

## *Media Regulations in Gulf Cooperation Council Countries: A Global Perspective*

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**Abstract:** The Study aimed at investigating Global Media standards as widely agreed upon in international conventions and the United Nations Organization , and consider to what extent the Gulf Cooperation Council countries addressed these standards in their constitutions, penal codes and press laws, it explores media freedom and media professionals constitutional rights and protection provided by the laws of these countries, it explained how media laws differ from international and global regulations adopted in libertarian societies in the United States of America, United Kingdom and France, The study used historical methods to gather related information from international documents, and the Gulf Cooperation Council countries constitutions, penal codes, and press laws and online sources, the findings of the study indicated that all the Gulf Cooperation Council countries have a restrictive clause in their constitutions which enable the government to issue laws which regulate the media, they all guarantee freedom of the press within the limits of the law, they all have a licensing system, and that these countries need to revise their penal codes and press laws to be aligned with international standards, and to change criminal libel to a civil offense instead of treating it as a criminal offense, the study concluded that the Gulf Cooperation Council countries have similar standards adopted in their constitutions and laws, and this returns to their common shared culture, values, traditions and religion.

**Keywords:** Human Rights, Constitution, Press Laws, penal Code, Freedom of Expression.

## 1.1 Introduction

The development of global and regional media technology and institutions in the field of Mass Communication is considered a product of both the law and technology; science and technology provided human beings with the means which enabled them to transfer information and ideas across time and space, and for that humanity owes scientists and inventors like Edison, Bell, Marconi, DeForest and Zworykin for their great contribution and achievements in making the communication revolution a reality of the world of today, it is widely accepted that technology is a necessary antecedent to mass communication and that society laws ultimately determine how technology will be developed and reached (Zukerman et al. 1988,p.2)

However, these new technological achievements cannot operate without human beings' existence, for it operates in organized societies governed and ruled by laws and regulations. These societies can be open liberal with free speech and expression rights, or it can be authoritarian and closed led by a few numbers of people who control the media. Despite the role of technology in the advancement of humanity, the rule of law remains the main factor that shapes how technology develops and its products are used.

Historically the law accompanied the development of media technology early time in history; the kings of authoritarian governments in the European Continent interfered and regulated expression whether written or spoken since the renaissance age and through the French Revolution ;during those years, political, social scientific, philosophical and ideological differences and conflicts are all reflected in writings which were severely censored, publishers and printers are required to get permits and license before publication or circulation.

Regulation of the printed word continued in societies like England and America until 1695 when the House of Commons in England refused to renew the act of licensing; the right of expression and free speech was more strengthened when a court in the colony of New York accepted truth as a defense in seditious libel, and further in 1787 the idea of the freedom of the press gained unrobust and robust support when the United States Congress passed the First Amendment and adopted in the Bill of Rights in 1791.

Although the printed word licensing and censorship system is abolished in the libertarian countries in Western Europe and the USA since the end of the 17<sup>th</sup> Century, in different regions in other continents the printed expression is still facing control through administrative and restrictive laws and suffers from government intervention, and the laws of these countries contradicts with many international standards agreed upon in the UN, UNESCO and the WTO, the need for an international joint effort to regulate the global media became evident when the world countries realized the fact of the scarcity of the airwaves when radio broadcasting began transmission in the early 1920 and later the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) was established, and became one of the United Nations bodies.

Although many of the United Nations documents are against media regulations like The Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, but still there is wide disagreement and differences between what might be called International Global media standards and regional media standards, and this is what this paper is trying to study; the intergovernmental organizations role to regulate global media.

