

## **Professionalism and Objectivity of Al-Jazeera Satellite Channel**

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### **Abstract**

*This study aims to evaluate the performance of Al-Jazeera Channel using two major indicators -- objectivity and professionalism. The study was based on a survey conducted in nineteen Arab countries on a sample of 611 Ph.D. holders specializing in political science and media. The results show variation in the evaluation of objectivity and professionalism of Al-Jazeera performance. Al-Jazeera was evaluated lower in terms of objectivity (63.5 points) compared with professionalism (77.9 points). The overall performance of Al-Jazeera reached 71.4 out of 100 points. Moreover, the nationality of the experts and specialists affected their evaluations of Al-Jazeera objectivity, professionalism and overall performance.*

**Keywords:** Al-Jazeera Satellite Channel, Media, Professionalism, Objectivity, Arab Media

### **Introduction**

Media is an important actor in our daily life. Media enables us to communicate with each other and with others around the world in addition to providing news of events and incidents in the world. Thus, the media shoulders a great deal of responsibility to deliver information which affects the way we think, and ultimately how we behave. The media plays several significant roles in public life. Perhaps the most critical are to protect political and civil rights, and to maintain transparency in decision-making processes. The media asserts a vital role in influencing people's attitudes toward social, political and economic issues. Hence, the quality of the message delivered to society has a great impact on attitudes and ultimately on behaviours. For example, the media has a great impact on the evolution of voting intentions (Dobrzynska et al, 2003; Nesbitt-Larking, 2010). At the same time, it is hard to assess the impact of media upon people's choices.

The relation between democracy and media is significant because free media promotes plurality and debate, which are important indicators for democratic consolidation. The consolidation of democracy requires establishing an effective communication process that enables citizens to communicate with other social groups. This could be done through critical and independent media (Guerrero and Nesbitt-Larking, 2010). Moreover, the liberal perspective argues that a "democratic" media has three main pillars that constitute a baseline that control the professionalism and impact of the media. These pillars as stated by Guerrero and Nesbitt-Larking (2010) are "to watch over the uses and abuses of power on behalf of citizens, provide the public with information to base their choices, opinions and decisions on public matters, and become themselves an open and free marketplace of ideas." The role of the media is of great importance because to stand against the oppression of the state, the media is one of the key actors that tackle such responsibility (Barendt, 1993). Thus, the media is considered a natural ally for citizens in controlling abuses of power, and as a result professionalism in the media is important for evaluation of the impact of such media on the public.

In Western democracies, particularly the United States of America, media has an influential role in governmental institutions, and at the same time the government influences how information is published. However, media in the U.S. influences U.S. public opinions concerning a multitude of issues. Such influence of the media affects the voting behavior among Americans (Graber, 2009). It is clear that American political life is manipulated by the media, but public life is *administered* by the type of information disseminated via the media (Davis and Owen, 1998). Moreover, the tremendous advancement in communication technology crystallizes the role of communication and media in shaping public life. For example, in Canada the media has a great impact in terms of political participation, effective governmental communication and civic involvement in multicultural settings. On the other hand, Mexico is still in the process of formulating effective baselines for media professionalism in terms of balanced delivery of information (Guerrero and Nesbitt-Larking, 2010).

In another arena, Al-Kandari and Hasanen (2012) highlighted the important role of Al-Jazeera and other news channels in the Arab revolutions or what is called “Arab Spring.” The role of Al-Jazeera was vital as it was the channel that protesters (then revolutionaries) displayed on big screens in the squares. The role of the media in such incidents is to inform the viewers on news of importance. The vast communication development helped media channels (i.e. Al-Jazeera, Al-Arabiya) to use the social media that was produced by young Arab internet users who uploaded such videos on the internet and made it possible for other people around the world to watch what was happening in their countries. Such a tool was used by protesters in Tunisia, Egypt, Syria, Bahrain and Yemen (Al-Kandari and Hasanen, 2012).

### **Importance**

It is important to analyze the role of Al-Jazeera on the international media stage in terms of the transition of Al-Jazeera from an important regional player to an opponent and a competitor on the international media and political scene. By tackling such issues as the “war on terror” and Iraq war, this small Arabic channel managed to compete with global media and reverse the traditional flow of information from the “South” to the “North” and from the “Third World” to the “First World” (Mikhlaifi, 2009).

In the era of political, social, and economic globalization, the media as a means of communication is capable of altering people’s way of thinking. Therefore, analyzing the impact of Arab media in the age of satellite channels would be of great importance. Al-Jazeera was the target for many researchers from different disciplines. Abd Al-Mawla (2011) collected books, Master’s theses and Doctoral dissertations that studied Al-Jazeera Channel and found that between the period 1996-2011 there were 57 books, 74 theses and 66 dissertations. This academic interest in Al-Jazeera portrays the vital role that was played by Al-Jazeera as an important turning point in the history of the Arab media, and the way it dealt with the problematic Arab issues.

