Using Grounded Theory: The Case of Political Marketing and Women Candidates in the 2014 Parliamentary Election in the Kingdom of Bahrain

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This paper discusses the process of Grounded Theory (GT) to analyze the behaviors of female candidates in the 2014 Parliamentary Election in the Kingdom of Bahrain (KoB). Women candidates in the 2014 Parliamentary Election used political marketing strategies to win the election. This study uses Grounded Theory. Data were collected from two sources: in-depth semi-structured interviews and documentation. Twenty-two female candidates stood for the 2014 Parliamentary Election in the KoB. Ten out of 22 female candidates were selected as informants based on a purposive sampling method. The research findings show that the candidates' behavior was controlled and influenced by the Gulf Cooperation Council culture, notably: masculinity, tribalism, stereotype, and uncertainty avoidance. Findings also show that the candidates circumvent cultural factors by expanding their networks with stakeholders. Moreover, the findings show that female candidates can be described as relationship-oriented.

Keywords: grounded theory, political marketing, female candidates

Introduction

The aim of this paper is to discuss the processes involved in generating a substantive grounded theory by making explicit a seemingly chaotic process. This paper uses writings from Glaser and Strauss (1967, 2008; Glaser, 1998), Charmaz (2014), Corbin and Strauss (1990, 2015), and Birks and Mills (2015) to present the principles of how to conduct a GT study. This paper illustrates the data collection, data analysis, and development of a conceptual theory that is central to grounded theory research.

This study applies GT, which allows the construction of a theory from data. The GT strategy was appropriate for this study for several reasons. First, the parliamentary election is a very new practice in the Kingdom of Bahrain (KoB). Second, there is little, if any, research that investigates the phenomenon of political marketing in the KoB. Third, based on the latter, there were no hypotheses to be tested or assumptions to be confirmed

or refuted. Fourth, this study constructs a theory from data. Thus, GT is an appropriate strategy to build a theory on the behaviour of female candidates in elections in the KoB.

The Kingdom of Bahrain, Female Candidates, and Political Marketing

It is fruitful to briefly discuss the political and social environment in the KoB to understand the behaviour of female candidates in parliamentary elections in one of the Arab countries. The KoB is located in the middle of the Arabian Gulf surrounded by three regional powers – Saudi Arabia, Iran, and Iraq – all of which influence attitudes, thinking, and behaviour of KoB voters and candidates. The KoB is a member of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), which consists of six countries: Saudi Arabia, KoB, Kuwait, UAE, Oman, and Qatar. The six countries share the same culture, which can be characterised as masculine, tribal, and collectivist. In a masculine culture, women have less opportunities to reach higher positions. Amidst tribalism, younger individuals and lower positions respect and follow the orders and commands of seniors in the tribe like a father, the Head of the tribe (*Shiekh Al Qabilah*). In a collectivist society such as the GCC, group ties in relationships of extended families link them to other groups in society (Hofstede, 1984, 1991).

The 2002 Constitution of the KoB guarantees political rights of voting and standing for elections for both males and females. Women stood for parliamentary elections in 2002, 2006, 2010, and 2014. In the first three elections, there was only one female candidate who could reach the legislative chamber.

In 2011 and a few months after the 2010 Parliamentary Elections, the Arab Spring (*Arrabea Al Arabi*) swept some Arab countries such as Tunisia, Egypt, Syria, and Yemen. People in these countries demanded political reform. Opposition political parties in the KoB installed *Arrabea Al Arabi* in an attempt to overthrow the regime. The political parties ordered its Parliamentary members of the 2010 Parliament to resign. This action left 18 seats in the parliament empty. Consequently and according to the Constitution of the KoB, a Supplementary Parliamentary Election was held, which was a good opportunity for three more female candidates to reach the legislative chamber.

In 2014, 22 female candidates stood for Parliamentary Elections. Three out of the 22 female candidates could reach Parliament in the second round. The female candidates used political marketing strategies and tactics to win elections.

