

Arabic Digital Media Coverage For the coup crisis in Niger

Analytical study of Al Jazeera.net website

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Abstract:

This study aims to reveal how the media dealt with the issue of the crisis in the African Sahel with the development of the political and military situation in Niger, through the Arab digital media (Al-Jazeera.net website), in order to identify the extent of interest in the issue of the coup crisis, and its repercussions, as well as responses international reactions around, where the analytical descriptive survey method was used in this study, and the study revealed, through analyzing the frameworks for media treatment of the crisis, the direction of the Al-Jazeera.net news site in presenting adequate and sufficient information in detail in analyzing the current situation, as the study found that the site employed media templates, including news and reportage. to enrich the issue of the crisis, and follow-up of its course step by step, depending on the various political, military and academic personalities to address its reasons.

Keywords: media treatment, digital media, crisis, coup, Al-Jazeera.net website.

Introduction:

The contemporary world has witnessed a multitude of rapid changes as a consequence of the advent of innovations in information and communication technology across a range of domains.[1] These changes have had a profound impact on our society, with the World Wide Web and its applications serving as a significant catalyst for this transformation. The Web has effectively bridged the gap between the digital and the physical realms, offering a unique opportunity to understand and navigate the complex variables at play. By integrating actual or real reality with digital virtual reality in various forms and methods,[2] and employing the latest technological means and technical applications to understand or clarify the basic and interconnected relationship between real reality and digital virtual reality in all political, economic, cultural, security, and other fields.[3] New media represent the most prominent concept in the digital content industry for various institutions and bodies due to the multiplicity of topics and ideas according to the diversity of their fields in public life.[4] In light of the tensions that the world is currently witnessing, Al Jazeera Net has reported on the subject of political and military coups in some parts of the world,[5] which requires a set The current situation presents a multitude of variables that require wise management.[6] Digital media has focused on many crises, seeking to address them in a manner consistent with its nature, namely to enlighten the global public on the repercussions of crises in the African Sahel region and neighboring countries.[7] In light of this introduction, the following question can be raised:

• **How did Al Jazeera Net address the subject of the coup crisis in Niger?**

Previous studies:

1/ A study by Madi Nabil, Kihoul Taleb ,(2023) investigated the coverage of the Russian-Ukrainian war on Al Jazeera.net. The researchers employed a descriptive analytical survey method and found

that the website maintained a neutral stance on the crisis, with over 65% of the content falling into this category.

2/ A study by Asmaa Al-Haddad(2017) on hybrid wars - the Ukrainian crisis as a model. This study deals with the phenomenon of hybrid wars as one of the generations of new wars and uses the descriptive-analytical approach in its treatment. The results of the study conclude that hybrid wars, such as the Ukrainian war, constitute a field for a traditional battle and the international community must intervene to support the conditions of the aggressor.

3/ study of Sawsan Mekki (2024), The objective of the study was to elucidate the manner in which the Al-Jazeera news website treated the Al-Aqsa Flood battle in its media output. To this end, a sample of selected topics was subjected to analysis in order to ascertain their general features and character, as well as the site's position on the Al-Aqsa Flood. The study revealed that the Al-Aqsa Flood was treated extensively. It was characterized by an immediacy of news presentation rather than an in-depth analytical approach, and relied on rational appeals rather than emotional ones.

4/ A study by the researchers Farek, Ben Tared,(2016) on the media treatment of the Ukrainian-Russian crisis in the talk shows on Al Jazeera News Channel - an analytical study of a sample of the Beyond the News program. The study revealed that the program used news and reporting templates to enrich the talk show by **33.33%**. The program also supported the course of the crisis by hosting political and military figures to address it. The study also revealed that the program's direction was dominated by neutrality in raising the topic of the current crisis by a percentage of **50%**.

5/A study by Fatima Al-Ahmedi (2022) on the frameworks for processing international news sites for the Russian-Ukrainian war. The study aimed to identify the processing of international sites for the Russian-Ukrainian war, which led to the development of events in Ukraine and the consequences thereof, with a focus on the **CNN, France 24, and RT** Russian sites. The results of the study confirmed the difference in the nature and type of topics related to the Russian war on Ukraine that the study sample sites focused on. The results also indicated, concerning the methods used in processing the Russian war on the sites under study, that the category (using more than one method) came in the first place, and the study found that the category (reporters) came in the first place by **17.8%**.

