

LEBANESE AMERICAN UNIVERSITY

An Illusion of Freedom: Kafala System and Its Benefits
For Kuwait

By

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requirements for the degree of Master of Arts in
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Acknowledgment

This master's degree has to be one of the most difficult degrees I have ever done in my life, it started in spring 2010 where I decided after my BA in journalism to pursue a career in international relations, until I paused it for a quest to find myself and found myself graduating with an MFA in Filmmaking in New York. When I was making films there, I got a job offer as a political and economic advisor in the UN. I was passionate about it and it motivated me to return to Beirut and finish my international relations Master's degree.

In fall 2014, I enrolled officially and started taking my required courses, and it was not easy. It is never easy to have two passions to pursue in life, a lot of struggle to make one come true, but I was convinced I can pull it off; to have a career in film and international affairs.

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Thank you.

Kafala System and Its Benefits

of Kuwait

By

Farrah ALHashem

ABSTRACT

This thesis critically discusses the Kafala system, its mechanism and reason behind its existence in Kuwait. Drawing on ethnographic and field-based observations in Kuwait, there is increasing pressure from NGOs and human rights activists not only for improving the democratic rights and conditions of citizens, but also those of non-citizens such as unskilled migrant workers, who in some Gulf countries far outnumber the local populations.

We discuss reasons behind Kuwait's desire to keep the system active for reasons that defy human rights treatment but abide by security of the country. Despite evidence of the political will to introduce reforms that are consistent with international labor standards and conventions, the core elements of the Kafala system still denies basic civic rights to migrant workers and make them vulnerable to abuse, exploitation and trafficking.

Keywords: Temporary Workers, GCC, Kuwait, Kafala System, Human Rights.

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Chapter One

Introduction

1.1 Background of the Study

The land of oil, the land of plenty, and job opportunities, the land of restrictive freedom in press, and life choices has a catch for financial relief. If you plan to work in the Gulf, you have to understand that you will never become a national unless proven otherwise in certain exceptional cases. The gulf comprises of Dubai, Doha, Kuwait, Riyadh, Muscat, and Bahrain, which seek the same objective concerning development. In this research focuses on the Kafala system of Kuwait in details, highlighting the impact of it on migrant workers and the objective behind keeping it intact.

However, the motivation towards societal development by individual rentier nations remain influenced by their untouched governmental policies, interchangeable political affairs, and any economic problem, which creates inconsistencies concerning everything tangible in their reality.

Kafala, which means to sponsor, is a system that emerged in the 1950s to regulate the relationship between employers and migrant workers in many countries in West Asia. Increased movement of skilled people from around the world to the region has facilitated the growth of the Gulf. Indians and Egyptians have physically built the Gulf, while the Lebanese and Egyptian marketers and advertisers have promoted it in magazines and media outlets (AlGhanim, 2015; Alogeel, 2011; Barjracharya, 2011; Picot, 2014; Hertog, 2014; Khan, 2011; Naufal & Vargas-Silva;

2010). The oil extracted from the region has been shipped abroad by American, Spanish and British engineers.

1.2 Statement of the Study

Kafala is a tool that plays the role of a double-edged weapon. How? It does so with political gains that stand from a state's perspective and drawbacks that diminish the wellbeing of humans, and shake the social welfare of foreign workers. Moreover, the state of Kuwait has created this system to take control of its borders (Zahra, 2015). Such an equation places the security of the state in the hands of the citizens. This status quo could backfire as well, some might abuse this power, and others may not, but workers will not be able to enter the country freely without any sponsorship (Zahra, 2015).

1.3 Purpose of the Study

In attempting to investigate factors accounting for the Kafala system, this study raises one major question, which includes why Kafala was created, who it is for and why it remains intact and active in Kuwait?

The current study investigates the relationship between the Kafala system and the nature of governance of the Kuwaiti political system. There is not much research that has been conducted about the role of security under the Kafala system, and therefore this research paper aims to understand why this system is still being used in Kuwait state.

1.3.1 Research Question

What is the impact of the Kafala system as a security tool on migrant workers, and why does it still remain intact?

1.4 Importance of Thesis Research Question

The research question remains vital to the Kuwaiti government as it highlights the necessary changes required in the country, which may be furthered through the elimination of the Kafala system. Despite Kuwait creating the illusion of democracy; one family, the ruling family in fact, rules it. The system of Kafala is an extension of that control managed by the Interior Ministry as opposed to the Ministry of Labor as any applications sent to the Ministry of Labor remain under the authority of the interior Ministry and as long as the country is the sole controller of movement, Kafala remains active.

1.5 Structure of the Thesis

The study will incorporate five chapters comprising of the introduction, literature review, general review on the Kafala system in the gulf countries followed by an analysis of the Kafala system in Kuwait and the conclusion. The opening chapter remains essential to the study as it introduces the reader to the Kafala system and consequent implementation in Kuwait. The Introduction Chapter will develop a background for the literature review, as it will present the reader to the Kafala system, which will be expounded upon in the literature review section. The study will adopt the qualitative analysis that will involve the sourcing of data from secondary sources including journal, books, and periodicals on the subject. Qualitative analysis will remain essential to the research, as it will provide research and information from other

studies concerning the Kafala system, which will build up the premise for the study and development of study argument and conclusion.

The Second Chapter will comprise of the literature review, which will expand upon the introduction through the provision of a detailed analysis of the Kafala system. The literature review will remain essential to the study, as it will provide an overview of the Kafala system in general through the identification of its premise and adoption in the Gulf region. It will also introduce the reader to the discourse of Kafala between researchers, academics, and political and social activists as well as published statements of officials in Media outlets in Kuwait. The Third Chapter will integrate a general review of the Kafala system among the Gulf States. The analysis of the passage of the system in the Gulf States will remain vital to the study, as it will provide a point of comparison and reference to the system adopted in Kuwait. The Fourth Chapter will integrate a review of the adoption of the Kafala system in Kuwait. The report will remain essential to the study as it develops the basis and overall premise of the research. The Fifth Chapter will provide a conclusion of the research and will identify the challenges faced by the Gulf region and Kuwait, in particular.

Chapter Two

Literature Review

2.1 Historical Background of Kafala

According to the Kathmandu Post, "In the migration context, it is a way for governments to delegate oversight and responsibility for migrants to private citizens or companies" (Sedhai, 2015, p.15).

The Gulf countries (GCC) members equally strove for global economic integration, but they may differ among themselves concerning the composition of a population, natural resources, or economic and military capabilities. Gulf cities present similarities concerning conservatism and prosperity based on hydrocarbon revenues (Sedhai, 2015). Cities in the Gulf are desperately trying to diversify their economic earnings by investing in touristic projects, alternative fuel, and energy, as well as hosting international events on an annual basis.

The concept of Kafala originated in the early 50s, where the Gulf governments had excessive oil wealth arising from the oil peak of October 1973. To be able to take advantage of this oil boom, the GCC countries had initiated economic diversification programs to maintain sustainable growth. Hence, they decided to invest in infrastructure development together involving other sectors including tourism, healthcare, and education (AlGhanim, 2015; Alogeel, 2011; Barjracharya, 2011; Picot, 2014; Hertog; 2014; Khan, 2011; Naufal; Vargas-Silva; 2010). However, given the small size of Gulf populations having 60% of citizens were between the ages 14 and 27, who lack interest in developing the necessary organizational and managerial

skills for private sector jobs, there was a conflict that created a need to import foreign labor and that is how the sponsorship system was born. (Sedhai, 2015).

2.2 Exploration of Types of Kafala in Gulf Countries

Before we dive into the densities of Kafala in Kuwait, one must take a sweep outlook over Kafala in the Gulf, whether it is Qatar, Bahrain, Saudi Arabia or UAE not to forget Oman. The Gulf countries have used the system excessively when inviting people from all parts of the world to work on their land.

According to Al Subaiey (2010), the “Qatarization” or “Kuwaitization” strategy is a policy that seeks to change the national labor force by replacing foreign professional workers in critical positions with Qatari locals or Kuwaiti locals. Also, this is perfect for supporting local talents, and this step has changed the course of development locally. However, the Gulf employment force is still in the process of development, and it cannot compete in the international markets (Al Subaiey, 2010). Despite the fast economic growth, which was a result of oil revenues, there has been a lack of skilled labor in Qatar, Kuwait, Oman and Saudi Arabia, Therefore, the government has had no choice but to import foreign labor to fill this gap and then supervise and teach nationals in various industries and sectors to be able to reach a sustainable position (ALSubaiey, 2010).

Many workers come from developing countries, or poor and economically unstable communities like Pakistan, Sri Lanka, the Philippines, Nepal, and Bangladesh (AlGhanim, 2015; Alogeel, 2011; Barjracharya, 2011; Picot, 2014; Hertog; 2014;Khan, 2011; Naufal & Vargas-Silva; 2010). A large number of those workers transfer part of their salaries to their families in their country of origin. Therefore, the percentage of revenues from the working force is not comparable with

the money sent out of Kuwait, where 80% of the workforce is filled with Egyptians, Syrians, Lebanese, Jordanians, and Asians from different countries.

On the other hand, according to the Human Rights Watch 2014 study, titled "*I already bought you*," the UAE, with its thriving oil-based and trade economy, has long worked as a pull factor for job migration. As a result, it became one of the world's ten richest countries with a (GDP) of US\$383.8 billion, which is due, in large parts, to the contract labor of an estimated 7.3 million migrant workers (HRW, 2014). In a step to decrease the dependence on foreign labor, the Gulf in general has started its national program: "Nationalization" (Al Subaiey, 2010). More than 4000 died when they were working to build the stadium for world cup 2022 in Doha for example. The cost was estimated to be 100 billion dollars, and according to the international trade union confederation, a lot of casualties took place resulting in a humanitarian crisis. (Mustafa, 2015).