Political marketing strategies are used by politicians, governments, political parties, and candidates to win elections. Shama (1976) defines political marketing as the process by which political candidates and their ideas are

directed at voters to satisfy their political needs and thus gain their support for the candidate and ideas in questions. Lees-Marshment (2001) argues that political marketing is about political organizations adapting techniques and concepts originally used in the business world to help them achieve their goals.

Tremendous studies investigated political parties' behaviour to identify the orientations of the political parties; for example, 4Ps framework (Niffenegger, 1989), a conceptual framework by Butler and Collins (1990) and Wring (1996), focuses on propaganda, media and political marketing, and the three approaches model (Lees-Marshment, 2001).

This study investigates the political marketing strategies used by female candidates in the KoB in 2014.

Questions of the Study

The questions of the study are:

1. What is the extent of the female candidates' awareness of political marketing in the KoB?
2. What were the political marketing techniques and strategies utilized by female candidates in 2014 Parliamentary Election in the KoB?
3. What political marketing orientations characterised the female candidates' in the KoB?

In this qualitative inductive study, the researcher considers that: (1) the Parliamentary Election is a new practice in the KoB; (2) this study is the first that investigates the phenomenon of political marketing in the KoB; (3) there is no hypothesis to be confirmed or refuted; (4) there is a huge amount of data collected from interviews and documentation; and (5) female candidates in the KoB stood for election in one of the countries that is influenced by Arab Muslim culture. Hence, the appropriate strategy to collect and analyze data is Grounded Theory.

Grounded Theory

Grounded Theory (GT) was introduced by Barney Glaser and Anselm Strauss (1967) and is widely used in qualitative research. Strauss and Corbin (1990, p. 24) define GT as 'a qualitative research method that uses [a] systemic set of procedures to develop an inductively derived theory about a phenomenon.' GT aims to generate a theory from data. The main objective of GT is to build a theory rather than to test concepts and ideas. Strauss and Corbin (1990, p. 23) argue that GT is 'one that is inductively derived from the phenomenon it represents. It is discovered, developed and provisionally verified through systemic data collection and analysis of data pertaining to that phenomenon. Therefore, data collection, analysis and

theory stand in reciprocal relationship to one another.' Martin and Turner (1986, p.141) support the viewpoint of Strauss and Corbin to define GT as 'an inductive, theory discovery methodology that allows the researcher to develop a theoretical account of the general features of a topic while simultaneously grounding the account in empirical observations or data.' Charmaz (2014, p. 343) argues that GT is 'a rigorous method of conducting research in which researchers construct conceptual frameworks or theories through building inductive theoretical analysis from data and subsequently checking their theoretical interpretations.' GT, then, is an inductive, rigorous, and systemic method of collecting and analysing data. The GT method requires implementing steps including data collection, open coding, selective coding, and theoretical coding to construct a theory. In each of these steps, researcher experience is a cornerstone in developing theory. GT gives researchers wider margins of interpretation from rich data to construct a theory.

GT was introduced in the 1960s after Barney Glaser and Anselm Strauss' sociological research in medical sociology. The approach of GT was published and introduced in 1967 in the book *The Discovery of Grounded Theory.* The strategy began from data, based on the research interaction among respondents and the environment. Neuman (2006, p. 157) argues that GT enables researchers to develop theory during the data collection process.

GT has two differentiating characteristics: constant comparative analysis and theoretical sampling (Glaser and Strauss, 1967). Constant comparison enables researchers to compare the codes and classify similarities and differences and thereby refine concepts (Bryant and Charmaz, 2013, p. 607). Comparisons can be used to establish facts and verify theories (Glaser and Strauss, 1967, 2008). Constant comparison aims to obtain truthfulness of evidence in the conceptual categories, and to generate theory subsumes this establishing of empirical generalizations (Glaser and Strauss, 2008, pp. 22–31). Gibson and Hartman (2014) noted that five principles differentiate GT: openness, explanatory power, generation and justification, theory structure, and the research process.

The process of GT includes data collection, data analysis, coding, writing memos, conducting constant comparison, and theoretical sampling all in one package. The steps of GT process are continuous, going forward and backward among the steps from data collection to theoretical sampling (Glaser, 1998, p. 12).

