

ALJAZEERA'S TV CHANNEL COVERAGE OF CORONAVIRUS IN ARAB COUNTRIES: AN ANALYTICAL STUDY

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ABSTRACT

The study aimed to identify the coverage of Al-Jazeera channel for the coronavirus in the Arab countries through an analytical study, which included the presentation of the categories of analysis, the study concluded that the percentage of coverage of Al-Jazeera channel about the phenomenon of the Corona virus reached 88% of the news rate, as indicated through the (Reporters) program that 75% of the coverage was about the Arab Gulf countries. Al Jazeera's coverage of Corona virus relied on foreign newspapers, where it occupied the second position with 44%, while Arab news agencies and Arab newspapers enjoyed a very small percentage in covering the news, which was 5.72%, and Al Jazeera's coverage of Corona virus news It was an objective coverage of Somewhat, the objective coverage rate was 87.1%, and the biased coverage rate was 12.9%. These percentages indicate that Al-Jazeera has covered the news.

Keywords: Aljazeera's TV channel, Coronavirus, Arab countries

INTRODUCTION

Satellite TV channels are considered one of the most powerful modern communication tools that help the receiving audience to experience and interact with the age, and they also have played an important role in explaining issues related to human health and putting them before the public opinion in order to prepare it in the media about a specific phenomenon sweeping countries without supervision (Al-Ansari, 2017). Therefore, the twenty-first century is considered the age of international media and propaganda, with all its components, in light of the issues that are now being raised related to a dangerous phenomenon, which is the Coronavirus (Al-Jazeera TV, 2020).

It is worth noting that Al- Jazeera channel coverage through a network of reporters, Al Jazeera channel Mubasher (live), and through dialogues in which some medical professionals are hosted, in addition to specialists in the fields of economics, politics, and psychology, shrouded in caveats and dangers about the Corona virus, not the least of which is the manufacture of false public opinion, forgery and misleading truth, concepts, and conventions for gains that may be political (Reporters Network, 2020). As there is guidance from the authorities in the Arab world towards concealing cases of infection with the Coronavirus in Arab countries, in addition to falsifying facts about safety measures against this virus (Without Borders Program, 2020). Perhaps the media environment of Al-Jazeera began to use a media discourse within dialogue cultural programs to confront the phenomenon of the spread of Coronavirus in Arab countries.

It should be noted that Coronavirus is from a large group of viruses known to cause disorders ranging from colds to more severe diseases, such as Middle Eastern Respiratory Syndrome and Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) (WHO, 2020). The new coronavirus was identified in 2019 in Wuhan, China; this virus is a new strain that has not been previously identified in humans (United Nations, 2020). One of the most prominent headlines in Al-

Jazeera was under the name (Coronavirus: the mysterious phenomenon), where the dialogue touched on the concept of this phenomenon and its causes and treatment, and its impact on Arab societies in terms of health, economic and politics; professionals in the field of public health, a personality in the United Nations, in addition to personality from international organizations and NGOs were hosted, and the dialogue took place through the Al-Jazeera Mubasher (live) Network (Harvest Program, 2020).

Through the meeting on Al-Jazeera, the guests confirmed that on December 31, 2019, the WHO regional office in China was informed of cases of pneumonia causing an unknown disease that was discovered in Wuhan, Hubei Province, and the new Coronavirus was declared as the causing virus of these cases by the Chinese authorities on January 7 2020. (Al-Jazeera TV, 2020).

In the same context, the World Health official in the Middle East confirmed that there are many families of the Coronavirus that have been discovered so far and that humans can be infected with it from an animal source, as it was confirmed the transmission of the Coronavirus that causes severe acute respiratory syndrome (SARS) from civet cats to humans in China in 2002, the Coronavirus, the Middle East Respiratory Syndrome (Mers) virus also passed from camels to humans in Saudi Arabia in 2012. The last COVID-19 virus was also from the Corona virus family, and it was linked to a marine and animal market in Wuhan, China (WHO, 2020). There are many other known (Corona) virus strains that circulate among animals without the transmission of infection to humans until now, as it was also clarified that the Corona virus can be identified by genetic sequence (Asharq Al-Awsat Journal, 2020).

PROBLEM OF THE STUDY

It is the responsibility of Al-Jazeera to show the true stereotype regarding the Coronavirus phenomenon, in addition to employing the components of the World Health Organization in its dialogues and speeches towards the receiving audience, and to clarify the truth about the Coronavirus in relation to injuries and safety measures in airports and state institutions in the Arab countries in the Middle East.