## I.2 Background of Media regulations

The printed media were the earliest media to be threatened with censorship beginning with Philosopher Plato, who suggested in 387 B.C that some parts of Homer Odysee be removed for immature readers (Biogi,2005,p.296), since they started after the invention of printing and the publication of books in the 15<sup>th</sup> Century in western Europe because of the perceived power of books nearly all the governments of Europe restricted the printing or distribution of Books. The authoritarian kings of the European Continent interfered in the infant printing industry and controlled it by restrictive laws and regulations, then censorship extended to the content of the publications , until the end of the 1600s printing in England was strictly controlled (Folkert, et al ,2009,p.27), advanced approval of the material was required before printing, and a license is required before establishing printing workshops. Authors and writers were severely punished by the authorities for heretical and treasonable writings, the authoritarian theory developed in Europe during the 16<sup>th</sup> and the 17<sup>th</sup> centuries. The kings of Europe believed in absolute power and the idea of divine right, it controlled expression through licensing and censorship.

After the collapse of the authoritarian governments of Europe, the libertarian ideas spread in Europe , libertarian philosophy is based on the self-righting process principles which was advocated by English author and poet John Milton in 1644 ( Baran, , 2012,p 394), the print media became free from government interference and licensing was abolished towards the end of the 16<sup>th</sup> century, the House of Commons in England refused to renew the licensing Act , and the French revolution called for freedom and the right of freedom to all citizens , in 1734 in the British colony of New York, the court of New York ruled that truth can be accepted as a defense in libel suits ( Zenger v. Cosby, 1734), ending the Standard of (The greater the truth the greater the libel).

The weakening of government interference and idea of free expression was led by libertarian pioneers like John Milton, John Stewart Mill John Locke and Thomas Jefferson , these libertarian leaders and philosophers set the ground for the now deeply rooted media freedom in western Europe and America. Milton, Locke and Mill supported the idea that truth can be reached through the open discussion of ideas and not from the monarchs of Europe, their belief in freedom of thoughts and expression and individualism and the right of every person to express his ideas freely without any abridgment or prevention from the government , paved the way for the media to play the role of the watchdog.

In summarizing the main principles of the libertarian Theory, we can add that it guarantees freedom of thought and expression from government interference. It refuses government media ownership, encourages the media to present the truth and reflect different views, and media professionals to be responsible when dealing with public issues and not to misuse its power or endanger the security of the state, in the libertarian system the media can only be criminalized through criminal law .

In the Soviet Union when the Communists reached power through revolting against the emperor of Russia (1917), they developed the Soviet Communist Theory which does not differ much from the Authoritarian Theory, they controlled the media through direct government ownership and used it to advocate the government policies and the communists

ideas, the media are looked upon as pillars of the state, and should achieve its goals ( Servin , Tankard, 1977,.352) .

During the twentieth Century the Social Responsibility Theory was developed in America it was advocated by the Commission on Freedom of the press, and called for the right of every person to voice his opinion, and that the media should act as a forum of public discussion.

Authoritarian government still exist today in many countries outside Europe, it is used to control expression and to advance the polices of the governments (Severi, Tankaro, 1996: 346)

In the third world countries governments control both the electronic and the print media through administrative laws to guarantee that it operates within the government policy, the constitutions of most these countries contain a restrictive clause on the freedom of expression, executive decrees and administrative law regulate the business of publishing and professional practices ,all countries of the (GCCc) have press and publication laws, and there is a need to revise their laws.

### **1.3 Statement of the problem**

Studying media global and regional regulations is a very interesting subject, especially when this kind of research is conducted in a framework of international standards taking into consideration the influencing guidelines introduced by international organizations like the ITU, WTO. UNESCO, WIPO, and ICANN, which advocate and call for openness of communication systems, inspire of constitutional guarantees in the (GCCs) restrictions of media still exist through licensing and the penal code. The objective of this study is to investigate the GCC countries constitutions , press laws and penal codes which affect media regulation and journalist practices in these countries in comparison with global media standards.

### **1.4 Research Question**

Media policy and regulation in third world countries among them the Gulf Cooperation council (GCC) countries has widely became of interest in international academic circles especially after the great technological and communication development which enabled these countries to attract and spend big investment in media sector, and adopt policies which encouraged the private sector to enter in the media industry, the creation and establishment of many private newspapers, radio and television stations raised the issue of media government regulations and its compliance with global standards relating to its media laws and penal codes.

