

# The Portrayal of COVID-19 Vaccine in the Egyptian Media: A Comparative Media Study Between TV Channels and Online Newspapers

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## Abstract

This paper analyzes the media portrayal of COVID-19 Vaccine in the Egyptian Media and comparing between TV Channels & Online Newspapers. Media portrayal should be objective and balance to direct people's mind towards what's best for them so, the aim of this paper is to define objectivity and balance in reporting news then, explore objectivity and balance of media portrayal for COVID-19 Vaccines in the Egyptian Media. This paper is going to use the qualitative content analysis for the Egyptian media. This research attempts to study the impact of media through Framing theory & Agenda building theory by explaining how media can frame any topic to certain perspective. This topic falls under SDG number 3 Good health and Well-Being ensuring people's good health in the Egyptian society.

**Keywords:** Media portrayal / COVID-19 / Vaccine / Objectivity / Balance

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## 1. Introduction

Corona-virus is one of the most important issues if not the most important issue nowadays. The pandemic that started in Wuhan, China and spread all over the world in not time. Health officials around the world are proactive, as they are trying to stop the virus from spreading.

Some countries faced a lot of damage that there were no place for infected people in hospitals as Italy. The countries had lockdowns to prevent people from direct contact. The symptoms of the infection started with moderate cold or flu-like symptoms in two to four days. While signs can vary from person to person, they generally include sneezing, coughing, runny nose, tiredness, sore throat, and fever. Coronaviruses are a category of viruses that usually infect the respiratory system and intestines of humans and other mammals. Viruses are closely related to infections such as pneumonia, chronic colds and illnesses such as extreme acute respiratory syndrome (SARS) and Middle East respiratory syndrome (MERS).

In Egypt we had precautions to protect the people there were lockdown and the restaurants, cafes were limited to delivery. In April 2020 there were a decree to stop the dine in services. So people suffered a lot specially the owners of the businesses that had to shut.

According to the WHO there are three COVID-19 vaccines for which use has been approved by certain national regulatory authorities. None of the WHO EUL/PQ approvals have yet been obtained, but they foresee an evaluation of the Pfizer vaccine by the end of December and any other candidates shortly afterwards. In December 2020, FDA issued emergency use authorization (EUA) to Pfizer COVID-19 and Moderna COVID-19. Both Pfizer and Moderna COVID-19 vaccines need two doses to be successful. Doses of vaccine Pfizer COVID-19 should be given 21 days apart. The doses of the Moderna COVID-19 vaccine should be given 28 days apart. In this paper we will study the portrayal of the Vaccine in the Egyptian media and how the media talks about the dilemma of the vaccine.

## 2. Literature review:

Starting the 21<sup>st</sup> century, coronavirus conquered the world including Mers-Cov, SARS-Cov and now having COVID-19. All of these epidemics' sources are from China, and this is where they are asked to propose certain vaccine.

Covid-19 belongs to the family coronaviridae, and this family consists of beta, gamma, alpha & coronaviruses. The corona virus causes respiratory tract illness to patients, (Batool et. al, 2020). In 2003, sars-cov prevailed while in 2012, MERS-Cov then prevailed and were the cause of mortality rates of 37%.

In 2019, some cases appeared in Wuhan, China and Hubei which were linked to beta coronavirus and it was named by the WHO as SARS-CoV-2. The epidemic and its fast prevalence needed vaccine to help the world survive.

World Health Organization documented 160 vaccine for COVID-19 starting on 13<sup>th</sup> of July, 2020 as 26 of them is on clinical evaluation while, 137 are still on preclinical evaluation (Haq etl. Al, 2020)

According to WHO, all countries was impacted with 12,768,307 positive cases and 566,654 deaths on 14<sup>th</sup> of July 2020. (<https://covid19.who.int/>).

## 2.1 Ethical Reporting In Journalism

It is ethical reporting that explores the premise that impartial reporting is successful reporting. Ethical reporting has solid dimensions that shall not be changed, they are correlated with the notion of objectivity. Those dimensions are reliability, truthfulness; justice equilibrium, and moral neutrality.

It is reported that journalists are not impartial in their reporting in certain situations, either because they choose not to be or because their sources are exploiting them (Robert, 2000).

Objectivity happens when those three terms mingle together; neutrality, balance and reliability. The hard news' reporter, under objectivity and neutrality, refrains from voicing views, passing judgment on the content presented, or reacting emotionally.

The hard news' reporter also has to work under another important principle, which is the credibility that supposedly guarantees that the sources used to provide subjective judgments and versions of events have sufficient experience, expertise, authority or social status.

Thus, if journalists abide by those dimensions, people will be able to reconcile the media's assertions of objectivity with the ultimately essence of all news reporting through such interpretations of the news story, and of news stories as individual instances of this type

Moreover, objectivity is sometimes seen as conventions as creating a specific type of textuality by which the journalist's inter-subjective position is obscured.

It is understandable that the media has been able to retain trust in the notion of news as an 'objective' form of representation through this mode of textuality, while still creating texts that convey specific social assessments and that convey specific world views (Robert, 2000).

### **Accuracy, truthfulness, fairness and balance**

Accuracy, the Journalistic principles and practices maintain that information that are presented have to have proven journalistic values as accuracy; honesty and fairness.

The optimal objectivity and balance that must be present can be accomplished by the implementation of these principles. Accuracy is undermined in many instances because journalists do not stop choosing and because they want honesty.

Moving on to truthfulness, there has to be truth in every piece of news. Yet, there occur some pressures placed on journalists that also hinder the attempt to obtain impartial reporting.

Sometimes the news agencies demand stories, and the faster the better. The news agencies focus and impose deadlines in their briefings that make the journalist in a hurry to meet this deadline. Also, the news agencies have the need to fill space, so they pressure the journalists. Moreover, the competitive market with other media organizations put pressure on the journalist that he has to bring news in order to increase ratings.

All of the above-mentioned reasons, pressure the journalist to report in an imbalanced way; those reasons leave the journalists to distort the truth, to glorify events that are relatively easy, to magnify information, to produce no matter what. There are inclinations that are very individual. In a way that would restrict impartial reporting, we all want to tell personal stories. Truth supports us, serves our needs, makes us feel secure, and makes others look at us favorably at the same time (Raphael, 2001).

Journalists are under pressure to tell stories when they are still happening, when they can draw media interest, within the deadlines set by editors. And if the tale that at first seemed unusual appears to be very ordinary on review, then it can be colored to explain its inclusion a little.

Moving on, there are some pressures that the journalists face that cause sensationalism. Under pressures, journalists sometimes create unreal incidents to grab the attention. One of the prominent examples is what happened during the days of the Palestinian Intifada in 1987-1993. The media people asked young Palestinians to fake incidents where the camera's presence triggered an unreal incident and reported it.

Palestinians were asked "To do something" by media crews so they should report back to the agencies they belong to. Media people asked Palestinians to fake actions as to throw stones and Molotov cocktails, burn tires, or even provoke soldiers (Reese 1990).

To cut it short, objectivity shall be in its context when honesty, truthfulness and decent coverage of all facts of a given story mingle. Those ethical dimensions should never be considered as a relatively minor thing or to be overlooked when there is urgency to report.

Moreover, the news should have Fairness and balance.

The media deliberately tend not to be impartial on several occasions in the sense of either offering a fair representation of a given issue or striving for accuracy in their reporting because they want to draw attention to a particular issue, individual, political platform, viewpoint, problem or human story (Herman, 1995).

Sometimes the journalists do not intend to be unfair, yet, they undeliberate use certain terms and refrain from others, which makes them unfair and a bit biased.

Journalists are sometimes not aware of taking sides in a certain issue or dilemma.

Yet, there are other times when journalists are deliberately unfair and are often not impartial because they consciously prefer prejudice.

For different purposes of growing ratings and sales, there is a certain angle that they want to highlight.

Moving on, there is an important aspect that media people shall always look after, which is the idea of not hurting others and respecting others that must take a central role in journalists' considerations.

This shall always be the case, except when the media are definitely entitled to report information to the public at the detriment of certain dishonest people on certain issues, such as corruption in political institutions as corruption people shall not attain any respect and their bad deeds must be highlighted to the publics (Raphael, 2001).

Objectivity of truthful news is unattainable yet beneficial. Journalists should strive for objectivity as it is possible yet a bit hard to achieve.

In a nutshell, accuracy, truthfulness, fairness and balance are acknowledged and promoted in reporting. Journalists should comply with the ideals and dimensions of ethics to be able to present objective news that the publics would accept. Also, journalists should comply to not hurting others and respecting their privacy. (Sanders)

Journalists are expected to be responsible for what they report as well as for how they report. The role of news agencies must be played both in the sense of applying considerations while evaluating various conceptions and in trying to resolve competing desires, arguments, and demands.

This is a delicate challenge, one that requires integrity: taking the relevant factors and demands that affect society as a whole into account when making decisions.