Triangulation Strategy

Triangulation is a strategy used in GT research to strengthen the design and increase the ability to interpret the findings (Campbell and Fiske, 1959; Denzin, 1970). According to Denzin (1970), triangulation is the combination

of two or more data sources, investigators, methodological approaches, theoretical perspectives, or analytical methods (Kimchi, Polivka, & Stevenson, 1991) in the same research. Data triangulation enables researchers to see the scenario from more than one angle, which increases the validity, reliability, and truthfulness of the study (Kimchi et al., 1991). Similarly, Jick (1979) notes that using triangulation increases confidence in research data, creating innovative ways of understanding a phenomenon, revealing unique findings, challenging or integrating theories, and providing a clearer understanding of the problem.

Process of Grounded Theory

The first step of the GT is identifying the population and the sample of the study. The second step is open coding and writing memos. In this step, the researcher looks for similarities and differences by using constant comparison. Similar ideas, concepts, themes, actions, and reactions emerge by classifying the similarities and giving a name for each category.

Data were collected from two sources: in-depth, semi-structured interviews and documentation. Ten in-depth, semi-structured interviews were conducted with the sample of the study. Purposive sampling technique was used to select the informants based on phases of the election; that is, female candidates who competed in the first and second rounds, female candidates who won their parliamentary seats, and informants' demography in terms of different governorates and constituencies.

Interviews

Researchers need to prepare themselves and consider ethical concerns as they design a study so that sound ethical practice is built into the study design (Neuman, 2006, p. 129). Relying on Kvale (1996), informed process consent, confidentiality, and emotional protection were the ethical issues considered in this study. Prior to the interview, the researcher informed the participants about the objectives and purpose of the interviews and study, as suggested in Bogdan and Biklen (2003; Kvale, 1996). Each of the informants was contacted by phone by the researcher to introduce himself and seek their involvement in the study. Also, letters contained an introduction to the study, its objectives, and the purpose of the interviews, and contact numbers of the researcher and his supervisor were sent to each informant by electronic mail.

According to Bogdan and Biklen (2003; Fraenkel, 1990), the confidentiality of informants should be protected. The informants were given codes (C1, C2, C3, . . . etc.) to hide their identities. This action protected the informants from any embarrassment or harm (Bogdan and Biklen, 2003).

Bogdan and Biklen (2003) argue that a researcher must be aware of

sensitive issues that should be avoided during an interview. The researcher avoided asking the informants questions related to their personal lives, income, or any other questions that might cause them any emotional distress.

Moreover, place, date, and time of the interviews were established based on the informants' preferences. The interviews were conducted between July 15, 2015 and March 4, 2016. Interviews were held with the informants in Arabic to ensure that the concepts, ideas, and themes were understood. The interviews in Arabic were translated into English by the researcher and verified by an expert who is proficient in both languages.

Neuman (2006, p. 306) suggests that 'interviews proceed through three stages: introduction, asking questions, and exit.' The interviews for this study proceed through the same stages. The first stage was introduction. This included making the interviewer seem friendly, using a conversational form rather than questioning. It is favourable in Arab countries to start with asking about the families of the informants. The introduction also included providing informants with information about why they were selected for the study.

The second stage is entering the interviews. In this stage, questions were asked and the informants were given the freedom and time to answer and elaborate their points. Interaction between the interviewer and the interviewee is the main approach through which the informants will become agreeable to give more details. The last stage is exit. In this stage, the interviewer asked the informants to add any comments that would be useful for the study on topics such as women in politics, elections, and development of female performance. The interviews ended with thanks and appreciation for the informants' willingness to participate in the study.

Each interview was digitally recorded and transcribed immediately afterwards. According to Charmaz (2014, p. 68), 'using a recorder allows you to give full attention to your research participant, with steady eye contact, and to obtain detailed data.' Transcribing was word-by-word and was checked to ensure that no word was omitted. During and after each interview, the researcher took notes, including on the body language and reactions of the informants. The notes were summarised and converted into memos.