**The main Research Question** in this study is: How has the media laws and regulations responded to the trends in global media regulations?

#### **The Sub Questions focused on:**

- 1.4.1 what are the global media standards adopted by international organizations?
- 1.4.2 what are the major global regulatory bodies affecting media regulations?
- 1-4-3 what are the media regulatory laws in (GCC) countries?

- The main question in this study aims to investigate the rights of media freedoms as adopted in international conventions and organizations, and to what degree government policies and media regulations in the (GCC) countries address global media polices and regulations, the first sub question refers to the media constraints, the right of access, and freedom of expression as adopted by international conventions and global media organizations.
- The second sub question aims at explaining the role of international organizations affecting and preaching for global media standards like the UNESCO, WIPO, ITU, and WTO.
- The third sub question studies the press laws, and penal codes in the (GCC) countries.

### **1.5 Significance of the Study**

According to libertarian and democratic systems , every citizen has a right to express his opinion without interference from the government , and has a right to petition the government for any grievances or suppression of opinion , freedom of expression is constitutionally protected , but the idea of freedom of the media is still widely debated worldwide since the call for a new information order during the 1970<sup>s</sup>. While in western democracies media regulations are coping with global standards, regional media are still battling and trying to modernize and liberalize its media systems and practices, it can be said that the significance of the study is that it gives some clues about the system of media control in (GCC) counties.

### **1.6 Research Objectives**

This purpose of this study is to investigate to what extent regional regulations deviate from global media regulations, especially in (GCC) countries.

1.6.1 To find out global media regulations agreed upon by different countries and international organizations.

1.6.2 To study the constitutional rights, press, and penal codes rights in (GCC) countries.

### **1.7-Research Methodology**

This research used descriptive and historical methods to collect information about the about the nature and scope of the phenomenon under investigation, the historical method was used to review records, reports and documents related to the topic (Makawi, and Alsayed, ,1998,pp 393-394), the descriptive method used to analyze and explain the legal aspects of regulations (Abdulbary,1983,p110) in (GCC) countries in comparison with global standards.

### **1.8 Research Sources**

Global Media regulation was highly researched on international and regional levels, Data in this paper was collected from books. Periodicals. international reports and documents, laws from libertarian and (GCC) countries and online sources.

### **1.9 Literature Review**

1.9.1 The study of Yiyao Zhang, a master thesis titled “The right to freedom of expression versus media censorship in China: Chinese citizens and the Internet”, the study looked into the existing online censorship applied by the government, it also addressed government policies towards the Chinese media (Zhang, 2010)

1.9.2 The study of Bob Denis Odongo a master thesis titled “ Human Rights and Media in Uganda: A Critical Analysis of The Media Freedom, the study focused on the newly proposed laws and their impact on the mass media freedom in Uganda, the findings of the study indicated that media in Uganda is still not free.( Odongo, 2012).

I.9.3 The study of Matt J. Duffy, Arab Media regulations: Identifying Restraints on Freedom of The Press In the Laws of Six Arabian Peninsula Countries, the study dealt with media regulations in the Gulf Cooperation Council Countries, the study revealed that these countries control the press through licensing , defamation is considered a criminal offense and, and they put more emphasis on reputation ( Duffy, 2014) .,

### **1- Global Media Constraints and Freedom Standards**

2.1 Media constraints operates in four areas:

2.1.1 Fear of legal interventions or actions that prevent the media from publishing (prior restraint)

2.1.2 Financial constraints which might limit or shape the media product or stop it from publication.

2.1.3 Professional practices which affect what to be published.

2.1.4 Public responsibility and professional believes also affects what to be published (Peter Golding and Graham Murdoch, pp.22-23), these media standards are addressed and influenced by many international documents and regulations.