It is also the responsibility of Al-Jazeera to publish everything related to the Coronavirus and explain the causes of this virus and the mechanisms for its treatment and prevention, and from this standpoint it becomes a justification for the researcher to ask a set of questions about these mechanisms to confront the Coronavirus in Arab countries, which are useful in diagnosing this situation, including the conditions and the atmosphere responsible for the spread of this virus in the hope of trapping and eliminating it, and accordingly, does Al-Jazeera employ constructive dialogues that are useful in diagnosing and clarifying the causes of transmission of the virus and the mechanisms for its treatment and prevention. Hence, the research in Al-Jazeera's coverage of coronavirus in the Arab countries has justifications in light of what is being presented on the local and international media scene of the necessity of confronting this virus, and showing the negative stereotype of this virus, and therefore the main question of the study problem is reflected in the following:

What are the mechanisms of Al-Jazeera coverage of coronavirus in the Arab countries?

The following sub-questions stems from the main question:

1. What is the role of Al-Jazeera's coverage of coronavirus in facing its risks and its spread in the Arab countries?
2. What are the most prominent analyzes related to this phenomenon?

3. What are the talk shows that cover Coronavirus?

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. Identifying the mechanisms of media coverage of Al-Jazeera about the phenomenon of the spread of Coronavirus in Arab countries
2. Identifying the safety and preventive measures against the Coronavirus.
3. Identifying the repercussions of the negative stereotype of the spread of the Corona virus.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

1. Shedding light on what the Coronavirus is and how it is spreading in Arab countries.
2. Explaining the mechanism for determining the type and origin of the Coronavirus
3. Highlighting the ways the virus is transmitted among humans.
4. Highlighting the symptoms of coronavirus infection.

TERMS OF THE STUDY

Coronavirus: It is a large group of viruses that may cause disease in animals and humans, and it is known that a number of corona viruses cause in humans respiratory infections that range from common colds to more severe diseases such as Middle Eastern respiratory syndrome and severe acute respiratory syndrome (SARS). The newly discovered Coronavirus causes the Corvid-19 virus. (WHO, 2020).

Al-Jazeera Channel: It is a satellite TV channel, which belongs to the so-called Al-Jazeera Media Network, and it has several outlets, including the Internet, and specialized TV channels in several languages, and it displays many news and dialogue programs related to the political, social, cultural, economic aspect ... etc. (Al-Jazeera TV, 2020) .

Talk Shows: What is meant in this research is what Al-Jazeera broadcasts through the Al-Jazeera reporters network, and Al-Jazeera Mubasher network of talk shows related to a given phenomenon, and the extent of the reflection and impact of these programs on the formation of awareness and its development among the Arab recipient towards this phenomenon (Mansour, 2014).

Methodology and Procedures of the Study:

Method of the Study: In this study, the researcher followed the descriptive analytical method, where he monitored the coverage of Al-Jazeera channel for coronavirus in Arab countries through an analytical study.

Population of the Study: It is Al-Jazeera's coverage of the phenomenon of the spread of Coronavirus, through (Reporters) program, and (Without Borders) program, in addition to breaking news related to the spread of the Coronavirus. Al-Jazeera network was chosen being one of the most powerful Arab satellite channels that is directed for the Arab audience, which publishes many local and international news.

Instrument of the Study: A special instrument was developed in the content analysis (analysis form) that deals with the issue of the spread of the Coronavirus in Arab countries.

The validity and reliability of the instrument were ensured in addition to its appropriateness for analysis.

The Study Variables:

The Independent Variable: Phenomenon of Corona spread in the Arab countries.

The Dependent Variable: Al Jazeera coverage of the Corona virus.

Analytical study of Al-Jazeera coverage of Coronavirus

Analysis categories:

Media studies indicate that the value of the content analysis lies in its categories, which must be characterized by specificity, clarity and uniqueness. Below is a review of the categories of the analysis of the spread of the Coronavirus in the Arab countries according to Al-Jazeera coverage for this news, as the categories were as follows:

1. **Category of Topics:** It refers to all topics that Al-Jazeera channel covered through news and dialogue programs about Coronavirus.
2. **Category of Sources:** It refers to all the sources on which Al-Jazeera channel relied on in covering the news of the Coronavirus, and they are represented by the sources of private websites, international news agencies, Arab news agencies, foreign newspapers, Arab newspapers, and agencies.
3. **Press patterns category:** they are all the arts that were done by covering the news of the Coronavirus, and they include: news, report, article, investigation, and interview.
4. **The category of highlighting elements,** which means all the highlighting methods on which Al-Jazeera has relied on to cover the news of the Corona virus, including: title and photo.
5. **Coverage direction category:** It is intended to cover the news of the Corona virus, and includes: supporter, neutral, opponents, and without direction.
6. **Coverage size category:** means the size of material related to the spread of the Coronavirus.
7. **Objectivity category:** in dealing with topics about the Coronavirus, its causes and ways to prevent it.
8. **Category of supply sources:** means the main sources related to data and information on the topic of covering a news story, and they include: Arab sources, Western sources, and mixed sources.
9. **The category of media frameworks:** It refers to the humanitarian concerns, economic outcomes, political relations frameworks, which Al-Jazeera channel focus on covering.