### **Research Problem**

A lot of questions were raised concerning Al-Jazeera since its beginning in 1996, and its relation with the government of Qatar and means of financing. However, such questions did not address the high rate of viewing by Arab people. For example, in Jordan Al-Jazeera occupies first place among other news channels, where 59% of Jordanians trust Al-Jazeera as a source for Arabic news and 60% trust Al-Jazeera for international news (CSS, 2010). Abu al-Rub (2008) argued that the policy of Al-Jazeera is structurally compatible with Qatar’s policy concerning the modernization project and its political, economic and ideological implications. Abu al-Rub criticized the slogan “Opinion and Other Opinion” of the channel, arguing that it is inaccurate since the Arabic-language channel of Al-Jazeera represents the opinion, and the English-language channel of Al-Jazeera represents the other opinion in the majority of cases, with the exception of the coverage of Qatar’s profile.

The future of the Arab media is linked to the future of democracy in the region. Mikhlaifi (2009) argues that there is a need for freedom of the media to contribute to the “democratization” of Arab societies considering that the media is “A school to learn democracy,” but it is not in any way a substitute for democratic institutions such as parliaments, political parties and civil society organizations (Mikhlaifi, 2009). Therefore, there is a need to evaluate the objectivity and professionalism of Al-Jazeera Channel to assess its impact and performance.

### **Objectives**

Many researchers consider Al-Jazeera Channel to have constituted, since its launch in 1996, a prominent Arab media event.

It has become a milestone in the history of the political media in the Arab World to the extent that it is possible to divide the contemporary history of the Arab media into two phases: pre-Al-Jazeera phase and post-Al-Jazeera launch and initiation. (See: Ali and Srinivas, 2008, Mellor, 2005, Telhami, 2004, Nishet Janet al., 2004, and Tatham, 2005). Therefore, there is a need to explore the extent that media channels in the Arab world hold the professional and objective means to contribute in enlightening the public on issues that might alter the status quo of the Arab countries. To achieve this objective, this study will explore objectivity and professionalism as two major indicators of Al-Jazeera's performance. This will be accomplished by surveying experts and specialists in media concerning their evaluation of Al Jazeera's objectivity, professionalism and performance. Also, this study will test the impact of some variables associated with experts and specialists on their evaluation of the objectivity, professionalism and overall performance of Al-Jazeera Channel.

### **Methodology**

A survey was conducted to evaluate the objectivity and professionalism of Al-Jazeera Channel. A questionnaire was designed to measure the major variables of the study. The project team formulated questions designed to determine two major components of Al-Jazeera performance. The first one is "Objectivity", which was measured using the following indicators:

1. The truthfulness of the information broadcasted.
2. The balance in presenting different perspectives in terms of the time allotted to each and the chance given to the representatives of these points of view.
3. The boldness with which highly sensitive issues in different fields are approached.
4. The diversity in the media content and sources, and the ethnic and religious background of the presenters and reporters.
5. The influence formal and non-formal authorities' have over the channel's (media) policy.
6. The aptitude the channel displays towards retracting false news and misinformation.

The second indicator is "Professionalism", which was measured through addressing the extent of the technical development used in presenting the media material. This includes simultaneous interpretation, the transition to the events' and live broadcast site, the academic background of the presenters and the news crew, obtaining media exclusives, images captured by Al-Jazeera photographers, and the rhetoric and concepts employed in describing events.

The questionnaire was prepared and then evaluated by a group of political science and media professors and experts from different Arab countries. This step was very important to verify the ability of the questionnaire to measure and later to evaluate Al-Jazeera performance.

### **Study population**

This study covered 19 Arab countries: Jordan, Emirates, Bahrain, Tunisia, Algeria, Saudi Arabia, Sudan, Syria, Iraq, Oman, Palestine, Qatar, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya, Egypt, Morocco, Mauritania and Yemen. The study was conducted over the period February 1, 2007 to January 9, 2008. This time span includes all of the phases that led to the accomplishment of the study, from the questionnaire's preparation and design phase until reporting the final study results.

### **Sampling frame**

The sampling frame was prepared by The Knowledge World Center for Polls which scanned all Arab universities for Media and Political Science departments so as to build a database of the study population, in addition to the political science professors database provided by the Academic Center for Political Studies in Jordan. The Center established this database as a part of its efforts to write the "Guide to Arab Researchers in Political Science". The study population consisted of PhD holders that are media and political science instructors and employees at Arab universities. The total size of the population, which is 1251, is made up of 616 media experts and 635 political science specialists from 19 Arab countries.