## **2.2 Media Literacy and Infodemic Problem:**

World Health Organization (WHO) announced that COVID—19 Is a public health emergency in 30<sup>th</sup> of January 2020 then , on the 2<sup>nd</sup> of February 2020 , organization warned from the consequences of this issue and asked to avoid “Infodemic” which is large quantity of information that makes it hard for people to find credible sources and reliable sources to use it in getting information.

Information about covid-19 prevailed in different formats as Youtube Links about several treatments, prescriptions ,news clippings and vaccine related comics and memes in groups on Whatsapp.

When Russian President Putin announced that they had developed harmless vaccine for corona, some links started to go viral about his daughter who dies after getting the second dose of the vaccine, later on this story became debunked as false story , although it was written on online websites which people consider as credible.

According to the European commission there are two types of misleading information:

- Misinformation: Unintentionally mistaken information while.
- Disinformation its false information leads to misleading people for economic gain and for the reason of deceiving publics. ( Hajela,2020)

Some governments in different countries implemented different measures to limit misinformation about COVID-19, for example Some EU countries and South Africa criminalized false information and arrest citizens who spread false information about the virus.

According to a new report by Centre for Countering Digital Hate (CCDH) , there is anti-vaccine movement as 31 million people followed these types of groups on Facebook , while 17 million subscribed to accounts related to anti-vaccine on YouTube. But, Facebook have taken measurements to curb spread of false information by down ranking pages about anti-vaccine and give the priority to vaccination pages led by experts while YouTube announced the intention to remove any video that might include any misleading information about COVID-19 vaccine.

A study made in Vietnam to show that there was high rate of hesitancy and resistance to take vaccine among people who lives in urban areas due to media coverage. And these findings lead to the importance of developing accurate information in the media about vaccines and also the importance to build trust between health care professionals and publics (Tran et. al , 2018)

In UK, an online campaign is run to curb false information about COVID-19 and its vaccination so it offers some tips:

- 1) Make sure of the credibility of the source and that it's coming from trustworthy source
- 2) Read more than just the headline
- 3) Check the facts in different sources
- 4) analyze the photos whether it's retouched
- 5) Keep an eye on grammar and spelling mistakes in any source.

A study asserted that negative messages regarding corona virus portrayal caused people to highly panic which causes vaccine intake refusal, as misinformation has been delivered to people on Twitter. Twitter is a very effective social media platform through which youth and even old people have accounts with a high activity regarding tweets, retweets, and even hashtags searching. It's the main used platform for news through which youth gather their information from.

Tweets with misinformation have been classified with 32.47% which is represented as “misleading

statements” that are projected in portraying that the survival rate is actually high which caused vaccine safety and effectiveness to be questioned, as why it’s important to take the vaccine if people easily survive the disease? A qualitative content analysis was constructed with different themes by analyzing 7 major units to explain media representation effectiveness in leading the public agenda, concerns, and decisions (Nuzhath, Tasnim, Sanjowal, Trisha, Rahman, Mahmud, Arman, & Hossain, 2020).

COVID-19 pandemic has been causing infodemic through digital media portrayals that actually share false information and health unsourced recommendations causing missing angles of media coverage and an ineffective media framework when delivering COVID-19 vaccine media messages. On the other hand, international and local media networks increased awareness and decreased anxiety by exposing useful conferences and live coverages explain the disease, its pros and cons, and how to deal with it in case of a personal or non-personal infection. This exposure helped in the reduction of moral panics and the fear of never overcoming the disease if infected. Ordinary people's voices represented in different traditional media coverages reduced the fear of being alone when it comes to feeling worried or stressed. These kinds of representation also answered many concerns and questions that have been implemented within audiences (Mheidly and Fares, 2020).

During Covid-19 , Some types of campaigns were released about Vaccine. Some of them were with taking vaccine and encouraging people to take it , while others where anti-vaccination. And this happened in different countries. For example ,

There is online and offline campaigns about focusing on medical freedom and civil liberties to demonstrate against it in London “Come together , resist and act”

While some campaigns were tackling the issue of the importance of vaccination and even asking people to participate in testing COVID-19 Vaccine. ( Hajela,2020).

In Egypt , some campaigns used celebrities to influence people to help in taking the vaccine in order to combat COVID-19 as soon as possible.



حملة لتشجيع المصريين للمشاركة في الأبحاث الإكلينيكية للقاح فيروس كورونا<sup>1</sup>

### Tips for objective reporting on vaccines

Corona virus has been invading the whole world creating a global crisis with people’s lives, transportation, economic downfall. Corona virus media representation has been planned to influence a high number of people convincing them with the disease vaccine safety and its usefulness. This vaccine is framed within a context under the label of penetrating or stopping the crisis by delivering the solution through different media platforms to persuade audiences decision-making.

Understanding an individual’s perception regarding corona’s vaccine is essential for adopting media platforms’ vision when it comes to the vaccine intake. This is implemented by media platforms addressing resources via social media networks for further information regarding facts and research concerned with the safety of corona’s vaccine. Moreover, evidence-based messages are the main frame through which messages circulate in to help influence audiences through balance, clarity, explaining costs and benefits, and tailored contexts to complement with audiences’ needs, wants, and their right to know (World Health Organization, 2020).

WHO published some tips for journalists in order to have professional coverage and reporting on vaccines

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QfPT-aOWd5A>

in COVID-19 (WHO, 2020)

- As a professional journalist , there should be thorough look on any full article before publishing not just from the headline
- Always include details of data reporting
- Use trusted sources who talk about Vaccine and specially when there's media coverage about new vaccine , it's important to contact experts of science media center of the country to give details about latest developments
- State the source to ensure credibility
- Since the language is going to be scientific , not all people are aware of all terms , so the reporter should keep in mind to be clear in his language
- Reporters should be clear in telling in which stage is the research as early stage research is not the same as a research which is peer reviewed.
- In reporting vaccines , it's important to state numbers of sample size , people who tested and the timeframe of the trial
- reveal the side effects because revealing it is very important. As in the case of COVID-19 , there is not any vaccine in the history got progressed in the stages as fast as corona virus . that's why we need to mention any side effects
- Use illustrations that appeal to people for example people who work on Vaccines. Avoid adding photos of crying babies.
- Mentioning demographics of people who tried the vaccine is needed because not all people are going to respond the same to the vaccine
- Position vacancy as needed and important to avoid misinformation that prevails during pandemic.

### 2.3 Covid-19 and the Portrayals of Vaccine:

Coronavirus is an infection that is caused by extreme acute respiratory syndrome. In December 2019, in Wuhan, China, the first case was found. According to media reports on unpublished Chinese government records, the first COVID-19 case of a person suffering can be traced back to 17<sup>th</sup> of November, 2019. The article in the South China Morning Post said that at least 266 people who contracted the virus last year and who came under medical surveillance were reported by the Chinese authorities, and the earliest case was 17<sup>th</sup> of November, weeks before the new virus was confirmed by the authorities (Davidson, 2020).

COVID-19 symptoms are complex, but frequently include fever, cough, weakness, trouble breathing, and loss of smell and taste. Symptoms begin to occur from One to fourteen days after exposure to the virus. There are no signs in around one in five infected persons. Some people experience acute respiratory distress syndrome, while most people have mild symptoms.

Longer-term damage to the organs (lungs and heart in particular) has been noted. There is concern about a large number of patients who have recovered from the acute phase of the disease but continue to suffer a variety of symptoms for months afterwards, known as long COVID-19. These symptoms include extreme tiredness, loss of smell and taste, other cognitive difficulties, low-grade fever, weakness in the muscles, and breathlessness (Davidson, 2020).

The virus causing COVID-19 spreads primarily when another person is in close contact with an infected person. As people cough, sneeze, breathe, or speak, tiny infected droplets of the virus will spread from the nose and mouth of an infected person. If the virus gets into their mouth, nose or eyes, other individuals are infected.

The virus can also spread through contaminated surfaces, although the main route of transmission is not believed to be this. The exact route of transmission is rarely conclusively confirmed, but infection occurs predominantly when individuals are long enough near each other. It can spread as early as two days before symptoms are displayed by infected people and by people who do not experience symptoms. In mild cases, people remain infectious for up to ten days, and in extreme cases, two weeks.

In order to diagnose the disease, various testing methods have been developed. The standard method of diagnosis is Polymerase Chain Reaction (PCR). Going back, the very 1st COVID-19 infected case to be discovered in Cairo was on the 14<sup>th</sup> of February, 2020. The first Coronavirus infection for a 'Chinese' national in Egypt was confirmed by the Egyptian Ministry of Health on Friday. Health Ministry spokesman Khaled Megahed said that the laboratory tests performed at Cairo International Airport for the suspected case resulted in a positive virus, but the infected person did not experience any symptoms (Egypt Today, 2020).

COVID-19 has infected at least 128,343 people worldwide and 4,702 have been killed. Of those that have developed the virus, 68,324 individuals have recovered since it started. Nearly 81,000 of the cases were in China, mainly in Hubei Province.