6/ A study by Rabab Al-Basirati (2022) on the media treatment of the Russian-Ukrainian war. This study aimed to identify how the various media around the world have dealt with the phenomenon of war, and the parties to the ongoing conflict with credibility and objectivity. The results of the study concluded that electronic media, especially social media sites, provided adequate treatment of the war, but this treatment was characterized by a lack of neutrality, objectivity, and professionalism, due to the influence of Western political and economic powers on these media, where the media were directed to broadcast news that supports the Western narrative at the expense of the Russian one.

7/A study by Kirat Mohamed (2003) on American media management and crises - the Gulf War as a model. This study reviews how American media management dealt with the crisis of the third Gulf War. The study concluded that the media coverage of this crisis was characterized by the imposition of a large censorship on the media and its materials, through the restriction of journalists and their recruitment in most cases.

Research Question:

- ❖ what extent is Aljazeera.net engaged with the subject of the crisis in Niger?

- ❖ What are the most important sources that Aljazeera.net relied on to collect information and news related to the issue of the crisis in Niger?
- ❖ What are the most significant journalistic templates employed by Aljazeera.net in addressing the crisis in Niger?
- ❖ What was the position and direction of Aljazeera.net on the issue of the crisis in Niger?
- ❖ What were the underlying causes of the crisis in Niger, as reported by Aljazeera.net?

Methodology:

The study employed a descriptive analytical approach, utilising a descriptive survey method to achieve its objectives.

This study is a descriptive analytical study, which, as notes[8] depends entirely on the revelation of truth and the attainment of satisfactory results. The appropriate method for this study is the descriptive survey method, which is consistent with its nature and objectives.[9]

The sample and study tool are as follows: The data analyzed in this study is derived from articles and topics on the Al Jazeera Net website pertaining to the coup in Niger. The most appropriate tool for this purpose is content analysis of electronic content, conducted in both quantitative and qualitative manners. Content analysis is defined as "a direct technique applied to written, audio, audio-visual, or digital material issued by individuals or groups or that deals with various topics.[10] Over the course of a full month, from August 26th to August 25th, 2023, the researcher identified and selected 89 topics related to the subject of the coup in Niger.

Results:

A comprehensive analysis of the Al Jazeera Net website was conducted over the course of one month, from July 26, 2023, to August 25, 2023. The analysis was based on the specific research questions and the study's primary focus. The findings are presented below.

- ❖ In terms of the geographical distribution of the media material on the topic of the coup crisis in Niger, Al Jazeera Net devoted the majority of its coverage (34.83%) to the events of the third week of August. This surge in interest was largely driven by the site's focus on the crisis, particularly the topic of the coup against President Mohamed Bazoum.
- ❖ In terms of journalistic types, the following results were obtained: Given that the Al Jazeera website is active on a daily basis in the transmission of a variety of news and events, the press report was the most frequently occurring item, accounting for 47.19% of the total. This was followed by the news, which accounted for 37.07% of the total. This enables the editor to cover aspects of the topic in a broad way, by highlighting his personality in narrating the details.
- ❖ In terms of sources, The Al Jazeera Net website primarily relied on its own sources, as nearly all the news and reports that reached the website were signed by Al Jazeera journalists in all countries worldwide, from correspondents to envoys. Consequently, the correspondents category constituted the largest percentage at 35.95%.
- ❖ In terms of the general trend, All the various reports and news items were aligned with the neutral direction of the study topic, with a percentage of 65.16%.
- ❖ With regard to the subject categories, the subject of the conflicting parties was the most prominent, accounting for 25.84% of the total.
- ❖ To ascertain the underlying causes of the crisis in Niger, Al Jazeera News concentrated on the dissemination of daily news and information concerning the prevailing circumstances in the region, the coup against the president and its political and military ramifications.
- ❖ The Al Jazeera News website concentrated on the group of active parties involved in this crisis, providing comprehensive coverage of the situation. The website's focus was on all the

parties engaged in the conflict, with a particular emphasis on those related to the military and political aspects.