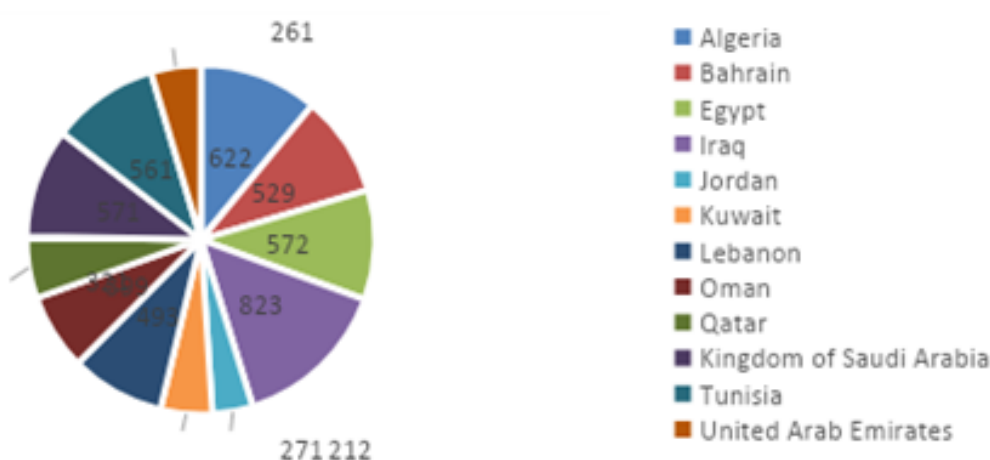
Hence, the analysis process for Al-Jazeera's coverage of Corona virus showed the following:

1. The coverage rate of Al-Jazeera on the Corona Virus phenomenon reached 88% compared to political, economic and other news.
2. (Reporters) program covered the Corona virus phenomenon in all Arab countries. The Arab Gulf countries occupied 75% of this coverage.
3. (Without Borders) Program came with the largest dialogical coverage rate on the Corona Virus, as it reached 91%. The program was repeated in different time periods during a week of coverage, and it has discussed the following aspects:

- How the virus spreads among humans.
- Coronavirus symptoms.
- Identifying the type of coronavirus.
- The origin of this virus.
- The main steps to prevent corona virus.
- Corona virus effects on Arab societies in terms of economic, social and political aspects.

4. Al-Jazeera satellite channel, through its newsletter, confirmed the presence of coronavirus cases in the Arab countries, and reviewed a list of confirmed cases outside the mainland of China in the Arab countries and the Middle East region, as follows:

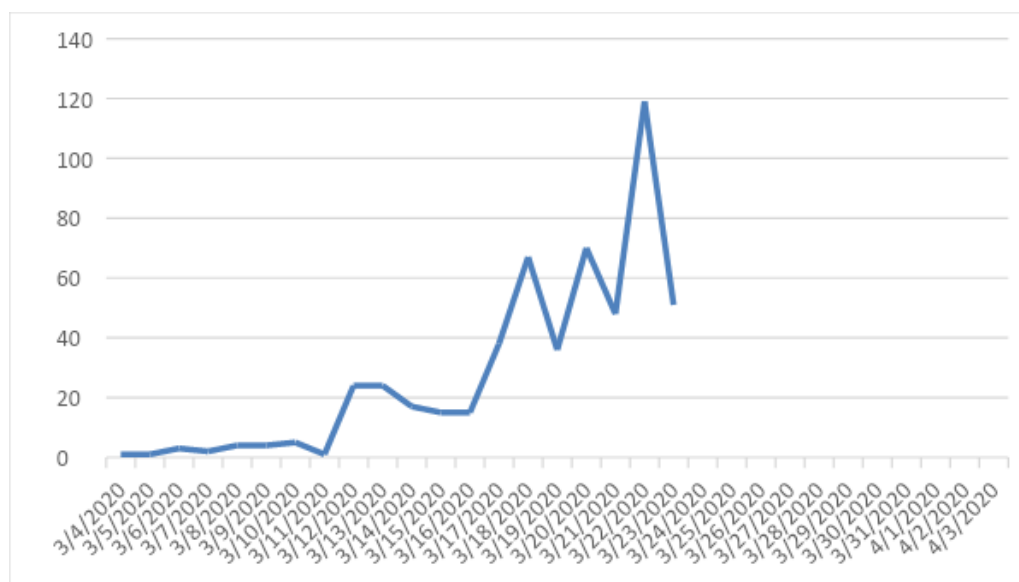
- Algeria (622cases)
- Bahrain (529cases)
- Egypt (572 cases)
- Iraq (823 cases)
- Jordan (212 case)
- Kuwait (271 cases)
- Lebanon (493 cases)
- Oman (399 cases)
- Qatar (321 cases)
- Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (571 cases)
- Tunisia (561 case)
- United Arab Emirates (261 cases)
- Syria (Number of cases in Syria is unknown due to Al-Jazeera inability to cover the Syrian interior with the ongoing war there)
- In addition to Iran, as Al Jazeera reported in its coverage of the news that the cases in Iran are unknown in number.