### **Sample**

Size and distribution of sample across strata:

The study sample consisted of 611 college professors distributed as follows:

- 298 media college professors
- 307 political science college professors
- 6 college professors whose disciplines were not identified

The stratified systematic sampling technique was used in distributing the study population into strata according to country and specialty. Table (1) demonstrates the sample's distribution according to specialty.

**Table (1): Sample distribution according to specialty**

Specialty	Number Before Weight	Number After Weight	Percentage After Weight
Political Science	307	305	50.0
Media	298	298	48.8
Non-Identified	6	7	1.2
Total	611	611	100.0

The variable sampling fractions technique was also employed in this study; strata with small numbers of sightings were fully scanned. In addition, 25%-50% of the sampling units were allotted to the rest of the strata, according to the size of each sampling unit. This was performed in order to provide data that are 99% accurate and have less than 1% error margin for the main variables of the poll. The sample size reached 48.84% of the total number of the study population (approximately 50%), which is twice the required sample size for conducting a poll. This very large sample size ensured that the study population was accurately represented.

### Sample Weight

Since the sample is not auto-weighted, it was weighted before extracting the results. The standard variation and error were calculated in addition to the coefficient of variation; the resulting numbers were all within the range expected when designating the sample.

### Response rate

The number of hard-copy questionnaires disseminated by field researchers in the different Arab countries was 509, which is 83.31% of the total number. The number of questionnaires disseminated via phone interviews or via e-mail and fax was 102, which is 16.69% of the total forms. The whole sample of 611 political science and media professors responded, scoring a 100% response rate.

### Results and discussion:

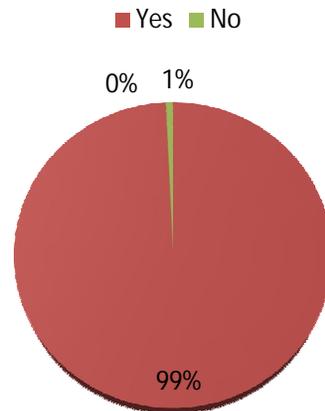
New variables were generated to combine all indicators of professionalism, objectivity and overall performance. To generate the Objectivity and Professionalism variables, the answer categories of each indicator were assigned a numerical value based on the question wording in order to identify the level of objectivity out of 100, and also to facilitate data interpretation and presentation. The variables of Objectivity and Professionalism were combined to generate the Overall performance variable of Al-Jazeera Channel. Moreover, another variable was generated to categorize the nationalities of experts & specialists based on three categories as follows: Mashreq countries: Jordan, Syria, Palestine, Iraq, Lebanon, Egypt, Sudan and Yemen; Maghreb countries: Morocco, Tunisia, Libya, Mauritania and Algeria; Gulf countries: Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Bahrain, Emirates and Oman. Objectivity was measured using the following indicators: credibility of media material presented by Al-Jazeera; balance in presenting different perspectives in terms of the time allotted to each and the chance given to representatives of these points of view; caution of Al-Jazeera in addressing some sensitive issues; neutrality of using concepts and terms by Al-Jazeera in its news and reports; neutrality in broadcasting images in the news and reports; and provision of information away from the principle of freedom of opinion to distortion and abuse. Professionalism was measured using the following indicators: use of classical Arabic language; influence of certain bodies on Al-Jazeera professionalism; retraction and apology in the event of false reports or misinformation; professional and technical level of presentation in simultaneous interpretation; promptness of transition to site of events; scientific capability of presenters; presenters' and interviewers' debate ability; media exclusive; technical quality of images; and the increase of the numbers of Al-Jazeera channels.

### Professionalism and objectivity

It is an essential start for an expert or specialist, when asked to evaluate the performance of an institution, to know such institution and its work.

Hence, the survey addressed a question that was directed to the experts & specialists whether they watch Al-Jazeera or not, and the results (Fig. 1) show that most of the respondents (experts & specialists) indicated that they watch Al-Jazeera Channel. This high percentage (99.0%) verifies the ability of the respondents to evaluate the performance of Al-Jazeera in terms of its professionalism and objectivity.

**Fig. 1: percentage of experts and specialists who watch Al-Jazeera Channel**



### Objectivity

The following results present the measures of objectivity of Al-Jazeera Channel. The results show that 45.8% of the respondents believe that there is a very high credibility of media material presented by Al-Jazeera, while 50.2% believe it is relatively credible and only 2.7% believe it has a low credibility (Fig.2a). With regard to Al-Jazeera objectivity in terms of presenting different perspectives, the results show that more than half of the respondents (61.3%) believe that the objectivity in this matter is relative, which means implicitly that whether or not Al-Jazeera supports one side of the story presented more than the other depends upon its institutional strategy. More than a quarter of the respondents (28.9%) believe that there is a big balance when discussing two different viewpoints. However, only 8.6% mentioned that there is no balance which means that Al-Jazeera is completely biased toward discussing different viewpoints (Fig.2b).