According to Glaser (1998, p. 122), 'the first step in grounded theory is to enter the substantive field for research without knowing the problem. This requires suspending your knowledge especially of the literature and your experience. The researcher must take a "no preconceived interest" approach and not ask questions that might be in his mind.' Entering interviews with a blank mind is a problem for researchers. The best tactic in such a case is to ask general questions in the field without directing the informants and allowing them to explain freely. The role of the researcher is to ask for elaboration of ideas if they are not clear.

Documentation

Documentation can be videos, drawings, diaries, group meetings, memories, newspapers, historical documents, and biographies (Corbin and Strauss, 2015, p. 37). People create documentation for specific purposes and they do so within social, economic, historical, cultural, and situational contexts (Charmaz, 2014, p. 46). This documentation plays a big role in clarifying scenarios. Documentation supports other data (data of interviews, for example) as they are often used in combination with other qualitative research methods as a means of triangulation (Denzin, 1970, p. 291). Corbin and Strauss (2015, p. 36) note that 'it is important for a researcher to initiate a research journal or diary in which he or she keeps a record of all the activities present and future that transpire during the research process.' The informants' documentation comes from two sources: newspapers and social media. Documentation on the main topics was presented by the female candidates in two forms. These were collected and read carefully. The data for the study were collected from two sources; newspapers and social media (Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter). Data from documentation were collected mainly from two local newspapers, *Akhbar Al Khaleej* and *Al Ayam,* collected between 1st September and 31st December 2014.

Pre-Analysis Process

Before conducting coding for all the informants, coding was conducted with two informants. The two informants represent two cases: the first case was with an informant who stood for election but could not stand for the second round and left the competition after the first round. The second case was an informant who stood for election, went through the second round, and won the election. Interviews of the two informants were coded and analysed.

Analysis in research on Grounded Theory starts as soon as the first bit of data is collected (Corbin and Strauss, 1990). Data from substantive areas can be numbers, photographs, images, and/or slogans. Dey (1999) mentions that the researcher usually starts with a general subject or problem conceived only in terms of a general disciplinary perspective.

Analysing data from the two informants followed the GT procedure. Data was first subjected to open coding. Similarities and differences emerged from ideas from the informants during open coding. Then the codes were classified, and each group was assigned a name. Constant comparison was conducted to identify the similarities and differences. The comparison was held to identify the similarities and differences in strategies and actions of the two informants.

Some categories emerged while analysing the two cases from the interviews with informants. The two informants' concerns were 'appearance of the informants in media and public,' 'culture,' 'tribalism,' and 'relation net-

works.' It is clear from these two informants that there are two groups of factors: internal and external influences on their campaigns. For example, the appearance of a candidate is the most important stage of introducing the candidate to voters. Informant C2 could deal with her appearance by using a strategy that allowed her to flood the market with her images, news, and announcements. She used all available media to introduce herself to the electorate. Also, she used three of the most popular newspapers to extend her political product. Meanwhile, Informant C1 underestimated the importance of social media. She did not use all available social media to expand her political product. She was satisfied with using Instagram, where she made a few posts.

Birks and Mills (2015) argue that theoretical sampling should be employed from the first interview or data collection event, as concepts will begin to take shape even from these earliest stages of analysis. Researchers should not rush into deciding the final theoretical pattern. Researcher may seek broader and more diverse sources and types of data, or alternatively attempt to tease out specific issues (Birks and Mills, 2015, p. 69). The two cases that the researcher used to conduct pre-analysis first confirmed the validity of the tools used for this study. Second, the two cases provided more insight into the categories that may emerge in the main study. However, emerging categories such as 'appearance,' 'culture,' 'tribalism,' and 'relation networks' needed more investigation. The researcher needed to identify more categories and themes during subsequent interviews.