#### **Preventive Measures:**

World governments are trying to develop counter-measures to curb the destructive effects and it has been

reported that 3 million lives in 11 European countries could have been saved by strict shutdowns. In order to best minimize the effect of the hazard, health organizations organize information flows and issue directives and guidelines.

Scientists around the world are working tirelessly at the same time, and knowledge is increasingly emerging on transmissions, new diagnostics, and preventive and therapeutic strategies. The clinical methods to cope with infection are only helpful at the moment, and our best tool in prevention aimed at minimizing transmission in the population. Aggressive policies of separation have contributed to a gradual decline in the number of infected cases (Cascella, 2020).

Egypt has been objective in sharing the preventive measures, all shared information are equally the same, whether compared on the local or the international levels. Preventive steps include physical or social distancing, quarantining, indoor ventilation, cough and sneezing coverage, hand washing, and keeping the face away from unwashed hands. In public settings, the use of face masks or coverings has been advised to reduce the risk of transmission. Several vaccines have been developed and mass vaccination programs have been launched by different countries.

Although work is underway to develop vaccines that inhibit the virus, the primary treatment is currently symptomatic. Control requires symptom management, compassionate care, isolation, and experimental interventions. (Rajnik, 2020). To decrease the risk of infection as the infected people cough, sneeze or chat, people need to maintain at least a 1-meter gap between each other. When in a closed area, maintain an even greater gap between each other.

Make it a natural part of being around other people to wear a mask. In order to make masks as effective as possible, proper usage, storage and cleaning or disposal are necessary. Wash the hands before putting the mask on, before and after taking it off, and after touching it at any time (World Health Organization, 2020). Clean hands frequently and carefully with alcohol, then rub the hands with soap and water. This removes germs that may be on the hands, like viruses.

Stop rubbing the mouth, nose and eyes.

Contaminated hands may infect people with COVID-19. When coughing or sneezing, cover the mouth and nose with bent elbow or cloth. Then immediately dispose of the used tissue in a closed bin and wash the face.

You protect the individuals around from viruses that cause colds, flu and COVID-19 by practicing good 'respiratory hygiene'. Always leave surfaces cleaned and disinfected, especially those that are frequently touched, such as door handles, faucets and phone screens (World Health Organization).

Daily, track the health. Be on the lookout for signs. Watch for COVID-19 fever, cough, shortness of breath, or other symptoms. If symptoms arise, check the temperature. Do not take the temperature after 30 minutes of exercise or after taking drugs that can lower it.

Better to abide by the preventive measures as there are still no 100% confirmed vaccines that perfectly work on treating COVID-19. There has been no specific antiviral therapy for COVID-19, they are still working on it.

#### **Different media discourse in portraying COVID-19 vaccine**

Egypt became the first African country to receive Chinese coronavirus vaccine since receiving the first batch of Chinese state-owned pharmaceutical company Sinopharm on 10 December. Despite official announcements by the Egyptian health minister that vaccination shots will be available free of charge to residents, many are hesitant to take them because no one knows if they are effective or not.

Alahram weekly interviewed some of the Egyptian people to know their opinion on the vaccine people stated that they are afraid to take it at least for now. Controversies among the public mirrored the condition of the experts. Serag Zakaria and Ashraf Omar, respected professors of gastroenterology in Egypt, offered varying opinions on the Chinese vaccine when Amr Adib was hosting MBC Masr. Zakaria said that he will take the Vaccine and his family too whereas Omar said he'll wait till he's sure that it's effective.

Sinopharm vaccine is made up of coronaviruses that have been destroyed or damaged, using the conventional technique of using an inactive virus to cause an immune response, whereas Moderna vaccine is made from genetic materials such as mRNA. Both Sinopharm and Moderna vaccines need two doses in order to be successful. Sinopharm doses should be taken at least 21 days apart, although the time in Moderna should be extended to 28 days apart. Sinopharm also confirmed that the vaccine needs to be refrigerated at temperatures of just two to eight degrees Celsius and has been stable for three years, making it easy to store and deliver. Moderna's vaccine, on the other hand, could remain stable for just 30 days between two and eight degrees Celsius. For shipping or long-term storage, industrial freezers are required, as they must be stored at minus 20 degrees Celsius for a period of six months.

In response to concerns about the safety and effectiveness of the vaccine relative to other vaccines, including those produced by Pfizer and Oxford, Presidential Advisor for Health Affairs Mohamed Awad Tag El-Din said in a TV statement on Tuesday that "Egypt will not receive any vaccine without ensuring that it is effective and safe." According to the Ministry of Health, the Sinopharm vaccine has been found to be 86 per cent effective against coronavirus, 99 per cent effective in antibody development, and 100 per cent effective in the

prevention of mild and serious symptoms. Moreover, Egypt planned launching a website so that people reserve the vaccine. Egyptians who are willing to take the vaccine will sign up and add their info, reported Al-Ahram online.

Egyptian Minister of Health Hala Zayed said Egypt will receive successive quantities of Chinese Sinopharm coronavirus vaccine and will provide people with doses provided free, depending on the President's instructions. Sinopharm vaccination, according to the UAE and Egypt, is 86% effective against coronavirus. It has been active in clinical trials in Egypt during the last few months. Minister Zayed has been one of the volunteers. Zayed said that the Chinese vaccine has been given emergency clearance by the World Health Organization, adding that Egypt has reached an agreement with the Global Alliance for Vaccination and Immunization to ensure the availability of additional doses of vaccine. The President's health advisor emphasized that Egypt will only allow vaccines that have proved to be effective and safe in the treatment of respiratory viruses to be distributed.

A qualitative content analysis asserted that state-backed media from China, Iran, Turkey, and Russia are attracting tens of millions of French, German, and Spanish speaking social media users around the world by highly feeling engaged with governmental sources. Each country has its own discourse through which COVID-19 vaccine was portrayed which also goes back to the protocols of each country in managing this health situation. Framing news within different themes have been used to generate COVID-19 vaccine news with high proportions of engagement and belonging.

Weak democracies, successful state responses, and conspiracy theories were the main state-backed narratives regarding COVID-19 vaccine portrayals. Weak democracies narratives created chaos and undermined trust in public institutions while successful state responses fought this chaos by explaining COVID-19 management strategies. Conspiracy theories narratives were also used especially by China to explain how this disease is a bioweapon manufactured by the US (Rebello, Schwieter, Schliebs, Joynes-Burgess, Elswah, Bright, & Howard, 2020).

Different kinds of portrayals have been polarized by influencing people toward anti-vaccination or vaccination intake. Traditional media has been believed to be trusted by the mass audiences, as it delivered news about COVID-19 without exaggeration, negativity, gloominess, or even unsafety. COVID-19 vaccine has been framed in frames of precautions, positivity, hope, number of survivors, and how easy it is to overcome the disease. Unlikely, it has been reported that the social media has been used to organize offline actions by negatively portraying the vaccine and creating panic between individuals to urge an anti-vaccination attitude. Framing vaccination as unsafe or useless was highly processed by online foreign disinformation campaigns which highly influenced users on different social media platforms. Polls have been used to detect negative vaccine discourses by detecting how audiences were negatively influenced by foreign disinformation campaigns as 95% of audiences lacked confidence in the vaccine creating a high level of mistrust towards traditional media such as print media and TV channels (Wilson and Wiysonge, 2020).

The usage of words or the language itself plays a great role in the portrayal of COVID-19 before the portrayal of its vaccine. These words help in the cognitive understanding of the health issue and its consequences. Frames of gloom, hope, precautions, fear, and lack of confidence have been oppositely interacting with each other creating an opposed comprehension of COVID-19 vaccine. Studying twitter through different countries such as China, the US, Japan, and Italy, concluded that the use of different styles regarding portraying COVID-19 vaccine news played a huge role in the fear of not overcoming the disease, as mainly news concentrated on the outbreak of the virus and ways to fight its rate of speed. These portrayals didn't effectively represent the disease vaccine, instead it focused on the global concerns creating a missing coverage upon the disease's updates (Essam, Abdo, & Alghonaim, 2020).

#### **2.4 Objectivity and Balancing News presentation**

Objectivity is one of the issues that is considered to be most debatable in the history of journalism and it had multiple definitions. Gans and Tuchman link to the objectivity by "examining content of compiled news material". (Yat,2007). Others, called it separating facts from opinions. According to Glasser , objectivity means writing news independently and responsibly then presenting it to the audience as the final product. (Glasser, 1992).

An example for objectivity in Iraq , happened invasion by Us and the embedded journalists started there. Being biased for a journalist in war maybe something that happened circumstantial. In this example definitely objectivity is going to be influenced. Nowadays , what controls the objectivity of any media is the "Gatekeepers" as editors decide what to publish to the audience and what certain news stories should be gathered and appear to people. As for Fred and Wellman , Editors and now media owners are the one who decides which issues to be published in journalism.

