

Covering the websites of Iraqi satellite channels regarding the 2021 parliamentary elections

By

Noor Kareem Yasser Al-Salihi

Al Iraqi University, College of Media, Department of Radio and Television Journalism, Iraq

Email : Noorhaider185@gmail.com

Alaa Najah Nouri

Al Iraqi University, College of Media, Department of Radio and Television Journalism, Iraq

ala_alsarmed@yahoo.com

Abstract

This research dealt with the news coverage on the websites of the Iraqi satellite channels for the 2021 parliamentary elections, to know the news coverage on the websites of the Iraqi satellite channels and how the websites deal with this electoral event in form and content. The study problem revolves around the following main question: What is the coverage of the websites of the Iraqi satellite channels regarding the 2021 parliamentary elections

The study has several objectives, including the following

- 1 Knowing the types of news coverage and its contents on the sites of Iraqi satellite channels about the 2021 parliamentary elections
- 2 What are the technical and editorial forms that the websites of the Iraqi satellite channels use in presenting the news of the parliamentary elections

This study belongs to descriptive studies, and the researcher used the survey method in order to study the coverage on the websites of Iraqi satellite channels in an accurate and scientific manner. The researchers chose a partial enumeration of a community represented by all the news contained in the Dijla and Al-Ittijah TV websites related to the 2021 parliamentary elections during six months (184 days), which are July, August, September, October, October, and January, i.e. the period from 1/7/2021 to 31/12/2021AD, the researchers used the intentional sample in selecting news related to the topic of parliamentary elections to complete the requirements of the study

The research reached a number of results, including the following

- 1 We conclude from the obtained results that the two websites used all kinds of news coverage such as explanatory, objective coverage, biased coverage, composite news coverage, coverage based on narration of events, coverage based on information narration
- 2 We conclude from the obtained results that the websites of the Iraqi satellite channels (Dijla TV website and Al-Ittijah website) used the image processor (artistic form) placed with a fixed image, and the news as editorial art as the most used art, because the websites use the subject (news, event) with a largely fixed image to show the event or topic through the accompanying image

Based on the results, the researchers suggest the following

- 1 The administration of the websites of satellite channels must cover the election news and present it to the browser more objectively, transparently, and impartially, and not focus on one aspect over the other in its news coverage
- 2 It is imperative on the websites of satellite channels to pay attention to the various forms of art in presenting the political topics that the public is interested in such as graphs, motion graphics, and video graphics, in addition to the short film material for their participation

Keywords: coverage, websites, satellite channels, parliamentary elections

Introduction

The websites of Iraqi satellite channels are among the modern means of communication and have become an important means of communication as a result of the technologies provided by these sites and the features and characteristics that are distinguished in them. Among these features and characteristics is that it allows the audience to be interactive to express their opinions and aspirations and opens up a broad horizon for them through discussions within these sites and their arms on social networking sites, especially as we live in an era in which the sender and recipient have become involved in the content industry, and it also provides the possibility of sharing its news and topics on the media. It may be stored or printed by the public, unless it is available to the recipient through exposure to news through the screen

The websites of satellite channels are a reality imposed by technology on these institutions in order to keep pace with the rapid development, as well as the search of these institutions for the public and access to it wherever it is found, as these sites work as an independent means of communication in covering the events and issues that surround the public in order to provide news about these events and issues in a different manner that suits the nature of this medium and its diverse audience that is not specified by place and time, as it strives to be a preferred and distinctive means for this audience

As the researchers divided the research into three topics, the first included the methodological framework, the second included the theoretical framework, and the third was devoted to the practical framework

The Methodological Framework

The research problem

The research problem was represented by the following main question: What is the news coverage on the websites of the Iraqi satellite channels for the 2021 parliamentary elections

From this question, several sub-questions emerge

- 1 Knowing the types of news coverage and its contents on the sites of Iraqi satellite channels about the 2021 parliamentary elections
- 2 What are the technical and editorial forms that the websites of the Iraqi satellite channels use in presenting the news of the parliamentary elections