### **2.2 Freedom of Expression in Human Rights Declarations**

Article 19 of the Declaration of Human Rights says that “Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression; this right includes freedom to hold opinion without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers.” (UN General Assembly Decision No:111, A217), this article agreed upon by the General Assembly of the United Nations, and this article now is considered as a principle source in international law, also the right of free expression is adopted in the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, which states:

Everyone shall have the right to freedom of expression, this right shall include freedom to seek, receive and impart information and ideas of all kinds, regardless of frontiers ,either orally, in writing or in print , in the form of art or through media of his choice (UN General Assembly Resolution 2200A (XXI).16 December, in force 23 March 1976.

Also the right of free expression is adopted in the three regional conventions about human rights, especially article (12) from the American Agreement of Human Rights, and article (10) of the European Agreement of Human Rights and article (9) from the African Charter of Human Rights and people.

Global media regulations usually focus on the importance of freedom of expression , because when free expression is restricted or abridged , then all the other principle human rights can be endangered , freedom of expression usually means that all people should participate in the decision making process , and this cannot be achieved without people having the right to receive information and express their ideas, and in a free open democratic society people cannot participate in the decision making process if the media did not play its role in providing the public with information and encouraging public debate about the important issues.

In democratic Societies the constitution and the law protect free expression. The American Bill of Rights is an example which stated that “ Congress shall make no law abridging freedom of expression or of speech or of the press, and freedom guarantees protection from despotic control by the federal government as Madison said (Zuckerman and Harvey p,4) , the theories of the First Amendment justified that truth usually comes from public discussion of competing ideas and that everyone right to express his ideas is secured and protected ,and that the press is free from government encroachment, however in a landmark case the Supreme Court of the United States ruled that , if there is a need for a government restrictions in issues of national security , the government has to justify an action of prior restraint if attempting to enjoin a newspaper for publishing a classified information as the court in the Pentagon Papers case ( 403.U.S.S.Ct.1971)

The law also states that reputation both personal and property is protected as justice Stewart said in *Rosenblatt v. Baer* (383 U.S., S.Ct. 1966), “ The right of a man to the protection of his own reputation from unjustified invasion and wrongful hurt reflects no more than our basic concept of the essential dignity of every human being – a concept at the root of any decent system of ordered liberty.” The English Common Law provide the media professional with defenses against libel and defamation among them is truth, privilege and fair comment, more protection is provided for media people with the ruling of the *New York Times v, Sullivan* ( 379 U.S S.Ct.,1964)

### **2.3 International Standards and Freedom of Expression**

International standards on freedom does not believe in absolute freedom, some types of speech may be more easily constraint than others, and speech may be more regulated depending upon location at which it takes place. The courts in the United States decided that the first Amendment provide no protection for obscenity, child pornography, speech which can be called “ fighting words”, and it provide less protection to commercial speech ,defamation (Libel and slander) and speech that may be harmful to children, the US government must meet certain standards when it attempt to regulate speech in a constitutional way. (Ruane, 2014), The International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights in **Article 19 states that:**

2.3.1. Everyone shall have the right to hold opinions without interference.

2.3.2 Everyone shall have the right to freedom of expression; this right shall include freedom to seek, receive and impart information and ideas of all kinds, regardless of frontiers, either orally, in writing or in print, in the form of art, or through any other media of his choice.

2.3.3 The exercise of the rights provided for in paragraph 2 of this article carries with its special duties and responsibilities. It may therefore be subject to certain restrictions, but these shall only be such as are provided by law and are necessary:

- (a) For respect of the rights or reputations of others.
- (b) For the protection of national security or of public order (order public), or of public health or morals. (UN General Assembly R 2200A XXI).

According to this covenant certain limitations should be met when trying to restrict freedom:

- Restrictions on freedom should be based on the law and enforced without contradiction with the law. And that the law should be clear and understandable.

- Restrictions should aim to protect the one of the objectives mentioned in article 19 (2).
- The enforced restrictions should be necessary with strong arguments.