Qatar had adopted a labor law in 2004 concerning migrant workers, which had not done enough to protect migrant workers from such abuse (Mustiya, 2015). Despite the announcement of Kafala Cancellation in Qatar, the exit visa still would require approval by the sponsor, who is now to be called the 'recruiter.' However, the acceptance of family members is significant, where, unless the current pre-requisite of a minimum QAR 10,000 monthly salary remains intact during the two-year ban after resignation, end of any contract would not be reduced to 6 months, as anticipated (HRW, 2014).

There have been numerous discoveries throughout this research that conceptualize one simple idea. There is a lack of a clear system that identifies Kafala as a law with a series of items and rules and there has been a giant backlash at the treatment of humans raised by human rights organizations against the Kafala.

Nonetheless, the major gap is the absence of critical reasons to justify its continuation as a working system and its association with the security of the state of Kuwait.

On June 1st, 2017, Kuwaiti parliament member Safa ALHashem issued a statement against foreign workers, asking Kuwaiti parliament to pass her drafted law to Kuwaitize the workforce and cut back on use of foreign labor as well as to increase tax on their health, transportation, medical expenses and insurance. (Alayan, 2017)

ALHashem reinforces the idea of Kafala on her new law that has been approved by the Kuwaiti parliament and has been implemented in June 2017.

MP Safa al-Hashim (2017) said the following:

When I opened the file of expatriates and the imbalance of the population structure, the first of those who accused me of racism were some of my colleagues and some of my compatriots, and I continued and did not calm down, because I believed in my great oaths and I defend their interests and money, and made many suggestions to reduce this imbalance. The most recent of which was the issue of the issuance of driving licenses for newcomers. The government is not ashamed and not ashamed, continuing to harm the citizen and draw a healthy future for him, concluding by saying: «one axis, the President in your next interrogation is composed of Hippocrates but it can lift your government from the chairs.

Heavy dependence on foreign workers may cause a shift in the political or economical structure of the nation that is attributed to the lack of skilled and knowledgeable individuals in the population. The replacement of Arab workers with Asian workers remains detrimental to the population in the event of an uprising or upswing for the need of additional labor within the population (AlGhanim, 2015; Alogeel, 2011; Barjracharya, 2011; Picot, 2014; Hertog, 2014; Khan, 2011; Naufal & Vargas-Silva, 2010).

It is interesting to know that the GCC cities are members of the Arab League and World Trade Organization. Furthermore, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, and the UAE are also OPEC members. In addition, there is formation of the GCC Monetary

Union, which finally came into effect in June 2009, despite Oman and UAE's absence (Sedhai 2015).

2.3 What is Kafala and its Objectives?

The Kafala system has come under numerous criticisms from various international bodies operating within and outside Gulf. Human rights organizations warn against it, and governmental agencies in Gulf promote the adoption of the system.

The system identifies a simple arrangement selected to observe and organize the movement of labor, but not a thoroughly organized system as it incorporates numerous loopholes that lead to more harm as opposed to revenue within the System.

The objective is creating an army of workers for quick and fast progress in Gulf nations as well as sustaining control, like turning the Gulf political system into an eco-political octopus to be able to control of entries and exits of every single person interested in either working long or short term in the desired city. It is another form of government control by a formally known **rentier state**¹. The Gulf in the Middle East is the important stepping stone its economy. This requires fighting the system from within (AlGhanim, 2015; Alogeel, 2011; Barjracharya, 2011; Picot, 2014; Hertog, 2014; Khan, 2011; Naufal & Vargas-Silva, 2010). As a result, any political implication in Gulf will spill over other Middle Eastern countries. A vital element to challenging the capital and state in the Gulf must also be the defiance of the region's foreign workers.

¹ a **rentier state** is a state which derives all or a substantial portion of its national revenues from the rent of indigenous resources to external clients. Hossein Mahdavy first postulated this theory in 1970.

Some states have a diverse range of Islamist political voices that have influenced political protests in the Gulf initiated by the Arab Spring revolts.

The Kafala System provides several restrictions to migrant workers. Firstly, not all employees can change their jobs efficiently unless allowed by their employer. Secondly, the employee lacks the capacity to quit a job or leave the state without Sponsor's permission. (AlGhanim, 2015; Alogeel, 2011; Khan, 2011; Naufal and Vargas-Silva, 2010). Such restrictions affect all aspects of workers' lives, whether they can insist on contractual or legal rights or to find a good stable job that has future and good pay. Several factors can affect the worker's life such as delayed or lack of payment. Employers can take steps to prevent their employees from leaving the country without their consent. If the Kafael/recruiter notifies the government that his/her employee left the job without permission, the worker can face criminal charges (Naufal & Vargas-Silva, 2010).

2.4 Kuwait Kafala System and the Gap in Research

During the collection of data, it has been shown that most academics Kuwaiti officials and media experts who conducted research papers, discussions, and reports regarding the Kafala system, were not able to identify the reason behind the existence of Kafala or Show a connection between the presence of Kafala and Kuwaiti governance policies.

The exploitation of these workers is a prominent part of showing how working classes are formed in the Middle East and is essential to the ways in which the capitalist system of the Gulf nations continues to project their power. To simplify the idea, ending Kafala and empowering workers would cause autocracy together with

human exploitation and create an opposite revolution in the Gulf nations (Hanieh, 2015).

Emphasis placed on this system begs us to return to the question; what is the secret behind Gulf countries holding onto that system so much?

Scholars and Academics agree that the System is known for its power and its control over the movement, entry and exist of every foreign worker. The situation remains sensitive because, upon arrival in the Gulf, all foreign workers are required to provide documentation about one's history, background, traditions, habits, language and possible measures stipulated by the country. However, the conditions given by the Kafala system cause conflict among the majority of foreign worker population leading to the development of a poor perception of the scheme and consequent adoption (AlGhanim, 2015; Alogeel, 2011; Barjracharya, 2011; Picot, 2014; Hertog, 2014; Khan, 2011; Naufal & Vargas-Silva, 2010). Increased 'notoriety' of the Kafala System has resulted in integration of various research and discussions on the system by foreigners including the Americans, British, and French who have sought to develop an understanding of the Kafala System through a development of comparisons with the existent European institutions. Increased notoriety of the scheme has led to the growth of a group of Asian human rights agencies dedicating their profession and time to discuss the impact of the Kafala System on the nature of labor within the region (AlGhanim, 2015; Alogeel, 2011; Barjracharya, 2011; Picot, 2014; Hertog, 2014; Khan, 2011; Naufal & Vargas-Silva, 2010).

The question behind the reason of not using another system has been raised hundreds of times, and the media in the Gulf announced it and published various public and official statements showing initiatives against it. Still, nothing has changed so far in Kuwait except for setting a minimum wage for workers in Kuwait which

amounts to 200\$ (Migration in Kuwait, 2016). Nevertheless some rules were bent in Qatar, but the situation is not as smooth as one might think. The readings regarding Kafala summarized thoughts that were highlighting the difference among the diverse Kafala systems in the Gulf countries and how each country deals with its foreign workers. (AlGhanim, 2015; Alogeel, 2011; Barjracharya, 2011; Picot, 2014; Hertog, 2014; Khan, 2011; Naufal & Vargas-Silva, 2010). The research explores the reasons behind using such a migratory tool specifically in Kuwait. The analysis identifies the impact of foreign policy in Kuwait facilitating a shift in perspective of the differences and changes over the course of history and the impact of these changes on foreign workers and the Kafala System. The references used in this research tackled some interesting ideas like the number of employees who visited Kuwait since 1961 to present the nature of Kuwaiti society, and its politics in the Gulf. The studies highlight the role of the Kafala system as an umbrella protecting the state goals and sustaining the regime by organizing foreign workers' living conditions, its future regards to Kuwait economy and the security of the country.

The factors influencing the adoption of the system included the nature of the political system, the fact that Kuwait is a rentier state; the political system “doesn't have the luxury to be unstable.” (Motaparthi, 2015).

The Kafala System also protects the individual when entering a foreign land from losing job opportunities, being manipulated or being deceived. As the worker can get various rights when working, his status becomes legal, and he is allowed to own a house and a car, receive a monthly salary without taxes, and be able to get health insurance with minimal fees. The security aspect adopted within the System seeks to facilitate the safety of the state of Kuwait from foreign dangers, such as terrorism, drugs, alcohol trade, and undocumented foreign workers. Undocumented

forigen workers sometimes are categorized as a product of human trafficking, which has led to several deportation attempts by the Ministry of Interior Affairs due to an economic deficit in Kuwait (Motaparthi, 2015).

Being considered as “Temporary Workers” instead of “Migrants” has led to a conflict in understanding of human rights in Kuwait. Most Gulf countries lack immigration laws attributed to a lack of a desire to understand migration and the underlying factors (AlGhanim, 2015; Alogeel, 2011; Barjracharya, 2011; Picot, 2014; Hertog, 2014; Khan, 2011; Naufal & Vargas-Silva, 2010). Due a fear of integrating different nationals in the Kuwaiti system, Kafala has become another version of “Brexit” where the country has built an isolative system around it.

The legalization of migration within Kuwait remains limited by the developed concept that the locals should remain at liberty to enjoy the benefits provided to nationals. The key advantages provided to citizens include owning or renting a house, starting a company, unemployment allowance, employer provision for the private or public sector, free education and healthcare and the access to loans.