The importance of research

The importance of the research is in order to shed light on the news coverage and to identify the types of coverage and content on those sites, and to reveal the extent of the interest of the satellite channel sites in the subject of parliamentary elections and the mechanisms for dealing with their news, as well as access to how to bring election news to the public browsing these sites

This study falls within the interests of the researchers as it is one of the recent topics that link the coverage of news sites for Iraqi satellite channels with the parliamentary elections and in two different institutions in editorial politics, and they have their candidates and blocs in these elections

Research Objectives

The research aims to

- 1 Identifying the types of news coverage and its contents on the Iraqi satellite channel websites regarding the 2021 parliamentary elections
- 2 Determining the technical and editorial forms used by the websites of the Iraqi satellite channels in presenting the news of the parliamentary elections

Type and Method of Research

This study belongs to the descriptive studies, and according to the objectives of the study, the researchers used the survey method to reach accurate results that can be generalized

The research community and its sample

The research community is represented by the websites of Dijlah and Attijah satellite channels, and the researchers chose the intentional sample

Time domain

The researchers determined the time range of the research for the period from 1/7/2021 to 31/12/2021 AD, which is the period for the start of the electoral campaign for candidates, entities, political parties and personalities until the election results are announced

The objective domain: The objective domain is represented by the websites of the Dijlah and Etijah satellite channels

Procedural Definitions

Coverage

It is a set of measures taken by newsroom workers on the websites of satellite channels in order to shed light on the events of the early Iraqi parliamentary elections and detailed information about those elections and present them to the public in a distinguished manner and in different artistic forms

Websites

These are the websites of the two channels (Dijla and Al-Ittijah satellite channels) that bear the logo of the satellite channel and represent its policy in the virtual electronic field. These websites contain a set of pages linked to the World Wide Web

Iraqi Satellite Channels

The channels that are concerned with the Iraqi issue and owned by Iraqi personalities, these channels represent modern aspects of communication that depend on satellites to broadcast their media messages to the target audience directly and in real time

Parliamentary elections 2021

These are the early Iraqi parliamentary elections set by the Iraqi government on October 10, 2021

Previous studies

Al Khazali Study, 2020

The researcher identified the problem of his research with the following main question: What are the limits of news coverage of the issues of the Iraqi components in the websites of satellite channels?, The objectives of his research were as follows;

- 1 Disclosing the designations and terms used for Al-Alam and Al-Jazeera websites
- 2 Investigate the effective forces in the news coverage of the issues of the Iraqi components in these two websites

This research belongs to descriptive research, and the researcher resorted to the survey method, using the intentional sample based on the comprehensive inventory of Al-Alam and Al-Jazeera websites, and the researcher reached the following results

- 1 The variation of the used labels regarding a specific and specific issue is subject to the mechanisms of view of news frameworks based on the editorial policy of the media organization to which the news site belongs, by giving preference to the use of a specific label over another
- 2 The discrepancy in highlighting the active forces on an issue on this website or that, according to the media institution's view and direction of it, and highlighting it in a positive or negative way, or by reducing its negative image by surrounding it with specific terms and a certain tone of coverage that mitigates its impact

Saihoud Study, 20192

The researcher summarized the problem of the study by the following main question: What is the impact of the news coverage of the Iraqi satellite channels of the crisis of the referendum on the secession of the Kurdistan region and its reflection on the national identity of the Iraqi public? The researcher identified the objectives of his study as follows

- 1 Identifying the coverage of the Kurdistan Region referendum crisis in the two channels
- 2 Disclose the topics covered by the news coverage of the crisis in the Iraqi satellite channels

He used the intentional sample, and the researcher chose a partial enumeration of the research community for a period of three months, and the researcher reached a set of results represented as follows