So there are some factors that may lead to biased presentation of reporting news. First one , when information collected is imbalanced and distorted from one to another. Second one, when facts lack credibility

due to wrong information reported. Third one, due to ambiguity as the journalist cannot find a source to verify for him the news. Many studies were conducted starting from 1920 by Walter Lippman. Most of the studies focused on how news lack objectivity but, none of them focused clearly on the factors that influence the objectivity.

Objectivity differs from culture to culture. For example: there are some cultural factors that impact objectivity in news.

Journalists can become biased towards something for example: a journalist who grew up in India may have different opinions regarding death as they are not familiar with burying but, familiar with burning dead bodies. (Yat, 2007). In addition, objectivity may be affected due to deadlines that they must meet that's why they have no time to verify facts so they rely on quotes from people.

Journalistic objectivity is a state of mind for the editor or press delegate that includes a conscious effort not to judge what he sees, not to be influenced by his previous personal judgments or tribal prejudices, and not to be fascinated by the language of the participants in the news event.

The problem of dealing with news in an objective way in opinion newspapers seems much more difficult than in newspapers that have been termed as independent newspapers because those working in these newspapers owe the principles of the party represented by the newspaper. (Ismail, 2015)

### **1) The relation between the languages of the reporter to the objectivity:**

The reporter or the writer of piece of news should give up the idea of rating things between good or evil or black and white so in order to achieve objectivity, avoiding describing things from one's point of view is needed

### **2) The complete difference between members of a specific group or class of society**

Avoiding stereotyping for all group members is also needed, for example the democratic person (A) is not the same as the other democratic person (B)

### **3) Everyone and everything is constantly changing**

When reporting a piece of news, always remember that things constantly change as the president in a specific year is way very different from the president of another year.

Balance is an important characteristic of the news, and it means confirming the completion of the story in all its aspects. The journalist must seek balanced news coverage to arrange the facts to present an equal view. (Ismail, 2015)

According to Ben Bradlee -Former editor-in-chief of the Washington newspaper- :

*"Searching for opposing viewpoints must be a regular duty or routine for a journalist"*

In conclusion, Objective coverage does not achieve what it believes is its role in a democratic state as a fourth authority, guard dog, and defense press. In fact, objective coverage is biased towards the status quo to the point that psychologist Golds described the journalists as "the managers of the status quo."

The concept of status quo managers will be applied on coverage of COVID-19 Vaccine in the Egyptian Media.

News presentation refers to elements of the news starting from the headlines and the body which includes opening and ending; how it moves from kernel or the core to the subsidiary items and back forth again. In addition news presentation has a role in even choosing people who got interviewed and figures that appear which contributes to the overall of the piece of news. (Montgomery, 2008).

News presentation rely on the one who reads the news and it's consisted into different types: Newsreader, anchor, newscaster and presenter.

For the newsreader, he just read the news while newscaster, someone who has background in journalism and help in compiling news. As for anchor, presenting material at certain time. And finally presenter encompasses all of these roles.

Presenters should deliver the news in certain way that should not be dramatic nor completely inexpressive. For example: In human interest items some tragedy accidents should appeal to some narrow emotional range but, also presenter should take care and avoid being overly emotion. So in order to be objective, limiting postural behavior is very important.

Some of the studies of news focus on practices of media and its production, and most of the studies focus on sources that is used and influence and how news organizations and ideologies used in it shape news as if it's product (Tuchman, 1978). Some studies was made about news production that talked about news content such as Glasgow (University), and Bad News (1976), More bad news (1980). (Montgomery, 2008). The Media can be print or broadcasting, both of them are few to many which are forms of mass communication. For the print, it needs time to be delivered correctly from encoding to decoding, while, broadcasting helps in live communication.

A qualitative comparative analysis asserted that conflict reporting has been highly used by news media to strengthen circulation and ratings even if objectivity and balance will be set aside. News media has a solid relationship with the state especially in times of war through which news gathering or collection is specialized with going back to official and elite sources which discards many different views which can limit diversification



and freedom of expression or choice.

The context through which news is placed within has a great influence on reporting and selection of news when it comes to framing, as it has been concluded that Chinese, Vietnamese, and Philippine newspapers depict news differently and this goes back to how the conflict between the three countries is deep. Thus, multinational conflicts influence the practices of journalists, as any actions made by any foreign army is highly expected to be portrayed by the American media as the war-oriented frame is highly implemented within New York Times and Global Times (Vu, 2012).

Digital age presents new challenges for the journalistic objectivity, as the journalism of verification which goes back to the old school concerning journalism isn't the sole kind of journalism anyone. Objectivity has been misused by the digital age that created a new kind of journalism which is expected to have greater transparency, evidences, and diversification, but lacks quality and practices of delivering news which is still a main journalistic concern.

The digitalized news outlets created an objectivity redefinition and new codes of practices that are related to transparency which isn't enough for digital journalism to compete the old journalism with. Transparency relies on the individual's ability to interpret what has been offered. Therefore, accountability will not be present all the time as the new kind of journalism isn't affiliated to a specific organization.

As a result, serving the public interest will not be implemented in a professional way, but when a specific incident of a specific person's interest happens (Sambrook, 2012). Reporting news is important to citizens because it's their sources to accessing events that might affect people's life on different aspects such as politically, economically, emotionally and culturally. News is most probably selective and partially when choosing which is worth reporting and how it's presented to audience. (Delin,2000).

When we look at newspapers will find some different types of texts with different goals, aims and presentation of content. 1) Hard news 2) Soft news as feature stories 3) special topics such as sports or topics related to art 4) photo captions. Some factors relate to the story to be newsworthy which falls in the way news is gathered and represented to people; negativity is one of the items that make a story newsworthy as It depends on something negative that happened such as disasters or crimes.

News to be newsworthy it must be novel and not routine also new one. Also, news should relate to some credible sources by giving facts. (Galtung & Ruge, 1965)

The first research in ethics code of conduct was aiming at the medical profession. (Oates,2006).

William Labov is the founding father of sociolinguistics and Labov felt that it should appeal to social responsibility as he expressed this in his report on "Objectivity and Commitment in linguistics science in 1982" after an African American parents whose children was being disadvantaged and so called to have learning difficulties by teachers who did not know enough about "African American Vernacular English", so linguistics here needed to show that it's a standard English unlike the stereotype about it that its' sloppy.(Hultagren,2016)

In any story disseminated to people have many sides of the story which can be for, against and reality.

The reality of issues "any independently of any cognitive thinking and also in accessible to any personal experiences".

People are interested to know truth of things because they want to make sure that their beliefs are correct. Truth in the end is a mix of thoughts, judgments, beliefs and opinions also, statements, and sentences that express these beliefs. Sometimes things can be considered as true when it includes some facts. According to Crispin Wright, he mentioned basic principles: 1) content is true when it disseminate facts 2) truth is distinct 3) truth is absolute 4) truth is something stable "never changes" 5) truth is understandable 6) a statement means presenting something as true. (Faye,2016)

### **COVID-19 Vaccine Objective Portrayals**

An Australian media analysis advocated that instead of allocating responsibility, the Australian media remained objective by introducing actions and consequences of the pandemic and the COVID-19 vaccine. Instead of using the blame frame that was constructed by mostly all media platforms, as COVID-19 was depicted as a Chinese disease, the Australian media didn't use it as a form of reassurance to the crisis as what other media in different countries did.

It has been reported that the blame frame was absent from Australian print media, as Australia didn't believe that the risk was high enough for the media to blame China for the crisis. Moreover, Australian media didn't want to parrot what other countries were reporting by labeling COVID-19 as a Chinese disease with a useless vaccine. In addition, other Australian media expressed that the blame was obvious in other countries, thus it doesn't need a further comment.

The Australian traditional media wanted the scoop by achieving uniqueness through different kinds of balanced coverage with pointing fingers at anyone or any country (Thomas, Wilson, Tonkin, Miller, & Ward, 2020).

Cross-correlation analysis stated that mass media played a huge role in properly portraying COVID-19 vaccine by delivering different media reports with available statistics, accessible resources, and using physicians

as important voices to explain the virus and its symptoms by providing audiences with tips for precautions and dealing with the infection if possible.

This effective media reporting helped in curbing the spread of COVID-19 and building a solid relationship between audiences and the mass media by safely depending on its reporting and the town halls constructed that was also portrayed by such a media creating diversified sources and voices explaining the vaccine and its effectiveness. High degree of public awareness was implemented by enhancing news reporting which didn't only depend on authorities, but also it assisted opinion leaders, physicians, and citizens that have been infected or know someone who's infected (Zhou, Wang, Xia, & Xiao, and Tang, 2020).

In the UK, a survey has claimed that authorities were trusted and media representations were positive (84%) creating a trustworthy relationship between the media and its audiences, as media discourse played a huge role in influencing beliefs and attitudes towards COVID-19 vaccine.