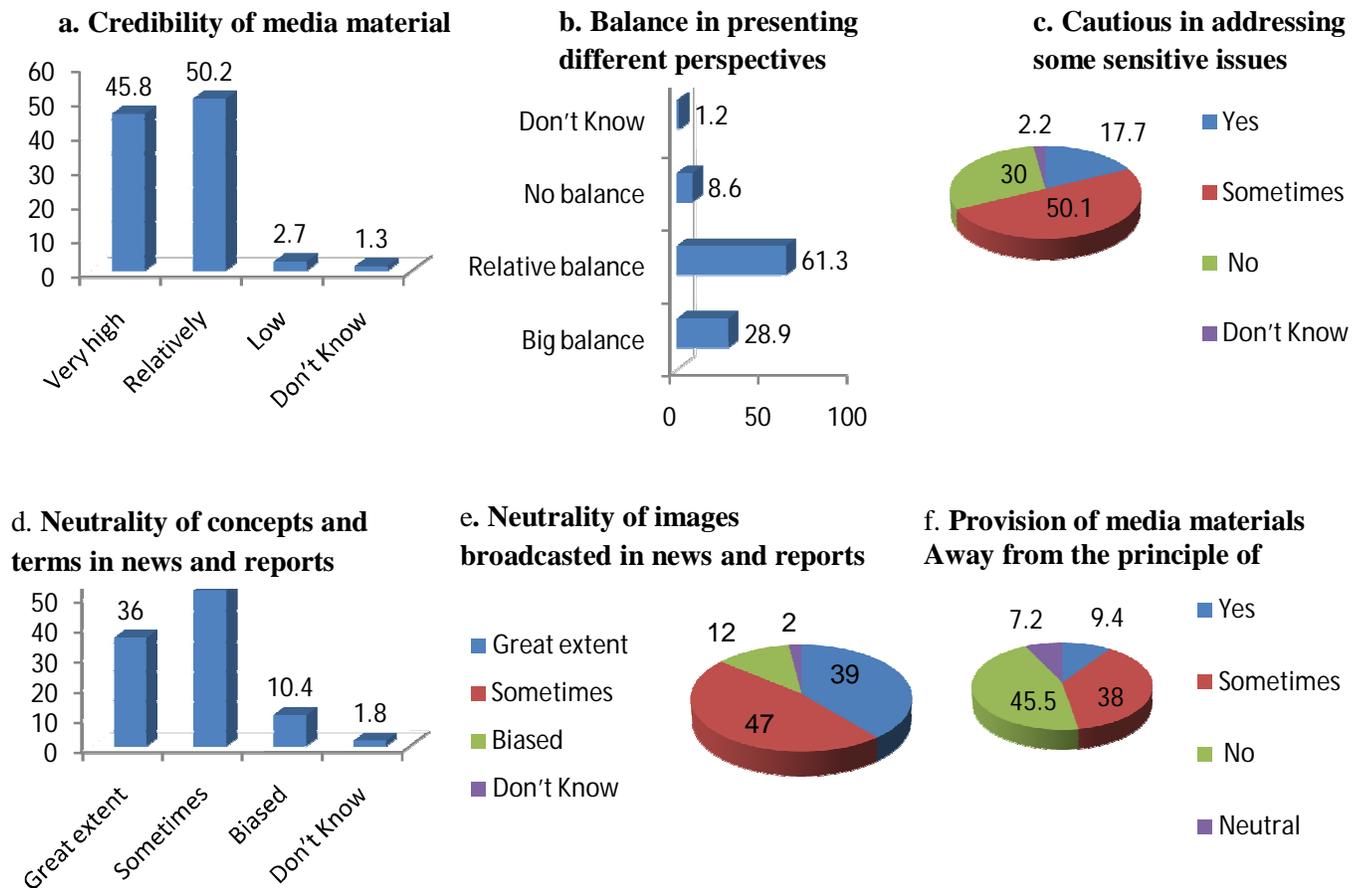
Another measure of objectivity is approach to sensitive issues and how Al-Jazeera is performing in this regard. The results show that half of the respondents indicated that Al-Jazeera Channel is sometimes cautious in addressing certain sensitive issues, while 30.0% believe that it is not cautious and 17.7% believe that Al-Jazeera is cautious when addressing certain sensitive issues (Fig.2c). As for the neutrality of Al-Jazeera in using concepts and terms in news and reports, the results show that 51.8% of the experts and specialists believe that sometimes Al-Jazeera uses concepts and terms that are neutral in its news and reports, while 36.0% believe that Al-Jazeera uses concepts and terms neutrally to a great extent. However, 10.4% believe that there is a bias by Al-Jazeera when using concepts and terms in its news and reports (Fig.2d).