On the other hand, there are statistics on the prevalence of Coronavirus in Jordan issued by the Ministry of Health (2020), which indicated the high number of infections with Coronavirus at the beginning of its spread in Jordan, as shown in the following table:

Table 1. Statistics for the number of Coronavirus infections in Jordan

percentage of infections	Injuries	Date	percentage of infections	number of infections	Date
3,12%	17	14.03.2020	0,18%	1	04.03.2020
2,75%	15	15.03.2020	0,18%	1	05.03.2020
2,75%	15	16.03.2020	0,55%	3	06.03.2020
6,97%	38	17.03.2020	0,37%	2	07.03.2020
12,29%	67	18.03.2020	0,73%	4	08.03.2020
6,61%	36	19.03.2020	0,73%	4	09.03.2020
12,84%	70	20.03.2020	0,92%	5	10.03.2020
8,81%	48	21.03.2020	0,18%	1	11.03.2020
21,83%	119	22.03.2020	4,40%	24	12.03.2020
9,36%	51	23.03.2020	4,40%	24	13.03.2020



Through the statistics and previous graphs, it shows an increase in the spread of the Corona virus, and this indicates that awareness about the risks of the virus is somewhat low at the beginning of the crisis, and here came the role of researchers and the media and the Ministry of Health in Jordan to clarify the risks of this virus, methods of prevention and the safety measures followed that It has Al-Jazeera.

- The analysis showed that one of the most used methods for presenting talk shows about the spread of the Corona virus is an announcer and guests from the World Health Organization, in addition to guests from health professionals.
- In its coverage of the Coronavirus, Al-Jazeera has relied on several press sources, such as delegates and reporters, essay writers, international news agencies, Arab agencies, and Arab and foreign newspapers, and it appears through the results that the researched sites have drawn greatly from some press sources to varying degrees. The international news agencies came at the forefront of these sources, as the percentage of broadcasting the Coronavirus news reached 56% from other sources.

7. In its coverage of the Corona virus, Al-Jazeera channel relied on foreign newspapers, where it occupied the second rank by 44%, while Arab news agencies and Arab newspapers received a very small percentage in covering the news, which was 5.72%.
8. Al-Jazeera's coverage of the Corona Virus news was fairly objective coverage, with an objective coverage rate of 87.1%, and a biased coverage rate of 12.9%, and these percentages indicate that Al-Jazeera has covered the news.

CONCLUSION

Al-Jazeera channel has focused on the spread of the Coronavirus, and the coverage demonstrated the economic and social effects of this phenomenon, as the Corona virus occupied most of the coverage in news broadcasts, Al-Jazeera also outlined safety and prevention measures, which were described by the guest of (Without Borders) program at the World Health Organization, as well as the coverage of Al-Jazeera. Through a network of reporters in most of the Arab countries the risk of spreading the virus, as quarantine procedures have been followed in addition to stopping all schools and universities in some Arab countries, and stopping the Hajj and Umrah season in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, where Al-Jazeera reporters indicated that these measures are precautionary according to a political decision, in cooperation with the Ministry of Health in the Arab countries.

It may be noted that the coverage of the news took a political direction, and the bias in showing cases was not accurate according to the World Health Organization, according to investigative reports in some Arab countries and other countries such as Iran, where foreign sources that were accurate and objective were relied upon while covering the news.

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