Media discourse matched authorities or the government statements that explained how essential the vaccine is by positively framing the information along with giving a way for the misinformation to provide audiences with a whole picture of the health issue by delivering information and leaving (and at the same time fighting) the false information for people to freely and properly judge and construct their decision which creates a vaccine validity/intake or a vaccine hesitancy.

Details around the vaccine are still limited as not all information is available and not all experiments came to light due to the lack of information about the vaccine composition that will help the media a lot in creating a complete framework through which this important health issue is depicted creating a balanced media representation (Sherman, Smith, Sim, Amlôt, Cutts, Dasch, Rubin, & Sevdalis, 2020).

A report concluded that countries with Bacillus Calmette–Guérin (BCG) vaccination program that has been disseminated on traditional media platforms had lower death rate when it comes to COVID-19 in comparison to countries without a (BCG) vaccination program and an effective media portrayal of such a program plan. This report explained how (BCG) vaccination program has been highly tackled by the traditional media declaring how the traditional media is effective when it comes to COVID-19 portrayal as well which caused audiences to follow the procedures which lowered the infection/death rate.

Also, it has been proclaimed that BCG vaccine, used against tuberculosis, helps in reducing COVID-19 symptoms. It was also asserted that the traditional media plays a huge role in spreading information about COVID-19 vaccine, as it strengthened its intake in many countries by objectively representing health issues and their consequences just like how in 183 countries, the BCG vaccine was properly represented by the traditional media along with its consequences which led these countries to create a risk communication plan if any new disease emerged. This, COVID-19 managing protocols differ from one country to the other which goes back to each country's media and its environment through which it processes (Hussein, Salem, Salman, Abdulrahim, Massry, Saad, Dahman, & Negida, 2020).

## **2.5 Egypt's Media System affecting objectivity and balance of news**

A study asserted that the Egyptian Media faced a lot of challenges in relation to freedom, pluralism, and independence, as there was a lack of regulatory framework that defines the functions of public and private media. This lack led to the empowerment of government, as it started to add pressure on media organizations/institutions in relation to the content made or delivered to audiences. Advertisers too had their toll on the public and private media in relation to creating a content that matches specific owners' favors, who own some shares or media organizations (Allam, 2017).

In addition, The Egyptian Radio and Television Union (ERTU) oversees and monitors the government, therefore it controlled media outlets (Radio and TV) (ERTU Files, 2001).

Moreover, TV channels' licenses are issued and signed through the General Authority for Investment (GAFI) which is affiliated to the Ministry of Investment and therefore, it's still a part of the government. Satellite channels have more freedom than that of terrestrial channels in relation to the content executed and delivered to audiences along with criticizing the government's decisions and are the most favored platforms by viewers (Amin, 2016).

Another study tackled Egypt's Media Scale by dividing it into periods associated with specific presidents in order to detect whether such media scale is evolving or downgrading. The report declared that the origins of the Modern Media started in 1828 with the introduction of the printing press and establishment of the country's first newspaper "Al-Waqi'a Al-Misriya" and later Al-Ahram in 1875. Under the British occupation in the 1930s, Egypt became the focal point of Arab publication and broadcasting. President Gamal Abdel-Nasser came into power in 1956 and made extensive use of radio technology to spread his ideology among the people. Cheap transistors radios were distributed among Egyptians for Nasser to spread his political speeches to announce Egyptians with political developments.

Furthermore, Press was nationalized in 1960 by Abdel-Nasser and in 1971, The Egyptian Radio and Television Union (ERTU) was established under President Anwar Al-Sadat. Therefore, a monopoly over

terrestrial television broadcasting took place and government allowed a minimal degree of private radio ownership.

Egypt under President Hosni Mubarak launched the First Arab Satellite Channel, The Egyptian Satellite Channel in 1990. In 1998, the Egyptian government launched its first satellite NileSat and therefore had been the most influential country when it comes to delivering news and entertainment. By 2011 popular protest, the rise of social media and online publishing took place creating an immediate post-change media environment. Egypt Media System in relation to President Mohammed Morsi (2012) and President Abdel-Fatah Al-Sisi (2013) regimes is characterized by “harsh restrictions upon freedom of expression and the return of a culture of enforced obedience in the print and television industries”.

Also, Egypt’s media landscape through 2011 and how the 25<sup>th</sup> of January changed people socially, politically, culturally, and emotionally by involving political learning or education. The study affirmed that “the eclectic and paradoxical nature of the modern Egyptian media landscape, which combines the binary opposites of authoritarianism and resistance, public ownership, and privatization, ethical and popular spheres, and secularization and (re) Islamization offers an interesting case of heterogeneity and divergence, reversing Hallin and Mancini’s (2004) hypothesis of homogenization, which predicts that the development of the free press goes with the shift toward democratization and the development of liberal institutions and mass markets, which in many countries beyond Western Europe does not seem to be the case”.

Therefore, the paper tried to indicate that the emergence of oppositional and resistant voices indicated the emergence of pluralistic media arena, so political change took place in parallel to political education and awareness when it comes to audiences, but still there is an authority that may destruct such an emergence. (Khamis, 2001).

Egypt continues to struggle with an authoritarian media sector and constraints on freedom of expression even after January 25 revolution. It concentrated on Egyptian Media since and after the 25<sup>th</sup> of January along with how limitation of freedom in relation to self-expression and the control of Egyptian median coverage took place.

Private Media outlets influenced by wealthy owners with ties to the Mubarak’s regime along with state media supported whatever regime is in power of. After 25<sup>th</sup> of January, critical view expression and established media entities in relation to expressing ideologies that are against the government took place. Social Media played a huge role in this, as it was the main media platform through which freedom of speech took place.

Therefore, marginalized views are offered, activists can voice their opinions and document human rights violations. President Mohammed Morsi was ousted from power in July 2013 and Islamist-affiliated outlets have been shut down by the government, along with repression of the media had its early signs in relation to the current regime. “Termination of popular political satire show Al-Bernameg and a request for proposals from the Ministry of Interior for software to monitor online social networks” (Abdulla,2014).

Currently, Egypt is playing a crucial role in political, social and cultural change. “The media has a critically important role to play in Egypt given the authoritarian political rulers have, to a large extent, been controlling the public sphere”. Media ownership and editorial practices have been influenced by such authoritarian power in relation to the content produced and delivered. This was also tackled in the paper through how in parallel to technological developments, Information and Communications Technology (ICT) has transformed mass-mediated communications into a more interactive process that engages citizens more strongly after the government realized how the growth of the Internet usage took place.

Media users in Egypt use a variety of platforms in different amounts, but throughout *a recent study on media consumption by Google*: “Mobile phones were the second most popular medium, used for both calling and short messaging services. The Internet followed in the third place which implies how digital technology is important” Access and availability of the Internet or information is evolving according to individuals’ interests, needs, wants, or desires.

“Media practice has been reinvigorated through citizen-driven initiatives, acquiring new meanings on the process of content production”. People tend to choose what to be exposed to and what to discard, but the paradoxical infrastructure of the Internet in Egypt clarifies that the public interest may contradict to the government interest as portrayed in news-coverage, how algorithms of social media work, and the time through which news is delivered. Such Internet Infrastructure in Egypt has been flourishing with strong commitment to the government and what’s been happening now is advocated by, although it was implemented in 2011, “this government has been actively deploying an array of strategies to block online political expression and freedom” (Attalah & Rizk, 2011).

Journalism draws a great deal of its credibility from the belief that it is capable of portraying truthful images of truth. No one would have learned from journalism if the journalists themselves believed that the distribution of news consisted of misleading representations of the unrepresented. Concepts such as 'truth' and 'reality' cannot be separated from the concept of objectivity.

Positivism is attractive in its common sense approach to information: the only thing we can know about is

what we can immediately know through our senses; thus, it is only through the senses that such knowledge can be accomplished. When such information has been gained, this knowledge is like building blocks in the complete amount of human knowledge. The positivist idea of objectivity is discrete: it is either factual or one is subjective.

To be subjective is to claim that someone's judgments (acts and values) have an effect on knowledge. To be impartial is to claim that one is satisfied to report anything that is not influenced by one's own interpretation, i.e. the facts. The truth is what can be experienced specifically, what some will be expected to discover in just the same manner. And the real worth of a statement is not under consideration. If one is content to express the truth, one is impartial by definition. It is also a requirement for positivism that a distinction should be made between reality and beliefs.

The issue is that a journalist must choose the sense in which to position the facts. And the decision would be his own subjective choice. This is an interpretation which journalism, like science, has discovered very challenging to tackle. As a result, many of the reflective literature and textbooks of journalism still preserve a distinction between reality and viewpoints, even with some concerns in some situations.

Journalism often borrows from the root of constructive critique – is historical research: it is clear to everybody that not all references are similarly successful – i.e. represent equally great meaning in truth – as one deals for a journalistic commodity or with historical research. Kristian Erslev found himself the advocate for proposing a system of cognitive pairs that could be used to identify sources.

