national days), and media analyses. For Al-Malki (2016), a unified national identity promotes inclusiveness and pluralism, embraces marginalized minorities, and eradicates discrimination. In Eastern Thailand, Youkongpun (2015) concluded that traditional and community-based media strengthened people's perception of themselves and promoted that part of the country as national cultural tourism.

Koch (2015) and Wakefield (2012) shed more light on how the Emirates used heritage sports to create its identity, especially camel racing and falconry. This is a clear example of using animals and birds to refer to the Bedouin past of the Emirates (Baycar, 2022) and the Gulf region, including Qatar. It is worth mentioning that some nations in the region and the West print animals and birds (related to their heritage) on flags and banknotes.

Theoretical Framework

To content-analyze the editorials collected for this study, we will draw upon a framework that combines genre and social responsibility theories. These two theories will be explained below.

A sound definition of genre must focus on the social action it is employed to achieve, not on the form and substance of the discourse (Miller, 2015). Miller understands genre as: (1) a typified rhetorical reaction to a repeated rhetorical situation, (2) a pragmatic act, (3) important social action, and (4) mediation between the producer's purpose and the receiver's social need. In media studies, genre theory is understood to be a theory about texts and a theory that bridges production and reception. Miller (1984) pointed out that the focus should be on the end a genre producer may aim for. A genre producer may apologize, eulogize, instruct, recommend, etc. Taking all this into consideration will help me understand what the editorials published by *The Peninsula* aimed for.

According to Bremner (2011), rhetorical genre studies (RGS) view the genres in any setting as being formed by the social contexts that emerge in that setting, arguing that there is a "mutually constitutive relationship between genre and context" (p. 11). To elaborate, when genres produced by a public relations company, such as those examined by Bremner (2011); a university's PR office, like those studied by El-Astal (2024); or by an engineering company, such as those examined by Artemeva (2009), are examined, the social context will be the context within which those organizations work. However, when the genres produced by a mass media organization are examined, such as the study at hand, the social context of that mass media organization will be larger to the extent that it encompasses the entire society. In other words, the genres produced by a PR company reflect the reality of that company, and the genres produced by a mass media organization reflect what is going on in the whole society, not only the reality of the mass media organization itself. This peculiarity of the context in which mass media function made them function as a mirror of society, not a mirror of a given workplace setting or a profession—as PR and engineering professions do. 'Mirror of society' is a metaphor often used to describe the media's (as a fourth estate) function towards society (Ekron, 2009).

The second theory in the integrated framework employed here is the social responsibility theory of media. For Oloyede (2005), the press, under the social responsibility theory, is obliged to: (1) extend and explain the values and goals of society; (2) serve as a platform for the exchange of comments and criticisms; (3) provide the audience with a comprehensive and truthful account of the day's happenings in a meaningful context; and (4) strive to project a representative and inclusive picture of the groups that make up society (p.104). Based on Oloyede's four obligations, the press is responsible for reporting events and explaining, interpreting, criticizing, commenting, and explaining society's values and goals. Doing so makes readers make informed decisions about what is happening in society. One of the tools (genres) used by the press for leading and helping readers make informed decisions on issues important to them is the editorial or 'leader.'

Methodology

Besides providing some background information about *The Peninsula*, this part of the paper illustrates how the data was collected and how it would be analyzed.

The Peninsula

The Peninsula is one of three leading English dailies in Qatar. It was launched in 1996 by *Dar Al Sharq*. (Wikipedia, n.d.).

Data Collection

The Peninsula published 153 editorials between the 19th of September 2022 and the 18th of February 2023. Sixty-four (41.83%) of the editorials published during the said period were purposively collected from *The Peninsula's* website (https://thepeninsulaqatar.com). That is to say, all the editorials promoting Qatar's national identity were collected for analysis in this study. In other words, the editorials published two months before the tournament (the 2022 FIFA World Cup), during the tournament, and two months after it were selected for analysis to see if there were changes in the newspaper's policy towards promoting Qatar's national identity.

Method

Kerlinger (2000) defined content analysis as a method of analyzing communication objectively and quantitatively to measure variables, and Krippendorf (2019) defined it as "a technique for making replicable and valid references from data to their context" (p. 24). For Kerlinger, quantification is a defining feature of content analysis ;for Krippendorf, it is not.