Analysing Data of the Main Study

Data analysis in Grounded Theory refers to searching out concepts, themes, and terms behind the incidents, categorising them, and then linking the categories to construct a theory. Coding is 'the process of breaking down, conceptualising, and reassembling data (Corbin and Strauss 1990).' Grounded Theory data analysis contains three cumulative rounds of coding: *open coding* for concepts, ideas, terms, and categories; *axial coding* to put categories back together in new ways after open coding; and *selective coding* to form theory. These operations require constant comparison. Microsoft Excel was used in the coding process. However, while using Microsoft Excel is exhausting and time-consuming, it also has its advantages. First, it enables the researcher to reflect on informants' statements. Reading and re-reading the transcriptions on spreadsheets gave more insights into understanding each sentence of the transcription. Secondly, it enables the researcher to see the concepts and ideas behind the codes. Finally and most importantly, it allows the generation of codes for GT based on data. Thus, in the Microsoft Excel spreadsheet, the data led the researcher to come up with categories. In the application, the researcher is led by data,

which is the main purpose of GT. In the mechanisms in other applications, the researcher leads the data, and this biases the data and increases subjectivity.

Open Coding

The first step in the coding process is when open coding takes place. This step involves breaking down data into distinct units of meaning (Goulding, 1999). According to Glaser (1978), coding is 'running the data open.' Birks and Mills (2015, p. 10) state that open coding is 'the first step of data analysis. It is a way of identifying important words, or groups of words, in the data and then labelling them accordingly.'

Strauss and Corbin (1990, p. 6, 1998, p. 102) characterise open coding as the process when 'the data are broken down into discrete parts, closely examined, compared for similarities and differences, and questions are asked about the phenomenon reflected in the data.' Segmenting the statements aims to provide more understanding and insight into each of the ideas and concepts that signal an evolving theory. Also, segmenting statements enables researchers to focus on codes that emerge. If the researcher has trouble finding indicators that lead them to codes, they are advised to read the statement backward. Such a tactic allows the researcher to read the transcript word-by-word.

The researcher in this step broke the transcription of the interviews into separate lines. The lines of each transcription were assigned serial numbers to facilitate tracing statements of informants. Each line contained ideas, terms, themes, concepts, and events by analysing the text line-by-line, which means naming each line of written data (Glaser, 1978). Some statements were given more than one title based on the purpose of the ideas or concepts. The transcription of each informant was subjected to open coding separately to enable the coding to lead to the emergence of new ideas in the next transcription. Each line of the transcription was labelled with its respective abstract representation, which can be conceptual.

The next step was putting all transcriptions onto one sheet to sort them in the aggregate. After the open coding process, the codes were sorted in alphabetical order. Sorting codes reassemble codes in similar categories that held the same concept. Each one of these codes represented similar conceptual items. The total number of generated codes after open-coding was 819 codes, no matter how many times they appeared in each transcription. The list of codes presented the code numbers and names.

Constant Comparison

The emergent codes from the open-coding process present different ideas, concepts, and actions in different directions of the informants' political mar-

keting strategies. To identify similarities and differences in the strategies of the informants, the researcher conducted constant comparison. Corbin and Strauss (2015, p. 85) define constant comparison as 'the analytical process of comparing different pieces of data against each other for similarities.'

After the process of open coding, the comparison was conducted to identify similarities and differences in initial data. To do so, similar concepts, terms, and ideas were classified and assigned a name. The location of each idea and concept was also identified, regardless of the number of times they appeared in each transcription. Also, naming the codes and their locations facilitated subsequent categorisation of coding.

Documentation analysis revealed that there were 1,190 items related to the Parliamentary Election in *Akhabr Al Khaleej* and *Al Ayam.* Items that related to the election include caricatures (cartoon drawings presenting viewpoints of the caricaturists about parliamentary candidates), news (all items related to the news published by candidates about their social and election campaign activities), columns (all columns written by candidates), posters (all advertisements, images, and slogans of candidates related to the parliamentary elections), announcements (all messages and announcements sent by candidates to voters), and media coverage (all items that are related to the coverage conducted by the newspaper about the candidates).

The study deals with rich data. Some of the data were obtained from interviews while other came from images, slogans, and banners, and gathered from female candidates' accounts on social media and in magazines, newspapers, and other written sources. Interviews and documentation were subjected to analysis.