#### **2.4 The Right of Access to Information**

Global media standards also protect the right of access to information and the right to transfer it to others , Sweden adopted the world first access to information law in 1766, ( History of Right of access to Information) it recognizes that the press freedom is contingent upon access to information , and free access should be allowed to all archives in France in 1789, an article in the French Constitution seems to provide for a public right to know the spending of taxes, in 1946, the UN General Assembly adopted a resolution on freedom of information declared that freedom of information implies the right of every one to gather, transmit and publish news and everywhere without fetters. (UN General AssemblyR.59,1946)

The United States of America adopted Freedom of Information Act in 1966 (FOIA) it established the public right to obtain information from federal government agencies , anyone can file a request including citizens, foreign nationals, organizations associations and universities, after 1976 the law was amended to force greater agency compliance, and in 1982 and 2007, it was again amended to allow for greater access to electronic information .( History & FOIA).

**The Council of Europe adopted in 1981, recommendations to member States on the Access to Information Held by Public Authorities.** This non-binding recommendation urged member states to ensure that “Everyone within the jurisdiction of a member state shall have the right to obtain, on request, information held by the public authorities other than legislative and judicial bodies.” The recommendation reflects the trend in Europe to recognize a right of access to administrative information, as reflected in laws such as France’s 1978 law on the “improvement of relations between the public and the administration” and the Netherland’s 1978 “law on openness of the administration”.

#### **2.5 The Media and The Government**

Button wrote that there are mutual benefits between the media and the government , for the government makes the law and controls the source of information , the access to the audience means that the government wants to use the media to promote its cause and polices and want the media to present a positive view of the government ( Button, 2010, 61)

In the Western democracies and among media people in most nations there is a global embracing of the necessity that the media should be independent from government political or commercial control ,these standards are deeply rooted in the libertarian democratic countries, the early pioneers of liberalism believed that any government interference or encroachment for the media shall prevent the media from defending the public interest, instead it will serve the goals and objectives of the government , worldwide the degree of freedom of media institutions usually depends on the nature of the political system of each country and the ideology it adopts. Rupert Murdoch believes that “absolute freedom of the press and completion in the free marketplace is a valid argument for the government to keep out of media business”, (Peter Golding and Murdoch 2002 ). Congdon disagrees and says that there will be no presumption that the free market will give top priority to truthfulness of



the news to seek an appropriate mix of news and other programs (Golding and Murdoch 2002), in the United States of America, although the Constitution prevents the making of any law to abridge expression and the print media can print anything as long as they do not defame or interfere in privacy, and the internet is almost unregulated. However broadcast media are extensively regulated, they must obtain a license from the (FCC), because the public owns the airwaves, and the (FCC) regulates the airwaves, and it has a policy to fine broadcaster if they violated decency standards and they can revoke the license in certain cases ( U.S Government and politics Study Guide), in the past there was various attempts to restrict press freedom , examples are, The Alien and Sedition Act of 1798, The Espionage Act of 1918, The Smith Act of 1940, in the pentagon Papers case in 1971, the court found the government had failed to proof its case , according to the case of the New York Times v. Sullivan in 1964, in regards to libel cases the media role is to encourage “uninhibited, robust and wide open debate” ( Biagi, , 2005,.289).

In the United Kingdom press can express strong political views without sanctions , but the law prevents monopoly practices, and the newspapers usually enforce self-regulatory procedures, the press Complaint Commission (PCC) is the self-regulatory body for the industry, in regards to the broadcast media the Office of Communication( Ofcom) was set by a statute to regulate as an independent body the Broadcast Media in the areas of accuracy, bias and impartiality (Lulu Garcia Navarro), the regulations of media provide protection for the following:

- Protection of specific and possibly vulnerable audiences such as children and young people.
- Protection of public interest as in the case of security services.
- Protection of the general public as in respect of nations of good taste.
- Protection of process of law in respect of the nation of fair trial.
- Protection of interests of military operations (which are taken to be carried out in the interest of the people.