Historically, content analysis was first used to analyze media content quantitatively (Harwood & Garry ,2003), and it was later used in communication, journalism, psychology, sociology, business, and other fields (Neundorf ,2002) with either quantitative or qualitative data (Elo & Kyngas, 2008). This study attempts to make inferences from data to their context—it is a descriptive qualitative content analysis study.

Analysis

Selecting and defining the unit of analysis and constructing the categories to be analyzed are two discrete vital steps in content analysis, in addition to several other steps, such as formulating the research questions or hypotheses and selecting a proper sample for analysis (Wimmer & Dominick, 2014). Krippendorf (2019) distinguishes between three kinds of units: (a) sampling units, which are distinguished to be included in or excluded from analysis; (b) recording/coding units, which can be discretely categorized or described; and (c) context units, which "set limits on the information to be considered in the description of [the] recording units" (p. 105). In this study, the editorial is the sampling unit, the word is the recording unit, and the sentence is the context unit.

It is worth mentioning that after a preliminary examination of the editorials collected for analysis, we selected the three units of analysis and categorized the coding units into two categories: values and cultural symbols. With this in mind, any sentence about values, such as generosity, tolerance, and respect, and any statement about cultural symbols, such as Katara, Darb Al Saai, and Qatar's National Museum, were quoted and analyzed. A germane example is the excerpt: "Qatar's generous hospitality received wide praise from all over the world." This excerpt was taken from the editorial published on *The Peninsula*'s website on January 28, 2023.

Conceptualization

Conceptualization is an essential process through which the most important terms used in any research are clearly defined to prevent ambiguity or misconception (Zikmund, 2000). Doing so helps the researcher correctly select the context units for analysis. In this study, the context units of analysis are the sentences about values and cultural symbols. Both are defined below.

Value

Friedman, Kahn, and Borning (2006) define value as, "What a person or group of people consider important in life" (p. 349). Given this beautiful definition of value, nothing is more important than the values that achieve social harmony, integration, and belongingness.

Cultural symbols

Cultural symbols are ciphers that make attachments between people and things (Geertz, 1994). Germane examples of the ciphers (symbols) that people attach to Qatar and Qataris are banknotes, heritage sports (in which animals and birds are used), Katara, Darb Al Saai, and Qatar's National Museum.

Findings and Discussion

As mentioned earlier, this paper is limited to studying the values and cultural symbols promoted by *The Peninsula's* sixty-four editorials selected for analysis in this study. In this part, we will display, interpret, explain, and discuss the findings obtained from the analyses.

Values Promoted

The Peninsula promoted several values based on the findings obtained from the analyses of the editorials examined here. The findings on each value will be displayed and discussed in the coming pages.

Generosity

The Peninsula promoted generosity in three (4.68%) of the sixty-four editorials collected for analysis here. In the editorial published on January 11, 2023, generosity and synonymous words were mentioned several times in a context related to Qatar's and Qataris' help, assistance, and support of other countries and people at times of calamities. See the two excerpts below:

1. Ambassador of Turkiye to Qatar, H E Dr. Mustafa Goksu, thanked [the] government and people of Qatar for their generous support to earthquake [-] affected people in Turkiye and Syria.
2. Qatar has always stood at the forefront in assisting different countries and their people in times of need.

A cursory look at the two excerpts above reflects Qatar's commitment to humanitarian aid and the high value it and its people place on charitable initiatives and alleviating the suffering of others. In the other two editorials, *The Peninsula* promoted generosity in a more general context—reflecting the culture of Qatar and the Qatari people and how kind they are to visitors. See the extracts (Table 1) below.