The process of open coding identifies similarity and differences in the actions and strategies of informants during their election campaigns. Constant comparison aroused many questions. Some of the questions are presented in the following:

1. Why do the informants believe that political marketing is about 'sales skills'?
2. If the informants did not represent ideology as a political product, what then did they use as political products in their campaigns?
3. Which constituencies were dominated by tribalism and masculinity?
4. What was the role of the supporters in the informants' campaigns?
5. In which constituencies did cultural dimensions in terms of masculinity, tribalism, and collectivism appear?
6. Why are all the informants using their relationships to conduct their election campaigns?

To answer these questions, the researcher reviewed the transcriptions to find some hints to uncover the means behind the informants' beliefs, actions, and strategies. The researcher found that the election process provided more explanations on the informants' strategies because some strategies were used before, and some were used during; others were used in the second round of elections and some were controlled by Arab culture. Analysing documentation enables the researcher to cover the scenario from different angles. Hence, newspapers, social media, and posters were analysed to observe how the informants appeared to voters. Slogans, advertisements, and images were coded, categorised, and given names.

Memo Writing

Glaser (1978, p. 83) warned researchers, 'if the analyst skips the stage of memo writing by going directly from coding to sorting or writing he is not doing grounded theory.' This stage is as important as is the theoretical write-up of ideas, separate from the data that focuses on relationships between codes and their properties as they became evident to the analyst. Glaser (1978, p. 83) states that 'memo writing captures the frontier of the analyst's thinking.' Memo writing is a fundamental analytical process in grounded theory research that involves the recording of processes, thoughts, feelings, analytical insights, decisions, and ideas in relation to a research project (Birks and Mills, 2015, p. 179). Memos are a roadmap for researchers to show the development of the theoretical sampling based on cumulative data. Researchers need to log all of the information (date, time, etc.) related to the memos. This allows the researcher to trace the development of theory. In memo writing, the researcher has to ask the five questions *what, why, when, where,* and *how* concepts, ideas, themes, actions, reactions, and strategies emerge. To answer these questions, the researcher needs to dig into the data to find explanations from data.

Corbin and Strauss (2015, p. 189) argue that one of the reasons some researchers have difficulty formulating theory is that they fail to write long, thoughtful memos throughout the research process. Although interviews provide data covering all of the aspects of the phenomenon under investigation, writing and organising memos enables researchers to develop theory.

Categorising and Axial Coding

Researchers need to go forward and backward through the data from the memos and transcription to codes that were generated (Charmaz, 2014). According to Charmaz (2015), axial coding, which is related to categories and subcategories, specifies the properties and dimensions of each, and reassembles the data that was fractured during the initial coding to give coherence to the emerging analysis. De Vos, Strydom, Fouche, and Delport

(2005, p. 348) argue that axial coding is 'a set of procedures whereby data are put back together in new way after open coding, by making connections between categories.' Glaser and Strauss (1967, p. 36) define a property as a 'conceptual aspect or element of a category. Property is related to the main ideas, themes, or concern that can be conceptualised.' Strauss (1987, p. 21) notes that property is 'the most concrete feature of something (idea, event, activity, relation) that can be conceptualised.'

Deciding on the name for a category requires some imagination and sensitivity to the process or phenomenon being categorised. Most important, the chosen name must be something memorable, something that promotes thoughtful analysis, and something from which the researcher may draw theoretical inspiration (Strauss and Corbin, 1990). The researcher's own knowledge and experience are very important to finding the categories that fit reality and give logical explanations of the relationships between categories.

To do this task, the researcher first laid out the dimensions of each category. Open coding revealed the various dimensions of the categories. These include: *action, strategies, behaviours,* and *reactions.* Political marketing is a social interaction between the informants and their stakeholders.

Categories and sub-categories were identified. The categories represent three timeframes in female candidates' campaigns: *before, during* and *after* the election. The period 'before election' shows the informants' process of preparation for election. The period 'during election' involves two stages of strategies in the election: during the first and second rounds of the elections. 'After the election' refers to the informants' behaviour after the polls.