It is important for a channel to keep a balance when broadcasting images, and in this context Al-Jazeera was sometimes neutral in broadcasting images in the news and reports according to 47.0% of the experts and specialists, and was largely neutral according to 39.0% of experts and specialists, while 12.0% of experts and specialists responded that Al-Jazeera was biased in this matter (Fig.2e). The experts and specialists tended to accuse Al-Jazeera of sometimes or most of the time trending away from the principles of freedom of speech to distortion and abuse because 38.0% and 9.4% believe that sometimes and always this is the case for Al-Jazeera when providing media materials. At the same time, 45.5% believe that Al-Jazeera does not provision media materials away from the principle of freedom of opinion to distortion and abuse (Fig.2f).

The results indicate that Al-Jazeera obtained an acceptable level of objectivity among all the indicators of objectivity. Such results explain the credibility of Al-Jazeera in the Arab countries because there is a margin of freedom that Al-Jazeera demonstrates when dealing with issues that are of great concern to the average person in the Arab countries.

This reputation of Al-Jazeera among the Arab public is due to the failure of other media sources to practice an acceptable level of freedom of speech when addressing local, regional and international issues.

**Fig.2: Objectivity indicators for Al-Jazeera Channel**



**Professionalism**

This study used 10 indicators to measure Al-Jazeera professionalism. One of the indicators was the use of classical language and the results show that 55.2% of the experts and specialists see that there is a high commitment by Al-Jazeera in using Arabic classical language in its news and reports. Other experts and specialists (39.5%) believe that there is a relative commitment to use classical Arabic language. However, only 3.2% of the experts and specialists in media performance indicated that Al-Jazeera has a limited commitment to use the classical Arabic language (Fig.3a). Influence of certain bodies on Al-Jazeera professionalism is another indicator of professionalism. It is seen in Fig.3b that 60.5% of the experts and specialists believe there is an influence (positive and negative) of certain bodies on Al-Jazeera, but 37.1% of them believe that such influence has a negative impact on Al-Jazeera performance and 23.3% believe that this influence has a positive impact. However, 16.2% of the experts and specialists believe there is no such influence on Al-Jazeera.

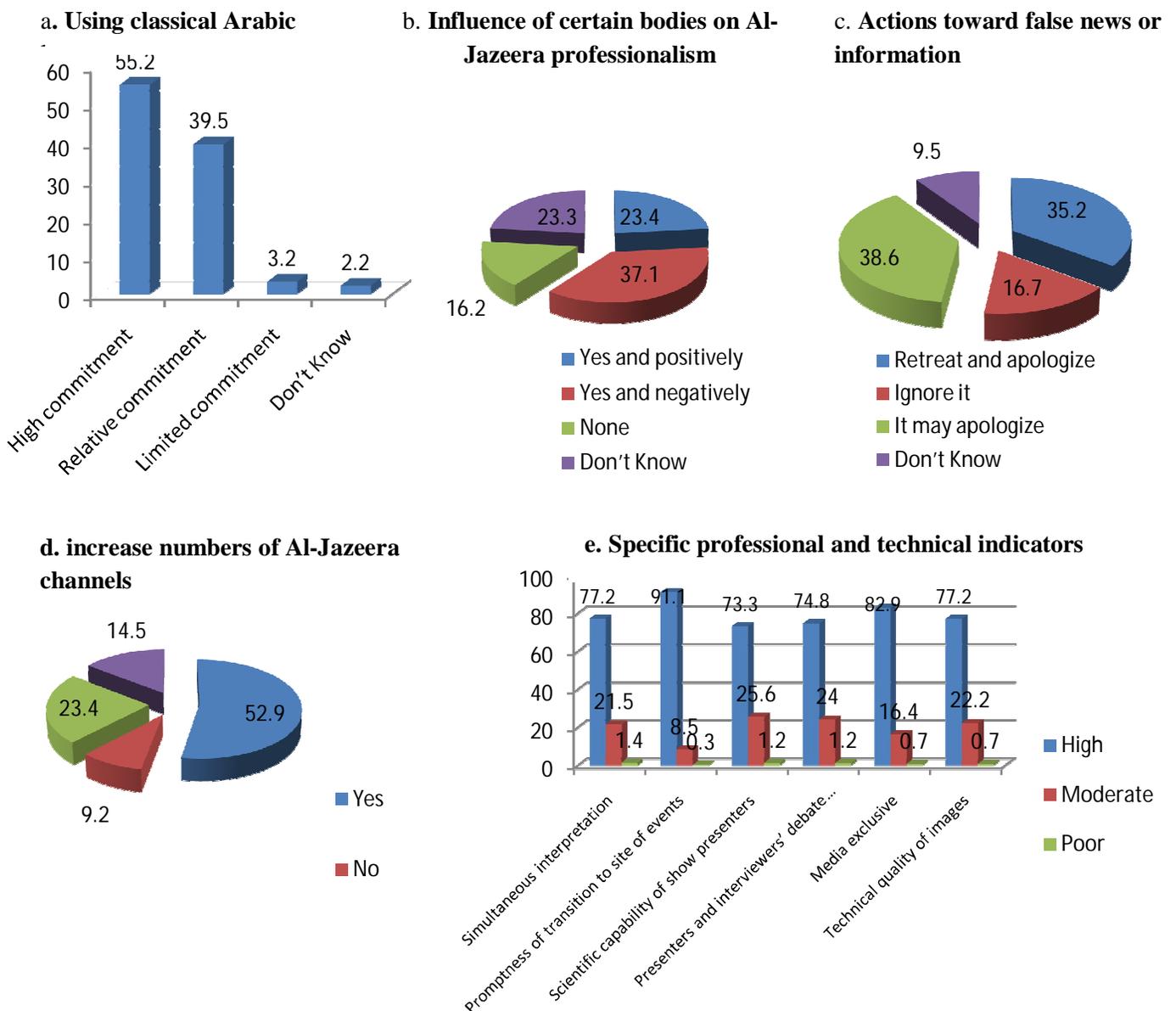
One of the other indicators on professionalism was to measure if Al-Jazeera Channel would retract and apologize if there were news or information broadcasted by Al-Jazeera and was not true.