Table 1: Extracts that Reflect Generosity

#	Extracts	Publishing Date
1.	The Organising Committee [Qatar National Day (QND) Committee] has dedicated six buses to transport World Cup fans free of charge.	November 26, 2022
2.	The most amazing aspect of this World Cup…is how the Qataris are showing their generosity to fans who have come from different parts of the world.	December 11, 2022

Again, a cursory look at the extracts above (Table 1) and their contexts shows Qatar and Qataris' kind nature and genuine willingness to impact others positively. When *The Peninsula's* editorials (genres) reflected such actions, this was not done in isolation. That is to say, *The Peninsula* did so purposively, and what it did explains Miller's (2015) description of the genre as a social action that serves an end and Oloyede's (2005) point that the press, under the social responsibility theory, is obliged to extend and clarify the goals and values of society. Interestingly, Wilton (2010) found Canadian values embedded in the Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC) materials, which tells that the "reproduction and reinterpretation of the pattern of values" (as Smith (2001) puts it) that construct national identities can be found in official and non-official genres.

Respect

The Peninsula boosted the value of respect in thirteen (20.31%) of the sixty-four editorials selected for this study. The newspaper boosted the value in different contexts, as shown in what follows.

Respect for human rights. In seven (10.93%) of the sixty-four editorials, *The Peninsula* implicitly or explicitly boosted Qatar's respect for human rights. See the extracts (Table 2) below.

Table 2: Extracts that Reflect Respect for Human Rights

#	Extracts	Publishing Date
1.	Qatar has taken many serious measures to address labour issues, combat human trafficking and protect human rights.	October 3, 2022
2.	Lawmakers from the UK, France, Romania, Italy, Serbia, Finland and Ireland lauded Qatar's […] promotion of workers' rights.	October 6, 2022
3.	The State of Qatar has pursued a consistent policy to protect and promote human rights, on the basis of our Arab and Islamic principles [Qatari Amir said].	October 6, 2022
4.	Infantino [FIFA President] said that many international institutions have recognised the labour rights standards in the Qatar similar to labour rights standards in Europe.	November 21, 2022
5.	[T]he NHRC [National Human Rights Committee] continues to closely monitor everything raised about human rights situations in the country [NHRC said].	November 22, 2022
6.	It is no doubt that Qatar has implemented several reforms to ensure every resident and visitor enjoy their rights and freedoms according to UN resolutions.	November 29, 2022
7.	Doha has become an international centre for many of the UN's prominent organizations--presenting an appropriate platform for global dialogue to maintain regional peace and security and promoting human rights.	February 3, 2023

A careful consideration of the excerpts above shows that *The Peninsula* boosted Qatar's respect for human rights in several contexts as follows: First, a context that depicts respect for human rights as a legal value and Qatar obeys and respects that (items 1, 2, 4, and 5). *The Peninsula* tried to convey that Qatar did not see human rights as moral principles or abstract ideals but as legal obligations that should be protected, safeguarded, legislated, and enforced. *The Peninsula* quoted Western lawmakers' laudation to promote Qatar's respect for human rights in general and labor rights in particular.

Second, a context that reflects Qatar's static stance, identity, and cultural belonging (item 3). *The Peninsula* depicted Qatar's respect for human rights here as an integral part of its and the region's culture, beliefs, practices, and traditions. That is to say, depicting Qatar's respect for human rights as such means that human rights are not political or legal values that are imposed from outside but rather an inherent aspect of the nation's identity and heritage.

Third, a context that depicts respect for human rights as a political value (items 6 and 7). Interestingly, *The Peninsula* depicted Qatar's respect for human rights as an inherent aspect of its identity and, simultaneously, as a political value. When human rights are regarded as political values, this depicts Qatar as a country that nurtures democratic principles, promotes the rule of law, boosts transparency and accountability, and fosters equality.

Respect for family. In its editorial, published on November 1, 2022, *The Peninsula* bolstered respect for family values. The extract, "Qatar pays significant attention to family values…the Community Partnership Forum [organized by the Qatari Ministry of Social Development and Family] only serves to ensure these values are respected and improved to meet any challenges," is explicit evidence of this. Qatar's respect for the family fosters positive relationships, well-being, harmony, resilience, and a sense of belonging.

Respect for the 'other.' The Peninsula boosted respect for the 'other' in five (7.81%) of the sixty-four editorials examined here. The 'other' refers to aliens here. The excerpts below (Table 3) show how *The Peninsula* boosted this value.