Digging data from interviews, documentation, and memos showed the various strategies used by the female candidates in their election campaigns. The strategies were deployed before, during, and after elections. A total of 819 codes were categorised into 96 titles and sub-titles in three time-periods (pre, during, and post election) of the informants' campaigns were identified. The following are some of the categories and sub-categories that were generated:

1 What is Political Marketing?

2 Informants before Election

  2.1 Empowering Programme

  2.2 Political Environment

    2.2.1 Boycott of the Political Societies

    2.2.2 Boycott of the Voters

    2.2.3 Cancelation of Wusta Governorate

    2.2.4 Al Wefaq Domination

  2.3 Cultural Factors

Theoretical Saturation

Saturation is 'when no new categories or relevant themes are emerging (Corbin and Strauss 2015, p. 139).' After identifying the categories and sub-categories, the researcher found no new emerging ideas, concepts, terms, or themes. Moreover, the researcher investigated the themes in depth to ensure that there were explanations for each of the emerged categories. The researcher used the *repetition* of ideas, concepts, and themes as an indicator of saturation stage. The researcher followed the emergence of new ideas, concepts, and themes, once the ideas, concepts, and themes were repeated; thereafter, no new ideas emerged. At this stage, the researcher ceased collecting data.

Theoretical Coding and Story Line

At first glance, a number of patterns of informants' behavior in the election emerged. The researcher did not rush into deciding which one of these patterns explains the behaviors of the informants in the election, but it is important to confirm the most relevant logical pattern that reflects reality. Strauss (1987, p. 36) states that categories must be sufficiently abstract so they can be used as the overarching explanatory concept tied to the other categories in the aggregate. It also must appear frequently in the data. The category must be logical and consistent with the data. It should grow in depth and explanatory power as each of the other categories is related to it. Theoretical sampling may expose more than one pattern of behaviour. The core variable reoccurs frequently in the data and comes to be seen as a stable pattern that is increasingly related to other variables. It relates meaningfully and easily with other categories and has a 'carry through' within the emerging theory by virtue of its relevance and explanatory power (Bryant and Charmaz, 2013, p. 280). Having enough time to consider each pattern provides more insight and understanding of the scenario.

It was clear that two factors played a role in the informants' election campaigns. External factors, such as cultural elements (masculinity, tribalism, stereotypes of women, and women in management) played a role in the informants' election campaigns, as did internal factors such as late decisions to stand for election, lack of planning, lack of financing, and little experience in election practices. In such a culture, the informants circumvented the cultural factors by creating, maintaining, and activating their relationship networks to help them conduct their election campaigns. The informants relied on their stakeholders and built good relationships with each of these stakeholder groups in their campaigns.

In sum, female candidates in the KoB can be characterised as relationship-oriented candidates. The informants who run for the second round of elections increased their alliance with other candidates who could not reach the second round. They used their relationship networks to win the second round. Unfortunately, the informants who could not pass the first round stopped appearing in the media and in public. Meanwhile, the informants who won and reached parliament increased their participation in social and political activities.

Limitations

The data were collected from two main sources: in-depth, semi-structured interviews and documentation. The sources provided rich data that served the study. However, the researcher should collect data from observation, which would enrich the data and cover the full scenario of the behaviour of the female candidates in elections.

Theory Construction

Birks and Mills (2015, p. 108) define theory as 'an explanatory scheme comprising a set of concepts related to each other through logical patterns of connectivity.' Similarly, Charmaz (2014) notes theory is the 'explanatory of relationships between concepts.' In this research project, the culture was in the focus of the female candidates.

Using GT in data collection and analysis in this research revealed that the female candidates were controlled by Arab and Muslim culture. The female candidates encountered two groups of factors before, during and after election. Internal factors include: (1) late decision to stand for election, (2) lack of appearance in media and in public, (3) lack of planning for election. There are also external factors influencing the female candidates election campaigns, which include: (1) stereotypes threat, (2) cultural factors in terms of masculinity, tribalism, stereotype of women and uncertainty avoidance.

To circumvent cultural factors, the female candidates increased their relation networks with stakeholders. The female candidates relied on their relation networks in all stages of their election campaigns. The female candidates can be characterized as relationship-oriented candidates.