The Kafala system in Kuwait and mainly the “Gulf” has developed into an intricate element of controversy developing between human rights organizations and the Gulf governments (AlGhanim, 2011; Alogeel, 2011; Barjracharya, 2011; Picot, 2014; Hertog, 2014; Khan, 2011; Naufal & Vargas-Silva, 2010). The thesis seeks to develop an analysis that provides an explanation about the premise for the existence of the Kafala System and the factors that maintain the sentiment that a worker is associated with national security in Kuwait. The research will identify the state benefits and limitations attached to the adoption of the System. This objective has been identified because of the lack of data on these issues in prior research and literature.

Chapter Three

Methodology

3.1 Method

The main aim of the study is to discover why Kuwait continues to use the Kafala System keeping in mind it was revealed to be as unjust towards foreign workers. Seeing that Kuwait has proclaimed itself a democratic country, there is a conflict between political and economic policies in the State. Since this was my aim, there is one main question that needs to be answered, and I was able to do so through three instruments of research. My three instruments were interviews, personal statements by officials and research papers written by professional academics in the field of social science. I adopted this qualitative case study approach that looks into Kafala's existence in Kuwait through data analysis of interviews with Kafala experts, and the Minister of Interior Affairs interviews with politicians and previous studies. And what I'm trying to prove in this research paper is why Kafala is not canceled.

I adopted the case study approach that looks into an issue and explores its angles to discover and expose the circumstances of it in a holistic manner. This type of case study, being exploratory, helps in discovering the different reasons why Kuwait refuses to cancel Kafala, and uses the excuse of state security whenever the discussion of Kafala comes up. Then I came up with an enhanced concoction of diverse and different answers through the use of a mixed method that involves both qualitative and quantitative data. In contrast, the study has more of a qualitative trait than a quantitative one. Out of experience it was expected that Kuwait, being a rentier state dependent on the rules of one single ruling family, having a small amount of

nationals, and a great GDP per capita, uses an isolationist system to separate Kuwaitis from the rest of the world and to keep the Kuwaiti society non-integrated in any new foreign impact. (AlGhanim, 2015; Alogeel, 2011; Barjracharya, 2011; Picot, 2014; Hertog, 2014; Khan, 2011; Naufal & Vargas-Silva, 2010).

3.2 Sampling

Since this is an exploratory case study, I believed that the conducted research should take into consideration all available perspectives to be able to collect as much data I needed in the limited amount of time I had.

I wanted the study to be able expose the actuality of Kafala's status remaining active in Kuwait and its deep relation with state security. Hence, I wanted to include statements by politicians, diplomats, cabinet members and lawyers.

Three kinds of samplings in three different states were carried out to purposely choose participants including cabinet members in the Kuwaiti parliament, officials in the Ministry of Interior Affairs and lawyers. That was done, because I believe they are in direct contact with foreign workers, and in direct contact with the ruling family.

In this purposeful sampling I chose to deal with five research institutions in Kuwait to obtain information from different sides of the argument. Nonetheless I wanted to focus on governmental and humanitarian agencies in Kuwait to create an analogy between the opinion of the government of Kuwait and the opinion of UN and human rights non-governmental organizations (NGO's) in Kuwait.

3.3 Instruments

For this exploratory case study to be holistic, it became apparent that the use of more than one instrument to collect the data was important. I didn't just want to expose the reason behind Kafala's existence until today, but I wanted also to understand Kuwaitis' motivation behind keeping it and the real reason behind associating such a system with state security. I also wanted to analyze the real motivation behind the ruling family's constant refusal to recognize workers as migrants.

This would result in the possibility of constructing suitable recommendations for Kuwait to use instead of this unjust system while sustaining its security. This resulted in me interviewing political members of the Parliament in Kuwait whose background affected their decision-making. In addition to that, I analyzed research papers to distinguish between Kuwaiti and foreign academics discussions of the unjust system of kafala in detail. As for my third instrument, it was a round of video archives and newspapers that show clear points of view of the ruling family and the government of Kuwait about workers, immigration, and political security.

Summary of Use of Instruments for Data Collection, for Variable in the research Question.

Instruments used	Data collected	Main variable
Interviews	Diplomats and government officials on the kafala	Motivation of Kuwait to keep Kafala
Research	How Kafala is unjust to foreigners and view of academics and Humanitarians	How Kafala is unjust to foreigners
News	Why Kafala is associated with security- opinion of parliamentary officials and Ministry of Interior and lawyers	Reason behind associating status of foreigners with security of Kuwait

3.4 Data collection

Some countries in the gulf like Qatar officially canceled the Kafala system, which created political pressure across the Gulf concerning the developed relationship with the Kafala system. As a result, Kuwait has spoken publically through its media about canceling the system but nothing has happened. (ALSubaiy 2010).

However the real result when it comes to implementation, Kuwait reinforced the Kafala system, by hiring only locals to fill in these employment gaps.

20% of Kuwaitis are unemployed. (ALthoufiri, 2013). In addition to what was mentioned it known that between June and August of 2013, 44 Nepalese workers died most of whom suffered from heart failure caused by working under 122 degrees Fahrenheit heat with little access to drinking water. Workers were betrayed during the employment recruitment when they had their passports confiscated and salaries reduced (Mustafa, 2015).

There is a lack of stability for workers. They are always under pressure of deportation. Also, despite the difficulties presented at hand on foreign workers, there is a continuous flow of arrivals to GCC from Asian and Arab countries. Due to the nationalization policy of integrating the nationals into the workplace, there have been constant deportations for many reasons.(ALKandari, 2010).

The Sponsorship system needs updating to be able to accommodate to all kinds of people, and all sorts of lifestyles. It is a primary tool to control the movement of workers but it is not developed or well studied enough to control or comprehend different forms of people within the system (AlGhanim, 2015; Alogeel, 2011; Naufal &Vargas-Silva, 2010). The government passed a series of laws and measures to dismantle and cancel out the Kafala System as a result of human trafficking and created shelter for women who were forced into prostitution. However, the

government of Bahrain failed to back these efforts with proper implication tools ensuring that kafala remained operative in the country. The laws and regulations of Kafala are similar among Gulf nations, but there are noteworthy differences when discussing migrant workers' status.

From an economic standpoint, Kuwait has always been regarded as a developing nation in accordance with the GDP in comparison to Arab countries (AlGhanim, 2015; Alogeel, 2011; Barjracharya, 2011; Picot, 2014; Hertog, 2014; Khan, 2011; Naufal & Vargas-Silva, 2010). Economic growth has facilitated the development of the "Kuwait Fund Program" that has promoted the provision of continuous financial help and support to various African and Asian countries including Lebanon, Syria, and Egypt. The fund has developed Kuwait's reputation in facilitating humanitarian support but, due to the circumstances in the oil sector and the change in oil prices together with the high dependency on oil is bringing Kuwait to question its strategic future plan for finding alternative resources (AlGhanim, 2015; Alogeel, 2011; Barjracharya, 2011; Picot, 2014; Hertog, 2014; Khan, 2011; Naufal & Vargas-Silva, 2010).

Considering the example of Kuwait, Aljarida newspaper in Kuwait has published the official resolution showing suggestions made by MP Safa Alhashem (2017) about foreign labor from Kuwait.

- Project contractors are required to take out expatriate workers from Kuwait after the completion of their projects.
- It is necessary to stop the random estimates that are made in the recruitment of expatriate workers, and activate the role of e-government to ascertain the actual number of arrivals.

- It is necessary to prevent entry to the family only for parents and under certain conditions, and in case of any exception; the sponsor or the expatriate is responsible for all health and medical needs.
- The fees paid to bring in the expatriates must be increased by 100% and borne by the sponsor.
- The expatriate's stay in Kuwait should be limited to a period of not more than 10 years and is renewed only once, with exceptions for high-quality occupations only.

3.5 Data analysis

While conducting this research, I analyzed the answers and data I got from the interviews with various Kuwaiti officials and organizations that deal directly or indirectly with the Kafala System. I have come to different conclusions, and what I discovered is that there is fear of exposing factual reasons that could explain the reason why the Kafala System remains intact and active among governmental institutions.

3.6 Analysis of the interviews

To investigate what is being said about Kafala and to be able to cross-examine statements of government officials and civil community members along with academics of social science related to study of this sponsorship system called Kafala, I found that the data and information I collected were highly similar to each other. The similarity has to do with effect of Kafala but the data is highly contradictory in terms of reasons behind Kafala's existence.

Semi-structured interviews, according to Bernard (1988), are best used when there is one chance to interview someone and when several interviewers are sent out

into the field to collect data. Semi-structured interview guide provides a clear set of instructions for interviewers and can provide reliable, comparable qualitative data

Semi-structured interviews are often preceded by observation and informal, unstructured interviewing in order to allow the researchers to develop a keen understanding of the topic of interest necessary for developing relevant and meaningful semi-structured questions.

The United Nations has worked relentlessly with the Kuwait Mission regarding hosting workshops in the General Assembly, meetings with the Gulf nations or working locally with their governments.

According to a human rights watch report released in 2017, Kuwait took it upon itself in 2016 to improve foreign workers status including improving minimum wage for workers, easing employer transfer regulations and implementing new improved regulations for the 2015 law that allowed workers to work comfortably for the first time.

Unlike many of its gulf neighbors, Kuwait continued to allow human rights watch to access the country and engaged in constructive dialogue with the organization on a range of human right cases.