Table 3: Extracts that Reflect Respect for the 'Other'

#	Extracts	Publishing Date
1.	The theme of the [World Cup] opening ceremony is a gathering for all mankind, bridging differences through humanity, respect and inclusion.	November 20, 2022
2.	They [Qatar Parliament Members] called for the organization [European Parliament] …to promote an anti-hatred speech…that…bolster East-West communication…in an atmosphere dominated by love and respect.	November 29, 2022
3.	Qatar has a very diverse resident population with people from several countries co-habiting in a peaceful and respectful way.	December 12, 2022
4.	The Cabinet has called on the international community to take steps including legislation to ensure respect for faiths and check Islamophobia in some countries.	January 26, 2023
5.	Qatar participated in the eighth Geneva Interfaith Dialogue, stressing the need for issues related to international and multilateral affairs, human rights…	February 16, 2023

Interestingly, in critical studies, researchers examine disrespect for the 'other,' in descriptive studies (like the one at hand), they examine respect for the 'other.' *The Peninsula* in the items above (Table 3) portrayed Qatar in a way that suggests the following: (a) it fosters understanding and dialogue among humans regardless of their cultures and religions, (b) it fosters tolerance and acceptance, (c) it encourages equality, integration, and inclusion, and (d) it rejects discrimination and hatred speech. *The Peninsula's* message here is to show that these aspects are rooted in Qatar's values, policies, and practices. Moreover, the message portrays Qatari society as a diverse population with people from many countries living in peace and reciprocated respect. Without direction and a sense of social responsibility, *The Peninsula's* editorials would not have done so.

Hospitality

The Peninsula fostered hospitality and words synonymous with it in nine (14.06%) of the sixty-four editorials analyzed. Some examples are below (Table 4).

Table 4: Extracts that Reflect Hospitality and Synonymous Words

#	Extracts	Publishing Date
1.	Fans coming from across the globe will experience the hospitality of Qatar themselves and will return to their countries with fond memories.	October 16, 2022
2.	When Qatar will welcome all the visiting fans with an open heart during the November 20 to December 18 tournament, they will experience the country's rich culture and hospitality themselves.	October 30, 2022
3.	FIFA Secretary General Fatma Samoura said in a statement recently, adding Qatar will welcome all the fans "with the best hospitality that you can imagine".	November 6, 2022
4.	I [Qatar Amir] welcome from Qatar, from an Arab country, everyone to the World Cup 2022.	November 21, 2022
5.	The Council added that the anti-Qatar campaigns went unabated despite the ongoing tournament, which has seen Qatar warmly welcome thousands of multicultural fans "in an atmosphere dominated by enthusiasm and friendliness."	November 29, 2022
6.	The critics have been proved wrong as football fans found the host country [Qatar] a welcoming place.	December 5, 2022
7.	A fantastic FIFA World Cup football matches, Arab and Qatari hospitality to experience…	December 6, 2022

#	Extracts	Publishing Date
8.	From Qatar, from an Arab country, I [Qatar Amir] welcome everyone to the World Cup 2022.	December 19, 2022
9.	Qatar's generous hospitality received wide praise from all over the world.	January 28, 2023
10.	The Peninsula came across numerous visitors who were mesmerized by Qatar's hospitality.	January 28, 2023

A quick look at the items (Table 4) above shows that *The Peninsula* cared for reflecting the value of hospitality more than all values rooted in Qatar and its society. Noticeably, *The Peninsula* promoted hospitality in a context related to the FIFA World Cup. The first editorial to promote hospitality was published on October 16, 2022, and the last was published on January 28, 2023. The first coincided with the arrival of the teams taking part in the tournament, and the last depicted visitors' impressions of Qatar and Qataris.

When *The Peninsula* pays special attention to fostering hospitality, its message seems to be: (a) people in Qatar are warm, friendly, and approachable, (b) Qataris respect and accept the customs, traditions, and beliefs of others, (c) Qatar and Qataris care for the comfort and convenience of others, (d) Qatar and Qataris are aware of the positive impact that hospitality makes on visitors, which boosts tourism, and (e) Qatar is ready for receiving visitors in terms of infrastructure and facilities provided. One more thing noted here: *The Peninsula* highlighted in three items (4, 7, and 8) Qatar's belonging to the Arab World, which projects Qatar's grand identity.

It is worth mentioning here that *The Peninsula* promoted hospitality as an act of welcoming, receiving, and hosting, which is different from generosity promoted (Table 1) as a trait of being willing to give and donate money. This is how both terms are distinguished in the literature.