Examples of such laws are:

- a- Defamation Act 1996.
- b- Public Order Act 1986.
- c- Contempt of Court Act 1981.
- d- Video Recording Act 1984.

### **3-5 Global Media Governing Organizations**

Until now there are no binding international media regulations, “In the absence of global government, global communication is not subject to any central or consistent system of control, the forces of the free market and of national sovereignty combine to keep it this way(University of Leicester, International Media Regulations ) , but there extensive set of controls and regulations that constrain the national media

In mid 19<sup>th</sup> century the Universal Postal Union was established , then followed by the International Telegraph Union in 1865, to coordinate interconnections and establish

agreements on tariffs, then became responsible from radio spectrum , during 1978 the UNESCO tried to introduce under pressure from Third World Countries a declaration stating a number of principles for the conduct of international Media, these efforts failed under opposition from western countries, the key players now in global media are:

3.5.1 The International Telecommunication Union (ITU) which deals with telecommunication technical standards, spectrum allocation, satellite orbits, among the objectives of the (ITU) is to provide an attractive and effective forum for the development of international standards.

3.5.2 The World Trade Organization(WTO) , central issues for the (WTO) are issues of free trade and production with implications for limits to national sovereignty in relation to media policy, also the EU and other regional Trade organizations such as NAFTA can impinge on media issues.

3.5.3The United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), with no real power, but active in freedom of expression and internet.

3.5.4The world Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) established in 1983it aim is to harmonize legislations on property rights.

3.5.5The European Commission (EC) can influence certain aspects of broadcasting relating its members.

## **Chapter 3**

### **3.1 Freedom of Expression the (GCC) Constitutions**

Media research suggest that it is difficult for third world countries to adopt a system of press freedom because of colonial legacy ,illiteracy, and conflicting tribal conflicts and differences in ideologies(Alshamry, ,1993..65-66), according to Siebert, Petreson and Shramm four theories of the press model , most third world countries among them (GCC ) countries fit into the authoritarian model with some variations and differences, historically media regulations like in all British colonies were adopted to suppress and control expression and speech, these practices are deeply rooted in the old English authoritarian regimes in England when the stationers’ company was established in the mid twentieth century to control printing, during British occupation in the Gulf Countries the British practice censorship and licensing, now in (GCC) like Kuwait, UAE, Bahrain and Saudi Arabia countries private ownership of newspapers is permitted after obtaining a license from a government body(Almshqba, , 2011..282) .

Habte, suggested there are three media systems in the Third World Countries,: they are fully controlled media system, and a system regulated by directions and censorship, and an independent system with a margin to criticize the government” (Habte, ,1983..99) .

After independence from the British rule, these countries adopted constitutions which guarantee freedom of expression with a restrictive clause, for example Saudi Arabia “ basic law” states that “ freedom of information, publication and all other media shall employ courteous language and the states regulations, and shall contribute to unity ” ( Article 39),

the constitution of Bahrain ratified in 1971, provide for freedom of opinion under the rule of the law, the United Arab Emirates Constitution (1971) guarantees freedom of expression, Article 30 states that "Freedom of opinion and expressing it verbally, in writing or by other means of expression shall be guaranteed within the limits of the law".

### **The Penal Code of (GCC) Countries**

All (GCC) countries have some similarities and here are some examples of their penal codes, like the penal code of Kuwait ratified in 1960, Article 204 punishes by imprisonment and a fine any person who "prints, or sells or distributes, or exhibits pictures' or drawings or form of anything immoral", it also punishes for opinions that sarcasm or contempt religion, punishment is also included in Article 165 of the Kingdom of Bahrain penal code ratified in 1976, it provide for contempt of the government, Article 168, punish for publishing false news reports or statements or rumors.

The U.A.E, penal code of 1987 provides strict measure against defamation in Article 372, it states that "Whoever attributes to another person by any means of publicity, or incident which make him liable to punishment or contempt, shall be punished by detention or a fine" the code also punish for libelous publication in article 372, and it provide for protection of privacy in Article 376.