The theory was that by assessing the sources by form, the relative truth value of the sources could be measured. Among scholars, the source classification before the 1960s led to vigorous dissertations when it was not possible to pursue such a definitive classification of origins.

Sources adjust position and purpose and may also therefore be categorized differently based on how they are used, i.e. depending on the issue that is being collected. Journalists should be objective for both sides and have balance when telling a story which means that journalists shouldn't take sides. Objectivity is about informing the public; it tells us to worry about things like accuracy, balance and fairness" (Shaw, McCombs et al. 1997:303)

### **Critique and Knowledge Gap**

All previous studies agreed on how audiences trusted the traditional media when it comes to depending on it for trustful information about COVID-19 vaccine which has been nowadays concern. Moreover, all of the previous studies agreed on how digital media is disseminating false information to urge people toward anti-vaccination. Digital media has been depicted as fighting what the traditional media is trying to do which is lowering anxiety and strengthening the notion of easily being cured if infected while increasing hope.

Also, all previous studies agreed on the implementation of different media frames when it comes to the portrayal of COVID-19 vaccine and how important the discourse helped in the flow of information delivering specific angles of concerns. Frames of hope, gloominess, precautions, successful state responses, weakening democracies, and conspiracy theories were all presented in different media platforms which actually created an opposed picture of COVID-19 vaccine which established a sense of hesitancy.

Moreover, COVID-19 vaccine plan has been related to communication in terms of providing effective media messages by using different tools of communication by communicating a balanced and objective portrayal leaving the decision to audiences without pushing them toward a vaccine intake or an anti-vaccination.

Additionally, previous studies agreed that a balanced portrayal was constructed due to diversification of sources such as traditional media portrayals, conferences, town halls, and meetings that are also aired through TV channels with different voices of physicians and opinion leaders showing a whole picture of this health issue such as using celebrities in Egypt to encourage people to volunteer in taking vaccines. The balanced portrayal was supported by tips from WHO which is mentioned in the literature review.

Unlikely, all previous studies didn't actually state how are these balanced portrayals implemented like what the media actually concentrated on or what was the topics revealed in conferences or meetings. Issues tackled in town halls wasn't also depicted which is the core of an effective coverage that helps in the objectivity of media platforms. This gap added a lot of weakness to these previous studies as they didn't mention what has been discussed or what was included in the objective portrayals for an accurate presentation and lack of information about social context within campaigns with or against COVID-19 Vaccine . Also , there's minimal research papers covering the balancing and objectivity within news.

There were limited studies on the portrayal of the Vaccine in Egyptian media and how it framed the importance of Sinopharm "the Chinese vaccine" for the people. Most of the articles, the news and the TV are talking about the effectiveness of the Sinopharm and neglecting the side effects. They are encouraging and framing it as the best vaccine.

In addition, Most of the studies on Objectivity focused on Biased content but , lacked explaining the factors that might affect objectivity.

### 3. Results of Exploratory study

This qualitative content analysis will try to detect how the portrayal of Egyptian media concerning COVID-19 vaccine is depicted. Egyptian Online newspapers and TV channels use different angles of depiction which reveals information in specific tones with different language and choice of words influencing the while projection of news.

This proposal will analyze 6 news from TV channel and Online newspapers testing specific categories and units of analysis that would help explain the portrayal of COVID-19 vaccine in Egypt.

#### Analyzing 6 Recent News from TV Channels and Online Newspapers:

- Hadeeth AlKahera Talk Show ( Ibrahim Issa tackling COVID-19 Vaccine issue)
- Al Masry Al Youm Online “ Why Chinese vaccine is better than the American ones ? “
- Al-Hekaya Talk Show (Amr Adib talking about COVID-19 vaccine intake)
- Al-Ahram Online (“Egypt orders 20 mln doses of “Pfizer BioNTech” and 30 mln doses of AstraZeneca COVID-19 vaccines: Finance Minister”)
- Egypt Independent (COVID-19 vaccine authorized in US preparing to ship out.
- Sadda Elbalad “Ahmed Moussa” The arrival of the Chinese vaccine “sinopharm”

<u>News in TV Channels/Online Newspapers</u>	<u>Power of text</u>	<u>Tone</u>	<u>Reliability</u>	<u>Level of exaggeration</u>	<u>Diversity</u>	<u>Presentation of Facts</u>
News 1 “Ibrahim Eissa” (TV Channel)	(3) Strong	(1) positive	(1) High	(1) High level of exaggeration	(2) With	(3) Subjective
News 2 “Al Masry Al Youm (Online Newspaper)	(1) Weak “Subjective headline”	(2) Neutral	(2) Medium	(2) Moderate level of exaggeration	(2) With	(3) Subjective
News 3 “Amr Adib” talking about the vaccine intake (TV Channel)	(1) Weak	(1) Positive	(3) Low	(1) High level of exaggeration	(2) With	(3) Subjective
News 4 “Al-Ahram online” (Online Newspaper)	(1) Weak	(2) Neutral	(1) High	(4) No exaggeration	(2) With	(1) Objective
News 5 “Egypt Independent” (COVID-19 vaccine authorized in US preparing to ship out.) (Online Newspaper)	(2) Medium	(1) Positive	(1) High	(1) High level	(3) Against	(3) Subjective
News 6 Sadda Elbalad “Ahmed Moussa” The arrival of the Chinese vaccine “sinopharm” (TV Channel)	(2) Medium	(1) Positive	(1) High	(1) High level of exaggeration	(2) With	(3) Subjective

#### 1) TV Channel: Al Kahera Wal Nas

قناة القاهرة و الناس برنامج حديث القاهرة حلقة 11 ديسمبر 2020

Tackling episode about “ COVID-19 Vaccine “

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZIZgA3n\\_sFA](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZIZgA3n_sFA)



#القاهرة\_والناس #حديث\_القاهرة  
حديث القاهرة | مع إبراهيم عيسى الحلقة الكاملة 11 ديسمبر 2020

This program is presented by “ Ibrahim Issa” . the key messages used in this episode was strong and full of statements that supports certain point of view

As for the tone of voice, the presenter presented the positive side with a very positive tone of voice by describing the vaccine as لحظة انتصار انساني and used also the **statement** وداعا الجائحة. These statements positioned the vaccine as the tool that will end this pandemic. The level of exaggeration in the program was high a bit by stating

بعد انتهاء الحرب العالمية الثانية لما العالم كله قام يرقص فرحا وراحة من الام الحرب"

The aim of this statement is to show the impact of vaccine if we all collaborated and take it to end the epidemic.

As for the consistency of messages was high as every single word relates to the effectiveness of the vaccine and supported this by making an interview with Minister of health “ Dr. Hala Zayed” who stated that there are no problems in the vaccine at all referring to the campaign made by Khaled El Sawy about the vaccine in Egypt . The presence of Dr. Hala Zayed increases credibility to the facts stated there. As for the diversity in this episode , there was not enough different opinions only stated the opinion “with” taking vaccines leading to subjective presentation of facts.

### Conclusion:

This program focused on salient issues only that is important from their point of view without presenting any User Generated Content.

There was refutation strategy about people who attack the Chinese vaccine but the minister mentioned that she ignore these types of attacks and sayings.

Dr. Hala Zayed urged on the effectiveness of the Chinese vaccine and that it’s the most suitable for Egypt now , also it has no abnormal side effects and that she already took it herself to encourage people to do so.

### 2) Al Masry Al Youm Online Newspaper

لماذا لقاح «كورونا» الصيني أفضل من نظيره الأمريكي؟.. أستاذ أمراض كبد يجيب

19<sup>th</sup> of December 2020

<https://www.almasryalyoum.com/news/details/2193500>

According to Mohamed Taha in Al Masry Al Youm, the article’s key messages are a bit weak as it’s very clear to have a biased headline in the beginning of the article which may lead to ignoring the article if anyone is against this side of the story. The tone that was used in Al Masry Al Youm is neutral , not positive nor negative , only stating what’s happening nowadays. Since it’s neutral tone of voice , so it was moderate level of exaggeration.

For example like the statement: «لو تم عرض مليون دولار لن أحصل على اللقاح الأمريكي» . As for the reliability , it was medium as the article did its best in presenting facts and reasons why the American vaccine is not the best option for Egypt. There’s no diversity opinions in the article as this one only supported point of view that supports the Chinese vaccine only. The overall article was subjective starting from the headline using the word “better than” , stating that what happens about the Chinese vaccine and people who are against it , only happens due to the social media and the user generated content from people.

## Conclusion

Al Masry Al youm stated the point of view that opinions against the vaccines are a result of the hassle on social media led to some people who are non-experts to give opinions based on non-educational experience.

**This article only tackled one issue which is why to use the Chinese vaccine and not the American ones , and excluded any other issues.**

### 3) “Amr Adib” talking about the vaccine intake

In “Al-Hekaya” talk show hosted by Amr Adib, the contradiction of what’s stated and what he’s trying to convince people to do highly take place, as he’s repetitively re-stating the importance of the vaccine intake then he asserts that he’s not promoting for anything. Thus, the portrayal of news, mixed up with projecting his opinion which goes by the channel’s agenda is obvious by using a positive tone which has been expressed by “safety” and “post-crisis” solution frames.