Tolerance

The Peninsula fostered tolerance and words synonymous with it in five (7.81%) of the sixty-four editorials analyzed. See the extracts (Table 5) below.

Table 5: Extracts that Reflect Tolerance

#	Extracts	Publishing Date
1.	Qatar has always valued the role engaging the public through sports and cultural activities in order to highlight the value of football in enhancing sustainable development, peace, tolerance, inclusion…	September 19, 2022
2.	Underreporting hate crime, is also detrimental to stamping out this unwanted scourge and efforts to promote tolerance and understanding between cultures, heritage and beliefs [Qatar Human Rights Committee said].	November 22, 2022
3.	The country seeks to promote tolerance, openness and constructive socio-cultural dialogues and ensures the well-being of its citizens, residents and visitors…	January 16, 2023
4.	Qatar has also actively promoted values of tolerance and coexistence based on its keenness to establish the principles of international peace and security through dialogue and understanding.	January 26, 2023
5.	The center [Doha International Interfaith and Dialogue Center] aims to promote peaceful coexistence and tolerance and activate religious values to address issues and problems that concern humanity.	February 16, 2023

A cursory look at the items listed (Table 5) above reveals that *The Peninsula* reflected the following: First, Qatar's keenness to establish and promote openness and dialogue locally and internationally. To that end, Qatar established a committee for human rights and an international center for interfaith dialogue. Second, Qatar's respect for other cultures, religions, and identities without discrimination and prejudice. Third, Qatar values coexistence among diverse populations locally and internationally, which ensures sustainable development. Fourth, Qatar upholds freedom of expression, encouraging the exchange of viewpoints. Fifth, Qatar's recognition of the importance of religion in addressing humanity's concerns. Sixth, Qatar's efforts and work toward resolving conflicts through peaceful means. For Minich (2015), mediation is one of Qatar's many foreign policy tools for resolving disputes. Germane examples of this include its mediation between the Afghan government and the Taliban, between the Taliban and the States, and its mediation in Yemen, Lebanon, and the Sudan. It is not a secret that Qatar has received and is still receiving wide praise from many countries for its role in restoring peace and enhancing tolerance and dialogue. To conclude, depicting Qatar as such by *The Peninsula* reflects its social responsibility towards society values and the social action its editorials are employed to achieve—the receivers' social needs that the editorials meet.

Cultural Symbols Promoted

Besides values, cultural symbols serve as representations of identities. The difference is that values are intangible representations, while symbols are visual and tangible, so nations print them on their flags and banknotes. Katara (Qatar's Cultural Village in Doha) is one of the most popular attractions in Qatar. As Geertz (1973) puts it, cultural symbols are ciphers through which attachments are made between people and things. For example, Darb Al Saai in Qatar evokes history and attaches people to their past. Based on the findings obtained, *The Peninsula* promoted Katara and Darb Al Saai.

Katara

The Peninsula promoted Katara Cultural Village in seven (10.93%) of the sixty-four editorials analyzed. See the excerpts (Table 7) below.

Table 7: Extracts that Promote Katara Cultural Village

#	Extracts	Publishing Date
1.	Katara will also organise concerts by international bands from Argentina, the UK, and Arab countries, given that music is a universal language shared by everyone.	October 22, 2022
2.	Katara will organise art exhibitions and events from Paraguay, Dominican Republic, Uruguay, Ecuador, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Russia, Mexico, Indonesia and Iran.	November 14, 2022
3.	One instance is the recently opened Katara Traditional Dhow Museum, which offers a look into life in earlier times…ships used by ancestors…diving tools, boats…	December 3, 2022
4.	Katara carried grand activities and events even before the World Cup started. It had 51 main events, 300 sub-activities with the participation of 22 countries.	December 24, 2022
5.	Katara has already begun preparing the location where the third edition of the Katara International Arabian Horse Festival (KIAHF) will take place.	January 1, 2023
6.	[M]any points for collecting cash and in-kind donations have also been set up at a number places across the country including Cultural Village Foundation – Katara…	February 2, 2023
7.	Katara is not only preserving authentic Qatari cultural heritage but also promoting it among residents and visitors… Katara International Arabian Horse Festival has become a milestone and a distinctive mark…	February 4, 2023