Despite the national security law and other legislation that continues to restrict free speech, the emir of Kuwait Sabah ALAhmad AL Jaber AL-Sabah ordered authorities to amend a 2015 law that required all individuals in Kuwait to provide DNA samples in violation of their right to privacy.

In 2015 the National assembly passed a law that allowed workers the right to a weekly day off, 30 days of annual paid leave, a 12- hour working day with a 1-hour rest and an end –of-service benefit of one month a year at the end of the contract among other rights.

The Ministry of Interior Affairs passed regulations for the law including showing that employers must pay overtime compensation, and the minimum wage is 200\$ per month.

In 2016, the United States classified Kuwait as a Tier 2 country in its annual Trafficking in Persons Report. After classifying Kuwait as a Tier 3 country for nine consecutive years, the report credits the improvement to the passing of the 2015 domestic workers law and an unprecedented number of convictions of traffickers under the 2013 anti-trafficking law. The report found that Kuwait continued to have a rampant forced labor problem and that victims of trafficking were still being arrested, detained, and deported.

According to Jassem ALMubaraky the Head of International Organizations Department in the Exterior Ministry of Kuwait, Kuwait's own definition of a foreign or temporary worker conflicts with UN's interpretation of the same term. The UN considers foreign workers as migrants with human rights.

Al Mubaraky ascertains that in Kuwait, being part of the Kuwaiti society and gaining all rights and perks of the Kuwaiti citizenship, is strictly limited to Kuwaiti nationals or those parties who marry or are legally bound by law to locals. The highlighted perks are limited to non-Kuwaiti females marrying Kuwaiti citizens even though it states in the Kuwaiti constitution that after 20 years of living in Kuwait, anyone is entitled to gain a Kuwaiti nationality. Despite this, the stipulation has not been adopted or implemented yet as some individuals have waited for over 40 years to acquire citizenship but to no avail (Oteibi, Jarrah, Kandari, & Jarallah, October 2013).

In an interview with 10 employees in managerial positions in the immigration department in Meshrif, Kuwait, the respondents confessed that the only reason

Kafala is used was another way to tell the foreigners they are welcome but under certain conditions, there has been a wave of deportations happening on a monthly basis, where more foreigners are being deported due to their nationality, political affiliation, age, or even for not paying their parking tickets.

One of the managers, Ahmad, said that around 182 Kuwaitis have given up their nationality, in search of better options, while pretending to be still living in Kuwait, keeping in mind that they have migrated to Turkey, India, Australia and America for pursuit of different life paths.

“I am not giving up on anything, I am just gaining my freedom back,” one of the Kuwaitis who preferred to share a nickname as “Salem A” other than his real name said. He said that it is extremely dangerous to denounce your citizenship, because according to the constitution, you could face some kind of punishment or jail time.

In another statement published in ALJarida by Samya ALSuileh, a Kuwaiti political activist pushed authorities to fight corruption occurring within ministerial management. Nonetheless, the minister emphasized the idea that Kuwait is suffering from a tribal and class division among its people. There are so many divisions due to the origin of the Kuwaiti family, tribal differences, sects, traditions and even social status. The divisions remain in the society, and they are hard to shake off. Alsuileh believes that Kuwait needs rehabilitation in terms of its relationship with foreign workers but what about the cultural fact that out of 10 families in Kuwait, 8 homes have a house keeper, a driver, or a butler. The concept of a ‘servant’ is planted in the minds of Kuwaitis, to be served by other people, it is a common tradition Kuwaitis got accustomed to; it is impossible to change unless a driving force sought otherwise. The interesting aspect about Kafala is that its mechanism is interpreted in other

ministerial systems; the concept of sponsoring is present in other governmental sectors in business relationships and even among Kuwaitis themselves.

Physiologist, Meshaad ALShammari, who owns a private practice downtown Kuwait, has treated hundreds of patients from the royal family. Shammari maintained that the majority of Kuwaitis are afraid of change and have got accustomed to a certain lifestyle; certain understanding of how things work out around them and it is hard to shake that image. There is distrust in the governmental sector, where the role of bureaucracy has shaped the daily life struggles, slowed down the pace of work, and created an absence of energy among nationals and Kuwaitis who depend on foreign labor. ALShammari maintains that in order to understand the Kafala system, one need to understand that it is a System inside a bigger System. The Sabah Family is the ruling family, that retains control over the economic infrastructure of over three-quarters of Kuwait city leaving the rest to be controlled by a handful of families like Behbehani, Ghanem, Roumi, Humidi, Khorafi, ALSalem, Banay, Enzi. ALKhalifah and ALSagr.

Each family handles a certain aspect, in terms of car dealerships, real estate, shopping malls, clothing stores, restaurants, the official national airport of Kuwait, Banks, and newspapers. In a perfect world, Kuwait could apply the method of privatization like UAE, Qatar and Oman have done when it comes to its infrastructure. Still, Kuwait remains economically divided resulting in an uneven society, in terms of quality of services, productivity, living conditions and political awareness.

It is interesting to keep in mind that the Council of Arts, culture and Letters owned by one of those families, is the only source for cultural activity in Kuwait and it is the only independent institution from the Ministry of Information. Salem Karam,

head of English News at Kuwait National TV whom I had the pleasure of collaborating with on a Political TV show, listed for me a series of things to take into account first. The TV Company has issued a new law that forbids the TV from working with non-Kuwaitis working outside the Ministry of Information. Additionally, there exists a grading system consists of A, B, C, D and F where any writer, editor, TV presenter, camera operator is subject to be placed under a certain grade depending on their experience. However, there are a lot of MA holders who are not included in this grading system because their experience is not recognized in Kuwait. Individuals who have worked outside Kuwait for over 10 years cannot be graded fairly inside the Ministry of Information or any other ministry, they will be considered as beginners, and same applies to foreign workers.

There are several conditions a man or woman must possess to run for parliamentary elections, however they are waived in Kuwait as those runner-ups must only know how to speak and write Arabic. Yet, in recent polls made by the Ministry of Interior Affairs, during TV coverage, I got a list of nominees that included 41 names. Twenty of them were unable to write or read Arabic and were nominated by their district and voted for parliamentary elections. Three of them have won seats in the parliament in the last two consecutive elections despite the dissolution. The Ministry of Interior Affairs have developed a fingerprint system, accompanied by DNA testing to be done to all those wishing to remain in Kuwait or file for a permanent visa (AlGhanim, 2015; Alogeel, 2011; Barjracharya, 2011; Picot, 2014; Hertog, 2014; Khan, 2011; Naufal & Vargas-Silva, 2010). However those who do not follow the rules, their visa application will be rejected and confiscated, and they will be deported.

Kuwait's Kafala system is merely another part of the rustic, unresponsive, slow infrastructure that translates its incompetency in many outlets around the state, it is not impossible to be abolished, but it is part of the ruling family's desire to keep things unchanged and untouched. Change is inevitable, however, as long as Kuwaitis receive monthly support from social security, and have jobs even though there isn't a monitoring system that monitors quality, the situation will remain the same.

3.8 Reliability and validity

As I have mentioned earlier in previous sections of this study, in order to tend to the two angles of my study, three instruments were used for it. This was also how triangulation achieved where I used data from one instrument in cross examination with another to make sure of the validity of the data collected and how reliable my sources are to my study.

According to Nahid Golafshani in (2003), validity is when the instruments used are effective and clear in their measurement of what is chosen for them to be measured. Reliability is the consistency in which an instrument shows results. In order to achieve the goal desired of this study. Triangulation is a must when picking the instruments for measurement, be it for quantitative or qualitative data.

I aimed for the closest-to-generalization formula of instrumentation by relating my research question to all three instruments. Keeping in mind that all instruments are to give me similar results for that research question, it is pertinent to have each instrument measure this question the most accurately. (Golafshani, 2003).

Furthermore, to know why Kafala is active, I decided to interview the government officials from the Ministry of Interior Affairs in Kuwait what has been

discussed about Kafala in the academic community, Consequently, this will help me come up with recommendations according to results that are reliable and valid.

3.9 Findings

3.9.1 Kafala as a Security tool

Several have discussed the condition of Asian workers in Kuwait since the 1970s until now and have described it as horrific and unsettling. In the perception of the government, Kuwait has been following a risky equation; the benefits outweigh the cost, where there could be harmful side effect to this strict system; there is an upside to it. However, Kafala remains beneficial to the society as it protects Kuwait's national security, which necessitates the integration of a review on the benefits of Kafala regarding protecting the security of Kuwait from outer danger (AlGhanim, 2015; Alogeel, 2011; Barjracharya, 2011; Picot, 2014; Hertog, 2014; Khan, 2011; Naufal & Vargas-Silva, 2010).

According to the associate professor of anthropology at the University of Puget Sound

In a report published in 2014 Kafala is not a reliable system, yet it is mandatory for the state in the Gulf. The system presents a collection of laws, practices, and traditions that forbid or oppose the migration system. The kafala may be abolished or removed in some Gulf countries in the future, so there is no guarantee that change will take place in workers' lives as these work permits cater to the same kind of control that is critical. (AlGhani, 2015; Alogeel, 2011; Barjracharya, 2011; Picot, 2014; Hertog, 2014; Khan, 2011; Naufal & Vargas-Silva, 2010). Kuwait is deporting immigrants and canceling out work permits for many reasons; that's where politics interferes. Consequently, the nationality of the worker affects his/her stay in Kuwait,

his/her political agenda, his /her situation in their country, his/her relationship with the state of Kuwait.