- 1 The expansion of the size of media coverage in crises and its intensification in the peak stages, with this coverage varying between action and reaction factors, so that the satellite channels on the exciting side are greater than the side facing them
- 2 The disparity of communicative contents in general between the satellite channels in question, and the adoption of a general discourse based on dialogue and understanding, but its contents are directed in a way or manner commensurate with the editorial policy of this or that satellite channel from which its apparent content derives

Theoretical framework

The news coverage

News coverage on the websites of Iraqi satellite channels represents an important focus and a prominent tool that enables the browsing public to communicate with local and global events. It also represents one of the ways that allows the recipient to form impressions and form trends for him, coverage is an effective element in transmitting events and following their developments in light of the large number of media that are attracted by all its forms, whether in the field of satellite via the screen or in the field of websites for satellite channels

News coverage on the websites of satellite channels is defined as “the process of obtaining information and data on political and non-political events, information related to these events and understanding their causes, as well as knowing where they occurred and the names of those participating in them, how and when they occurred? and other details that make this event possess the ingredients and the elements that make it suitable for publication on the websites of satellite channels and their other electronic arms

Websites

Websites with their various technologies have created a new press called media journalism, as video, image and audio are added to the topic or news, in addition to links and comments related to content through hypertext links, these features hastened traditional institutions to enter the virtual space (Hassan , 2016;113

There are those who define it as “a group of web pages that are usually linked together with a specific header or sub-address of the site in the web on the Internet, and a web page is a document built in a special description language , and It can be

accessed through the so-called Hypertext Transfer Protocol” (Sadiq, New Media - Concepts, Means and Applications, 2008 : 95

Satellite channels are a powerful, prominent and important means for the public to see what is going on in the world of events, and the importance has increased after the technological development that expanded its capabilities in following up on the event wherever it is found and in all circumstances, and it has become an important source for the public (Mohammed, 2009: 52

Satellite channels

Satellite channels represent the most important achievements of the twentieth century, whose technologies rapidly developed to reach the limits of satellite broadcasting, which transformed the idea of making the world a single village into a reality. The size of the world has shrunk under the weight of electronic means of communication and their great capabilities to spread, bypassing political borders and geographical obstacles, and satellite broadcasting today is one of the latest and most competitive and influential means due to its wide spread and attracting increasing numbers of viewers at the expense of other media (Al-Hadithi, 2002:82-83

The Iraqi Parliamentary Elections 2021 AD

Elections in Iraq are the basis for forming governments according to the current political system and the basis for the democratic process practiced by the Iraqi people for every four years in electing their representative in the parliament according to the proportional representation of the governorates in which they reside (Al-Masari, 2019:7

Elections are defined as “people directing to the polls to cast their votes for a candidate or a number of candidates or for a specific electoral list according to a specific electoral system (Kashkoul, 2015: 5

The Practical Framework

This topic includes the results of the content analysis of Dijlah and Al-Ittijah satellite channels for a period of six months from (1/7/ 2021 until 31/12/2021 AD), which is the period for the beginning of the election campaign for the early parliamentary elections and the duration of their conduct and the period for announcing the results and submitting appeals to the Federal Supreme Court and deciding on them, and authentication, the new winners of the early parliamentary elections and the researcher analyzed the two sites to find out the news coverage on the websites of the two channels (Dijla and Al-Ittijah satellite channels) (in form and content

Table (1) shows the categories of coverage on the Dijla and Al-Ittijah TV websites regarding the 2021 parliamentary elections

S/N	Categories	Dijla channel website		Al-Ittijah channel website	
		Frequencies	Percentage %	Frequencies	Percentage %
1	The contents of the coverage of the websites of the Iraqi satellite of parliamentary elections	337	12.63	520	11.49
2	Types of coverage used to cover parliamentary elections	419	15.71	603	13.32
3	News coverage trends for the parliamentary elections	419	15.71	603	13.32
4	News coverage in terms of editorial trend.	419	15.71	603	13.32
5	News coverage of political differences after the election results were announced	55	2.06	121	6.23
6	Reasons for appealing the results of the parliamentary elections	56	2.09	192	4.24
7	Actors in the news coverage	466	17.49	679	15.00
8	Institutions involved in election coverage	352	13.19	595	13.15
9	Claims of parties and politicians	64	2.39	140	3.09
10	Covering political positions regarding the parliamentary elections	32	1.23	256	5.65
11	The implications of political marketing in news coverage of the elections	48	1.79	212	1.19
12	Total	2667	100.0	4524	100.0