Thus, the power of text is weak, as the key messages aren’t well represented which creates a sort of confusion, as the five W’s and H aren’t consistently stated. As a result, the level of reliability is low as well due to the paradoxical projection of this important health issue.

Additionally, high level of exaggeration took place by stating that it’s more than important for passing this health issue safely and that Egyptians shouldn’t discard its effectiveness. Moreover, he repeatedly hosted physicians talking about the vaccine necessity without explaining its composition. This is also projected by hosting Egypt’s Health Minister to assert the necessity of the vaccine.

Besides, the presentation of the COVID-19 vaccine is subjective which limits the diversification of messages, lacking the presentation of with and against point of views, as the only “with” presentation has been implemented which also again goes back to the agenda of the channel, as well as news framing to place news within a specific circuit.

Unlikely, this missing coverage of the vaccine and its effectiveness creates an unobjective portrayal that actually frames the issue with a specific context that takes it away from what it should be or how it should be represented or delivered.

### 4) “Egypt orders 20 mln doses of “Pfizer BioNTech” and 30 mln doses of AstraZeneca COVID-19 vaccines: Finance Minister”

Moreover, Al-Ahram online newspaper delivered that Egypt ordered dozens of the Chinese vaccine taking into consideration Egyptians’ health as it’s number one priority and how 3.6 billion pounds were spent to support irregular employment stating that the Egyptian citizen is the main concern.

This kind of portrayal was very objective, as the news was stated as it is by also mentioning that Egypt is experiencing COVID-19 second wave along with proclaiming number of people infected as a total which actually created a neutral tone of voice.

Also, the news wasn’t exaggerating number of infected people, nor the idea of the vaccine intake. Instead, the picture was stated as it should be by providing Egyptians with information about Egypt ordering the vaccine, number of infected people, and that Egypt is facing a second wave. The newspaper agenda wasn’t projected in this news even if the government wants people to take the vaccine as claimed in other newspapers or TV channels.

Unlikely, the news also projected salient issues about COVID-19 vaccine missing to cover the vaccine composition, its safety or effectiveness, or even the experiments through which this vaccine passed by which also led to an incomplete coverage.

As well, this causes a weak text as the key messages wasn’t portrayed in a balanced way, as the missing coverage made it ineffective regarding delivering a whole picture when it comes to the vaccine. Therefore, this showed that diversification of news isn’t applicable, as not the whole story was revealed. News was objectively portrayed, but without a balanced vision which negatively affected the heterogeneity of views.

On the other hand, the reliability level was high, as consistently highly took place throughout the news presentation starting by telling audiences that Egypt ordered the vaccine moving by how the ministries are concerned about Egyptians’ health, reaching that Egypt is experiencing the second wave, which is a proper inverted pyramid projection of news. This presentation was very compatible even if it missed stability when it comes to a whole coverage concerning the vaccine.

### 5) “Egypt Independent” (COVID-19 vaccine authorized in US preparing to ship out.)

Egypt Independent online newspaper is clearly using **powerful texts** and terminologies in representing the news.

Egypt Independent’s **tone and attitude** was positively in favor of Pfizer.

The piece of news is **highly reliable** as it stated facts and numbers that none can deny. Yet, Egypt independent had a very **high level of exaggeration** when it clearly mentioned that Pfizer’s vaccine is “kicking off the nation’s biggest vaccination drive.” This means that Pfizer’s vaccine will save people’s lives, instead of waiting for the Chinese vaccine.

Egypt Independent clearly exaggerated when it took Pfizer’s side as it stated that those shots are considered to be “the only” way to stop COVID-19, while in fact there are other vaccines to stop COVID-19. Egypt independent

didn't have any diversity of opinions, it was very subjective in portraying Pfizer's vaccine and clearly taking its side.

Egypt independent did not state different opinions about the vaccines, they only mentioned Pfizer's. Egypt Independent had a subjective way in **presentation of the facts**. Egypt Independent is sending a subliminal message when it stated that nations "Desperately need" the vaccine.

This clearly shows that Egypt Independent is backfiring the Chinese vaccine by saying that it is late to save people's lives and that Pfizer will satisfy people's desperate needs. The news portrayal was very subjective, as Egypt Independent also stated that Pfizer's vaccine are ought to be "The much-needed shots" and that they occurred in the right time, as the second wave and the mutation of COVID-20 have occurred.

Egypt Independent mentioned the numbers of infected and dead people, which is of no exaggeration, as the numbers have been really high since the breakthrough of Corona virus. The newspaper agenda is a bit clear, as it mentioned that the world is in great need to be saved through Pfizer's vaccine.

#### 6) TV Channel: Sada ElBalad

On the 10<sup>th</sup> of December 2020 the Chinese vaccine arrived Cairo airport and Ahmed Moussa was narrating what was happening.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4eGgE1YF3GI&feature=youtu.be>



This program is presented by Ahmed Moussa. He was talking about the Chinese vaccine "Sinopharm" and how it will save the Egyptians. It was somehow subjective to how Egypt is doing a great job to get the vaccine and the president himself is making sure that Egypt has the vaccine. He added that Egypt is the first country in Africa to have the vaccine. He added "مصر دلوقي وصلت خلاص", "إلي قدامك ده عنوان الحقيقة". He used these statements to show how important is the vaccine for us and how it's going to take us to another safe level. He was excited about the Vaccine and his tone was very happy about it.

#### Conclusion Of the exploratory study:

These results concluded that there are differences in the portrayal of news when it comes to COVID-19 vaccine news in TV channels versus Online newspapers. These frames of presentation are constructed due to the agenda of the platform through which news circulate. Social contexts of the channel through which news are presented plays a huge and essential role in the tone, level of exaggeration, and power of text.

Ibrahim Eissa Program stated some facts about the importance of taking the Chinese vaccine and that it's the best for Egypt, by adding some factors as a phone call with minister of Health Dr. Hala Zayed talking about the Chinese vaccine and that she volunteered herself, also mentioning the efforts of Khaled Elsayy about his campaign that goes for the vaccine. So this analysis showed that ElKahera WI Nas is a private channel but has an agenda for what's best from the state point of view

Al Masry Al Youm is an Egyptian privately owned daily newspaper known for somehow being objective.



However, articles written in Al Masry Al Youm regarding COVID-19 Vaccine is a bit subjective so what happened shows that there's a certain agenda that fulfills most probably all the Egyptian media to ask people to try the Chinese vaccine and why it's better than the American one but with different ranges of subjectivity.

Al Masry Al Youm presented the idea in a moderate level of exaggeration even neutral tone of voice which is expected from a private owned newspaper.

As for Egypt Independent, the newspaper agenda is a bit clear, as it mentioned that the world is in great need to be saved through Pfizer's vaccine.

It has been concluded also that the Egyptian media uses different frames through which news are delivered. Online newspapers use words of approval by stating Ministries' decision upon COVID-19 vaccine without actually presenting the whole picture concerning the crisis.

This was expressed through Al-Ahram online newspaper by objectively stating number of infected people, Egypt ordering the Chinese vaccine, and that Egypt is facing a second-wave, but lacked a balanced projection, as not all sides of the story were depicted. The online website missed the coverage of the experiments through which such vaccine passed by to be approved as a safe medicine that helps in the cure process. In addition, the vaccine composition isn't revealed even by ministries or physicians which will add a lot to the awareness of Egyptians concerned with the effectiveness and safety of such a vaccine. Thus, even if there is an objective news in the Egyptian media, it's unbalanced as it lacks the whole picture of reality.

On the other hand, Amr Adib's contradiction of portrayal regarding the vaccine was highly implemented as he's overly stating its necessity by hosting physicians and the Egyptian Health Minister, but claiming that he's not promoting or urging people toward any action which is a mixed framed portrayal that helps in increasing vaccine hesitancy. Moreover, Amr Adib's coverage to the vaccine issue is missing a lot regarding the vaccine composition, experiments, and safety, as he was labeling it as a Chinese disease at the beginning of the outbreak then now, he's convincing people to take the Chinese vaccine. This contradiction isn't objective or even balanced, as he's opinion is dominating the actual news causing confusion and inconsistency. Sada elBalad is a private channel owned by Mohamed Abo Elenien. Known for its subjective side to the government. Ahmed Moussa's Program is one of the important ones in this channel. Ahmed Moussa presented the vaccine as an achievement from the government and the ministry of health. This showed that there were an agenda for him to talk about the vaccine from the government point of view. Moreover framing the arrival of the vaccine using statement as "مصر دلوقتي وصلت خلاص".