According to Gulf News, Kuwait deported 1,053 workers who were subject to detention in Jleeb AL-Shyouk with the highest number of workers. During this deportation spree, more than 4,015 employees had their identification documents reviewed and some confiscated (Toumi, 2016). Kuwait forced 1,170 to travel; those were detained in a massive crackdown in the area of Khaitan followed by a deportation of 3,548 people (Toumi, 2016). The eviction happens every once in a while and such campaigns are common in the Ministry of Interior Affairs to stop lawbreakers. The Ministry also said that documents of those detained had been checked and the department only allowed 2,378 people to go, but around 1170 workers were deported (Toumi, 2016).

The foreign worker is part of a large program run by the State, and such a system has produced a primal reliance on foreign workers despite unemployment being popular among Gulf nationals (Lori, 2012). There are, however, reform proposals and ideas that will facilitate the development of a formal recruitment structure that renders the process less complex and transparent so that the workers are given a chance to change their employers. Also, they try to improve pay and operational environment and enhance the relationship between the Kafel and the employees. It is important to know that the Kafels can use a variety of mediators to form a link between the foreign workers and their employers. The provision of a favorable working environment for foreigners within Kuwait has led to the adoption of policies geared towards adopting an efficient system for workers. To change the reputation of Kuwait, officials have to treat workers differently, because the Kafala System is crucial despite its benefits on the State's organizational system (AlGhanim,

2015; Alogeel, 2011; Barjracharya, 2011; Picot, 2014; Hertog, 2014; Khan, 2011; Naufal & Vargas-Silva, 2010). In addition to removing such a system, officials have to install new right laws, and new ways to deal with foreign workers, as they are considered, up until now, core stones of production in Kuwait and Gulf in general. As previously highlighted by Ali Alali, providing foreign workers with full rights could create some chaos and lead breakdown of class hierarchies in the Gulf. The discovery or appearance of robust militant labor voice in the Gulf will fix its reputation at the UN, but at the same time it will give them equal rights just like nationals thus creating other issues that will profoundly position the Gulf rules in a different problem (AlGhanim, 2015: Alogeel, 2011: Barjracharya, 2011: Picot, 2014: Hertog, 2014: Khan, 2011: Naufal & Vargas-Silva, 2010).

On October 3 and 4 in 2013, a high-level dialogue on the matter of international migration and development took place under the patronage of 68th Session of the General Assembly at the United Nations headquarters in New York. The Member States unanimously adopted a declaration that desperately called for the respect of human rights within international labor standards. Furthermore, there was a need to fight human trafficking, and it strongly condemned manifestation of racism and intolerance (Das, 2013). A UN study that found that there are 232 million workers world wide, highlighted, that migration brings a considerable amount of benefit , experience and social integration. On the other hand, migration is a double-edged sword as it has negative consequences, specifically in developing countries where workers are in need of work with different levels of skills. There is an important aspect to pay attention to that worker and their diaspora communities spend a lot of money and contribute a lot to the development of their origin state and their country of work.

The contributions are through remittance trade, investment, money transfer, the creation of enterprises, and job offers (Das, 2013).

On another note, an increase in migrant skilled personnel raises concerns over the successful application of development goals like Millennium development goals (MDG) in developing countries. The absence of regular migration channels may delimit economic growth of individuals as the channels provide an opportunity for escape from poverty.

Kuwait's political alliances consist of six civil society organizations working on the Universal Periodic Review, addressing an issue that violates human rights in Kuwait. Despite that rejection, the culture has shifted to advocacy for reform, mainly due to the assessment that the GCC countries lack the political power to replace the Kafala System. Also, there is a growing perception that those sending countries lack the necessary bargaining power as a result of their economic dependence on the migrant workers' remittances (Manyonga, 2013). Advocating for a comprehensive reform of the Kafala system as a double-edged weapon, it might affect the percentage of employees coming from 'sending countries' to 'receiving countries' (ALogeel, 2011).

Kuwait announced its desire to abolish Kafala in February 2011 through the Ministry of Social affairs, but nothing has been done yet regarding that matter (Al-Shamari, 2010). After the announcement, the undersecretaries from the same ministry explained that the government would not cancel the system, but only amend it to make it easier for the migrant workers to transfer sponsors (Etheridge, 2010). Kuwait is flexible when it comes to its policies and among the only GCC nations with the possibility of a human rights solution to Kafala, whereby; a lot of rules have been modified for the goodness of their employees (Etheridge, 2010).

Not all foreign workers suffer from inequality since the majority of employees have good employers, steady income, great jobs and chances to open their own businesses at a reasonable rate or help with any banks in Kuwait. The majority of workers receive payment from employers as agreed upon and on time. In some cases, the companies provide additional benefits and allow migrant employees to have investments in the country through the establishment of a business or purchase of property (Migrant Rights in the Gulf, 2015).

Kuwait has more workers than citizens. After the oil boom and the need for additional labor in 1961, the number of migrant workers continued to increase and became half of the population (Shah, 2007). Kuwaiti population consists of three prominent groups, including the ones with official Kuwaiti nationality and the ones who are not Kuwaiti such as the Bidon. Before the invasion of Iraq in Kuwait, the Bidon were considered as Kuwaitis for one main reason, to join the Kuwaiti Resistance Party against the Iraqis during the war. They maintained eligibility for various social services including free education and health care. (Shah, 2007). The percentage of nationals giving nationality to Bidon in 1965 was only about 36%. In 2005, a local newspaper published that the percentage of Kuwaitis within the population increased to about 35%, but in return, foreign workers percentage rose to 31% of the population (Paci, 2007). Kuwaiti women are about 4.1 % in fertility rate, which declined from 7.5 % in 1965. Nevertheless, the death rate in the country is only 2.5 per 1000, while the life expectancy is 76.9 years (Mortality Percentages in Kuwait, 2005).

3.9.2 The impact of the Kafala system on Kuwait

Kuwait monitors its national security through various aspects including Kafala system, to keep its eye on whoever enters the country and whoever leaves the country

(Zahra, 2015). Qatar, for example according to Alshorfa report by the committee research and headed by Dr. Kaltham Alghanim, maintained that the sponsorship system has positive aspects that help control migration, but it also has negative aspects such as employers not paying wages on time. Several newspapers articles have reported that Qatar nationals in Qatar want stricter sponsorship rules. Beydoun (2012) argues that similar reports have been provided about Kuwait and the adoption of the Kafala system. The current situation begs the question; ‘why this obsessive control?’ According to Beydoun (2012), Kuwait is a constitutional emirate with a semi-democratic political system, the hybrid political system is divided between an elected parliament and an appointed government. The constitution of Kuwait approved and promulgated in November 1962 calls for direct elections to a unicameral parliament. According to scholars Nasser M. Beydoun, Jennifer Baum in a book titled *The Glass Palace: Illusions of Freedom and Democracy in Qatar*.

The Gulf governments including Qatar, Kuwait and Bahrain ‘pretended that they are considering abolishing Kafala, but in fact, it is far from it. That is because Kafala is identified as a mechanical body extended from the authority in Kuwait.

The system works in the population by controlling the movement of non-nationals creating the illusion of opportunity for people to come here and work in Kuwait, but it contradicts with international labor laws. Khalifa al-Luqayan, a leading Kuwaiti writer, stated that democracy, as we understand it, is a way of citizen participation in the affairs of society. Unfortunately, democracy presents inexcusable behavior by awakening tribal and sectarian fanaticism. Kuwait may have a parliament, but the Emir has the absolute authority to dissolve it when needed. It is an illusion of full democracy. It is a controlled freedom, hence the Kafala’s implantation (AlGhanim,

2015: Alogeel, 2011: Barjracharya, 2011: Picot, 2014: Hertog, 2014: Khan, 2011: Naufal & Vargas-Silva, 2010).

In the Gulf region and Kuwait, the adoption of the Kafala system has been presented as a security mechanism critical to the population. In Kuwait, the Ministry of Interior Affairs security handles and authorizes the adoption of the Kafala System, which means that the State deals with foreign workers as a security threat instead of forwarding their files through the Ministry of Labor.

Alia Li Ali, (2013) a lawyer in defense of the System, maintains that: “This System serves as a security mechanism to protect Kuwait from danger, a risk that can be avoided from arrivals of refugees from Syria, Hezbollah supporters, people who do not fit in the traditions and habits of Kuwaiti society, and people that provoke the lives of Kuwaitis.” Alia Li Ali argues that canceling the System in Kuwait does not permit the control of the worker. Kuwait needs control as it is a small country, and there is no reason to cancel the Kafala System at the moment.

Kuwait’s Kafala System may be hated among humanitarian organizations, but the continuous fake promises by the Ministry of Interior Affairs to cancel Kafala confirms that Kuwait is nowhere near the cancellation of such a system. If anyone in the parliament tries to cancel the System, he/she would be considered as an advocate in revoking the power of the ruling family as a monarchy.

Islamic groups are part of the society. Freedom here is a double-edged weapon; it is more negative than positive. The level of security remains heightened due to the existence of various Islamic groups in Kuwait that are fundamentally affected by other radical ideas (AlGhanim, 2015: Alogeel, 2011: Barjracharya, 2011: Naufal & Vargas-Silva, 2010). The level of peace experienced in the country remains attributed to the immense control of police and the Sabah Family over the nation. In addition, even

those radical Islamists have put aside their interests for the benefit of the State. On the contrary, chaos could erupt from other countries to Kuwait, and this could be a political or economic spill or even a social one. Societies like Kuwait are small in number, easy to influence, and can take few thousands of people to change their lifestyle.