Discussion:

Table (1): shows the distribution of the media material on the topic of the coup crisis in Niger

Rank	Week	Date	Repts	Per (%)
3	First week	From 26 jul to 2 Aug 2023	18	20.22%
2	Second week	From 3 to 10 Aug 2023	23	25.84%
1	Third week	From 11 to 16 Aug 2023	31	34.83%
4	Fourth week	From 18 to 25 Aug 2023	17	19.11%
Total	4	From 26 jul to 25 Aug 2023	89	100 %

Source: Prepared by the researchers

By extrapolating the results of Table(01), which represents the site of the media material on the topic of the coup crisis in Niger and its developments, it can be seen that the largest percentage of crisis topics occurred in the third week, with a percentage estimated at 34.83%. The second largest percentage of crisis topics occurred in the second week, with a percentage of 25.84%. Subsequently, the initial week exhibited a rate of 20.22%, while the fourth week demonstrated a rate of 19.11%.

The location of media material is of significant importance in the context of media discourse, as it reflects the level of interest and attention that the media in question is paying to a particular subject or event. Accordingly, the Al Jazeera website accorded considerable attention to the matter of the coup in Niger, as evidenced by the fact that the media materials presented during the third week were the most prominent in terms of their portrayal of the subject. In this week's coverage, the website addressed significant developments at the diplomatic level in Niger, including the potential expulsion of the French ambassador. This was in response to mounting tensions with the French authorities, particularly regarding the arrest of a French uranium production company and the convening of the heads of African states representing the ECOWAS group to propose military intervention in Niger. Furthermore, international responses to the situation in Niger, including the involvement of neighboring countries, countries with shared interests, and the ongoing military rule in Niger, were evident in the initial headlines presented by the website on the Internet regarding the crisis. These headlines highlighted significant developments and reactions on the international political scene.

The researchers posit that the distribution of materials on the subject of the coup crisis in Niger on the front page of Al Jazeera's news website constitutes sufficient evidence to judge the website's great interest in the subject of the study. The website relied on the majority of significant media outlets, including the most prominent ones, to address and address the subject, which reflects the extent of the sensitivity and privacy of the subject on the Al Jazeera website. This is particularly evident given the website's coverage of the subject in its political, economic, military, and even international security and peace dimensions in the region.

Table (2): shows the journalistic formats used in the coverage of the coup crisis in Niger

Journalistic Formats	Repts	Per (%)
News	33	37.7%
Report	42	47.19%

Analytical article	06	06.74%
Press Interview	08	08.98%
Total	89	100%

Source: prepared by researchers

As evidenced by the data presented in Table (02), the Al Jazeera News website employed a multitude of journalistic formats in its coverage of the coup crisis in Niger. The website utilized four distinct journalistic styles, encompassing a diverse array of topics and their implications. In terms of overall performance, the report ranked first with a percentage of 47.19%, while the news category ranked second with a percentage of 37%. The third-place finisher was the press interview, which accounted for 8.98% of the total. Fourth place went to the analytical article, which made up 6.74% of the total. This is the most direct type of article in expressing the policy of the media in general. Therefore, it can be said that the news website did not limit itself to news and reports when addressing the subject of the study. Instead, it presented the topic of the crisis in an intellectual manner through the use of an article.