### **4-1 Criminal Libel in GCC Countries**

Globally, especially in libertarian countries there is a tendency to treat libel and defamation as a civil libel not as criminal libel. before the case of (*Zinger v. Cosby* 1734), criminal libel is looked to as a sedition libel and considered as a restriction to freedom of expression when it comes to defamation. In 1964 a new concept of truth developed after the ruling of the (*New York Times v. Sullivan*), which created a new standard of proving actual malice in libel cases required from public officials (The knowledge of falsity and reckless disregard for the truth), the standard was extended to public figures, some scholars think putting libel into the political process is coercive and threatening (.Etule et al., 2007 . 429), In (GCC) countries, libel is treated as a criminal offense, which might lead to prison or a fine for written or verbal speech that might hurt reputation of a person or a family, or inflicting dignity of a person.

### **4-2 The Concept of Truth in GCC Countries**

Late in the 17<sup>th</sup> century in England truth became an acceptable defense in defamation, and this was extended to America after (*Zenger v, Cosby*) case in 1734, and was recognized as a complete bar to liability, and now this is the rule in the majority of American jurisdictions, (Zuckman, 1988, 63) In Saudi Arabia, the Press and Publication law of 2003, in article 39 truth can be used as a defiance in defamation if there is good intent in the criticism, in the United Arab Emirates penal code article 375, states that in cases raised against public officials truth can be accepted as a defense, if the defamatory statement is related to the public figure responsibilities. In the State of Qatar The penal code in article 328, provide that there shall be no crime if the defendant proved truth as a defense against libel cases raised against public officials, also the Sultanate of Oman penal code in article (173) accepts truth as a defense against libel suits if the defamatory statement directed to public officials., in Kuwait Article (215) guarantee the right of criticism if the facts are true.

### **4-3 The Press Laws in (GCC) Countries**

Some human rights activists say that the Human Rights Charter forbid the licensing of Newspapers , but in the absence of a unified interpretation of the charter and the existence of different media systems, licensing of newspapers is practiced in many countries and governments in Third world countries exercise great influence directly or indirectly ( . Emery, et al , 1977 , 56) , all the press laws in (GCC) countries require licensing from the government , the law also regulate the content in many ways, in the State of Bahrain the laws prevent publishing any material which might undermine the national security ,or advocating the change of government or any writing which might preach the peace (Law No47,2002), in the UAE the press and publication law (No 15/ 1980) prevent the press from causing damage to economy or defaming public officials or those who are assigned to perform a public job with false information, the law mandate punishment which contain fine and imprisonments, the press and publication law (No 49/ 1984) In Oman contains restrictions on reporting including defamation, privacy and damage to national interests., the law prohibited any material which might harm the national currency or the economic situation of the country.

### **4-4 The Regulations of Broadcasting in (GCC) Countries**

Worldwide there a conviction that the electronic media can be regulated since 1906, when the first Radiographic Conference convened in Berlin, the idea at that time especially during the 1920<sup>th</sup>, is that it should be regulated because the radio spectrum was scarce , and that government should interfere to regulate the airwaves , until now the radio spectrum is still heavily regulated by the (ITU), the idea behind radio and television regulations also attempts to ensure that its content is in the interest of the public (Stirn, 2012, 323)

In the US ,radio and television owners must obtain a license from the FCC because the airwaves are owned by the public, in the Red Lion Case the court reaffirmed the scarcity rational, the FCC policy can fine radio and TV stations if they violate public decency standards, the policy guarantee equal time for election candidates , it also forbid monopoly. In the GCC countries all broadcasters must obtain a license from the Telecommunication Commission of each country, and should adhere in their programs and coverage of news to national media policies, telecommunication laws in all GCC countries prevent the use the electronic media in sending messages which might endanger the safety of the country or to broadcast information which violate public decency or public order or cultural values and traditions.

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