There are changes within the societal structure in the Gulf region that have facilitated the development of a paradigm shift affecting the existent systems of governance within the region with the Kafala System developing into a critical component of change. Therefore, the relationship with Iran, the continuously unstable conflicts with Israel or any political instability-taking place in Syria, Lebanon, Egypt, Iraq, Libya, Yemen or Sudan affects the Arab arena. Kafala is a dangerous tool and must be used carefully; it is discriminatory, but Kuwait's infrastructure has not changed in past 20 years, also its policy has been described as orderly and peaceful (Beydoun, 2012).

Such system has resulted in a post-Kafalicized system where the Sponsorship objectives, problems, orders, and rules have become part of the everyday lives of locals in Kuwait (AlGhanim, 2015: Alogeel, 2011: Barjracharya, 2011: Picot, 2014: Hertog, 2014: Khan, 2011: Naufal & Vargas-Silva, 2010).

"Kuwait must protect itself," Prince of Kuwait Sabah AL-ALAhmad stated in a speech during national day celebrations. Kuwait's rentier state regime uses Kafala as a scanning mechanism that alternates, observers and analyzes anyone that comes inside its borders. It is a class division mechanism that has been installed and applied in various governmental and non-governmental sectors around the country to separate the Kuwaiti nationals from non-Kuwaitis, with regards to social, economic, health, cultural, political amenities and duties (ALGodori, 2016).

On another note, the economy of the country participates in sustaining the position of Kafala since Kuwait's oil revenues peaked at \$128.14 in March 2012. The oil cost has dropped dramatically reaching a very low point of \$45.13 in January 2015, which means there is a massive decline of 65 percent of the total revenues. Oil prices can remain below the economic break-even point for up to two years without significantly affecting domestic spending or the banking sector in Kuwait. Nevertheless, the government may look to alter its spending plans accordingly (Nakhli, 2014).

Eighty percent of the government income comes from the oil sector so there are no other areas in the economy to balance any potential decline in the oil prices. That would be a critical concern for the sustainability of the Kuwaiti economy (Nakhli, 2014).

The System has a set of standard features in all Gulf countries, including Kuwait, administrated and regulated by the Ministry of Interior Affairs, which grants the foreign workers their residency right, is the one that enforces those decisions without outside intervention by the court or other governmental bodies (Zahra, 2015).

According to Longva (1997), Kuwait's adoption of Kafala dates back to the country's traditions and culture since the sponsorship system was adopted by Anglers Sponsor Pearl Divers each season, bringing them on board on their ships and covering their until the season is over. The owners would divide or take away the fees from the Pearl Divers' salary that was earned during the season, but such situation left the divers in a continuous cycle of debt (Longva, 1997).

Kuwait's concern for stability is huge, and it may have led its local towards ideologically driven Islamist parties, which seem to compromise and add progressive

reforms over strictly Islamist laws. (ALGhanim, 2015; ALogeel, 2011; Barjracharya, 2011; Picot, 2014; Khan, 2011; Naufal & Vargas-Silva, 2010).

For example, Qatar and Saudi Arabia countries require a worker to have sufficient exit permit before they can leave the country. a sponsored employee must ask for a permit to leave, and employers have denied their workers exist permits in the cases of employment disputes (“What You Need to Know about Qatar Sponsorship Law”, 2013).

In the majority of GCC countries with the exception of Kuwait and Bahrain, workers cannot change jobs without their sponsor’s permission, no matter how long they have worked. The only way around this requirement is to seek special permission from the Ministry of Interior Affairs, and in some situations, to file a court case (Lesly, 2014).

Before discussing the consequences of the Kafala System on foreign workers, one must understand the fabric of the Kuwaiti society, where dramatic changes are bound to happen the moment migration takes place.

Kuwait’s reflection as a society is multicultural, and far from being locally made. However, multiculturalism is not legally recognized or practiced within the government, where there are brutal and strict laws to separate the Kuwaitis from foreign workers, and so, it is tough to be integrated into this society. The number of Kuwaitis in the labor market fell below 5% during the 80s, and the percentage of Asian workers increased at the same time, unlike its low rate during the 1970s, where Arab nationals were higher in number. Workers’ civil rights were taken and completely ignored. The percentage of citizens nationalizing Bidon in 1965 were 36%. The number declined steadily, but Kuwaitis comprised of 28% of the population before the Iraqi invasion in 1990 resulting in 37% of the locals in 1995.

According to statistical reports in the year 1980, there was an increase in the percentage of Asian workers, covering all market needs except in mines and petrol, where Arab nationals worked. Asian workers covered 47.1% in 1985 in the gasoline business, but 88.3% in hunting, agriculture, trade, and construction.

- Eight point nine of those workers took jobs in education and managerial arts positions, knowing that 6% had a university degree, and 37% participated in the educational System, still some of them were not qualified for their positions.
- Desk work and secretarial jobs are taken up by 56.4% workers from India and Pakistan, where those companies consider many factors when hiring the workers who get paid less than the Kuwaiti nationals and speak a different language other than Arabic.
- It was known that the level of education was quite primary and weak in the Gulf after the exploration of oil. Those governments needed foreign laborers to enhance the educational system.
- Arabs and Asians were part of the Kuwaiti society, and during the 70s, with their increase and continuous impact on the community, the number of illiterate people grew as well, leaving only 17% of Arabs illiterate from the Arab communities, where Asians constituted of 82.7% of the illiterate society in Kuwait.
- The 1970s up to the 2000s saw an increase in Asian workers, which was influenced by the replacement of Arab nationals. The reasons facilitating the replacement included:
 1. Asian workers were less costly than the Arab workers concerning monthly salaries and visa issues.

2. Asian workers left Kuwait or any Gulf countries earlier as soon as their contract expired.
3. Asian workers did not ask for family reunions or permanent residence.
4. There were regular workshops and awareness campaigns by the government and non-governmental organizations, to raise awareness about the importance of having Kuwaitis working in the private and public sector to replace the foreign labor. Furthermore Kuwaitization was reinforced to provide employment opportunities for the Kuwaitis in their land and invest time and effort to integrate the Kuwaiti males and females into the economic infrastructure of the country (Ezzeddine, 2001). Two regulations were implanted in 1979; Law 199 and Law 37 by the Ministry of Labor (Ezzeddine, 2001).

In 2007 40% of the population in Kuwait consisted of children who were less than 15 years old, 5% were aged 60, and above, the population pyramid was slightly unbalanced, and there was a preponderance of men over women (Shah, 2007). The statistics indicated that migration remained highly selective with an indication of men dominance in the country within the population and workforce. The current worker policies stipulate that the employee lives without his/her family due to a limited salary or visa difficulties, where every worker needs permission to invite their families. For example, payment for family visas is 450KD for the government employees and 650 for private sector employees. In 2009, the Interior Ministry of Kuwait lowered the minimum fee required for non-Kuwaitis to get family visas, which was 250KD. However, the workers would have to live in Kuwait for at least two years before inviting any relative (Bakri, 2004).

The existing data shows that there is a predominance of domestic migration, which is higher among the Arabs than Asians, judging from the percentage of the people who are Kuwaitis and non-Kuwaitis. Yet the rate is different because foreigners are around 372,194 (16.2%) in numbers. To break it down, from those born in 2007, 81% are Arab, 17% are Asian, and the remaining 2% from different nationalities (Paci, 2007). According to Kuwaiti law, they can't become Kuwaiti citizens, unlike the USA. Educational distribution in Kuwait varies whereby most of those who can't read and write are Kuwaiti females and the same goes for non-Kuwaitis. As for first, intermediary and Middle school, males dominate the classrooms (Shah, 2007).

Kuwait always played a significant role in hosting different nationalities, especially after its independence, where a considerable number of Indian-Europeans and other nations came to Kuwait for career opportunities due to the development of the oil business. Kuwait worked hard since 1961 to boost its infrastructure and develop educational, touristic, and economic sectors, but there were some hiccups down the road. After the Iraqi invasion, Kuwait's political standpoint had some consequences, and that led to the deportation of the foreign workers.

3.9.3 Why Kafala is still Intact?

The Kafala system despite its flaws helped develop and maintain a unique economic and social model whose aim to distribute the oil wealth among its cities and regulate other workers. It is like being in the Kuwait but not quite, because one remains a temporary citizen. It is an isolationist system derived from an isolationist regime. It is important to point that at the end. The Kafala System also protects the individual who enters a foreign land from losing job opportunities and from being manipulated or deceived. This is because the worker has various rights such as

becoming legal, owning a house, receiving a monthly salary without taxes, and obtaining health insurance. Kuwait has the right as a state to protect itself from all types of danger, and this is shown in this research paper seeing as chaos occurs if Kafala did not exist .

Alternatives to the Kafala system do exist, and the Kuwaiti Emir has made overtures about abolishing the system with the newly proposed system, which would allow workers to move their residence guarantee from their employers to the Kuwaiti Ministry of Social Affairs upon the completion of one year of work, which will facilitate the protection of workers' rights.

Sheikh Bibi Nasser AL-Sabah commented on the status of domestic workers that should be treated as part of the family because they work in households for instance, in the case of housekeepers. So, it is important to differentiate between the status of housekeeping workers, cleaners, clerks, and drivers and among company employees in the private or public sector.

Numerous differences are prone to create issues in the day-to-day relationships of workers and their sponsors. The developing problems may be attributed to the dynamics of the unequal power, the intimate daily contact, the cultural barriers and language. Therefore, in the case that a company in Kuwait recruits someone, the company is recruiting a human being who represents their country. Consequently, it is difficult to know everything about this worker, such as where he/she comes, where he/she was raised? Where he/she studied? What are his/her flaws and assets were? Whether he or she is comfortable working in a new environment, is he or she able to speak a certain language frequently, is he or she happy here? And what motivated he or she to come to Kuwait. is he good or bad person?