The quantitative results presented in Table 2 are attributed by the researchers to the fact that the Al Jazeera website employed a variety of journalistic approaches to present the topic of the coup crisis. These included neutral and objective journalistic formats, which conveyed the news in a straightforward manner, and analytical formats that aimed to examine and present different perspectives on the topic. Additionally, the website utilized expressive formats that were designed to engage the audience and persuade them to consider a particular point of view. The website placed the greatest reliance on the report, which indicates that Al Jazeera news website devoted attention to the topic from all angles in a clear and comprehensive manner. Subsequently, the news occupies the second position, indicating that the website furnished comprehensive explanations and analyses on the subject matter pertaining to the coup crisis and its ramifications, particularly with respect to the removal of President Mohamed Bazoum, the underlying causes thereof, and the subsequent reactions. The press interview, in third place, is a type of monitoring opinion. This supports the diversity of the journalistic formats adopted by the Al Jazeera website. Subsequently, the press article is in fourth place, with an acceptable rate of representation. This article monitored the opinions of military experts and specialists, politicians, and media professionals on the topic of the crisis. Our findings align with those of Nabil Madi, Taleb Kihoul.[11] The results of this monitoring contradicted the study of Rabab Jalal Al-Basrati.[12]

The researchers posit that Al Jazeera News's reliance on four diverse journalistic formats was not arbitrary but rather a deliberate strategy to enhance the depth and breadth of coverage, ensuring that viewers and followers are informed about the nuances of the subject matter.

Table(3): This table represents the categories of topics that were included in the coup crisis in Niger

Category of Topic	Repts	Per (%)
Conflict parties	23	25.84%
Official statements	12	13.48%
International reactions	18	20.22%
Reaction of international organizations	17	19.10%
Military and security statements	11	12.35%
Diplomatic efforts	8	8.98%

Total	89	100%
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Source: Prepared by researchers

As evidenced by the data presented in Table 3, the issue of the parties to the conflict constituted the largest share, estimated at 25.84%, due to the fact that the issue of the crisis exhibited an upward trajectory in Niger and posed an international threat within the region. Subsequently, the issue of international reactions was identified as the second most significant factor, accounting for 20.22% of the total. This was largely due to its direct role in exacerbating the situation, intensifying fears among the parties involved, and influencing the trajectory of the crisis. Subsequently, the issue of the reactions of international bodies was identified as the third most significant factor, accounting for 19.10% of the total. This was due to its role in facilitating a rapprochement between the disputants, advocating for the primacy of the public interest, upholding constitutional protection in Niger, and advocating for the release of the deposed president to avert further complications that could potentially exacerbate the situation in the entire Sahel region following the coup. Additionally, it was crucial in proposing new solutions that could contribute to the long-term resolution of the conflict. In fourth place was the issue of official statements, which accounted for 13.48% of the total. These statements, issued by the leaders of major countries and heads of neighboring countries, emphasized the necessity for a peaceful solution and self-restraint at this particular stage. The challenging circumstances currently faced by the region, characterized by heightened tensions and a series of accusations exchanged between army leaders in Niger and the ECOWAS group regarding the potential for military intervention in Niger, have led to a number of key issues emerging. These include the possibility of military and security statements, which accounted for 12.35% of the total, and diplomatic efforts, which accounted for 8.98% of the total. The latter has involved the confirmation of the majority of neighboring country heads' intention to return to international legitimacy and to prioritize the supreme interest of the Nigerien people. The researchers attribute these results to the Al Jazeera news website's significant interest in monitoring opinions and ideas related to the coup crisis in Niger. This interest was driven by the website's desire to enlighten the international public opinion about the political and military dimensions of the crisis, which contributed significantly to the further worsening of the situation. This worsening was occurring against the backdrop of tensions that the region has been witnessing for nearly three years, as evidenced by similar crises in Mali, Burkina Faso, and Chad. This is the subject matter that was covered by major international media channels and websites.

Table (4): This table shows the sources that Al Jazeera.net relied in the topic of the coup crisis in Niger

Sources	Repts	Per (%)
Al Jazeera reporters	21	23.59%
Special envoy	12	13.48%
Correspondents	32	35.95%
Personalities	8	8.98%
Military experts and officials	10	11.23%
Other media	6	6.74%
Total	89	100%

Source: prepared by researchers

A review of the data in Table 04 reveals that the Al Jazeera website relied on the channel's news journalists to a significant extent, with over 35% of the press correspondents involved in its coverage of the coup crisis. This highlights the credibility of the website and suggests the

availability of mechanisms to access information that substantiate its media value. Furthermore, the website relied on 23.60% of the channel's journalists to cover the event and present the reactions that accompanied the crisis from various countries around the world, in light of the new tensions in the Sahel region five years ago. The category of the special envoy came in third place with a percentage of 13%. The remaining sources, including personalities and other media outlets, contributed a relatively insignificant percentage, collectively accounting for less than 9% of the total. This aligns with the findings of the study conducted by Asmaa Al-Haddad (2017),[13] which corroborates our analysis on the sources utilized by the Al Jazeera website in its coverage of the crisis.