The evaluation of the experts and specialists show that 38.6% of them believe that Al-Jazeera Channel might apologize when it broadcast false information, but 35.2% believe that the channel actually retracts and apologizes when such incidents occur. However, 16.7% believe that the channel ignores such incidents and does not retract or apologize when false news or information are broadcast(Fig.3c).The majority of experts (52.9%) mentioned that the increased numbers of Al-Jazeera channels is an indicator of high level of professional performance of the main channel, while 9.2% mentioned that it is not an indicator of a high level of professionalism(Fig.3d).

One of the important measures of professionalism is the technical and logistical levels of a media channel. The results in Fig.3e show that the experts gave relatively high evaluation to the six indicators of technical and logistical capabilities of Al-Jazeera Channel. It is shown that Al-Jazeera has a very high capability of promptness of transition to site of events as 91.1% of the experts mentioned that Al-Jazeera has such capability. Also, 82.9% mentioned that Al-Jazeera has the ability to get media exclusive for its news. The technical quality of images and simultaneous interpretation received a similar evaluation by the experts as 77.2% indicated that Al-Jazeera has high-quality images. As for scientific capability of show presenters and the presenters and interviewers' debate ability, the experts evaluated these indicators almost the same (73.3%, 74.8% respectively).

The pattern of answers among the experts and specialists shows that there is a high level of professionalism of Al-Jazeera Channel. This high level of professionalism elevates the performance of the channel and explains the high rank that Al-Jazeera obtains among the public. These results demonstrate the technical and financial capabilities that enable Al-Jazeera to obtain such a high level of professionalism.

**Fig.3: professionalism indicators for Al-Jazeera Channel**

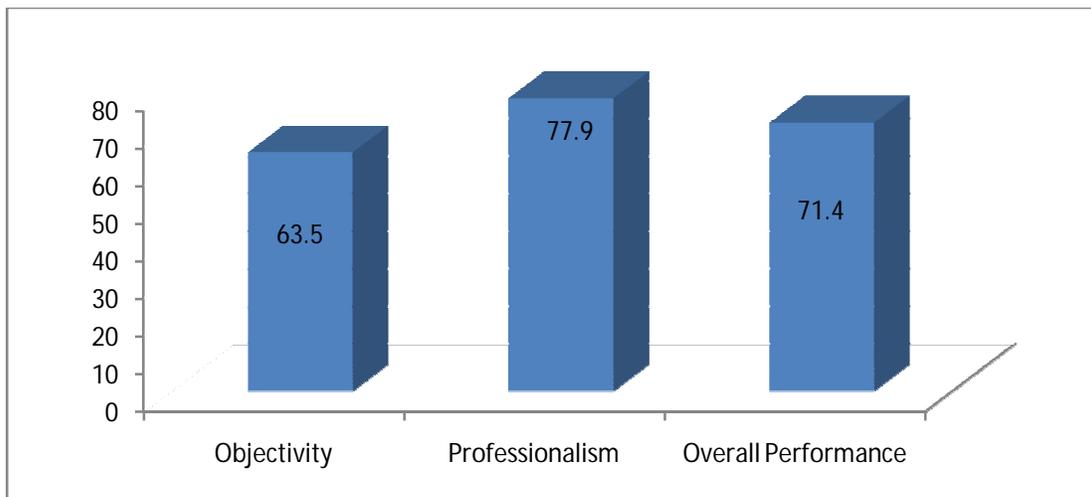


**Al-Jazeera overall performance:**

The new variables that were generated help us better understand the level of objectivity, professionalism and overall performance of Al-Jazeera Channel. The following results describe those variables and clarify the performance of Al-Jazeera in terms of objectivity, professionalism and overall performance.