There are many reasons that motivate someone to go to a different country and everything is bound to affect how his/her performs their work, how he/she react to certain rules and regulations in the country.

The developed equation of the Kafala System places the security of the state in the hands of the citizens. The status quo could backfire as well, some might abuse this power, and others may not, but workers will not be able to enter the country freely without any sponsorship (Zahra, 2015). Other dangers and responsibilities that the state of Kuwait is not equipped to deal with from a tactical standpoint may appear. Kuwait's political perspective and living standards are changing, despite the luxury high economic prominence of the country that is currently under uncertainty because of falling oil prices. Such division falls under the human rights violation treaty by the United Nations. However, despite the constant efforts propositioned by the state to modify these rules in the Kafala System, it remains working as a governmental machinery that monitors the worker's life in Kuwait (Motaparthi, 2015).

The tribe's account for 60% of the population, and this necessitates the selection of leaders from tribal families to parliament members which is considered instrumental in ensuring that the needs of the tribes are met through the representatives.

The growth of tribal influence in parliament facilitated the growth of Kuwait's opposition movement as the tribes sought to compound on the importance of revamping the existing structures and processes adopted within parliament and in the governance of the country. Increased tribe involvement in reforms has led to relinquished control by Sabah's over the extreme level of influence experienced. Increased control of the tribes has led to the development of numerous liberal groups including the Democratic Forum (al-Manbar al-Dimugrati) and the National Alliance (al-Tahaluf al-Watani) together with the Islamic groups. The groups sought to promote

high levels of equality, democracy and government participation. The growth of the liberal groups remained influenced by the existence of Bidon who referred to individuals without legal documents as the individuals were migrants from Gulf nations and were denied citizenship applications.

The biggest problem faced in Kuwait relates to the poor adoption of strategies and programs geared towards promoting the identification of additional resources other than oil revenues. An increase in the monthly earnings percentages in comparison to the rate of production has led to limited returns resulting in the existence of economic deficit in Kuwait (ALyan, 2016). The Kafala System has been attacked and criticized by international human rights organizations for its “inhumane” treatment of many foreign worker cases. Giving the circumstances, the adoption of the System was regarded a measure for promoting national security within the country.

The Arab world now and its problems are inter-connected just like a domino effect; whatever happens to that domino block directly affects all the countries in the region and their economic policies.

3.10 Textual Analysis

Why are Kuwaitis not revolting against the Kafala System or any governmental systemic body? And why will Kafala will not change dramatically or disappear completely? Because it is important to know that citizens of the oil monarchies feel gratitude to their rulers for giving them money and that this gratitude translates into political support. In Saudi’s case, if Islamists win power in Saudi, it could put the ruling family of al Saud to the ground depending on whether the family can pass over power to the Islamists (AlGhanim, 2015; Alogeel, 2011; Barjracharya, 2011; Picot, 2014; Hertog, 2014; Khan, 2011; Naufal & Vargas-Silva, 2010).

The Gulf regimes are in a real state of perplexity. However, their international image and prestige matters greatly with the exploitation of a series of weak, helpless workers being a major part of the gulf monarchies and their national strategy for surviving in the international market. But they have to choose between their image abroad and the security of their regime at home (Hanieh, 2014). To be able to clean the image of the Gulf's treatment of expats, the Kafala System itself would have to be abolished and fundamental workplace rights installed. However, to do this would be to tug at a loose thread, which could unravel the class hierarchies in the region (Hanieh, 2014). As Haniyeh (2014) summarizes, this is the impact of neoliberalism as grand larceny, and it is a projection of class power that strengthened the position of the local elites, while simultaneously making the Gulf take over the region. These conditions made the arab world suffer and burst into political flames.

The Kafala system is considered a pivotal element of the control adopted by the countries, which are geared towards preventing a potential revolution from employees and maintaining the standard of peace experienced in the region. However, the provision of unfavorable working conditions coupled with lack of fair pay necessitates the adoption of a system that eliminates the Kafala and promotes viable structures geared towards regulating the employment terms of foreign workers.

There is an important element to challenge the state in the Gulf must also be the defiance of the region's workers, some exploitations happening with workers is a vital part of showing how working classes are formed in the Middle East (AlGhanim, 2015; Alogeel, 2011; Barjracharya, 2011; Picot, 2014; Hertog, 2014; Khan, 2011; Naufal & Vargas-Silva, 2010).

Additionally, it identifies a tool to sustain the regime of Gulf nations to project their power. To make it simple, the end of the Kafala System and empowerment of

foreign workers would directly affect the center of autocracy, human exploitation and counter revolution in the Arab world (Hanieh, 2015).

A study was conducted to record dangerous transactions and visa frauds issued by traders and criminals who take advantage of the weak positions of the migrant worker, which had allowed many ineligible people to enter the the Kuwaiti society (ALSagr, 2014).

There have been some violations, where the “Kafeel” or sponsor, takes money from the migrant he or she is sponsoring. This money covers their living expenses and they are hired into a draining and challenging job. All this is not included in the job sheet approved by the legislative committee. Sometimes, the sponsors use violence against workers like withholding their passports and forbidding them from leaving the country, especially if they rejected working in adverse conditions.

In some instances, the sponsor might slow down the resolution process and refuse to negotiate in front of the human rights committee or the companies that seek to provide resolution between sponsor and worker conflicts (AlGhanim, 2015; Alogeel, 2011; Barjracharya, 2011; Picot, 2014; Hertog, 2014; Khan, 2011; Naufal & Vargas-Silva, 2010).

They write a bad recommendation or tell other companies not to hire the worker or to not cash a check, so this would make the worker feel discriminated against, frustrated, and eventually unemployed and unable to support his/her family or him or herself. There are no fixed working schedules in Kuwait. This drains the energy out of the workers, and some never get holidays or sick days or are permitted to have a single day off.

A report noted that in March 2013, the Minister of Public Affairs and Social Welfare reviewed the reports of the exploitation of workers in the hands of the

sponsors and sought to cut back about 1 million workers in 10 years. There, the Rachidi minister placed a strategic plan to vacate 100,000 workers yearly, because they have ruined the image of Kuwait in the human rights organization. Economically speaking, many politicians have rejected this plan, as it brings out the negative aspects of the private sector in Kuwait (Afghani, 2015; Apogeal, 2011; Barjracharya, 2011; Picot, 2014; Hertog, 2014; Khan, 2011; Naufal & Vargas-Silva, 2010). They depended solely on the non-Kuwaiti workers who had jobs which Kuwaitis do not know of or work in. During mid-August of the year 2008 the Kuwaiti government announced a plan to remove 800,000 workers between 2008 and 2011, but it was not implemented. Workers were now estimated as being between 897,000 and 1000000 in amount as of January 2013. There were others ways implemented to vacate some non-Kuwaitis such as deporting those workers who ran through red lights, more than one time while driving, or had more unpaid tickets. (AlGhanim, 2015; Alogeel, 2011; Barjracharya, 2011; Picot, 2014; Hertog, 2014; Khan, 2011; Naufal & Vargas-Silva, 2010). There are visa dealers who take advantage of such exploitation, by charging 1000 KD per worker to obtain a working visa in Kuwait. If they leave, they can return with a different passport, and they would be signed under "fake companies." There are around 1550 businesses in the private sector in Kuwait that has violated the rules by hiring people without valid visas in 2013. In a press release issued in January 2013, some officials in the business sector stated that the general investment institution in Kuwait is waiting for an acceptance to open three companies that will cater, foster and handle all paperwork and status of the workers, but the last group withdrew from it, leaving this proposal pending.

During the study, there were recommendations suggested, firstly, by canceling the Kafala System, a law would be put in place that punishes visa dealers and the

exploiters of humans, especially by companies in Kuwait that affected the country with regards to human rights. Secondly, a highly developed general institution would be organized and established for migrant workers, which would be an independent body from the Ministry of Public Affairs that deals with their issues (AlGhanim, 2015; Alogeel, 2011; Barjracharya, 2011; Picot, 2014; Hertog, 2014; Khan, 2011; Naufal & Vargas-Silva, 2010). This can turn into reality, by placing certain migrant workers' policies, and then decide their actual needs and the objectives of each employees and their stay in Kuwait. Thirdly, of a set of statements and laws that organizes their relationship with their workplace with regards to working hours, fees, housing, and everything that could potentially harm them socially or economically should be issued. Lastly, resolve all financial, humanitarian problems of the migrant workers and report on a monthly basis to the legislative committee, and keep the system up-to-date, to protect both legal and human rights of these workers (AlGhanim, 2015; Alogeel, 2011; Barjracharya, 2011; Picot, 2014; Hertog, 2014; Khan, 2011; Naufal & Vargas-Silva, 2010).

There were certain traditions and norms that were involuntarily integrated in the Kuwait society, as a result of the increase of non-Kuwaitis living in the country. The traditions created a counter-effect on the Kuwaitis claiming that they do not feel as if they belong to the country anymore, where everything takes time to be done in the public sector and the number of people standing in line is frustrating. Increase of traffic, the housing situation, and spread of unknown diseases happen due to some migrant workers who arrive in Kuwait illegally, carrying diseases, traditions, habits, and new attitudes with them (AlGhanim, 2015; Alogeel, 2011; Barjracharya, 2011; Picot, 2014; Hertog, 2014; Khan, 2011; Naufal & Vargas-Silva, 2010). The rising size and population of Kuwait indicates that the current infrastructure was designed for a

lower number of people, and now, with this increase, it has created a continuous traffic in all its sectors, both private and public, where it takes hours, or even weeks or months to be served. In a report published in 2013 in AL-Ray newspaper, certain statistics with regards to the average development in percentage between the Kuwaitis and non-Kuwaitis living in the areas across town highlighted a population of one million Kuwaiti, compared to almost 2 million non-Kuwaitis living in the country since 2011.