The researchers posit that Al Jazeera's reliance on its own sources in covering the crisis is due to the journalistic arsenal that Al Jazeera News Channel possesses through its own offices in most countries of the world. This afforded the channel the ability to obtain information with ease and in record time, thereby enabling the completion of the journalistic work in the production of instantaneous, immediate, and exclusive news in transmitting various news about the subject of the crisis. Additionally, the channel demonstrated considerable strength and resilience in dealing with the situation. By conducting a comprehensive and multifaceted analysis of the crisis, the channel has sought the insights of political analysts, security, military, and media experts from a range of prominent media outlets, including CNN American, BBC World British, and the official Russian channels RT, Reuters, and others. Additionally, local newspapers in Niger and other sources have provided invaluable coverage of the crisis, contributing to the channel's credibility in navigating the complexities of the situation and uncovering its underlying dynamics.

Table(5): This table shows the direction category of Al Jazeera Net website in the topic of coup crisis in Niger

direction	Repts	Per (%)
Supporter	13	9.82%
Opponent	18	17.85%
Neutral	58	67.85%
Total	89	100%

Source: Prepared by researchers

As evidenced by the data in Table No. 05, the topics exhibiting a neutral trend in the analysis material were the most prevalent, accounting for 65.16% of the total. In contrast, the topics with an opposing trend constituted the second-largest group, representing 20.22% of the total. The pro-trend group, on the other hand, comprised the smallest percentage, at 14.60%. The results of the study, as reported by the researchers, indicated that the trend of the Al Jazeera website was predominantly neutral, with an estimated 65.16% of the data points falling within this category. The opposing trend accounted for 20.22% of the data points, while the pro-trend trend constituted 14.60% of the data, which is consistent with the findings of the researchers (Farq, Ben Tarad, 2023).[14] The underlying causes of the emergence of the neutral trend on the Al Jazeera website. The divergence in political dimensions surrounding the crisis is evidenced by the continued allegiance of the defense and security forces in Niger to the incumbent government and the continued isolation of the deposed president under the auspices of the National Council for the Protection of the Homeland. Furthermore, the involvement of parties to the conflict aligned with the policy of President "Bazoum Mohamed," backed by the West, namely the United States of America, France, and the ECOWAS organization, resulted in significant regional tensions. These tensions necessitated extensive mediation efforts to resolve the coup, which ultimately proved unsuccessful.

Additionally, the researchers highlight the economic implications of the crisis and food security, particularly in light of the suspension of the French uranium company. In light of these developments, the Al Jazeera News website has sought to provide more realistic explanations and analyses of the crisis, with the aim of enlightening global public opinion and disseminating information in a timely manner that is complete, honest, and credible. This approach is intended to maintain the neutrality that has traditionally characterized the news website's coverage of the crisis. In contrast, the Al Jazeera website presented a different perspective on the Sahel crisis, citing the views of political officials and security and military experts with expertise in African affairs.

Conclusion:

The objective of this study was to ascertain how the Al Jazeera news website addressed the crisis in the African Sahel region, particularly in the context of the coup crisis in Niger. This crisis gave rise to significant concerns about the future of the region, particularly in light of the mounting tensions and mutual political and military conflicts between the parties involved. The Al Jazeera news website demonstrated a keen interest in a range of developments and changes, offering close coverage of the ongoing crisis. It sought to provide solutions and facilitate dialogue by periodically raising pertinent issues with impartiality and objectivity. It is important to note that the crisis is still ongoing and awaiting new developments in the coming days. It remains to be seen whether neighboring countries will be able to find a peaceful solution in Niger without the intervention of external parties with military and economic interests in the region.

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