#### **4. Problem Statement**

This study needs to be conducted to explore different media portrayals of COVID-19 vaccine in the Egyptian media by comparing TV channels' representation with online newspapers' representation to help understand how the Egyptian media treated this important health issue and how it plays an important role in constructing news within a specific framework that goes back to the attributes of different media platforms. Different kinds of portrayals have been exposed by different Egyptian media delivering diversified media coverage through different tone of voices, levels, stages, words, and angles. And these factors shape whether the piece of news is objective and balanced or not.

#### **Objectives of the Study:**

This study aims to explore the portrayal of COVID-19 vaccine in Egyptian media by detecting different kinds of media portrayals by different media platforms to help understand the differences of different media platforms' coverage and their tactics or strategies that help in news implementation.

Moreover, this study aims to compare between Egyptian TV channels portrayal of news and Egyptian online newspapers portrayal of news to help detect whether both types of portrayal correlate or not. This will also help in understanding how angles of coverage and the framing effects help each media platform to process news within a specific setting.

#### **Importance of the Study**

This study is very important to be tackled, as it explains the portrayal of COVID-19 vaccine in the Egyptian media by discussing different media representation regarding objectivity, frames of representation, and the tone used to deliver media messages that help in constructing news projection of different media platforms.

Moreover, different kinds of portrayal are essential to explore, as it contains balance and objectivity, misrepresentation, misinformation, and tips for effective communication as types of different media representation regarding COVID-19 vaccine coverage. Tackling these kinds of portrayals and explaining their differences create an effective approach of news comprehension.

Also, this study will compare between Egyptian TV channels and Egyptian online newspapers when it comes to different kinds of media portrayals regarding COVID-19 vaccine, as each platform uses its own strategies and tactics to implement news and deliver it within a specific context that helps in the flow of information.

Audible, visual, and written media content also helps in news writing process, as it creates a framework

through which the journalist, reporter, or even presenter will state the information accordingly, as these three types of texts decide a specific construction of news.

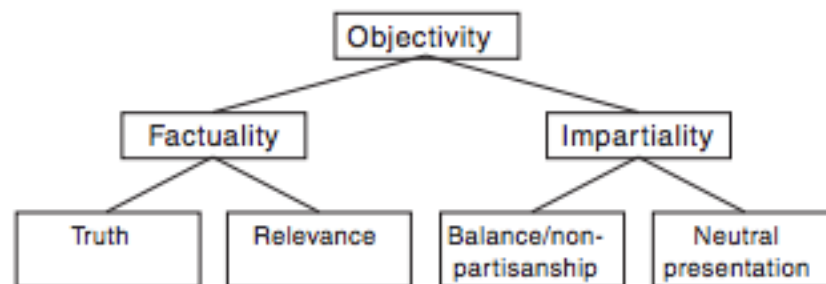
Time and space can restrict a whole coverage which can lead to the usage of hyperlinks that state further information, but it's not a must that audiences will actually use the hyperlinks feature for further information which will cause the journalist to carefully write important information without the usage of hyperlinks. This control over the writing process influences the portrayal of news.

Thus, understanding the portrayal of news, specifically COVID-19 vaccine news, is essential to detect different types of portrayals and different media platforms frameworks that actually control a journalist's writing, reporting, and even editing.

## 5. Theoretical framework

### Accuracy, Fairness and Balance: Journalism Tries to Break with the Objectivity Paradigm

This study is going to use "Westerståhl's Objectivity Concept, Adapted from Westerståhl"



Westerståhl observed that maintaining objectivity in the distribution of news can most conveniently be described as "adherence to certain norms or standards". Objectivity in journalism has two underlying concepts: factuality and impartiality. The principle of impartiality is fundamental to public service broadcasters around the world. Impartiality has been interpreted to mean that coverage should be neutral, balanced, impartial, open-minded and stop preferring one side over the other. While impartiality is connected to ethical practices and ideals of balance and objectivity, it is also a separate term. As for the Factuality, It is the methodological idea that there is a world of objects out there that is true and can be understood, rather than only assumed or thought. The principles of journalism are formulated in such a manner that news stories, whether the rules are followed, will be truthful in that they can correctly map the world to which they apply.

In this paper the paradigm will be used to observe how the media portrayed the Vaccine and talked about it, were the media objective or not about the information it gave the viewers or readers.

## 6. Research questions and hypotheses

**RQ1:** How do the Egyptian media portray COVID-19 vaccine?

**RQ2:** Is the Egyptian media objective in its portrayal of COVID-19 vaccine?

**RQ3:** Are there different media frames represented in Egyptian media portrayal of COVID-19 vaccine?

**RQ4:** Is there a difference between Egyptian online newspapers and Egyptian TV channels concerning COVID-19 vaccine portrayal?

### Hypotheses:

**H1 - Balance:** Egyptian TV Channels disseminate & emphasize information about a certain COVID-19 Vaccine.

- **Independent Variable: Emphasize Information**
- **Dependent Variable: COVID-19 Vaccine**

**H2 - Objectivity:** Egyptian Media objectively cover the Vaccine phenomena.

- **Independent Variable: Objectively cover**
- **Dependent Variable: COVID-19 Vaccine**

**H3 - Content:** Egyptian media differently cover the content of both vaccines.

- **Independent variable: Differently Coverage**
- **Dependent Variable: Content of both vaccines**

### Conceptual & Operational Definitions

Term	Conceptual Definition	Operational Definition
<b>Emphasize information</b>	To show that given information is very important and worth giving <u>attention</u> to (Cambridge).	Egyptian Media highlights and hammers on certain information that suits its agenda.  This will be measured through content analysis; by researching the style of writing of Egyptian Online Newspapers. To check whether Egyptian Media most of the time mentions a certain vaccine and eliminates talking about the other or not.
<b>Certain COVID-19 Vaccine</b>	COVID-19 is an infectious disease caused by a newly discovered coronavirus. The COVID-19 virus spreads primarily through droplets of saliva or discharge from the nose when an infected person coughs or sneezes (World Health Organization).	The Egyptian Media takes a side of either Pfizer's vaccine or the Chinese vaccine.  This will be measured through checking Egyptian Online Newspapers and TV programs and seeing how many times they talk about Pfizer's vaccine and how many times they talk about the Chinese vaccine.
<b>Objectively Cover</b>	Considering only facts and without being influenced by personal feelings or opinions (Oxford).	Egyptian media does not take neither Pfizer nor Chinese vaccines sides.  This will be measured through content analysis; by checking if both Egyptian Online newspapers and TV programs balance between delivering information about both vaccines and does not differentiate between them. If they equally talk about them or not.
<b>Differently Cover</b>	Partly or totally unlike in nature, form, or quality. Dissimilar (Merriam, 1928).	The Egyptian media favors a certain vaccine over the other.  This will be measured through content analysis; through analyzing the terms that are used whether they are in favor of Pfizer or Chinese vaccines.
<b>Content of both Vaccines</b>	The articles or parts contained in a magazine or book with the number of the page they begin on (Cambridge)	Which content about both vaccines is being presented in a more appealing way than the other.  This will be measured through content analysis; through analyzing if the Egyptian media marginalize content of one of the vaccines and gives detailed information about the other.

### 7. Methodology and Tools

This paper wants to discover Media portrayal of Vaccines in the Egyptian media impacts the perception of Egyptians.

#### **Qualitative Technique (Content Analysis) :**

This qualitative content analysis will try to depict how different kinds of portrayals are constructed. Egyptian Online newspapers and TV channels use different angles of depiction which reveals information in specific tones with different language and choice of words influencing the while projection of news.

The researchers are going to conduct it as an exploratory study through which 6 news regarding corona's vaccine are going to be analyzed through different categories and units of analysis, by choosing 3 Egyptian news from television channels and 3 Egyptian news from online newspapers by detecting words or frames of presentations used in both platforms along with exploring the objectivity and balance of representing all sides of the story. These sides of the story can be the pros and cons of corona's vaccine or even different explanations by professionals regarding the vaccine intake.

We will analyze certain languages used and how many times words are used, and how it's written or used in its social context and how it is interpreted & adding it our own Analysis & circumstances within the action in Egypt.

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#### APPENDIX

Categories of analysis	Operational definition	Units of analysis
<b>Power of text</b>	The power of <b>key messages</b> used in the piece of news	1. Weak 2. Medium 3. Strong
<b>Tone</b>	The way a publication speaks to audiences. It's the flavor, sound, feeling, and attitude carried <b>through words.</b>	1. Positive 2. Neutral 3. Negative
<b>Reliability</b>	The extent to which the news is trustworthy and in <b>consistency</b>	1. High 2. Medium 3. Low
<b>Level of exaggeration</b>	Overstating news while delivering it to audiences through <b>usage of words and language</b>	1. High level 2. Moderate level 3. Low level 4. No exaggeration
<b>Diversity of opinions</b>	Egyptian media being <b>diversified</b> revealing different opinions about a specific issue	1. With and Against 2. With 3. Against
<b>Presentations of facts</b>	The way information is presented in the media.	1. Objective 2. Neutral 3. Subjective