A careful consideration of the items listed (Table 7) above reveals that *The Peninsula* portrayed Katara as follows: (a) a hub that engages in international cultural exchange programs (items 1, 2, and 4), (b) a heritage promoter and preserver (items 3, 5, and 7), and as a tourist landmark (item 6). As a heritage promoter and preserver, Katara encompasses a museum that looks into the ancestors' identity and traditions and usually hosts the Arabian Horse Festival, highlighting the deep connection between the Arabian horses and Qatari heritage. Such festivals include generally horse dance, riding styles, and other activities deeply rooted in the region's culture. Horse festivals in Qatar and camel racing in the Emirates (Baycar, 2022) characterize the Bedouin identity of the region. They attach people to their past, as Geertz (1973) put it.

Darb Al Saai venue

The Peninsula boosted Darb Al Saai in two (3.12%) of the sixty-four editorials analyzed. See Table 8 below.

Table 8: Extracts that Promote Darb Al Saai

#	**Extracts**	**Publishing Date**
1.	As a cultural space, Darb Al Saai combines multiple events derived from Qatari environment and culture and inspires Arabic values.	December 15, 2022
2.	Minister of Culture H E Sheikh Abdulrahman bin Hamad Al Thani yesterday opened activities of Qatar National Day (QND) 2022 celebrations at Darb Al Saai.	November 26, 2022
3.	Darb Al Saai is considered a cultural space, which brings together many activities derived from the ancient Qatari environment and culture, and is inspired by the authentic Arab values."	November 26, 2022

For Geertz (1973), cultural symbols work as ciphers that evoke things people are attached to. Darb Al Saai attaches Qataris and residents to Qatar National Day celebrations. In addition, it evokes the country's past, as the items listed above (Table 8) reveal. Darb Al Saai serves as a platform to showcase Qatar's heritage, customs, and traditions. Both editorials highlighted that Arabic values inspire Darb Al Saai's activities and performances. Darb Al Saai performances usually include folk dances, traditional music, and poetry recitations.

Conclusion

Three questions were developed for this qualitative descriptive content analysis study. The first question relates to the values promoted by *The Peninsula* English daily to shape Qatar's national identity between September 19, 2022, and February 18, 2023. The second pertains to the cultural symbols it promoted for the same purpose and during the same period. The third pertains to the context in which *The Peninsula* depicted the values and cultural symbols promoted.

Based on the findings obtained from the analyses of the editorials examined here, the following conclusions can be drawn: First, *the Peninsula* promoted several values and cultural symbols to shape Qatar's national identity. These values included generosity, respect, hospitality, and tolerance, and the symbols promoted included Katara and Darb Al Saai. Second, the newspaper had a static policy promoting Qatar's national identity. It promoted the said values and symbols in 64 (41.83%) of the 153 editorials published during the data collection. That is to say, the tournament did not impact the newspaper's policy towards promoting Qatar's national identity.

Promoting the values and symbols found here illustrates how *The Peninsula's* editorial reflects the medium's social context rather than the organization's internal reality. This enhances Bremner's argument that there is a mutual "constitutive relationship between genre and context" (2011, p. 11). Moreover, *The Peninsula fulfilled its social responsibility by maintaining a static policy toward shaping Qatar's national identity. Aligning with* Oloyede's *(2005) perspective, The Peninsula fulfilled its ethical obligation.*

Last but not least, *The Peninsula* fostered the values and symbols found in different contexts as follows: (a) generosity was bolstered in a context related to Qatar's and Qatar's support of countries at times of calamities and in a context related to their kindness to visitors, (b) respect was promoted in a context related to human rights, another related to the family, and a third related to the 'other,' (c) hospitality was bolstered in a context related to receiving, welcoming, and hosting the FIFA World Cup fans, (d) tolerance was fostered in a context related to Qatar's commitment and diplomacy towards restoring peace and enhancing dialogue, (e) Katara was promoted as a hub for culture exchange, a heritage promoter and preserver, and as a tourist landmark, and finally (f) Darb Al Saai was fostered as a symbol for Qatar National Day celebrations.

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