News coverage and content varied in both sites to cover the early Iraqi parliamentary elections, with (2667) frequency on the website of the Dijla satellite channel, and at (4524) frequency on the website of the satellite channel, as categories for coverage in the two study sample sites

We note from the foregoing in Table (2) that the active personalities of the main groups ranked first among the other groups and as a result of those in charge of the project in the active personalities are the source of the political decision or they have a major role in it, whether that decision was issued by the legislative authority represented by Parliament (members of

Parliament) or the executive authority represented by the Council of Ministers (members of the Council of Ministers, the Al-Kademi government and his ministers) or the judicial authority represented by the Supreme Judicial Council and the Federal Court and their members

The media is in direct contact with these authorities because it represents a link between the authorities and the public, in addition to the media's interest in some personalities as a result of their political and factional affiliation.

Table (3) shows the categories of a form of news coverage on the websites of Dijla and Al-Ittiha channels about the 2021 parliamentary elections

S/N	Categories	Dijla channel website		Al-Ittijah channel website	
		Frequencies	Percentage %	Frequencies	Percentage %
1	Image processor for the used arts in news coverage	419	2.84	603	5.16
2	The editorial used arts in news coverage for websites	419	2.84	603	5.16
3	The type of image processor used to cover election news	736	5.00	1009	8.69
4	Sources of news coverage of the parliamentary elections	461	3.13	785	6.73
5	The site's tools for transmitting news or multimedia in transmitting news	4719	32.10	2634	22.58
6	Mechanisms for highlighting and directing viewing to the browser	6285	42.71	5427	46.52
7	Types of digital interactive coverage	1676	11.38	603	5.16
12	Total	14715	100.0	11664	100.0

The used forms, interactive tools, and news reporting mechanisms varied in both sites to cover the early Iraqi parliamentary elections, with 14715 frequency on the Dijla satellite channel website, and (11664) frequency on the Al-Ittijah satellite channel website, as the shape categories in the two sites of study sample

We conclude from the above results that the websites of the Tigris and Al-Ittijah satellite channels focused on highlighting the election news on their sites, because the highlighting mechanisms attract attention in both sites, such as the way to display the highlighted event on the main page with each news, as well as the contents related to the electoral event published according to the editorial policy of the institution, through which it passes its agenda to the browsing public in one way and another, and highlighting the electoral event is important because it is the most prominent in those days and determines the course of the political process after the October protests, which resulted in the resignation of the government (Adel Abdul Mahdi), and a new government was formed with the aim of organizing early elections, in addition, Parliament enacted a new electoral law (electoral districts), passed the Federal Court Law, and restructured the Independent High Electoral Commission

Conclusions

We conclude from the obtained results that the two websites used all kinds of news coverage such as explanatory, objective coverage (abstract), biased coverage (colored),

composite news coverage, coverage based on narration of events, coverage based on information narration, in covering the 2021 Iraqi parliamentary elections, as well as multiplicity and diversity of contents

We conclude from the obtained results that the websites of the Iraqi satellite channels (the Dijla TV website and Al-Ittijah website) used the image processor (technical form) placed with a fixed image, and the news as editorial arts as the most used arts, in addition to the multiplicity of forms used and the mechanisms of highlighting in the sites

Recommendations

- 1 The administration of the websites of satellite channels must cover the election news and present it to the browsers with more objectively, transparently, and impartially, and not focus on one aspect over the other in its news coverage
- 2 It is imperative on the websites of satellite channels to pay attention to the various technical forms in presenting the political topics that the public is interested in such as graphs, motion graphics, and video graphics, in addition to the short film material for their participation.

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