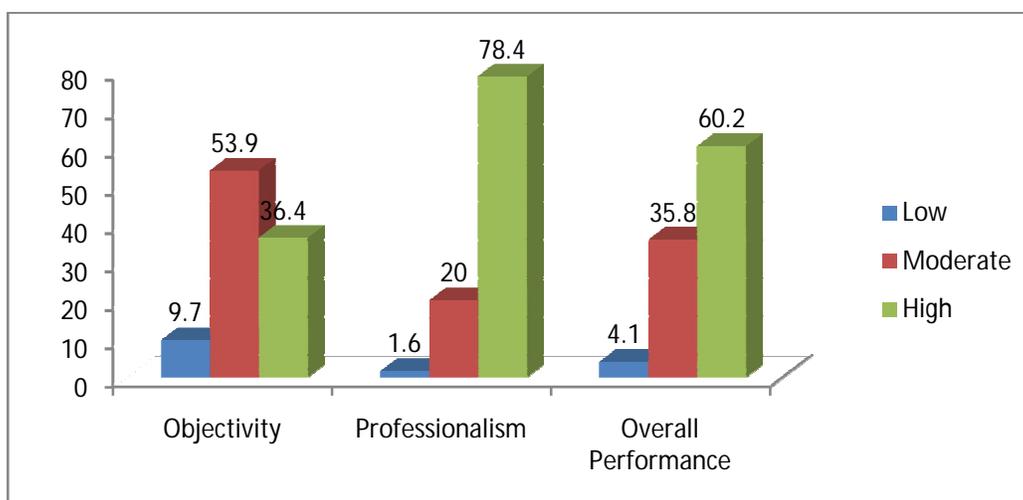
The objectivity and professionalism of Al-Jazeera was a subject of debate among politicians and even governments in many countries. The results in Fig. 4 show an acceptable level of overall performance (71.4), but at the same time the objectivity of Al-Jazeera is lower than its professionalism (63.5, 77.9, respectively). These results clarify the popularity of Al-Jazeera in the Arab countries and also clarify the high rate of viewing among the experts and specialists and among the public as indicated in the results of the CSS (2010).

**Fig. 4: Means of respondents’ evaluation for the performance of Al-Jazeera Channel regarding its objectivity and professionalism**



When sorting the answers of experts and specialists on objectivity, professionalism and overall performance into three categories (low, moderate and high), the results indicated that more than fifty percent of the experts and specialists (53.9%) evaluate the objectivity of Al-Jazeera as moderate and only 9.7% as high. However, professionalism scored high on the scale, where 78.4% of the experts and specialists mentioned that Al-Jazeera professionalism is high. The overall performance scored 60.2% on the scale that Al-Jazeera’s performance is high, and 35.8% on the moderate category (Fig 5).

**Fig. 5: Percentages of respondents’ evaluation of Al-Jazeera performance**



The results in table (2) are the outcome of the *f*-test used to determine whether the differences between the experts' answers on objectivity, professionalism and overall performance of Al-Jazeera Channel are due to some variables associated with the experts including nationality, academic experience, and practical experience related to media.

### **Objectivity and nationality**

The results show that experts and specialists from Gulf countries, Mashreq countries, or Maghreb countries evaluate Al-Jazeera's objectivity differently. The nationality of the experts and specialists has a significant impact ( $p \leq 0.05$ ) on the evaluation of the objectivity of Al-Jazeera, where the lowest mean of 60.5 was by the experts and specialists from the Maghreb countries, followed by the experts and specialists from the Gulf countries with 65.9, and 67.3 for the experts and specialists from Mashreq countries. The overall evaluation for the objectivity associated to this variable was 65.2.

### **Professionalism and nationality**

The results show that experts and specialists from Gulf countries, Mashreq countries, or Maghreb countries evaluate Al-Jazeera's professionalism differently. The nationality of the experts and specialists has a significant impact ( $p \leq 0.05$ ) on the evaluation of the professionalism of Al-Jazeera, where the lowest mean of 74.3 was by the experts and specialists from the Gulf countries, followed by the experts and specialists from the Maghreb countries with 75.0, and 81.0 for the experts and specialists from Mashreq countries. The overall evaluation for the professionalism associated to this variable was 78.7 which is higher than the objectivity.

### **Overall performance and nationality**

The overall performance combines objectivity and professionalism and the results of the *f*-test show that there are significant differences between the experts and specialists due to their nationality. The results (Table 2) show that nationality of the experts and specialists has a significant impact ( $p \leq 0.05$ ) on the evaluation of the overall performance of Al-Jazeera where the lowest mean of 69.3 was by the experts and specialists from the Gulf countries, followed by the experts and specialists from the Maghreb countries with 67.8, and 74.8 for the experts and specialists from Mashreq countries. The overall evaluation for the overall performance associated to this variable was 72.6 which is considered high and indicates the highest rank of Al-Jazeera as a news network.