Moving from one place to another and migrating to a different city does not have to be financial. However, there are many types of migrations where people move for education, travel, exploration, a better life, or for a good job. There are physiological factors that are part of the decision-making process where most foreign workers from Asian background prefer to stay longer or permanently in the Gulf societies for better living conditions. This varies in percentage when it comes to the Arab workers (AlGhanim, 2015; Alogeel, 2011; Barjracharya, 2011; Picot, 2014; Hertog, 2014; Khan, 2011; Naufal & Vargas-Silva, 2010). On the other hand, there are some benefits of having Asian workers for Gulf people's benefit, where 96% of Kuwaiti families depend on domestic servants to raise their children and do housework. Secondly, there are certain social attitudes, like Kuwaitis do not accept, deal, or handle housework still, asian workers accept certain difficulties or socially negative behavior by Kuwaiti sponsors because of their limited rights.

There is a sense of "security" which make sponsors realize that the worker will not rebel because otherwise, they will be subject to deportation. Due to such irregularity of the Kuwaiti population, there is a missing diversity, and a huge gap in the living condition, social statuses, and social recognition between approximately one million Kuwaitis and approximately 2 million non-Kuwaitis (AlGhanim, 2015; Alogeel, 2011; Barjracharya, 2011; Picot, 2014; Hertog, 2014; Khan, 2011; Naufal &

Vargas-Silva, 2010). Despite the fact that the foreign workers and Arabs exceed the population of the Kuwaitis, they do not get any of their constitutional rights, and they live and work differently, when seen from all the aspects.

So, as a result, such discrimination and lack of diversity in lifestyles subject Kuwait to enter a red zone of human rights violations plus creates a very unstable and uneven professional or personal relationship among the nationals and non-nationals, where crime rate escalates among the non-Kuwaitis. Bribery, human trafficking, drug and alcohol dealership, and many more problems have escalated heavily in the past 20 years in Kuwait (AlGhanim, 2015; Alogeel, 2011; Barjracharya, 2011; Picot, 2014; Hertog, 2014; Khan, 2011; Naufal &Vargas-Silva, 2010).

The country is known as an Islamic country governed by Sabah and with a limited democratized authority which established its own parliament in the 1960s, with the aid of Abdullah Salem AL Sabah. Nevertheless, such a parliament does not have the full authority to establish laws or change certain things in Kuwait, and the Emir of Kuwait, who handles everything governmental, constitutional, and whatever is related to the Kuwaiti society, solely governs everything. So, imagine 2 million people coming to a country, where there is only one official church, no Jewish temple, and no leisure and entertainment facilities that can be found in a cosmopolitan city. Cinemas are only dedicated to censored films, and the only choice for non-Kuwaitis to hold a party is within the borders of their apartment, house, or villa. Many people in Kuwait have respected such rules. Even so, such repression has created problems, where many banned products have been smuggled inside the country, like drugs, alcohol, certain films, books, or even feminine products (AlGhanim, 2015: Alogeel, 2011; Barjracharya, 2011; Picot, 2014; Hertog, 2014; Khan, 2011; Naufal &Vargas-Silva, 2010).

People in Kuwait have a tendency to follow their needs because the society does not fulfill certain personal or social needs that humans require to have a healthy life. So, some people lose their concentration, and it shifts from their goals and objectives to their personal needs. This is why people are seen bribing a government official to get a certain paper signed or a bottle of wine smuggled in a purse through the airport customs, or a film smuggled through a DVD.

There are certain physiological and social barriers while leading a normal life in Kuwait. The diversity presents different languages, social norms, traditions, lifestyle, and different mentalities that is in complete contradiction with Kuwait and its system. Ironically, some of these countries, like India and Philippines, have adopted Islam as one of the main religions (AlGhanim, 2015; Alogeel, 2011; Barjracharya, 2011; Picot, 2014; Hertog, 2014; Khan, 2011; Naufal & Vargas-Silva, 2010). On another note, their country is not Islamic, where they have created a certain degree of separation, so that it does not affect the daily lives of people and the state's authority. It goes for Egypt, Lebanon and Jordan (Stephan, 2013). This shows us how religion and democracy interact with each other, and how such different interpretation of Islam could bring confusion to individuals when visiting another Islamic country. A study showed that 52.7% of the nationals' relationship with non-Kuwaitis is weak, 47.3% of relationships are described as okay, where only 10% described their relationship with foreign workers and non-Kuwaitis to be strong. However, there is some common understanding about the fact that there is a tension between the relationship between the migrants and Arab nationals, where the nationals prefer Asians (Ali, 2001).

Chapter Four

Discussion

The Kafala System identifies as an isolationist system; it isolates the state of Kuwait from any change of their routine, from any foreign impact. The system remains imperfect in sustaining security, but it is the only system used at the moment in Kuwait and across Gulf nations because of the mechanism and the way of working in governments inside these states. Kafala is like an exit strategy because it monitors movement of anyone from A to Z without having an inviting nature to any non-Gulf national. In return, it pushes people away, so the society remains untouched, unchanged in mentality or ideology. What changes is the infrastructure, like having new buildings, new jobs and such. The Kafala System remains similar to a Visa Issuing system around the world, but it works a double-edged weapon and plays a vital role in understanding and monitoring whoever enters the Gulf State. Despite that Kuwait has a history with foreign labor, it continues to use this method because it corresponds with the governments' minor standards. It is a safe assumption to believe that this is the only working system at the moment, and if it changes, a new change in authority must be at hand.

The system of employment is slow, and there are no strategic plans to place employees in job positions that relates to their expertise. Instead, there is some confusion in the work place, a lot of people work in different departments, and the Kafala System was created to monitor who goes where and what profession is needed.

The civil service commission in Kuwait handles employment in governmental agencies and ministries and employs hundreds of nationals, and arabs on a monthly

basis, yet those who work in private sector must abide by rules and regulations of the company they are going to work for that's why they must request or obtain a working visa from their employer.

Over the past several years, Kuwaiti officials have reformed the Kafala laws to address the concerns of those who express complete disapproval of the system, for exposing foreign workers especially workers who are subject to abusive treatment. There is an inhumane treatment that can't be avoided like the confiscation of passport, and the inability to transfer employment. The government provides \$3,500 per foreign-born worker, to maintain national infrastructure and services.

The current situation experienced in Kuwait may be referred to a constitutional revolution influenced by rousing debates on issues experienced in the society together with increasing levels of awareness among individuals in the society. High levels of politicization among the leaders have sought to maintain the old systems of governance, which remain detrimental to the current and future growth of all individuals represented in the population. The adoption of rationalization concerning the existent political processes will remain essential to Kuwait, as it will ensure continuous stability of the political system. Similarly, the process will promote the level of freedom extended to all in the population leading to increased growth of the country's democracy through the amending of the constitution.

Chapter Five

Conclusion

In conclusion, it would seem legitimate nowadays for researchers and human rights activists to question and challenge their assumptions about this system called Kafala. This has been the purpose of this research. This does not mean, however, that there is no place for a definitive solution but it is important to differentiate between making a genuine effort to improve the understanding of politics of Kuwait and the limitations to why Kafala is used and not removed. Nevertheless, one needs to be more aware of the influence one can have in portraying and shaping worldviews which are one sided, and sometimes, factually inaccurate. In increasing such a level of awareness, the research answers one major question about the origins of Kafala and its reflections on the danger of having such a system with regards to humanitarian factors, while it highlights the main reason why Gulf countries use it and specifically Kuwait.

These research findings indicate that Kafala is not a single legal document but an accumulated set of practices under the whims of decisions by the ruling Family in Kuwait.

Their unidentified reasons behind the monopoly of the lives of migrant workers are secured, and they have a better way to control the workers of Kuwait against security problems, identity issues, and criminal activities, wishing in the long run to replace anyone who is not a local. Kafala is simply ambiguous.

There are limitations to this research that cannot be discussed due to the nature of the governmental system of Kuwait. During interviews with government officials,

many refused to foretell the reason why Kuwait continues to exploit this system. Additionally, when asked about whether or not the Kuwait Royal Family created these limitations, the research question remained unanswered. There is a shady politicized part of this research that is not possible to unlock due to political restrictions by the State of Kuwait.

The concept of Kafala is all about taking control, including control of movement, actions and lives of people. This control takes over and spreads to other parts of the Kuwaiti society. For example, in August 2016, the “United Nations Committee against Torture” expressed its worries at reports of arrest and torture by the Kuwaiti police and projecting security forces break outs on protesters, members of minorities, and persons suspected of terrorist activities. The committee also urged Kuwait to reinstate its “de facto moratorium” on applying the death penalty. On another note, The 2015 DNA law requiring all citizens, visitors and residents to provide DNA samples to the authorities was introduced after the June 2015 suicide bombing of the Imam Sadiq Mosque, which killed 27 people and wounded 227. Authorities have reported to local media that anyone failing to comply with the law would be subject to sanctions, including cancelling their passports and a possible travel ban.

Such examples are a direct indication that Kuwait faces security threats and Kafala is merely a new form of isolationism.

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