Reflections on Using Grounded Theory

Selecting an appropriate methodology in a major project such as a doctoral study is a difficult task encountered by doctoral researchers. The Methodology should enable the researcher to answer the questions of the study and achieve its objectives.

Starting the process of GT with a blank mind is one of the difficulties facing researchers. Morse (1994) states that no one would claim to enter the field completely free from the influence of past experience and reading. Even if this were possible, ignorance is not synonymous with generating insider understandings. Glaser (1978) argues that prior understandings should be based on the general problem area and reading very widely to alert or sensitise oneself to a wide range of possibilities. Learning not to know is crucial to maintaining sensitivity to data. Strauss (1987) notes that the use of self-education and literature are early influences and, while they diffuse understanding and provide greater sensitivity, both specific understandings from past experience and literature may be used to stimulate theoretical sensitivity and generate hypotheses.

Before the researchers start their GT, they should understand the GT process. Then, once the researchers start doing the GT following its procedure, the data will lead them to where the theory emerges. All that the researchers need to do is surrender themselves to the data and coding process. Researchers should accept the findings whether they agree or disagree with it. Glaser (1998) suggests that researchers should stop talking about GT and just start doing it. GT is all about data and nothing but data. Theory in GT will emerge from the data without forcing it.

Memos are more than a store of ideas and thoughts. Corbin and Strauss (2015, p. 118) state that students complain that writing memos and doing diagrams is time consuming. As a matter of fact, memos provide insights and deep thinking about the theory rather than just store ideas and thoughts. Writing memos helps researchers conceptualise the ideas, concepts, and themes and find the interactions between them to construct a theory.

Documentation (newspapers, social media, posters, slogans) supports the data of interviews. For example, 'appearance' is one of the categories that emerged in the coding process. Undoubtedly, the appearance of a candidate represents the main stage of the Product Life Cycle (PLC) introduction. Also, voters need to experience the candidate as a political product.

They seek to know about the candidate that they would select. In her interview, an informant states that, 'I started late. This of course minimised the chance to introduce myself to voters.' Similarly another informant said, 'We were advised to be appeared [sic] in media. We lacked to appear in media and in public. Trainers in the workshops kept telling us to appear in public. It would allow people to know about you.' By digging into newspaper data, researchers found that, out of the 1,190 items published in newspapers that related to the election activities (announcements, advertisements and images), only 14.71 percent of the items were published by female candidates. Documentation analysis confirmed the category of 'appearance' that emerged from open coding, where the informants did not give enough attention to appear in media and public.

The coding process may reveal a number of patterns. The most important goal is to select the pattern that reflects the reality of the scenario. Selecting the pattern has a number of criteria:

1. The scenario must reflect the reality of the scenario in terms that illustrates 'what is going on.' This can be achieved by using a strategy to ensure that data is collected from different angles, such as triangulating data.
2. Based on Number 1, the pattern must be logical. Experience, knowledge, and imagination of the researcher are required in grounded theory. A logical pattern must derive from a position of trust and truth.
3. The pattern should holistically cover the scenario, which requires the needed skills, experience, and knowledge of the researcher.
4. Patterns should explain the relationships between the variables and categories.
5. The pattern answers the research questions and achieves its objectives.

Conclusion

This study implements GT to construct theory from data. The findings emerged from a systemic process (open coding, selective coding, and theoretical coding) of GT. This enables the researcher to deal with a huge amount of data. It also permitted the researcher to collect and analyse data throughout the coding steps to develop a theory. The area of the GC including the KoB is new in using political marketing in elections. The study employs inductive reasoning. It did not use hypotheses to be proved and refuted, but rather provided a wide margin of imagination to interpret the behaviour of the study sample. Reviewing the political marketing theories provided insights for the researcher to discuss the process of political marketing in the KoB using his personal experience to interpret the behaviour of the in-

formants. Using Grounded Theory in collecting and analysing data was an appropriate strategy to develop a data-driven theoretical explanation for the process of political marketing in Bahrain. *w_aljowder@hotmail.com*

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