### **Objectivity, professionalism and overall performance and academic experience (specialists)**

Although there are differences among the specialists on their evaluation of Al-Jazeera due to their years of academic experiences, these differences are not significant. However, the results show that there is a pattern among the specialists' evaluation as it is shown in Table (2). The specialists with the fewest and most years of experience have a lower evaluation for the three indicators (objectivity, professionalism and overall performance) compared with specialists with intermediate years of experience.

### **Objectivity, professionalism and overall performance and specialty experience (experts)**

There was a significant difference (Table 2) between the experts with regard to their years of experience on the objectivity of Al-Jazeera ( $p \leq 0.05$ ). The evaluation of Al-Jazeera objectivity among the experts who have 5-10 years of practical experience was 68.9 followed by the ones who have less than 5 years of experience (66.5). The evaluation of all experts of Al-Jazeera objectivity was 66.0. However, with regard to professionalism and overall performance, the results did not show any significant differences between the experts due to their years of experience.

### **Objectivity, professionalism and overall performance and specialty (political science or media)**

To better understand the influence of the experts' and specialists' specialties (political science or media), a *t*-test was performed. The results in table (3) indicate that there is no significant difference between objectivity, professionalism and overall performance of Al-Jazeera Channel due to area of specialty of media experts.

**Table (2): *f*-test results for objectivity, professionalism and overall performance of Al-Jazeera Channel by some variables**

	Mean /n	<i>f</i>	Significance
<b>Objectivity and Arab States categories</b>			
Gulf countries	65.9	3.643	<b>0.027</b>
Mashreq countries	67.3		
Maghreb countries	60.5		
All	65.2		
<b>Professionalism and Arab States categories</b>			
Gulf countries	74.3	4.654	<b>0.010</b>
Mashreq countries	81.0		
Maghreb countries	75.0		
All	78.7		
<b>Overall performance and Arab States categories</b>			
Gulf countries	69.3	3.588	<b>0.029</b>
Mashreq countries	74.8		
Maghreb countries	67.8		
All	72.6		
<b>Objectivity and academic experience</b>			
1-4 years	62.9	0.851	0.514
5-9 years	65.0		
10-14 years	64.8		
15-19 years	65.1		
20-24 years	63.4		
25 years +	59.5		
All	63.6		
<b>Professionalism and academic experience</b>			
1-4 years	72.8	1.641	0.148
5-9 years	80.2		
10-14 years	78.7		
15-19 years	80.4		
20-24 years	77.3		
25 years +	75.4		
All	78.2		
<b>Overall performance and academic experience</b>			
1-4 years	66.0	1.842	0.104
5-9 years	74.8		
10-14 years	72.2		
15-19 years	74.0		
20-24 years	70.4		
25 years +	67.9		
All	71.7		
<b>Objectivity and specialty experience</b>			
Less than 5 years	66.5	2.667	<b>0.048</b>
5-10 years	68.9		
11-20 years	64.7		
20 years +	58.5		
All	66.0		
<b>Professionalism and specialty experience</b>			
Less than 5 years	77.8	0.820	0.484
5-10 years	81.3		
11-20 years	80.2		
20 years +	77.3		
All	79.9		
<b>Overall performance and specialty experience</b>			
Less than 5 years	73.4	1.782	0.151
5-10 years	76.4		
11-20 years	73.5		
20 years +	67.9		
All	74.1		

**Table (3): *t*-test results for objectivity, professionalism and overall performance of Al-Jazeera Channel by area of specialty of the media experts**

	Mean /n	<i>t</i>	Significance
Objectivity and specialty experience			
Political science	63.8	0.250	0.803
Media	63.3		
Professionalism			
Political science	76.7	-1.362	0.174
Media	79.0		
Overall performance			
Political science	71.2	-0.253	0.801
Media	71.7		

### Conclusion

Al-Jazeera objectivity is lower than its professionalism among experts and specialists in political science and media disciplines. The high level of professionalism elevated the overall performance of Al-Jazeera. Therefore, it can be concluded that the technical and financial capabilities of Al-Jazeera enables it to be an effective actor in influencing people's attitudes and ultimately their behavior as it became their source of information in the absence of effective formal media in the Arab states. According to a former Arab minister of information, the US Department of State considers Al-Jazeera one of the key actors when analyzing an incident or an issue in the Arab region. The experts' and specialists' evaluations were affected by their nationalities. The results show that there are significant differences between the experts and specialists due to their nationality on Al-Jazeera objectivity, professionalism and overall performance. This could be interpreted due to Al-Jazeera's strategy toward certain countries, which led to accusations by government officials in some Arab countries against Al-Jazeera Channel.

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